

Heritage Citation



Lavewan Court

Key details

Addresses	At 25 Upper Clifton Terrace, Red Hill, Queensland 4059
Type of place	Flat building
Period	Postwar 1945-1960
Style	International
Lot plan	Common property_BUP11503; L1_BUP11503; L2_BUP11503; L3_BUP11503; L4_BUP11503; L5_BUP11503; L6_BUP11503; L7_BUP11503; L8_BUP11503; L9_BUP11503
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 29 November 2019 Date of Citation — August 2017
People/associations	Curro, Nutter and Charlton (Architect)

'Lavewan Court' built in 1961-62, is an early block of units designed by award-winning architects, Curro, Nutter and Charlton. Featuring innovative design responses and creativity responding to the triangular shape of the allotment, 'Lavewan Court' demonstrates an innovative and attractive departure from the six-pack 'walk-up' unit of the 1950s and 60s.

History

The residential suburb of Red Hill is one of Brisbane's oldest suburbs with land in the area first subdivided for semi-rural estates in the 1860s.¹ The land on which 'Lavewan Court' is situated was surveyed and alienated in 1865 as portions 604 and 605, parish of North Brisbane.² At this time Red Hill was sparsely populated, with the steepness of the hills initially deterring settlement. However, from the 1870s, its proximity to the town centre, the availability of cheap residential allotments in the valleys and the later provision of a tram service through the district (opened along Musgrave Road, 1897-98), encouraged residential and accompanying commercial and religious development of the area.³

Portions 604 and 605 were purchased by Thomas Reynolds in October 1873 and February 1874 respectively. Thomas Reynolds used the land, totalling almost two roods (2023.4m²) to build an estate. Thomas Reynolds came to Brisbane as the chef of George Augustus Constantine Phipps, 2nd Marquis of Normanby who was Governor of Queensland from 1871-74.⁴ When the Marquis went to New Zealand to be governor, Reynolds went with him, but returned in 1876 when the climate did not agree with him. Reynolds then became the chef at Queensland's Parliament House for 37 years prior before retiring in 1913.⁵ Upon his death in 1935, Thomas Reynolds left his house "Millwood" in Upper Clifton Terrace, then valued with its grounds at £4.286, to the Christian Science Church (First Church of Christ Scientist).⁶

The church trustees subdivided portion 605, selling the first subdivision in 1941. In 1946 portions 604 and 605 contained at least two substantial houses and some outbuildings. The current site of 25 Upper Clifton Terrace containing 703 m² (27.8 perches) was created in February 1947 as a subdivision of portions 604 and 605 but remained vested in the trustees of the First Church of Christ Scientist. In 1960 the trustees of the estate of Thomas Reynolds applied to erect Multi Dwelling Apartments on the property. In March 1961 Lavewan Investments Pty Ltd bought the land and applied to erect nine (9) flats on the site.⁷

While early twentieth century flats were often large houses turned into multiple dwellings, the interwar period saw the emergence of the modern purpose-built flats. They were seen as the epitome of modern living which emphasised the pursuit of individual freedom. New planning regulations in 1936 allowed large planned blocks of flats with their height restricted to two or three storeys in special locations.⁸ This resulted in the construction of enlarged domestic style and multi-storey blocks of units.

When the material shortages following World War Two waned in the late 1950s, a new architectural form of multiple dwelling emerged. The 1960s “walk up” or “six pack” replaced the flats which were formed from subdivided large houses or interwar flats.¹⁰ ‘Lavewan Court’ is an innovative and creative development of the ‘walk up’ unit block.

In December 1960 architects Curro, Nutter and Charlton applied on behalf of the Trustees of T. Reynolds, to build a Class “A” Multiple Dwelling flats on the site. The approval for nine (9) flats was issued to Lavewan Investments Pty Ltd in April 1961.¹¹ The partnership of John Curro, Dan Nutter and Ian Charlton had recently formed with Charlton joining Curro and Nutter after working with notable postwar architects Hayes & Scott in 1954, 1958-1960. Curro, Nutter and Charlton studied architecture together at the University of Queensland under Karl Langer and Ron Voller, and practised from 1960-1972. They designed domestic houses as well as units.¹²

‘Lavewan Court’ is a three-storey multi-unit set of flats. It differs from the standard ‘walk up’ in having an extra storey and an unusual triangular shape responding to the shape of the lot located on a bend in Clifton Terrace. The high quality, innovative design utilises concrete and columns to create a distinctive design-response to the site and to organise the internal spaces framed by the triangular building into nine units with modern living spaces with compact kitchens and bathrooms.

Curro, Nutter and Charlton went on to win the Royal Australian Institute of Architects “Building of the Year” in 1965 with the high rise “Gleneagles” Senior Citizens Home containing 98 self-contained units in twin towers in Moray Street, New Farm.¹³ ‘Lavewan Court’ was finished and registered as Flat Buildings for 24 persons in March 1962 which was subject to the stipulations of the Chief Health Officer who was required to approve all flats to ensure that slum conditions did not develop.¹⁴

The units were let prior to the introduction of strata titling in 1965, and remained owned by Lavewan Investments Pty Ltd until a subdivision was created for the Strata Title Plan in December 2002.¹⁵ Since that time the property has been under the management of the Body Corporate for ‘Lavewan Court’. Some units’ kitchens and bathrooms have been modernised but the original configuration of the flats remains the same.

Description

‘Lavewan Court’ is an early three-storey multi-unit masonry set of flats. Built in the early 1960’s, it has an unusual triangular plan, corresponding with the triangular site, maximising use of the site and exposure to light and views. The face brick and suspended concrete slab building includes a feature set of floating concrete external stairs, a breezeblock screen, innovative planning and balconies and large windows to the expansive city views.

Red Hill is a small inner suburb of Brisbane, located 3.5 kilometres north-west of the city centre. It is primarily a quiet, residential suburb with steep and hilly, tree-lined streets, with an eclectic collection of cafes, retails and galleries along its major thoroughfares of Waterworks Road and Enoggera Terrace. The tree-lined streets are dominated by small one and two storey dwellings, including a mix of Federation and Interwar style homes, often well maintained and renovated. Lot sizes in Red Hill are generally small, similar to the neighbouring Paddington. Red Hill is best known for the landmark St Brigid’s red brick church on the hill.

The subject site is located in the eastern corner of Red Hill, on Upper Clifton Road, a small, elevated dead end

street between Musgrave Road and Kelvin Grove Road (no vehicular access onto Kelvin Grove Road), close to the junction of Kelvin Grove, Petrie Terrace and Paddington boundaries. The elevated street contains a collection of residences with some smaller multi-residential properties on the southern side, alongside a substantial heritage listed residence. A large-scale retirement development is located on the north of the street at the Musgrave Road junction.

The suburban street has concrete kerbs and narrow bitumen footpaths to both sides of the street. Narrow grassed verges run up to boundary fences or continue into the open front lawns. There is a mix of both new and established street trees on the north of the street, with no street trees evident to the southern side of the street. Setbacks are mixed and varied along the winding street.

The site is a truncated triangular shape with a northwest street orientation; sloping down from west to east. There is a standard setback from the street, a wider setback to the eastern side/rear boundary for the driveway access to the rear and a narrower setback to the southern side/rear boundary. The front setback of the property is open to the street and includes an area of concreted off-street parking, areas of lawn, small concrete edged garden adjacent to the pedestrian entrance and some established trees and shrubbery.

Vehicle access is along a concrete driveway to the eastern boundary, with border planting along the fence line. The driveway leads to open access undercover car parking, under the block of flats. A brick retaining wall with metal fencing over separates the lower concrete driveway to the east from the elevated front lawn area. This brick wall has brick capping and extends up to provide the units mailboxes. Pedestrian access is via a concrete path up to the open concrete stairs, connecting with landing access to both the external and internal stairs.

'Lavewan Court' is an early three-storey multi-unit masonry set of flats, containing nine units. It is an unusual triangular set of flats, correlating with the triangular site. Elevated from the street, the face brick external walls are banded with the exposed edges of each levels suspended concrete slabs. Lightly toned brickwork is used throughout. Painted flat sheet panels, currently teal in colour, are inset under the timber casements.

The suspended concrete slab construction has rectilinear painted concrete columns setback to align with the recessed line of the façade on the eastern end and central to the feature floating external staircase, open under for the driveway. A low-pitched sheet metal roof falls towards the street with downpipes and rainwater heads located centrally adjacent to the feature breezeblock screen. The roof plane extends both ends of the front façade with open balconies, stairs and access, providing openness and softening the bulk and perceived scale of the building.

The stairs and balconies in the eastern portion of the street frontage have an open metal rail and rod balustrade. The balconies to the west and rear are triangular in plan with solid rendered masonry balustrades, timber lattice installed above on the western facade. Some rear balcony spaces have been enclosed with glazing.

Timber framed casement windows with fixed glazing over and smaller hopper windows remain on the front façade. Larger timber framed casement windows with fixed glazing over are located on the rear elevations. Some windows to the rear have been replaced with aluminium sliders, some further altered with solid bulkheads over.

The interiors of this building have not been inspected. Publically available photography and floor plans have been reviewed. The overall plan is triangular with three units on each level: a triangular shaped two-bedroom unit to both the northeast and the south west, with a single bed unit to the centre. The interiors include flush lined walls and ceilings. A variety of floor finishes: carpet, tiles, vinyl and laminate timber flooring, are applied to the original concrete floor slabs. The kitchens and bathrooms are small yet efficient, with many refitted with modern finishes, fittings and appliances. The interiors appear to maximise bedroom size, living space and natural light

with large openings to the southern and eastern city views.

A shared laundry is located on the ground floor with glass louvres to the rear.

There are no additional buildings on the subject site.

‘Lavewan Court’ appears to be in good condition and moderately intact.

Externally, there appears to have been some minor alterations, including the addition of air-conditioning, the glazing of lower floor rear balconies, some rear windows and doors substituted aluminium framed suites and possibly the lattice screening to the western corner balconies. Internally the layouts remain the same, with finishes updated including floor finishes, kitchen and bathroom fitouts.

The rear windows and balconies of all units in ‘Lavewan Court’ have clear city views to the southeast. The front access balconies are open to the northwest, with views across the surrounding suburbs. Views of the site itself are somewhat limited, softened by the vegetation on site and the mixed scale of the streetscape.

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:

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

As a striking modern multi-unit dwelling which utilises its triangular shape to produce soaring vistas from its elevated position. The attractive, well-designed building responds well to the site and has a prominent presence in the streetscape.

Technical

CRITERION F

The place is important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technological achievement at a particular period

as a high quality, innovative design that utilises concrete and columns to create a distinctive design-response to the site and to organise the internal spaces framed by the triangular building into modern living spaces with

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 an early example of the multiple-unit dwellings designed by Curro, Nutter and Charlton, who went on to become award-winning architects for high-rise residential buildings.

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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 September 2020)



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