

Heritage Citation



New Farm Police Station

Key details

Addresses	At 653 Brunswick Street, New Farm, Queensland 4005
Type of place	Police station / building
Period	Federation 1890-1914, Interwar 1919-1939
Style	Bungalow
Lot plan	L667_B12342
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 30 October 2000 Date of Citation — August 2010
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (D) Representative

The New Farm Police Station was purpose-built in 1939 to meet the needs of a growing community. The main building was initially used as both a residence and police station, however space was quite limited so the building was extended in 1943 and again in 1979 to provide more room. The small hardwood and pine building adjacent to the station is believed to have been built circa 1912 and originally housed cells for the previous station on the site. In 1936, the cells were converted for use as an office and, although it was at one point considered for demolition, the building still remains on the site today. The New Farm police force was absorbed by the Fortitude Valley Division in the 1990s and the building ceased to function as a police station.

History

The first police station in New Farm was established in Heal Street in late 1891. From August 1906 the police rented a property from a Mr Rankin in Brunswick Street, but owing to a sharp increase in rent early in 1911, the Police department sought an alternative site. Rental properties were hard to find and Sergeant Benzies at the New Farm station recommended the purchase of an available residence. Benzies, in justifying his recommendation pointed out that because of the large permanent population, which was still increasing, it would be only a matter of time before additional staff would be required at the station. The nearby construction of wool stores and wharves, followed by an increase in overseas shipping, placed an added burden on the local police. Benzies also reported that in 1910, 80 persons were arrested by New Farm based police and a cell was desperately needed to temporarily detain prisoners arrested for minor offences.

The site of the present New Farm Police Station was formerly part of the land surrounding the nearby Le Brocq residence. The fifty perch allotment with a thirty year old residence was purchased from the Le Brocq Brothers for about £1250 in 1911 but was not occupied until January 1913 after substantial renovations and additions.

Further renovations occurred in 1933 at a cost of £82. These premises were suitable for the next 20 years, but in 1935, Sergeant Cranitch reported that the existing police office on the site was over 60 years old and should be condemned as unfit for occupation. Several bricks had fallen from the chimney and nearly hit his children.

In 1935, plans were drawn up for a new brick and tile police station and residence. Lavatories for the single officers and the public were built on the grounds. Relief Workers employed under the Intermittent Relief Workers Scheme carried out the excavation and levelling of the site.

The new brick buildings and re-location of a timber building were completed in 1939 at a cost of £2798. The main building was both a residence and a functioning police station. A concrete fence was constructed on the front and side boundaries adjoining the streets, and a timber fence was constructed at the back and other side of the property.

Even in the new building, office accommodation for the five police officers was extremely limited. In 1943, plans were drawn up to increase the office space by extending the lobby.

In 1979, a brick room was added to the western side of the police station and a passage was added to connect them to the existing residence and police offices. The connecting passage contained male and female toilets. This extension provided a room for the Officer in Charge, a constable's day room and a public counter.

The hardwood and pine building on the western side of the property was probably built in 1912 when the police

moved onto the site as a lock-up with two cells and single men's quarters. In 1936 when the old police station was replaced, the lock-up was thought to be in good repair, and was simply moved on the site and re-built.

Lavatories were added at this time and the cells were converted into an office for administration of the Intermittent Relief Worker's Scheme. When the Relief Workers Scheme ceased in New Farm in 1942, the police used the building as additional office space, a store room and a meal room. By 1961, the building had fallen into disrepair and the rector of the neighbouring and newly built Anglican Church wrote to the local Member of Parliament asking for it, and a redundant pole previously used to mount an air raid siren in World War II, to be removed. The Fortitude Valley police inspector described the timber building as "dilapidated and unsightly" in his report for the Minister. However, as the old building provided much needed storage space and meal facilities and there were insufficient funds to replace the building, it was decided to repair and repaint the 1912 building, at a cost of £196. The building still exists today, but is screened from the church and the street by large shrubs.

In 1993, the New Farm Police Station was incorporated into the Fortitude Valley Division. Today, the buildings in Brunswick Street are used by the Traffic Branch and as an inquiry office. Police patrols are conducted from the Fortitude Valley Station.

Description

The police station is residential in form and scale, with a tiled, hipped roof over the main core, and gable to the protruding wing, and a broken pitch over the verandah to the two street frontages. The external walls are facebrick, but the timber detailing to the posts, handrails, balustrading, doors, lattice screens and stairs to the verandahs retains the appearance of traditional timber domestic architecture. This is further reinforced by the height of the floor above ground level and the detailing of timber windows, sunhoods and decorative gable elements. The 1979 extension to the west of the police station is a simple form with a hipped roof - its materials and detailing match the adjoining police station.

The hardwood and pine building on the western side of the property is an early lock-up with two cells and a single men's quarters. A simple rectangular timber and tin building it is the earliest structure on the site and dates to the first police station constructed there.

The fence to the two street frontages is a partial retaining wall with the upper level reflecting the verandah balustrading. Pedestrian gates provide access from each street level to the front entry stairs of both buildings.

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 former police station and police lockup on this site record the history of policing in New Farm. The lock up dates from the time of the first purpose-built police station constructed in 1912 and was used for the administration of the Intermittent Relief Workers' Scheme during the Great Depression. The new station was built in 1939 in response to an increased need for policing in the area due to population growth and an increase in crime.

Representative

CRITERION D

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

as a good example of an interwar police station that was purpose-built to combine residential and policing functions and extended to suit changing needs.

References

1. Brisbane City Council, Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Detail Plan No: 161, 1937
2. Department of Natural Resources, Certificates of Title
3. Pullar, Margaret. Historical Reports on Ambulance, Fire and Police buildings throughout Metropolitan Brisbane, A Report for the Brisbane City Council Heritage Unit. 1995
4. Queensland Post Office Directories
5. Queensland State Archives A/41422, Brunswick Street police Station
6. Ryan, Robyn, Metropolitan North Region, Queensland Police Service, electronic mail, 27/03/03

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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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