

Heritage Citation



Porphyry wall

Key details

Addresses	At 27 Heussler Terrace, Milton, Queensland 4064
Type of place	Retaining wall
Period	Victorian 1860-1890
Lot plan	L3_RP19538
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 July 2002 Date of Citation — May 2011
Construction	Walls: Stone
Criterion for listing	(D) Representative; (E) Aesthetic

While accurate dating is difficult, this porphyry wall is likely to have been constructed at the same time as residential development began in Heussler Terrace. It is significant for its aesthetic value and as an example of a retaining wall characteristic of the type constructed in Brisbane during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

History

This small block of land was originally part of an area of just over 63 acres purchased by Michael Carrick in April 1859. In 1866 this land was bought by land speculators, James Dickson and James Duncan, who subdivided it into small lots of around 20 - 30 perches. In 1877, the 30 perch area including the current site was purchased by William Cooksley, who subdivided it and sold a 10 perch allotment to James Johnston in February 1878.

A small cottage currently was built for James Johnston soon after his purchase of the land. He took out a mortgage for £50 with the Brisbane Permanent Benefit, Building and Investment Society in March 1878. It is likely that this was used to fund the construction of this house. Although subsequent mortgages were registered on the title in 1879 and 1883, the fact that James Johnston is recorded as in High Street, (the nearby cross street) Milton in Postal Records in 1883-4 suggest that the house was built by 1883. Alternatively, Johnston may have rented a house in High Street before moving into his new home in Heussler Terrace. A 1920s detail plan shows the name of the house as Wavertree.

The 1860s saw growing settlement in the Milton/Auchenflower area including houses, farms and several large estates established by wealthy settlers. An early school in the area, The Petrie Terrace School on the corner of Hale Street and Milton Road, opened in 1868. During the immigration boom of the 1880s, residential development intensified at Milton as the more crowded inner suburbs such as Paddington and Red Hill spilled over into neighbouring areas.

Heussler Terrace was named for local landowner, John Heussler, whose 1860s villa would later be extended as Fernberg, now the Governor's Residence. The street name originally extended all the way along Haig Street and Birdwood Terrace to the estate of Stuartholme, but sections of it were changed during World War I when patriotic sentiment saw the names of many German names altered. In this case, the new street names of Haig and Birdwood honoured British generals. From 1885-86 until 1904 Heussler Terrace was known as Fernberg Road, Milton according to the Post Office Directories.

Research to date has not revealed the date of construction of the porphyry wall in front of the subject house. The retaining wall is an extension of a natural rock with a brick entranceway in front of the neighbouring house. A detail plan of the street dating from circa 1928 shows the wall and the entrances to both houses. It is possible that the wall was built in the nineteenth century when Heussler Terrace was constructed or, at a later date, widened. Advice received from Charles Oliver, an infrastructure heritage consultant, suggests that it is likely the wall was built around the time of the subdivision and residential development of this part of Heussler Terrace in the late 1870s as the retaining wall is supporting the earth on which the house is built and provides for access to the front entrance and side of the house.

The use of porphyry (or Brisbane Tuff) has a long history in Brisbane. In the 1820s, during early European settlement, porphyry was quarried from the Kangaroo Point Cliffs, providing stone for the Commissariat Stores

and surrounding retaining walls. Other Brisbane quarries operated at Spring Hill from around the 1850s, Victoria Park from at least the turn of the century and at Windsor from the 1880s. A porphyry quarry is currently operating at Chermside. In addition to using the stone for many of Brisbane's public buildings, porphyry has been used for building foundations, kerbing and channelling of roads, river training walls and retaining walls. The stone, which can range in colour from white and pink to brown and purple, has also been widely used as a material for road construction. It is not currently known from which quarry the porphyry used in Huessler Terrace originated.

Description

A well built porphyry stone blocks retaining wall with narrow stone steps addresses the street and also forms the right corner of the site.

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:

Representative

CRITERION D

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

as the wall is an example of a construction technique characteristic of Brisbane - the use of locally quarried porphyry stone in curbs, retaining walls etc. during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

as it is an intact porphyry wall which has a very strong visual impact within the street featuring the unique textures and colours of the porphyry stone enhanced by the patina of age and overtopped by vegetation.

References

1. Brisbane City Council Heritage Unit. *A History of the Extractive and Mining Industries of the Brisbane Area*. Nd
2. Brisbane City Council Water Supply & Sewerage Detail Plans
3. Department of Natural Resources, Queensland Certificates of title and other records.
4. Environmental Protection Agency. Entries on the Queensland Heritage Register. *Ithaca Embankments*. 602091 - 602099
5. R. Lawson *Brisbane in the 1890s* Brisbane:University of Queensland Press, 1987
6. McKellar's Map of Brisbane and Suburbs. Brisbane: Surveyor-General's Office, 1895
7. Pearn, John. *Auchenflower, the Suburb and the Name* (Brisbane: Department of Child Health Publishing Unit , 1997)
8. Queensland Post Office Directories
9. Roberts, Beryl. Oh for a Brisbane Omnibus! The influences of horse-drawn buses on the development of Brisbane 1860 to 1920s. Thesis (Postgrad. Dip.? History), U of Q, Jan. 1994

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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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