Local Heritage Places

Heritage Citation

Tram Shelter (former)

Key details

Addresses	Outside 70 Gregory Terrace, Spring Hill, Queensland 4000
Type of place	Tram / bus shelter
Period	Interwar 1919-1939
Style	Arts and Crafts
Geolocation	-27.459499 153.019130
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004 Date of Citation — January 2013
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Structure: Timber

Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (D) Representative; (E) Aesthetic; (H) Historical association

The timber tram/bus shelters are important for their association with the development of public transport in Brisbane, particularly the tramway system. The shelters are important for remaining in continuous use as waiting shelters for the public transport system in Brisbane since the early 20th century. The shelters are important as evidence of the former tram routes and of a form of public transport no longer in existence in Brisbane. In form, materials, arrangement of elements and location these shelters are representative of tram/bus waiting shelters. Robust functional structures with simple elegant lines the shelters are distinctive visual elements in the streetscape. The tram/ bus shelters are important for their association with the work of the Brisbane City Council's Transport Department, responsible for the operation of the tramway system from 1925 to 1969.

History

Shelter Design Trams were a feature of Brisbane streets from 1885 until 1969. From the 1920s to the 1950s The Brisbane Tramway Trust and then the Brisbane City Council erected a number of timber waiting shelter sheds along the tram/bus routes. Most shelters were constructed by Brisbane City Council in response to petitioning by community groups or progress associations. A survey of usage was undertaken by BCC to determine the most viable locations for the shelters. Waiting sheds promoted the use of the tram/bus system by providing a comfortable waiting area with some protection from the elements. Some shelters were large and purpose-built for the site but most were free-standing shelters constructed to standard designs. In this survey three standard shelter types used during this period were identified – P.1008 Standard Waiting Shelter (hipped roof pavilion shelter); Standard Small Type Tramway Shelter Shed No. 2512 (skillion roof shelter); and the gable roof shelter. Only drawings for the P.1008 and No. 2512 types were located during this study.

The gable roof shelter design may have been from a shelter constructed earlier in the 20th century during the time The Brisbane Tramway Company owned and operated the tramway network. The shelter in Chatsworth Road near the corner with Upper Cornwall Street was constructed in 1915 to shelter Greenslopes tram patrons. It had points for lights that the tram drivers would turn on at sunset and off when the last tram left. The P.1008 drawings were drawn up by the Brisbane City Council Department of Works, Planning and Building Branch and signed by City Architect F.G. Costello in 1946. The Standard Small Type Shelter No. 2512 was drawn up by the Transport Department of the Planning and Building Branch and signed by City Architect F.G. Costello in 1945. The P.1008 type shelter closely resembles the shelters constructed by the Brisbane Tramway Trust in the 1920s and 1930s. No drawings for these earlier shelters have been located and this study has been unable to confirm that the 1946 drawings were based on these earlier shelters but the physical evidence suggests that this is the case. The designs for the shelters are uncharacteristic of work designed by Costello which may indicate that the shelter designs are continuing an earlier idiom.

Tramway History

In 1884 a private company, the Metropolitan Tramway and Investment Company, laid Brisbane's first tram tracks along approximately 10.5 kilometres from Woolloongabba to Breakfast Creek, with branches to the Exhibition Building and New Farm. The company began the operation of a horse-drawn passenger tram system in 1885

with the trams running on rails from the North Quay to the Exhibition Building and Breakfast Creek and later extending the routes to Bulimba Ferry, New Farm, Logan Road and West End.

A power station to supply current to electric trams was constructed in Countess Street in 1897 and The Brisbane Tramways Company introduced the first electric trams to Brisbane that year after purchasing the early horse car system, converting it to electric operation and expanding and extending the routes. Brisbane's tramway system experienced rapid expansion in response to the growth in the City's population. From a population of 101,554 in 1891 Brisbane had expanded to a population of 139,480 in 1911, which then doubled to 209,168 by 1921. The number of cars in operation increased from 20 in 1897 to 172 in 1916. At the conclusion of the First World War there was general support for the notion that the tramway system be owned and operated by a public authority rather than a private company. In 1922, the Brisbane Tramway Trust was inaugurated by an Act of Parliament and the Trust assumed ownership and control of the tramways in January 1923. The tramway system had failed to keep pace with the expansion of Brisbane so the Trust faced a considerable backlog of work. It undertook the construction of repair workshops and car depots, laying of additional tracks, purchase of additional cars and the introduction of remote control of points at busy intersections. Innovations introduced by the Trust included the construction of passenger waiting shelter sheds, advertising in trams and a suggestions board scheme. The 1920s and 1930s was a period of tramways expansion following the Brisbane City Council acquisition of the tramways system from the Brisbane Tramways Trust in 1925. The Council continued with the upgrading and extension of the system. During the first half of the 20th century public transport was important in Brisbane and remained the principal form of transport for most residents. By the 1950s Brisbane had one of the highest levels of public transport usage in Australia. The tram system was the principal form of public transport in Brisbane until the 1960s. It is thought that the hipped roof and skillion roof shelters identified in this study were constructed between the 1920s and 1950s by the Brisbane Tramway Trust and then by Brisbane City Council. Most of the routes on which these shelters have been identified were constructed during this period. Further research is required to establish construction dates for the gable roof shelters. As the tram routes to Windsor and Coorparoo were established in 1914 and 1915, the shelter construction post dates this. The construction of the hipped roof waiting shelter in Merthyr Road, New Farm was approved by the Trust in 1924 and probably constructed in 1925.

In 1924 the Brisbane Tramway Trust extended the tram service to Ashgrove, demonstrating a confidence in the future of the suburb. The release of 855 allotments in the Glenlyon Gardens estate in 1924 was the catalyst for the development of Ashgrove as a residential suburb. It is thought that the waiting shelters along Waterworks Road (Ithaca Bridge, Oleander Drive and Stewart Place) were constructed at sometime between the mid-1920s and the 1940s. The Rosalie line opened along Elizabeth Street, Rosalie in 1904 and was extended in 1930 to Rainworth, terminating in Boundary Road adjacent to Rainworth Primary School. The shelters on Boundary Road were built after this 1930 extension of the line. Between 1937 and 1939 the tramline extended to Bardon and the Simpsons Road shelter was built some time after this. From 1940 the Brisbane City Council trialed the use of buses with diesel engines in areas not serviced by trams. In 1940 a diesel bus service ran from Kelvin Grove through Herston and along Butterfield Street to the City. The shelter on Butterfield Street remains as evidence of the diesel bus service which became the backbone of Brisbane City Council public transport after the closure of the tramway system in 1969.

Following the Second World War, Brisbane experienced a housing boom which encouraged the Council to extend its electric tramway network. At this time the Monday to Friday the morning peak services had 246 tram cars operating and 296 cars were required to meet the evening peak traffic. During the day each route was serviced by a tram every ten minutes. However from the 1950s various factors converged to influence a decline in the patronage of the tram system. An increasing reliance on the private motor car reduced the number of tram passengers and the growth of the Brisbane City Council's bus fleet gradually outstripped that of the tram system.

Urban sprawl saw more and more families move to outer suburbs not connected to the tram system, and a lack of investment in the technological development of trams compared with increasing expenditure on diesel buses contributed to the conversion of Brisbane's public transport system from trams to buses. In 1962 the Paddington tram depot was burned to the ground with the loss of 65 trams (20% of the fleet). In 1965 the Wilbur Smith Plan, a report on the future transport and traffic requirements of Brisbane, recommended the closure of the tramway system and a conversion to a bus program. As a result of all these various influences and events, the tram system in Brisbane was discontinued in 1969. The tram waiting shelters remain, providing evidence of a mode of transport no longer in use.

Description

Hipped Roof Pavilion Shelter – General Description: Known as the P.1008 design, this shelter is an open, rectangular, freestanding pavilion. The shelter has an unlined hipped roof with the framing resting on a perimeter beam, supported by stout corner posts with bold curved bracing brackets. The roof is clad in one of five materials – terra cotta tiles, asbestos cement tiles, concrete tiles, metal sheet tiles or corrugated metal sheeting. One or more of a standard design timber bench seat with a back rail support generally was provided beneath each shelter. Variations to this standard shelter include a screen infill to the rear and sides. The extent of rear infill varies. In some shelters a panel of framed sheeting fills the top third and at times carried advertising material; in some shelters the rear panel is clad with vertical beaded tongue and groove timber boards. Where there is a side screen it is generally of vertical beaded tongue and groove timber boards screening only the seating area. Some shelters with tiled roofs were decorated with terracotta horn finials. Most shelters stand on concrete slabs extending from each side of the central footpath or a slab adjacent to the footpath. The posts were generally set directly into footings within the concrete slab and many post bases have deteriorated. While many remain in direct contact with the concrete, some now are supported at the base by steel brackets or angles. A number of shelters have truncated eaves to the kerbside, a modification introduced to accommodate road widenings and buses pulling in close to the kerb.

Standing prominently on Gregory Terrace outside the Brisbane Grammar School, this hipped roof pavilion shelter is the waiting shed for the bus stop near the school gates. The roof is clad with corrugated metal sheeting, the kerbside eaves is intact and there are no roof gutters. The posts stand off the ground supported by metal angles. A framed sheeted panel occupies the top third of the rear opening. The shelter accommodates a standard design timber seat. Roof rafters are rotting at the ends and the paintwork is generally scuffed and chipped.

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

for its association with the development of publictransport since the early 20th century and remaining incontinuous use as waiting shelters.

Rarity

CRITERION B

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

surviving as evidence of the early tram routes and of aform of public transport no longer in use.

Representative

CRITERION D

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

representative of tram/bus waiting shelters.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

robust and elegant functional structures standing asdistinctive elements in the streetscape.

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 a tram shelter associated with the tramwayoperations of the BCC Transport Department from1925 to 1969.

References

1. Brisbane City Council - City Assets Branch *Conservation Management Study* Stage 1 Report. November 2002

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