



Heritage Citation



18 Rosa Street, Spring Hill

Key details

Addresses	At 18 Rosa Street, Spring Hill, Queensland 4000
Type of place	Duplex
Period	Colonial 1842-1860
Style	Queenslander
Lot plan	L54_RP10497
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 14 September 2018 Date of Citation — December 2014
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Timber
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (B) Rarity

This modest duplex is a rare example of a nineteenth-century timber duplex in Brisbane. It was built in the mid-1870s. It is likely to have been constructed by the owner of the property and carpenter, Anders Christensen. Built as a speculative investment it became a rental property for many years. Constructed prior to the introduction of the Undue Subdivision of Land Prevention Act in 1885 which prohibited the subdivision of land into lots less than sixteen perches (405m²), the timber duplex is one of the best examples in Brisbane of the acute land subdivisions that led to crowded conditions in these early suburbs.

History

The convict settlement was closed in 1839 and in 1842 Moreton Bay was officially opened for free settlement as part of the colony of New South Wales. At this time the area now known as Spring Hill was Crown Land and by 1856 the government had begun to subdivide the land and sell to private investors. Initially the land on top of the hills was bought by wealthy Brisbane residents who established large houses overlooking the town. Smaller and less expensive lots were bought by those of slighter means on which modest workers' cottages were erected. Spring Hill quickly became one of Brisbane's earliest dormitory suburbs, where most of its inhabitants went to jobs every day in other areas. The town limit was denoted by Boundary Street at this time. By the 1870s, following further subdivision of land in the Spring Hill area, the lower slopes of the hills were becoming increasingly crowded.

The land on which the timber duplex was built was not subdivided into small blocks until 1876. It was in this year, Anders Christensen, a recently arrived immigrant from Denmark, purchased the newly

subdivided twelve perch block on what was then called Rose Street. The street was renamed Rosa Street in the mid-1880s. Christensen was a carpenter by trade and it is likely he constructed the timber duplex. He was first recorded in the Post Office Directories on Rose Street (his name was spelt incorrectly). It is, however, unclear if this was the duplex. In 1879 Erasmus Jorgensen purchased the duplex. It is uncertain whether Jorgensen, a boot finisher, resided in the duplex as evidence only shows him living on Rose Street at this time. In 1882 John Walls, a joiner, residing in nearby Boundary Street, purchased the property as a rental investment. The duplex remained in the Walls family until the 1960s.

In 1885 the Queensland Government introduced the Undue Subdivision of Land Prevention Act 1885. The government began to have concerns with over-population in inner-city areas from as early as the 1870s. The construction of small tenements and tiny cottages on very small parcels of land increased the risk of disease and fire throughout the inner-city suburbs. With the passing of the 1885 legislation it became illegal to subdivide land into lots of less than sixteen perches (405m²). It also regulated the width of new roads and lanes and the distance between new houses and the road.

In a February 1886 article in the Queensland Figaro and Punch, Spring Hill's overcrowded conditions were commented on:

Some steps should be taken in order to put a stop to the manner in which buildings are huddled together in the suburbs of Brisbane. One has only to visit, say, Spring Hill, and he will see three or four dwellings on a small allotment of ground barely sufficient for one decent dwelling house ... fever and other diseases will be breaking out which will spread like a plague, and the cry then will be "I always said it would end badly".¹

By the 1890s, Spring Hill had become Brisbane's most crowded suburb.

The small timber duplex situated on a twelve perch block of land is important as it represents the intense subdivisions of land that occurred in Spring Hill prior to the 1885 legislation being passed. It reflects the increasingly crowded conditions that the division of lots caused in the inner-city suburb and the subsequent need for government legislation to control it.

Description

Is a modest timber framed duplex with a hipped roof clad with corrugated metal sheeting and a timber framed verandah spanning the front. It has a symmetric plan with a shared chimney.

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

Historical

CRITERION A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the city's or local area's history as it provides evidence of the pattern of development of Spring Hill in the late nineteenth century.

Rarity

CRITERION B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage as a good example of a small, single-storey, timber duplex in Brisbane.

References

1. *Queensland Figaro and Punch*, 13 February 1886, p15
2. BCC building cards
3. Brisbane City Council Detail Plan no. 16, 1914
4. Environment and Heritage Protection. Entries for Queensland Heritage Register: 'Athol Place' (600167), Moody's Cottages (600314), 'Theosophical Society Building' (600169), McWhinney's Brick Cottage (602248)
5. McKellar's Map of Brisbane and Suburbs. Brisbane: Surveyor-General's Office, 1895
6. Queensland Certificates of Title
7. Queensland Post Office Directories
8. Australian Immigration Records
9. Allom Lovell Marquis-Kyle, *The Character of Residential Areas, Brisbane*, A Study for the Brisbane City Council, 1994
10. Brisbane History Group, *Housing, Health, the River and the Arts*, Papers No. 3, 1985

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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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