

Heritage Citation



35 Cairns Street, Kangaroo Point

Key details

Addresses	At 35 Cairns Street, Kangaroo Point, Queensland 4169
Type of place	Cottage, House
Period	Victorian 1860-1890
Style	Queenslander
Lot plan	L4_SP228811; L1_SP196755; L1_SP192466; L1_SP196776; L151_SP184377; L1_SP196759; L1_SP196761; L12_SP190809; L103_SP206213; L1_SP190814; L1_SP190810; L1_SP190740; L1_SP190741; L1_SP190743; L50_SP192111; L61_SP192115; L1_SP196760
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 30 October 2000 Date of Citation — January 2013

Construction

Roof: Corrugated iron;
Walls: Timber

Criterion for listing

(A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (D) Representative; (E) Aesthetic

This cottage was built for and likely by John Mullen, circa 1876-8, shortly after the land was subdivided and offered for sale. Kangaroo Point was then growing in popularity as a residential suburb. He added three rental properties to the site in 1886, at the height of a boom which saw dramatic growth in Kangaroo Point and confirmed its position as a popular residential area. All four of Mullen's cottages were rented to tenants until well into the twentieth century. They were restored in the 1980s and were converted to offices in 2009. This cottage forms part of group of nineteenth century cottages still extant in Cairns street.

History

This cottage is located on land which was originally purchased by Robert Cribb and former Collector of Customs William Thornton in 1851. A small township had begun to develop in Kangaroo Point in the 1840s, its appeal largely due to nearby industry. However, this site was undeveloped by its early owners, and it was not until the 1870s that the land became available for building. Notable sugar planter and miller Louis Hope, who resided in Shafston House, purchased the land and offered it for sale in December 1874 as the 'Shafston Estate', a forty-four acre site fronting the curve of the river between Cairns Street and Wellington Road.

The Shafston Estate and Kangaroo Point had numerous features to draw residents. Though separated from the city by the river, ferry services were provided and industrial work was available in the area. Nearby services like hotels, churches and schools added to its residential appeal, and a water supply was added in the early 1870s. The size of the allotments on offer in the Shafston Estate was a further inducement: the subdivisions ranged from 40 perches to four acres, significantly larger than the allotments available in other inner-city areas like Spring Hill or Petrie Terrace.

In January 1876 labourer John Mullen purchased one rood (40 perches, or a quarter of an acre) of land in the Shafston Estate. The block fronted Cairns Street, with a side frontage to Lambert Street. Mullen, who had arrived in Brisbane with his wife and five children in 1873, took up residence in Cairns Street by 1878. He may have been in residence earlier; in October 1876 his Cairns Street 'property' was used as a reference point in sales notices, though whether he was living there at the time is unknown. Mullen likely built the house himself. The transverse gable house was two-storeyed, with a small room upstairs, likely to accommodate his family. Downstairs, the house featured a fireplace and brick chimney to provide heat, while verandas on three sides allowed occupants to take advantage of the river breezes and the dual street frontage. Kitchen quarters were built in a separate extension. The house was similar in style to neighbour John Gibbins' house, which was built on the opposite side of Lambert Street at around the same time (1876-8), and is also included on the Brisbane City Council heritage overlay.

In 1882 Mullen moved to Bowen Bridge with his family to operate the Bowen Bridge Hotel, leasing his Kangaroo Point house to tenants. Three years later, however, his application for a renewal of the licence was refused, and he returned to Kangaroo Point. From there, Mullen took up work as a quarryman, licensing the Merton Road

quarry in Woolloongabba. Additionally, he took advantage of his large landholding to construct three small rental properties next to his house in 1886. The forty perch site was not large enough to provide each house with a sixteen-perch land holding, the minimum subdivision size required under the Undue Subdivision of Land Prevention Act 1885. Mullen circumvented the legislation by keeping the houses on a single holding.

Mullen's cottages were constructed at the height of a population and building boom in Brisbane. This boom saw dramatic growth in the demand for housing, especially on the south side of Brisbane. Demand was particularly high in Kangaroo Point, where the population had increased from 1,903 people in 1881 to 3,204 in 1886. In response to the increasing population, landowners like Mullen constructed rental houses on their properties. Mullen's single storey cottages were smaller than his own house, but proved popular for workers seeking employment in the city or local area. The cottages were particularly well situated for the latter purpose, as Moar's shipyard opened at the river end of Cairns Street in the 1880s, providing job opportunities for wharf and ship workers.

Mullen resided in his Cairns Street house until his death in 1898, when the property passed to his unmarried daughter Margaret. She retained ownership of the property until 1945, leasing all four cottages. The area remained popular with tenants, particularly following the opening of the Story Bridge and the re-opening of the Cairns Street shipyard in the 1940s. The family's old house was rented to a series of tenants, mostly working class, widows and wharf workers. The cottages passed through a number of owners in the latter half of the twentieth century and were restored in the 1980s. They were held on a single block of land until 2007. In 2009 the houses were converted to commercial use and in 2016 operate as offices.

Description

This timber framed 19th century house with transverse gable roof and open verandah to three sides, is located on a corner site. The main roof of the dwelling is clad in corrugated iron with finials to each end and bargeboards with clover leaf design. The separate verandah posts supported by timber posts with cross braced balustrading. The gable walls of the dwelling are clad in chamfer boards and each contains an attic window. The exterior walls to the verandahs consist of chamfer boards and exterior framing. French doors open onto the verandah. Situated on a corner site the dwelling has a minimal garden area to both street frontages behind a low picket fence.

The strong horizontal elements of the neighbouring three cottages; uniform setbacks and rhythm of verandah posts are continued in this house and no. 37 on the opposite corner of Lambert Street which is very similar in style.

A separate kitchen wing extends from the rear of the house and is in disrepair. It has a gable roof, face brick chimney and chamfer board cladding.

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 one of a group of purpose-built nineteenth century rental cottages in Kangaroo Point reflecting the residential growth of the area in the 1870s.

Rarity

CRITERION B

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

as the cottages form a group of remnant nineteenth century workers' cottages which are representative of the type of housing which was originally located in Cairns Street and the surrounding area.

Representative

CRITERION D

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

as an existing example of the diverse socio-economic housing types found within the Kangaroo Point area.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

as part of a group of identical cottages and two similar corner houses with strong unifying features.

References

1. Brisbane City Council, aerial photographs, 1946, 1995-2013
2. Brisbane City Council City Architecture and Heritage Team, citations
3. Brisbane City Council, Properties on the Web, Building Cards
4. Brisbane City Council Department of Works, Detail Sewerage Plan
5. Centre for the Government of Queensland, *Queensland Places: Kangaroo Point*, 2015
6. Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Queensland Certificate of Title and other records
7. McKellar's Map, 1895
8. National Library of Australia, Trove newspapers, *Telegraph*, *The Week*, *Brisbane Courier*
9. John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland, Picture Queensland
10. Queensland Post Office Directories
11. Queensland State Archives, Immigration index
12. Queensland Women's Historical Association, *Walk into History: A history of Kangaroo Point* (circa 1983)
13. RPData, photos

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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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