

Heritage Citation



81 Dornoch Terrace, Highgate Hill

Key details

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| Also known as | Topham Residence |
| Addresses | At 81 Dornoch Terrace, Highgate Hill, Queensland 4101 |
| Type of place | House |
| Period | World War II 1939-1945 |
| Style | Stripped Classical |
| Lot plan | L2_RP58203 |
| Key dates | Local Heritage Place Since — 1 July 2002 Date of Citation — January 2011 |

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| Construction | Roof: Terracotta tile; Walls: Face brick |
| People/associations | Hall and Phillips (Architect) |
| Criterion for listing | (B) Rarity; (H) Historical association |

This three-storey brick residence, designed by Hall and Phillips, was constructed circa 1941 for Rose and Charles Topham. It was built during World War II, just before the shortage of building materials and labour, which halted most construction in Brisbane, and Australia, until the mid to late 1940s. It survives as an interesting example of World War II domestic architecture, exhibiting a mixture of both interwar and early postwar styles.

History

This three-storey brick residence was constructed circa 1941 for Rose and Charles Toham. The house was designed by the successful Brisbane architectural firm of Hall and Phillips.

The area of Dornoch Terrace, on the southwestern side, between Boundary Street and St James Street developed later than the rest of Dornoch Terrace. Photographic evidence shows that, circa 1902, this area was still covered in bush, adjacent to a paddock.

Portion 178 had been purchased under Deed of Grant by John Bridges in 1868. The land had subsequently passed to Norbet Bridges. However, after his death, the land was transferred from his trustees into the ownership of John George McGregor, a solicitor. It was McGregor who subdivided the land for sale. Prior to subdivision, Portion 178 was nine acres, two roods and nine perches in size.

These subdivisions were put onto the market through the 'Dornoch Terrace Land Sale', which commenced on 28 August 1909. This land sale covered an area bounded by Boundary and Sankey Streets, Dornoch Terrace and the Brisbane River. Although land allotments were sold in 1909, some of the allotments were still being sold as late as 1923.

This particular residence is located on land, which was once the tennis court of 'Weeroona', the neighbouring residence. In September 1941, just over 27 perches was transferred from the 'Weeroona' site into the name of Rose Topham. Rose had married an Englishman, Charles H. Topham in 1938. Charles Topham became the managing director of the Queensland Can Company, which had its factory at West End. With Rose expecting their first child, Charles Topham needed to find a residence close to his place of work. The site at 81 Dornoch Terrace was chosen because it was the only available vacant land that the Tophams could find near the Queensland Can Company factory.

Charles Topham submitted an application to Brisbane City Council on 10 October 1941 for a brick dwelling to be erected on the site in Dornoch Terrace costing £2,800. The contractor was E. Reid of Ambleside Street, West End and the architects for the residence were Hall and Phillips of Ascot Chambers.

Thomas Ramsey Hall, of the architectural firm Hall and Phillips, has been described as 'one of Brisbane's most successful architects of the early 20th century.' Hall was responsible for such notable buildings as the Tattersall's Club (1926), the Sandgate Town Hall (1911) and worked upon the Brisbane City Hall (at this stage Phillips also assisted on the design of the Brisbane City Hall). The partnership between Hall and Phillips existed between the period 1929 -1948.

The context of its construction should also be acknowledged. The dwelling was erected in Brisbane during World War II, just before the wartime shortage of building materials and labour, leading to increased building restrictions, had come into force. The Tophams faced many difficulties in obtaining building materials for their home. As his company produced tin plate and was considered an essential war industry, Charles Topham had established contacts within other essential industries. Thus he was able to obtain materials used to construct the residence at 81 Dornoch Terrace from Queensland Sawmills and from Wunderlich.

Description

This residence is an example of the work of the architects Hall and Philips and is also a valuable example of early postwar architecture. The house is a three- storey, terracottabrick building, which in plan shape is composed of two rectangles; the rear rectangle slid slightly more left on the site. The roof is hipped and clad in darker, terracotta tiles, with a simple terracotta-brick chimneystack. The chimneystack is expressed externally on all the floors of the house but narrows at the top storey.

The sidewalls are punctuated with a number of white timber framed windows and white plumbing. The front elevation has a continuous projecting bay on the upper two floors with timber door recessed into the brickwork below. The projecting bay has solid sheeting for the bottom section of both levels but with square, steel framed windows making up the rest of the projecting fabric. These steel sheeting window panes replaced the original glass panes soon after the Topham family took occupancy of the new house. The original window glass is currently stored under the house at 81 Dornoch Terrace.

The residence exhibits an important transitional style of architecture. The exterior fittings are a combination of Art Deco design (the handrails) and interwar popular decoration, (lead light windows on the western side). This contrasts with the overall design of the building, which borders on the 'modern' style found within post war Brisbane.

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:

Rarity

CRITERION B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage as a 1940s residence with an unusual transitional design exhibiting elements of both interwar and modern post-war elements.

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 it has a special association with the modern work of notable Brisbane architectural firm Hall and Phillips.

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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.

Citation prepared by — Brisbane City Council (page revised September 2020)



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