

Heritage Citation



84 Board Street

Key details

Addresses	At 84 Board Street, Deagon, Queensland 4017
Type of place	House
Period	Postwar 1945-1960
Style	Composite
Lot plan	L1_RP84651
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 29 November 2022 Date of Citation — November 2022
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (D) Representative

Built close to Sandgate Racecourse for noted Brisbane-based horse trainer, J.T. Nixon, this larger-scale 1940s brick house with a large yard and stables demonstrates changing attitudes to housing styles in Brisbane and its

suburbs in the mid-20th Century and the racecourse's influence on the development of Deagon. The house is a good example of a 1940s dwelling that was fashioned in an eclectic mix of the Spanish Mission and the English Revival styles.

History

A history of Deagon

The development of Deagon, a suburb located 16 kilometres north of central Brisbane, dates to the 1860s. However, while the first land sales in Deagon took place in the 1860s, ten years after land was sold off in Sandgate and Shorncliffe, much of the suburb's residential development dates to the years after the Second World War. Unlike Sandgate and Shorncliffe, large allotments of land between 23 and 49 acres in size characterised the subdivisions sold off in the Deagon area. Many of these lots were bought for investment purposes by local landowners, such as John McConnel, a pastoralist and later a member of the Queensland Legislative Council who also owned allotments in Sandgate.

Deagon developed slowly in the years leading up to the First World War. In 1887, both the Deagon railway station and the Shorncliffe railway station opened, five years after Sandgate station. Named after William Deagon, Mayor of Sandgate between 1882 and 1884, the station sat on the Sandgate to Brisbane train line that opened in 1882. In the same period, the Sandgate Amateur Turf Club began holding horse races on land that subsequently became the Sandgate, then later Deagon, Racecourse. Before the First World War, local residents felt that Sandgate Town Council did not properly look after their interests. One resident wrote to The Brisbane Courier suggesting that they might have to 'appeal to the Home Secretary to create the Deagon district into a divisional board.' By 1922, Deagon's population stood at just 122 residents.

While Deagon shared in the interwar boom period that brought prosperity to Sandgate in the 1920s, it was after the Second World War that significant growth came to the area. Residential growth occurred in a piecemeal manner between 1911 and 1939, with development concentrated around Board, Loftus, Coward, Drouyn and Washington Streets. The remaining areas, including the area west of Braun Street, were developed after the Second World War. By 1976, the population of Deagon stood at 3,378.

The development of Deagon Racecourse

Located on the south side of Board Street, the house at 84 Board Street was related to the ongoing development of the Sandgate Racecourse. Sandgate Racecourse, located on the north side of Board Street, was established in the early 1880s as Sandgate peaked as Brisbane's premier seaside resort. While Sandgate Racecourse was expected to become a successful racing venue, by the early 20th Century, the racecourse had been sold on to the Tattersall's Club. During the First World War, Sandgate Racecourse was used to host various patriotic events. Between the First and Second World Wars, it became a regular venue for motorcycle races and various community events. In this period, Sandgate Racecourse became embroiled in various racing enquiries despite not being used as a racecourse from 1922 onwards. Sandgate Racecourse was refurbished and reopened for horse racing in 1938. While activities appeared to have been sporadic, Deagon Racecourse, as the site was by now known, was still being used in the early-1950s. Since the 1980s, Deagon Racecourse has been registered as a racehorse training facility.

The construction of 84 Board Street

The house at 84 Board Street was built for John Thomas and Betty Nixon in 1946. Nixon was a well-known horse trainer in Queensland. He was granted a 'No.2 Trainers' license from the Queensland Turf Club in 1940, and by the time he died in 1954, Nixon held a 'No. 1 trainer's ticket.' These licences represented the different levels of experience Nixon had at various points in his career as a horse trainer. During his time residing in Deagon, Nixon was responsible for training race-winning horses.

In 1946, resubdivision 10 to 13 of subdivision one of portion 81 was transferred to Betty Nixon. In the same year, permission was granted for the erection of a new house. Later in 1946, permission was also approved for the erection of the first set of stables on the site that were located to the east of the house. In 1950, the Nixon's made another application to build a further set of stables that the Brisbane City Council approved. Neither set of stables now exist. This second set of stables was described as erected on '[r]esub. 10/15, Sub. 1, Portion 81, Parish of Nundah.' In early 1951, resubdivisions 14 and 15 of subdivision one of portion 81 were transferred to Betty Nixon.

The addition of further stables illustrated Nixon's continuing success as a trainer. However, Nixon died suddenly in late-1954 and consequently, in 1955, Betty Nixon further subdivided the land. In 1957, the house at 84 Board Street – by then located on subdivisions 10 and 11 and subdivision one of resubdivision 12 of subdivision one – transferred to Henry and Jessie Gordon. The land on which the stables resided was transferred to Eric Lindgren.

The house at 84 Board Street was built in an eclectic mix of the Spanish Mission and the English Revival styles. The Spanish Mission style of house is an example of the pervasive influence that American culture began to have on Australia from the 1920s onwards, with 'Australians [embracing] the [...] style [...] with an enthusiasm unmatched in any other country outside the United States.' The style derived from religious designs prevalent in former Spanish-controlled areas of the United States and Mexico from the late-18th Century onwards. The rise and influence of Hollywood in the 1920s increasingly made this house style more appealing. Additionally, many architects and builders sought alternative styles to those prevalent in Europe that they believed would be more suited to Australia's climate.

While the influence of American architecture was being felt in Australia, the period between the First and Second World Wars also saw the revival of 'old English styles' internationally and in Australia. One reason for the popularity of English Revival styles in Brisbane derived from the City's predominantly Anglo-Saxon population, whereby this house style expressed a sense of loyalty and nostalgia towards the United Kingdom. A defining feature of some English Revival houses, especially those of the Old English style, was battens over fibro or stucco. However, this was not always the case. Noted Brisbane-based architect E.P. Trewern helped popularise both the old English and Spanish Mission styles in south-east Queensland.

Why the Nixon's had 84 Board Street built in such an eclectic manner is unknown. However, the Nixon's were not alone in choosing a design incorporating elements of the Spanish Mission and English Revival styles. In 1940, The Telegraph published two articles detailing two houses built in Annerley and Coorparoo that incorporated elements of these two architectural styles.

Like that of the Nixon's, both houses were designed and constructed without the aid of an architect. Instead, the houses were designed and built by Dredge and Place. As The Telegraph recorded about the house, 'Miljon,' in Coorparoo: '[i]n every detail, the workmanship and finish in this home, which is ideal for the small family and yet lends itself to future extension, are all that could be desired.'

Description

As a highly intact mix of the Spanish Mission and the English Revival architectural styles, 84 Board Street is notable for its design and use of materials. This house's built form and composition include asymmetrical massing, different roof forms including a turreted roof over the main entrance, a street-facing, arched loggia with barley-sugar columns and casement window arrangements. Notable design details include terracotta roof tiles, exaggerated stucco finish, diamond leadlight patterning casement windows and undressed masonry windowsills. In addition, a low-height rendered brick fence responds to the materials of the house and makes it highly visible from the street.

General description

All external walls of the house are finished with white stucco. Several unfinished brick courses at the base of the external walls contrast against the white stucco and provide the appearance of a raised foundation. Dark-coloured masonry vents are located at either the base of the exterior walls or just under the eave linings.

The terracotta tiled roof utilises different roof forms, including a standard hipped style with a feature turreted roof above a corner entry porch and a prominent street-facing gable above a short loggia with three arched openings and barley sugar columns. The turreted roof and street-facing porch are the dominant features of the exterior.

Timber-framed, diamond-patterned leadlight casement windows adorn the external walls. The window lintels and sills are undressed soldier-coarse brickwork which contrasts against the white stucco-finished walls and frames the windows as visually prominent features. In addition, non-original metal hoods have been added to several windows.

The main door located under the turreted roof is timber and has a small, rectangular viewing window. The door is deeply inset into a stone-quoined arched opening, and its exterior face is detailed using a diagonal timber pattern. Unfinished brick masonry steps of similar colour to the window lintels and sills provide access to the front door.

An original masonry garage is located close to the home and utilises a similar hipped terracotta tiled roof, and white stucco finished walls.

A non-original metal-roofed patio has been added to the home's rear, providing access from the garage to the main house. A non-original extension was added to the rear of the property in 2021.

The interior of the building was not inspected.

The house is set back from the streetscape, and a low-height brick fence with brick posts, circular metal rails and woven metal wire separate the grounds from the public footpath. A concrete footpath leads from a non-original front gate to the front door and is surrounded by a large, grassed lawn area and gardens with a mixture of plantings.

Mature trees line the site's eastern and southern boundaries, providing privacy from adjacent properties. Relatively recent hedging along the front fence also provides increased privacy from Board Street and the public footpath.

There are significant views to the place from Board Street.

Significant features

Features of cultural heritage significance include:

- Original form and composition, including:
 - Terracotta roof tiling
 - Composition of roof styles including hipped, turret and street-facing gable

- Corner entry under turreted roof
- Three-arched porch under street-facing gable
- Rear garage with terracotta tiled hip roof
- House setback from streetscape.
- External casement window arrangements, including:
 - Timber framing
 - Diamond leadlight patterning.
- Exterior design details including:
 - White stucco-finished external walls
 - Dark coloured masonry wall vents
 - Unfinished brick masonry base
 - Unfinished brick masonry window lintels and sills
 - Stone-quoined arched opening at main entrance
 - Front door timber detailing
 - Barley-sugar columns.
- Landscaped elements, including:
 - Brick front fence with brick posts, circular metal rails and woven metal wire separate
 - Concrete path dissecting grassed lawn.
- Views to the place from the streetscape.

Non-significant features

Non-significant features include:

- Rear metal roofed patio
- Non-original extension to the rear of the property
- Non-original metal window hoods
- Landscape features, including:
 - Non-original plantings, particularly along front fence
 - Non-original front gate(s).

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

The larger-scale 1940s brick house and garage at 84 Board Street, built proximate to the then Sandgate (now Deagon) Racecourse by a successful local horse trainer, demonstrates the change in attitudes to housing styles, moving away from traditional building character weatherboard and iron-roofed homes in the post-war developing outer suburb of Deagon. The more opulent house was originally built with a large yard and stables, which demonstrated the influence of the racecourse on the suburb's development.

Representative

CRITERION D

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

One of several similar style, well-composed, picturesque houses constructed in Brisbane at the time, the dwelling is a good example of a 1940s house that was fashioned in an eclectic mix of the Spanish Mission and the English Revival styles. The key intact features include the hipped tiled roof, stucco finished walls, prominent gabled front with triplet-arched opening and twisted columns, a corner entry porch with turreted roof and quoined arched opening and sets of leadlight casement windows.

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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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