

## Heritage Citation



### Dahlow

#### Key details

<b>Addresses</b>	At 3 Kidston Street, Ascot, Queensland 4010
<b>Type of place</b>	House
<b>Period</b>	Federation 1890-1914
<b>Style</b>	Filigree
<b>Lot plan</b>	L1_RP34402
<b>Key dates</b>	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004 Date of Citation — January 2015
<b>Construction</b>	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Face brick
<b>People/associations</b>	Thomas Pye (Occupant)

'Dahlow' was built circa 1892 as a residence for Isabella and James Ross Coutts. The land on which the house stood was part of the Albion brickyards owned by Isabella's family, the Petries. After the family business was declared insolvent in 1894, the house passed to the Australian Joint Stock Bank and was finally sold in 1917 to architect Thomas Pye. It has since passed through a number of owners and operated as a set of flats, though it has since been converted back to a single dwelling.

## History

In September 1858 John Petrie, first Lord Mayor of Brisbane, bought this portion of just under twenty acres, and held it for the next four decades. The Petrie family is renowned as one of Brisbane's earliest free settler families, who arrived in Brisbane in 1837. John and his father Andrew built their reputations as contractors and builders, though the business was transferred to John when Andrew went blind in 1848. The Petries worked mostly with stone and brick, and from around 1860 the business included a brickyard in Fortitude Valley (now Petrie's Bight) and a quarry in Albion. When the brickyard began to run low, a second brickyard was opened on John Petrie's twenty acre holding. The new brickyard was situated on the corner of Oriel and Sandgate Roads, just to the north of the family's quarry. The site was then considered part of Albion, an area which included present-day Albion and sections of Ascot, Clayfield and Hamilton.

Petrie's works were amongst the first industries established in the area and sparked growth in the previously sparsely-settled district. A large number of people were employed at the works, and by 1884 'quite a small village' had sprung up on the brickyard site, 'the occupants being the men employed on the works with their "encumbrances"<sup>1</sup>. Residents of 'Petrie's Brickyard' were listed on electoral rolls in 1888 and 1893, including James Coutts, public servant and husband of Isabella Petrie. The Coutts' residence was this brick house.

The precise date of construction of the house is not known. It has been suggested that it was built in 1877 for a claypit manager, but this is unlikely. The brickworks managers were members of the Petrie family, who had accommodation elsewhere. John Petrie junior (Jack), was the brickworks manager in the early 1880s, but lived in the family's Gregory Terrace residence until his death in 1887. Jack's brother Andrew Lang Petrie, who also supervised the works, had his own residence constructed at Albion in 1886. Called 'Mooloomburram', the house is now part of St Margaret's Anglican Girls' School and is included on the Brisbane City Council's heritage overlay. The house may have been constructed for other workers at the brickyards, but evidence of this has not yet been uncovered.

The house was certainly standing by 1892, when the Coutts' son Donald was born there. The Coutts christened the house 'Dahlow', and Mrs Coutts began advertising for domestic help for the house from 1893. Dahlow may have been built before 1892, as the couple's children were born at Albion from 1887, but as Isabella's family was living there, the children may have been born at the Petries' residence rather than Dahlow.

The brick residence was built from local material, with bricks bearing the 'Petrie' brand still evident in the house. It may have been designed by an architect connected to the Petrie family. Coutts' brother Thomas, was a partner in the architectural firm Coutts and Hamilton, which called for tenders for houses in Albion through the 1890s;

while Robert Ferguson, who married into the family, designed 'Mooloomburum' for Andrew Lang Petrie.

Although Coutts was not employed at the Petrie brickworks, the new residence was conveniently situated for access to the city. The northern commuter rail line between Roma Street and Sandgate had opened on 10 May 1882, with regular services beginning the following day. By 1892 Albion was served by 29 daily trains to the city. By the turn of the century tram services linked Albion with Clayfield and the city (via Breakfast Creek and Newstead). The availability of transport suited city workers like Coutts, who worked in the Post and Telegraph Office's accounting branch in Brisbane city.

The Coutts' occupancy of Dahlow, however, was short. The Petrie family retained the site on which Dahlow stood, and by the time the Coutts took up residence, the Petrie family's business was experiencing serious problems. The brickworks had shut down in 1890 due to a combination of bad economic conditions and a strike. A widespread economic crash in the early 1890s saw many speculators, businesses and professionals declare bankruptcy. Land values plummeted, and with John Petrie's death in 1892, the Petrie family found itself unable to continue the business. The firm was declared insolvent in 1894, and the brickyard was permanently closed. Ownership of the site, including Dahlow, passed to the Australian Joint Stock Bank, though the Petrie family continued to occupy Dahlow. In 1897 Mrs James Petrie was resident in the house, but advertised the sale of the furniture from Dahlow in June 1898 and appears to have left around the same time. The four roomed brick villa was offered for rent in August, though it took another six years for the Bank to begin selling the land.

In May 1903 land across Oriel Road, along Montpelier and Wellington Streets, was marketed by auctioneers Cameron Brothers. Advertisements for the sale still showed the Petrie land marked as 'Petrie's Brickyards'. By the end of the year, however, the twenty-acre site had been subdivided. Allotments of the so-called 'Petrie Estate' were offered for sale, including Dahlow, now described as 'a substantial brick villa of 8 rooms'. Sales notices remarked on the proximity of the tramline, gas and water mains, as well as the area's elevation: '[s]uperb panoramic views of the river, bay and islands' were visible from the highest portions of the estate.<sup>2</sup>

Despite its advantages, the estate's allotments were slow to sell. Dahlow was leased to tenants from 1901, but remained in the bank's ownership. Thomas Pye, who had occupied the building from 1912, finally purchased the site in November 1917. Pye, Deputy Government Architect with the Public Works Department from 1906 to 1921, has been credited with designing the Rockhampton Customs House, Land Administration Building and Public Offices in Brisbane. During the 1920s Pye subdivided two smaller blocks from the land, at the southern and western edges, leaving the house on the corner of Kidston and Barlow Streets. Pye lived in this house until his May 1929 departure to travel overseas. He died in South Africa in 1930.

The house was inherited by John Lunn and Hermione Gill, wife of Sydney George Gill, who was a son of the Ipswich architect George Brockwell Gill. Whether there are links between Pye, Lunn and members of the Gill family is not known at this stage.

Hermione Gill sold the house in 1936 to Charles Constantine Warren, a tea merchant, who converted Dahlow into flats. Hawken, who resided in Bentong next door, purchased Dahlow in 1937. In the second half of the twentieth century, Dahlow passed through a succession of hands, one owner subdividing the final piece of land along Barlow Street in 1968. A block of apartments was built on the Barlow Street frontage, obscuring Dahlow from its previously prominent corner position. Renovations in the 1980s restored the house to a single dwelling, and added a wing on the former scullery at the back of the house. Dahlow was sold to its current owners in 1996.

# 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:

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### Historical

#### CRITERION A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the city's or local area's history

for the evidence it provides of Ascot's development as a suburb from its origins in Petrie's brickworks to a now sought-after address.

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### 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

with the Petrie family, being built for Petrie's daughter Isabella on land that was part of Petrie's brickyard and being constructed of Petrie bricks.

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## References

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3. Brisbane City Council aerial photographs, 1946, 2012
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6. Brisbane City Council Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board, Detail Plans
7. *Courier Mail*, 11 February 1985
8. Department of Natural Resources. Queensland Certificates of Title

9. Dornan, Dimity and Cryle, Dennis, *The Petrie Family: Building Colonial Brisbane*, UQ Press, 1992
10. John Oxley Library photographs & clippings files
11. JOL Estate Map collection
12. John Laverty, 'Petrie, John (1822–1892)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/petrie-john-4394/text7161>, published first in hardcopy 1974, accessed online 21 October 2015
13. Lawson, Ronald 1973, *Brisbane in the 1890s: A Study of an Australian Urban Society*, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia
14. McKellar's Estate Maps of Brisbane, 1895
15. Nundah and Districts Historical Society, *Historic Drive: Clayfield, Ascot, Hendra*, 2000
16. National Library of Australia, Trove newspapers, *Brisbane Courier, Queensland Figaro and Punch, Telegraph, Courier Mail*
17. Queensland births, deaths and marriages historical search
18. *Queensland Post Office Directories, 1887-1949*
19. Queensland Places: Albion
20. *Sunday Mail*, December 1985
21. Watson, Donald and Judith McKay. *Queensland Architects of the 19th Century: A Biographical Dictionary*. Brisbane: Queensland Museum, 1994

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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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