

## Heritage Citation



### Gleneagles

#### Key details

**Addresses**

At 79 Moray Street, New Farm, Queensland 4005

<b>Type of place</b>	Institutional / group housing
<b>Period</b>	Late 20th Century 1960-1999
<b>Style</b>	Brisbane Regional
<b>Lot plan</b>	L101_SP209170; L102_SP209170; L103_SP209170; L104_SP209170; L105_SP209170; L106_SP209170; L107_SP209170; L108_SP209170; L109_SP209170; L110_SP209170; L111_SP209170; L112_SP209170; L113_SP209170; L114_SP209170; L115_SP209170; L116_SP209170; L117_SP209170; L118_SP209170; L119_SP209170; L120_SP209170; L121_SP209170; L122_SP209170; L123_SP209170; L124_SP209170; L125_SP209170; L126_SP209170; L127_SP209170; L128_SP209170; L129_SP209170; L130_SP209170; L131_SP209170; L132_SP209170; L133_SP209170; L134_SP209170; L135_SP209170; L136_SP209170; L137_SP209170; L138_SP209170; L139_SP209170; L140_SP209170; L141_SP209170; L142_SP209170; L143_SP209170; L144_SP209170; L145_SP209170; L146_SP209170; L147_SP209170; L148_SP209170; L149_SP209170; L150_SP209170; L151_SP209170; L152_SP209170; L153_SP209170; L201_SP209170; L202_SP209170; L203_SP209170; L204_SP209170; L205_SP209170; L206_SP209170; L207_SP209170; L208_SP209170; L209_SP209170; L210_SP209170; L211_SP209170; L212_SP209170; L213_SP209170; L214_SP209170; L215_SP209170; L216_SP209170; L217_SP209170; L218_SP209170; L219_SP209170; L220_SP209170; L221_SP209170; L222_SP209170; L223_SP209170; L224_SP209170; L225_SP209170; L226_SP209170; L227_SP209170; L228_SP209170; L229_SP209170; L230_SP209170; L231_SP209170; L232_SP209170; L233_SP209170; L234_SP209170; L235_SP209170; L236_SP209170; L237_SP209170; L238_SP209170; L239_SP209170; L240_SP209170; L241_SP209170; L242_SP209170; L243_SP209170; L244_SP209170; L245_SP209170; L246_SP209170; L247_SP209170
<b>Key dates</b>	Local Heritage Place Since — 30 October 2000 Date of Citation — July 2002
<b>Construction</b>	Walls: Face brick
<b>People/associations</b>	Curro, Nutter and Charlton (Architect)
<b>Criterion for listing</b>	(A) Historical; (F) Technical

'Gleneagles' is culturally significant as an innovative and award winning example of high rise accommodation for retirees. The building was constructed circa 1964 for the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes and was designed by architectural firm Curro, Nutter and Charlton. It provides evidence of changing trends in housing for the elderly and demonstrates an important phase of development in the suburb of New Farm and the city of Brisbane during the 1960s.

## History

The Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes was established in England in 1822 at the Harp Tavern, London, near the Drury Lane theatre. It is believed that its origins were in meetings held by stage hands and other theatre staff who were excluded from existing clubs for actors and artists. The organisation became principally a “philanthropic and charitable body” which aimed to assist members in need or their dependants. The RAOB may have had early links to the Masonic Orders as many of their rituals and regalia are similar. The Masons, the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes and many “friendly societies” such as the Oddfellows were imported to Australia from the 19th century and became a feature of Brisbane society. As well as constructing meeting halls, friendly societies such as the RAOB sometimes demonstrated their commitment to providing practical assistance to their members by establishing facilities such as retirement homes.

The Buffaloes Grand Lodge of Queensland recognised the need for accommodation for aged people in 1957 when they decided to embark on projects which would provide appropriate housing. This included the expenditure of \$46 000 on homes for the aged at Redcliffe. A condition of taking up residence in the proposed Gleneagles complex was a donation of ?2 000 to the Buffalo Memorial Homes for the Aged fund. A proportion of this money was refunded if residents left Gleneagles or died within a seven year period.

Curro Nutter and Charlton were engaged as the architects for the planned high rise retirement units, which commenced construction in 1963. This firm was established as Curro and Nutter in 1959, and was joined by Ian Charlton the following year. By 1979, all three original partners had retired. Dennis Bridges continued to practise as Nutter and Bridges until 1985. The firm won several architectural awards, including an RAI A Bronze Medal (Building of the Year) for the William Adams and Co. office and warehouse and an RAI A Citation for the Skoien Residence in 1969 and an RAI A Citation for the Flynn Residence in 1971. Ian Charlton was awarded the Clay Brick Award for Overseas Study for the Foyster Residence in 1971.

Ian Charlton was the partner primarily responsible for the design of Gleneagles. The engineers for the project were R.J. McWilliam and Partners and the builder was T.J. Watkins Ltd. The contract price for the development, which took some eighteen months to complete, was \$439,059. Gleneagles was the vision of Roley Pym, who proposed the scheme to several churches before the Royal Order of Antediluvian Buffaloes agreed to the innovative development. Roley Pym was also instrumental in the sale of Torbrecht.

The scheme was to provide self contained double units for retired couples close to the city allowing residents to maintain contact with friends, family and community life. This was considered to be less isolating than retirement villages established in the outer suburbs. A sales brochure for Gleneagles claimed that “problems of compatibility, independence, and finance, that occur when parents live with their married children are now miraculously solved....Instead of relegating the aged to out-lying suburbs, far removed from friends and all familiar things, Gleneagles is in the very centre of convenience”. The marketing pitch also claimed that the complex was a “pioneering project such as never before has been attempted in Queensland”.

Advantages of the one acre New Farm site included extensive river frontage and impressive views of the river and Story Bridge, its location in a prestigious residential suburb, proximity to city amenities and the commercial centre of Fortitude Valley and good rock foundations.

The complex consisted of two towers: Falcon House (13 stories) closest to the Moray Street frontage and Peregrine House (16 stories) at the rear of the site near the river. This complied with the height restriction for

buildings under the prevailing planning scheme of 132 feet above natural ground level. Tall point blocks allowed the maximum areas for gardens and communal areas and provided a large number of units. Falcon House contained 44 double units and a Matron's unit and office. Peregrine House consisted of 53 units and a Savings Bank branch. Both buildings featured communal roof terraces and lounges at ground level. A single storey recreation building linked the towers. This included a recreation room, utility room, toilets, river view terrace, courtyard and covered accommodation for 30 cars. A dedicated chapel was also included in the complex.

Special considerations incorporated into the design to accommodate the needs of elderly residents included eliminating the need for the use of stairs and totally enclosed lift lobbies (with views of the Story Bridge and river). Features inside individual units included grab rails in the showers, extra wide doorways to accommodate wheelchairs and an emergency call system to the Matron. Other features of the units were semi-automatic washing machines, a clothes drying cabinet, incinerator chutes and mechanically ventilated bathrooms. Each unit measured approximately 460 square feet with a 70 square feet balcony.

The structure of the concrete slab above the garage consists of beam block floors with fibro-cement coffer boxes and generally "off form" concrete. Reinforced concrete columns with reinforced concrete flat plate floors were topped monolithically. The roof is metal deck on hardwood framing. External walls are of cavity face brickwork with internal walls of brick with a scrubbed fine render finish. Aluminium frames were used for windows. Ceramic tiles provided the finish on flooring in bathrooms and laundries, with cork tiles elsewhere. The balconies of both towers have been enclosed which has somewhat altered the rhythmic appearance of the buildings. A more recent low rise structure has been added on the southern part of the site.

The Gleneagles development has received recognition as a well designed complex from the architectural fraternity. It was described by Graham De Gruchy in *Architecture in Brisbane* as "a well disciplined modern architectural design reminiscent of the point blocks built by the London County Council in the 1950s." The merits of the development were also recognised in *Cross-Section*, the journal of the Department of Architecture at the University of Melbourne, which, in 1964, declared Gleneagles to be the "best of its type in Queensland". Recognition was given to the architects by their peers in Queensland in 1965 when the Queensland Chapter of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA) awarded Gleneagles the Building of the Year Award, the Institute's highest annual honour.

Gleneagles was built at a time when high rise residential blocks were beginning to change Brisbane's skyline and social trends. The continuing suburban sprawl during the 1950s encouraged developers to consider providing higher density housing closer to the city - an extension of the interwar trend of constructing flats in suburbs such as New Farm and West End. This pattern of inner city high rise units also occurred in Sydney and Melbourne. The first large scale multi-residential development in Brisbane was Torbreck at Highgate Hill, completed in 1959. This was followed by Camden on Kingsford Smith Dr, Hamilton, (Bligh Jessup); Glenfalloch at Oxlade Dr, New Farm (Lund Hutton & Newell) and Glencrag on Leichardt St, Spring Hill (F.B. Oswell, 1960-62). Such buildings signalled an acknowledgment that a detached house on a large block was not the preferred living arrangement of all Brisbane residents. City and river views were highly prized as demonstrated by the use of helicopter rides to market Torbreck's apartments.

High rise units such as Gleneagles and Glenfalloch altered the character of New Farm dramatically. The changing nature of the suburb was noted in the press of the day in headlines such as "River suburb transformed by boom in home units". The *Courier Mail* stated that "... generally, the unit caters for two groups of people - the elderly and the professional or business people" and described the majority of New Farm units as "first class" and "luxury".

Gleneagles was also constructed at a time when there were greater options emerging for accommodation for

older people whose needs varied according to their levels of health and dependence. Prior to the 1950s when the proportion of people over 65 rose to 7%, aged care had been seen as the private responsibility of families, rather than the concern of governments or the general community. Many older people were housed in the “spare rooms” of family or friends. Institutions for the elderly and infirm were mostly the preserve of churches and other not-for-profit groups. There was no regulation of aged care until the Commonwealth introduced the Aged Persons Homes Act in 1954. This legislation set standards for aged care accommodation and provided some Commonwealth financial assistance in the form of a pound for pound subsidy for not-for-profit organisations providing self-contained and hostel type accommodation. An application for this subsidy was to be made under the Act for the Gleneagles development. The Act’s focus on independent and hostel accommodation was, however, eroded over time by the increasing number of nursing home beds. From the 1980s, the trend of 30 years towards institutionalised aged care was reversed as policies advocating a return to home-based care were introduced.

Other accommodation for the elderly which was constructed in Brisbane during the mid-1960s included the Canossa Complex at Oxley designed by architect Col Denham, which provided a three tiered system of care (serviced rooms in a hostel, nursing home and hospital) and a three storied block of home units for “old people” in Bowen Terrace, New Farm. The latter was the second such complex of units built by the congregation of St Andrew’s Presbyterian Church in Creek Street. New Farm was chosen as the site because “it was close to shops and other city facilities...and...many older people did not wish to live in a home on the city’s outskirts”.

The building is currently owned by Church of Christ Brisbane Homes.

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## Description

*Gleneagles* consists of two towers, of 13 and 16 storeys, connected by a single storey recreation area, terraces and courtyards. Construction is reinforced concrete columns and floor slabs, with cavity facebrick external wall panels. Windows are aluminium, and cantilevered balconies have concrete balustrades originally enclosed by vertical metal louvre blades. Pairs of balconies are joined by cantilevered concrete sunhoods over kitchen windows.

The central stairwells are expressed on the side walls by vertical banks of windows, and floor slab edges are exposed between the facebrick wall panels. The roof top is expressed as a steel beam encircling the protruding plant rooms.

Later changes to the buildings include aluminium glazed enclosures to all balconies, painting to the exterior facebrick south-east walls, external air conditioning units on some sun-hoods, and an additional single storey building facing Moray Street.

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## 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

as it demonstrates a significant change in Brisbane's pattern of development during the 1950s and 1960s from predominantly detached dwellings and low-rise flats to an increasing amount of high rise accommodation in the inner suburbs; and, as the first high-rise accommodation in Brisbane for the elderly, providing evidence of changing trends in the provision of accommodation for retirees in Brisbane during the 1960s.

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### Technical

#### CRITERION F

The place is important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technological achievement at a particular period

as an innovative solution to the demand for suitable accommodation for retired residents in a central location that was awarded the Royal Australian Institute of Architects Building of the Year in 1965.

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## Supporting images



L. & D. Keen Pty. Ltd. (photographers) for the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (Queensland Chapter), 'Gleneagles home units in New Farm, Queensland, 1964', John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland.

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## References

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  11. Musgrave, Elizabeth and Kaylee Wilson, *New Farm and Teneriffe Hill Heritage and Character Study*, Brisbane City Council Heritage Unit, Oct 1995
  12. Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes Grand Lodge of England website. [www.raobgle.org.uk](http://www.raobgle.org.uk)
  13. *Telegraph*, 26 Mar 1962, 6 Mar 1965
  14. Information kindly provided by Malcolm Catchpole, Snr Architect – Aged Care, Project Services, Dept of Public Works. Telephone conversation 11 July 2002
  15. Information kindly provided by Ian Charlton, architect. Conversations 17 and 22 July 2002
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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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