

Heritage Citation



Langford-Ely Pawnbroker's Shop

Key details

Addresses	At 659 Stanley Street, Woolloongabba, Queensland 4102
Type of place	Shop/s
Period	Federation 1890-1914
Style	Free Classical
Lot plan	L1_RP11219
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 14 September 2018 Date of Citation — July 2015
Construction	Walls: Masonry

The two-storey, masonry building on the corner of Stanley Street and Merton Road was built between 1898 and 1900 as a set of two shops and upstairs dwelling. Constructed as an investment property for Brisbane merchant, Harry Clifford Love, the property was quickly sold to pawnbroker and jeweller, Thomas Langford-Ely in 1901 who established his business in one of the shops and leased the other to a succession of tenants. The set of shops are important as evidence of Stanley Street's prominence as a retail and commercial centre in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as well as making a contribution to the historic streetscape.

History

First known as 'One Mile Swamp', land sales began in the Woolloongabba area in 1855. The land was very swampy and initially land sales were slow. Most of the land at this time was used to rest livestock which had been brought up to Brisbane along the Logan Road. The first hotel in the area, the Clarence, was established in 1864 to provide hospitality to those driving the livestock. The area, however, began to be dotted with cottages and shops were established along Stanley Street in the mid-1860s.

Stanley Street (or Stanley Quay as it was first known) was identified on Brisbane's first Town Plan in 1842. By the 1860s the street had been subdivided and gradually small shops and timber hotels were constructed. The 1880s was a growth period for South Brisbane as Queensland experienced an economic boom. Thus Stanley Street developed into a major thoroughfare and retail centre, second only to Queen Street.

Commercial development flourished and Stanley Street became lined with the premises of grocers, ironmongers and bootmakers. Recognising the commercial potential of Stanley Street, prominent retailers such as Allan & Stark and J & T Heaslop established businesses there. The fire station and post and telegraph office were erected near the intersection of Stanley and Vulture Streets, making this region the civic centre of South Brisbane. Stanley Street became inadequate for the increasing volume of traffic and in 1883 the street, between Vulture Street and Annerley Road was widened. Stanley Street, between Annerley Road and Merton Road, was widened by the Woolloongabba Divisional Board in 1886.

During the 1890s, a period of economic depression, there was a decline in the economic activity in Stanley Street. The situation was aggravated by severe flooding in 1890 and 1893, which caused many retailers to move to higher ground on the north side of Brisbane. The construction of Melbourne Street station in 1891 also took customers away from Stanley Street and into the city. As the Queensland economy improved in the early twentieth century, development returned to Stanley Street.

In 1864 James Henderson, a baker, purchased a twenty perch lot on the corner of Stanley Street and Merton Road, Woolloongabba, on which he built a house and bakery. Henderson ran his business until the late 1870s when the property was placed on the market and sold in 1882, "That Valuable Central and Corner Property ... forming the corner of Stanley Street and Merton Road, and known as Henderson's Bakery. The improvements are substantial, comprising a brick bakehouse and oven, dwelling house, shop, outbuildings ... A flourishing business has been carried on for years"¹.

From 1888, the property was owned by tea merchant, Harry Clifford Love, who had bought it as an investment. The bakery continued to be leased to a succession of tenants until the 1890s when the shop became a butcher. Between 1898 and 1901 a new two-storey, masonry, building was constructed and in 1901 the property was once again placed on the market. In an advertisement in the Brisbane Courier the improvements were highlighted, "Corner of Stanley Street and Merton Road, A Splendid Business Site ... Subdivision 1 of Allotment 76, Parish of South Brisbane; 20 Perches, with frontages over 41ft., and over 129 ft. to Stanley Street and Merton Road respectively. The improvements consist of a two storied shop and dwelling"².

By 1903, Langford-Ely was first recorded in the Post Office Directories on the corner of Stanley Street and Merton Road as a pawnbroker. The same year he was also entered on the Electoral Rolls at the address, both working and residing there. Langford-Ely ran his pawnbroking business from the shop until 1917 when he changed his business to a jeweller. This business continued until 1934 and the property remained in the Langford-Ely family until 1968. The second shop was consistently leased to a variety of tenants over the years.

The two-storey masonry shops provide evidence of the bustling commercial and retail activity along Stanley Street at the turn of the century. As an integral part of the historic streetscape, Langford-Ely's Pawnbroker Shop helps to demonstrate this once important centre in Brisbane.

Description

This is a two-storey masonry building on the corner of Stanley Street and Merton Road. It has a high parapet overlooking Stanley Street with a series of first-floor windows and a hung awning. Behind the parapet there are two attached hipped roofs clad in corrugated metal sheeting. On both sides of the building there are a series of original windows. The ground floor shop fronts have been altered.

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 a two-storey masonry commercial building comprising retail on the ground floor and residences above, which

illustrates the development of Stanley Street as a business and retail centre at the turn of the century.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

as a turn of the century masonry commercial building comprising retail on the ground floor and residences above, which contributes to the Stanley Street historic streetscape.

References

1. *Brisbane Courier*, 29 June 1880, p4
 2. *Brisbane Courier*, 20 April 1901, p8
 3. Brisbane City Council Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board, Detail Plans
 4. Brisbane City Council, 1946 aerial photographs.
 5. *Certificates of Title*, Department of Environment and Resource Management
 6. Queensland Post Office Directories
 7. Queensland Electoral Rolls
 8. Lawson, Ronald *Brisbane in the 1890s: A Study of an Australian Urban Society*. St Lucia U of Q Press, 1973
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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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