

Heritage Citation



Maxwell Place

Key details

Also known as	Gwandoban
Addresses	At 42 Maxwell Street, New Farm, Queensland 4005
Type of place	Flat building, House
Period	Interwar 1919-1939

Style	Old English
Lot plan	L5_BUP102667; L6_BUP102667; L8_BUP102667; L1_BUP102667; L2_BUP102667; L3_BUP102667; L7_BUP102667; L9_BUP102667; L4_BUP102667
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 30 October 2000 Date of Citation — October 2011
Construction	Roof: Tile; Walls: Masonry
People/associations	James Collin (Architect)
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (E) Aesthetic; (H) Historical association

This Tudor style residence was built c1933 for Alexander and Elsie Dodwell. The house that can be viewed from Kangaroo Point was designed by James Collin to take advantage of its proximity to the Brisbane River and its site's elevation. Around 1960, the Keen family converted the house into flats. This was common for large dwellings in the 1950s and early 1960s, as Brisbane's population boomed and inner-city housing became highly desirable.

History

While development in other parts of New Farm commenced in the mid to late nineteenth century, Maxwell Street was a later development. It was derived from the 26 blocks offered as part of the "Riverside Slopes Estate" subdivision around 1911-1912.

The constructors of the residence in c1933, Alexander and Elsie Dodwell, commenced acquiring the land, which would eventually comprise the site, from c1916. By 1932, three titles were drawn up over the area. These separate titles consisted of areas of one acre, 21 perches and 9/10 of a perch plus 33 perches and 9/10 of a perch together with 23 perches and 7/10 of a perch. The latter two blocks of land would be the allotments that would be associated with the dwelling.

The Dodwells lodged an application with Brisbane City Council for a new brick and fibro cement residence in July 1933. The contractor's name was provided as T.F Woollam. The cost of the dwelling was estimated at 1600/-/-. The architect for this residence was James Collin. Dodwell must have preferred a local architect as Collin practised at New Farm during 1933-34 period. Collin was associated with some notable Brisbane architects and architectural firms such as L.L.Powell and Atkinson, Powell and Conrad.

The dwelling was sited on the allotments so as to take advantage of the aspects afforded by their elevated proximity to the Brisbane River. The adjacent laneway takes its name from the Dodwell family. The Dowell's called the residence 'Gwandoban'. The name could be related to the T.F.Levick painting of the same title.

The c1937 Detail Plan provides an interesting overview of Maxwell Street during the late interwar period, shortly after the dwelling was constructed. The development of the street must have been slow as vacant lots were still evident at this time and aside from the Commonwealth offices at the top of the street, private residences dominated the street. This indicated that Maxwell Street had escaped the boom in flats which New Farm became noted for at this time. The Detail Plan also showed that residential development had occurred between the subject residence and the Brisbane River by this date. Further subdivision occurred to this site when another residence in the late c20th was added to the land.

Council records disclose that subsequent owners, the Keen family, converted the residence into flats in c1960-61. To achieve the conversion and extension of 'Gwandoban' into an apartment block a Council relaxation was approved which allowed the addition to be erected at less than the required distance from the side boundary of the property. With the completion of this building work, 'Gwandoban' was renamed 'Bellvue Lodge'.

While the conversion of this house into flats occurred in the post World War II period, it followed a previous trend that had occurred in Brisbane during the interwar period. Purpose-designed flat/apartment buildings emerged as a new form of residential accommodation in Brisbane during the 1920s. Brisbane, in comparison to Sydney and Melbourne, was slow to adopt this form of flat development. However the practice of converting old, usually nineteenth century houses into flats was well established.

Mostly, the blocks presented handsome street facades, predominantly in the fashionable Old English, Spanish Mission or Mediterranean architectural styles. Few blocks of flats appear to have been constructed in Brisbane prior to the mid-1920s. New Farm gained only a few modern blocks of flats in the 1920s, with its acquisition of this new form of inner-city accommodation occurring during the 1930s. Those erected in Brisbane during the interwar period were mostly used as rental investments. The Great Depression (1929-39) fuelled the increase in flat construction, as many people found the costs of land and house finance too expensive. They turned to the rental accommodation found in new, well appointed flats and apartment buildings. This, in turn, created a strong environment for further investment in the further building of flats.

Investors favoured centrally located positions that were close to workplaces, shopping facilities, entertainment and schools and with easy access to public transport. Proximity to a tramline was particularly important, with lines along Brunswick Street terminating at the New Farm ferry. Subsequently, a concentration of flat buildings still exists around the former tram routes along Brunswick Street and Merthyr Roads in New Farm. Brisbane's population growth in the post-war period created a housing shortage and the demand for flats and other rental accommodation increased.

The conversion of 'Gwandoban' into 'Bellvue Lodge' during 1960-61 is an example of the second tier of house to flat conversions, where some interwar homes were turned into flats. This was an uncommon practice, as Brisbane had retained many large, nineteenth century homes that were suitable for such a conversion, so there was little need to convert more recent buildings. 'Gwandoban' was just 37 years old when it was converted into inner-city flats.

Description

Located at the end of a cul-de-sac the structure presents as large mock Tudor apartments, with an imposing frontage and main gable facing towards Maxwell Street and the Brisbane River. The siting of the structure on the

land takes advantage of the local environs and topography. The roof is of terracotta tiles. The main gable has an offset bay window and the staggered roof line has a dormer window added at a later date.

Constructed as a dwelling during the interwar period, of brick and fibro cement, the structure was subsequently enlarged and altered during the early 1960s and converted into flats.

The structure is visible from Kangaroo Point. The topography of this locality of New Farm affords structures, located along this stretch of the Brisbane River, to be positioned at various levels thus providing direct exposure to the river. This staggering of accommodation at different levels, provides a notable tiered effect to the residential setting of this area of the New Farm riverbank.

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 an example of the evolutionary nature of accommodation at New Farm, being a residence constructed during the interwar period, which was later converted to flats.

Rarity

CRITERION B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage

as a visual remnant of the residential pattern and style of development of Maxwell Street and New Farm, in close proximity to the Brisbane River.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance
as an impressive mock-Tudor style structure.

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 a residence originally designed by James Collin.

Supporting images



Unknown photographer,
"Gwandoben" The Home of Mr. and Mrs. M. V. Dodwell
- Occupying a prominent position beside the river at

New Farm, this attractive English type of residence is much admired. It is constructed of brick, and the cream stucco and brown timbering with Wunderlich mottled tiles give an atmosphere of light and colour', c.1934, Sunday Mail (Brisbane, Qld. : 1926 - 1954), 4 November 1934, p. 16. Retrieved September 21, 2020, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article97787374>

References

1. Brisbane City Council, 1946 aerial photographs.
 2. Brisbane City Council, Detail Plans (and supporting Surveyors' Notebooks)
 3. Brisbane City Council, *Properties on the Web* website including Building Records
 4. Department of Natural Resources, Queensland Certificates of title and other records.
 5. Schiavo, John, *New Farm: A Study of Land Use and Settlement to 1999*. (Brisbane: Schiavo, 1999)
 6. Watson, Donald and Judith McKay. *A Directory of Queensland Architects to 1940*. (St. Lucia: U of Q Press, 1984)
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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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