

Heritage Citation



Merivale

Key details

Addresses	At 105 Melbourne Street, South Brisbane, Queensland 4101
Type of place	Flat building
Period	Interwar 1919-1939
Style	Functionalist
Lot plan	L6_RP42480
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 July 2002 Date of Citation — November 2010
Construction	Walls: Masonry
People/associations	Chambers and Ford (Architect)

'Merivale' was constructed in 1938 for Pierce Williams to the design of prominent architects Chambers and Ford. It was one of many blocks of flats constructed in inner-city areas during the flat building boom of the 1930s which was caused, in part, by rapid population growth and a lack of affordable housing in inner-city areas. The three-storey block survives as a good example of the Functionalist style of architecture that was popular for flat construction in the interwar period.

History

'Merivale Flats', built in 1938, is a building representative of a particular social and architectural phenomenon that occurred in inner city areas like South Brisbane and West End in the mid to late 1930s. It is one of a number of purpose-built apartment blocks erected in the area at this time. Contemporaneous with this apartment construction was the division into flats of many of the grand nineteenth century residences in the area.

The establishment of higher-density residential living in inner-city areas was in response to a number of diverse factors impacting upon cities in the period between the wars. The increasing value of inner city property, suburbanisation and changing residential patterns within cities facilitated the construction of dwellings designed for higher density living than that of the family home. The greater South Brisbane region contains a number of these apartment blocks as well as nineteenth century residences that were divided into flats during the 1930s.

Jacob McLennan purchased 16.35 perches of land on the corner of Melbourne and Merivale Streets in 1918. McLennan was a mechanical engineer and from this site he conducted his business. The South Brisbane City Council resumed this whole property in 1925, for the widening of Melbourne Street. The land was vested with the Brisbane City council in 1926, upon the creation of Greater Brisbane, which transferred 13.98 perches of land back to McLennan. McLennan maintained his business at this site until 1936, when the Queensland National Bank acquired the property. This site was vacant until Pierce Williams purchased it in 1938. Building registers indicate that the 'Merivale' was built in this year. Designed by the architects Chambers and Ford, it was constructed by Horace Ryan at a cost of £4,800. On the death of Williams in 1952 the property was transferred to Rose Dimmich, widow. The Arieni family purchased the building in 1955.

Description

This is a purpose-built apartment building of three storeys that is stepped in level down Merivale Street towards Melbourne Street. The two different levels of units have separate entries off Merivale Street. The building is constructed of brick along clean modernist lines. In both entries the brickwork steps in towards the recessed doorways. The higher of the two entries has a projecting section with a symmetrical arrangement of openings. A narrow slot window is flanked by banks of louvres on the two upper levels on the two upper levels (although one opening has had aluminium-framed glazing installed). The projecting portion of building extends to a small raised

section of parapet in line with the entry below. Another bay of timber framed windows is located to each side of the projecting element on the same level. The lower entry has a narrow projecting piece above it with a single central slot opening. One bay of windows faces the street on this lower portion of the building before the curved corner, which includes a window bay following the curve. Two more window bays face Melbourne Street. Below the two upper floors is a suspended cantilevered awning above a shop with two large square opening.

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 block of flats constructed during the flat building boom of the 1930s which occurred in response to housing shortages; and, as evidence of pattern of residential development in South Brisbane during the interwar period.

Representative

CRITERION D

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

as a good example of a 1930s, purpose-built Interwar Functionalist style block of flats.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

for its attractive streamlined design with strong vertical and horizontal elements and its landmark qualities on this corner site.

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 good example of interwar flats designed by prominent architects Chambers and Ford.

References

1. Brisbane City Council Water Supply and Sewerage Detail Plans
 2. Department of Natural Resources, Queensland Certificates of title and other records.
 3. Environmental Protection Agency
 4. JOL Estate Map Collection and photographic collection
 5. Lawson, Ronald *Brisbane in the 1890s: A Study of an Australian Urban Society*. St Lucia U of Q Press, 1973
 6. McKellar's Map of Brisbane and Suburbs. Brisbane: Surveyor-General's Office, 1895
 7. 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.

Citation prepared by — Brisbane City Council (page revised September 2020)



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