

## Heritage Citation



### Mossrose Cottage

#### Key details

Addresses	At 19 Kent Street, New Farm, Queensland 4005
Type of place	House
Period	Federation 1890-1914
Style	Queenslander
Lot plan	L2_RP8612; L1_RP8611
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 30 October 2000 Date of Citation — January 2012
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Timber

This modest timber cottage was constructed in the late nineteenth century when New Farm was experiencing intense residential development. While elevated streets with views to the river were occupied by residences of the well-to-do, workers' cottages such as this were common in nearby streets. While a number have survived, few present as intact as this one. New Farm later became a suburb more well-known for its purpose-built flats and high rise residential development. This cottage's construction of land smaller than the minimum area stipulated by the 1885 *Undue Subdivision of Land Act* is evidence of the tiny subdivisions implemented during the early boom periods.

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## History

The suburb of New Farm derives its name from its origins as the 'new farm' of the developing convict settlement during the 1830s. Tracts of the land in the area, then known by the indigenous word 'binkinba', had been cleared for cultivation as increasing numbers of convicts were sentenced to this isolated penal colony.

With the closure of the Moreton Bay penal settlement in 1842 Brisbane was opened up for free settlement, however, surveyors had begun subdivision plans for the New Farm area as early as 1839 and large acreage blocks were auctioned through the 1840s and 1850s. Throughout the 1850s the adjacent Fortitude Valley had begun to develop into a residential area, as more suburban allotments were offered for sale. The push towards New Farm was slow and did not take hold until the mid-1860s. Barrister and later Premier, Samuel Griffiths purchased part of New Farm in 1870. Queensland National Bank Manager, ER Drury joined the gathering social elite in 1875, purchasing acreage and constructing his residence on Bowen Terrace. Suburban residential development had extended solidly onto the New Farm peninsula by 1883- 84, and was generally bounded by Moray Street, Merthyr Rd and James Street. The heaviest population was along Brunswick, Arthur, Harcourt and Terrace Streets, each with forty to sixty dwellings. This was closely followed by Kent, Annie and Hawthorn Streets and Bowen Terrace, all of which contained between twenty to forty dwellings. This growth was accompanied by the introduction of a public transport system which was to have a major impact on Brisbane's suburban development. In 1884 the privately owned Metropolitan Tramway and Investment Company laid Brisbane's first tram tracks. Electrification of the tramway system in Brisbane commenced in 1895. By this time, although industries were established in the New Farm area, significant residential development had continued. Private buses also provided residents with transport in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The land on which this house is built was part of almost six acres originally granted to Edward Lord in January 1845. William Costin purchased almost one and a half acres in June 1865 and immediately subdivided and sold the land in parcels as small as eleven and a quarter perches (284.5 sq metres). Costin was declared insolvent and the unsold land was transmitted to Alexander Raff in June 1868. Subdivisions 15, 16 and 17 totalling 37.5 perches (948.5 sq m) were sold to Joseph Lewthwaite in July 1868. Title to this land was acquired by Helen Fountain, who had previously purchased subdivisions 18 & 19 from Costin during the late 1860s, in April 1873.

Helen Fountain, a widow of Brisbane, sold 18.3 perches (resubA of subs 15 & 16) to John Chesney in July 1874, and married William Johnston in October of that year. William Johnston repurchased the land sold to John

Chesney in 1882 and it was sold to John Fountain, (likely Helen Fountain's son) an engineer in January 1884. The Fountains and William Johnston were living in Kent St in 1884 when Francis George Fountain, son of the late John Fountain, Chief Engineer, Cawarra died suddenly of a heart attack aged 23 years. Helen Fountain worked as a draper in the late nineteenth century.

While it is possible that this house dates from 1884, it is just as likely that it was built by John Fountain (the likely surviving son) in 1891 when he took out a mortgage for £210 and further advances from the Queensland National Bank. In 1891 John Fountain is first recorded as occupying 'Mossrose Cottage' next door to Mrs Johnston. John Fountain did not stay in Mossrose Cottage as it was occupied by Fred Wellington, a commercial traveller, the following year.

In 1897 resubB of sub 16 & sub17, an area of 19.1 perches were acquired by the Queensland National Bank under a writ of Fi Fa to remedy debts and sold to Joseph Robinson, a land agent, in 1898. At that time it was one of a row of 6 or 7 cottages with quaint names such as Ivy Green, Woodbine, Rosebud and Blinkbonnie. During the early decades of the twentieth century 19 Kent Street was occupied by Agnes Robinson. By this time, the site of the house was an area of 12.5 perches (316 sq m). This tiny block of two lots is tangible evidence of subdivision practices which preceded, and in fact prompted, the passing of the Undue Subdivision of Land Prevention Act in 1885 which stipulated a minimum allotment size of 16 perches (400 sq m).

In the 1920s, suburban development in Brisbane as a whole proceeded as private motor vehicles supplemented the expansion of the tramway system. As New Farm became a relatively densely settled suburban area, contracts to sewer the suburb were let. The area bounded by Ann, Brunswick, Kent and James Streets was the first contract to be signed in 1922. In 1937 Mossrose Cottage remained as one of a row of three identical cottages separated by the tiny cottage and adjacent shop from another two modest cottages. By this time, although nearby Bowen Terrace remained the location of grand nineteenth century residences, the suburb of New Farm became home to the new style of purpose-built flats. Where in earlier years a flat meant a section of a house which had been subdivided, the new flats prompted new building regulations which introduced minimum site areas and coverage, and building heights, depending on building materials.

The cottage at 19 Kent Street remains an intact reminder of the individual workers' cottages which dominated development in New Farm in the second half of the nineteenth century.

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## Description

This low-set timber residence is of the colonial style with a symmetrical frontage and a separately roofed front verandah. The main roof is pyramidal with a steep pitch, and is sheeted in corrugated iron. The front wall is clad in wide timber chamferboards, with side walls of non-original weatherboards. French doors open onto the verandah and the side windows are protected with tin sunhoods.

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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 a relatively intact example of the nineteenth century workers' cottage development in New Farm.

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### Aesthetic

#### CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance as a relatively intact nineteenth century colonial timber cottage.

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## References

1. Brisbane City Council. Sewerage Detail Plan. No. 161
2. Death Notice *Brisbane Courier* 24 April 1884, p.1
3. <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/printArticleJpg/3429354/3?print=y>
4. Musgrave, Elizabeth, Kaylee Wilson and Brisbane City Council Heritage Unit. *New Farm and Teneriffe Hill: Heritage and Character Study*. October 1995
5. Queensland Certificates of Title
6. *Queensland Post Office Directories* 1879 - 1939
7. <http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/chims/placeDetail.html;jsessionid=0a10032330d69b554de2345c44dcadbb9335e1d9112>
8. Wikipedia "Fi Fa" [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fieri\\_facias](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fieri_facias) (accessed 03/01/12)

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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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