

Heritage Citation



Mount Gravatt Outlook Reserve

Key details

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| Also known as | Mt Gravatt Lookout |
| Addresses | At 1541 Logan Road, Mount Gravatt, Queensland 4122 |
| Type of place | Lookout, Reserve |
| Period | Interwar 1919-1939 |
| Lot plan | L6_RP71207; L4_RP71207; L7_RP74384; L4_RP70418; L3_RP49623; L2_RP73492; L671_SL6388; L836_SL5941; L857_SL6162; L1223_SL8268; L59_RP66177; L1_RP38120; L8_RP50617; L5_RP50617; L1_RP50617; L1_RP49624; L1_RP49623; L3_SP142058; L102_RP119378; L101_SP146668 |
| Key dates | Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004 Date of Citation — September 2002 |

People/associations

William Jolly (Association)

Criterion for listing

(A) Historical; (E) Aesthetic; (G) Social; (G) Social; (H) Historical association

As a recreation reserve since the late 19th century, Mt Gravatt Outlook Reserve is important for its association with the early development of the district. A public park of bushland accommodating a prominent vantage point affording fine prospects across Brisbane and out to Moreton Bay, the Reserve is an important visual element in the terrain of Brisbane and in the streetscape of the district. Mt Gravatt Outlook Reserve is important to the local and wider community as a place to meet and engage in a range of outdoor activities including the use of the extensive system of walking tracks throughout the whole Toohey Forest Park area. Mt Gravatt Outlook is important to the local and wider community as a prominent vantage point for Brisbane affording expansive views across Brisbane out to Moreton Bay and across to the Brisbane Hills, Glass House Mountains and Mount Tamborine. The Reserve is important containing areas of high landscape value and visual amenity with prominent lookouts, ridgelines, creeks and gullies. A vantage point secured by William A. Jolly during his term as the first Lord Mayor of the Greater Brisbane Council, Mt Gravatt Outlook Reserve is important for its association with Jolly.

History

Mt Gravatt was first observed by John Oxley in 1823 when he noticed a “high mount to larboard”. Despite the fact that Commandant Cotton and Andrew Petrie were lost in the area in 1836, it was not noted again until the Government Surveyor, Robert Dixon in a survey undertaken around 1840, named Mount Gravatt after Lieutenant George Gravatt who was commandant at Moreton Bay for three months in 1842 preparing the colony for the change over from penal settlement to free settlement. The aborigines called it kaggurmabul or caggara-hahbill which means “place of echidna” or “echidna rests here”. Mount Gravatt (195m) dominates the entire environment in the Mt Gravatt, Mt Gravatt East and Upper Mt Gravatt areas. Before European settlement this area was heavily timbered, particularly with mahogany, and numerous small creeks flowed down the mountain and into large creeks or swamps at the foot. Fortunately, not all of the forest has been cleared and remnants of the original eucalypt forest remain.

In 1893 the New South Wales Colonial Government created a recreational reserve of 132 acres on Mount Gravatt which had formerly been a timber reserve. In 1915 another 160 acres were added. The management of the reserve was the responsibility of the community and clearing the bush and levelling the road by hand, the local residents constructed three roads up to the reserve using only voluntary labour. A road to the summit was first constructed in 1914.

During his term as Lord Mayor of Brisbane (1925-1931), William Jolly identified the purchase of additional parks and vantage points around Brisbane as a priority for the newly formed Council. The provision of additional “breathing spaces” and the acquisition of “vantage points” on the ranges and hills around the City was pursued with considerable vigour by Jolly. He secured a number of vantage points around Brisbane for public use – 405 hectares were added to Mt Coot-tha Park, Whites Hill was acquired and Mount Gravatt mountain reserve land was transferred to the Brisbane City Council in 1927. The mountain became a popular excursion destination and

a private kiosk was established to cater for the crowds flocking to the area. The kiosk burned down in 1938. Construction of the present road up the mountain was an intermittent relief work project undertaken during the 1930s Depression. American anti-aircraft guns and search lights were erected at the summit in 1940 although there is no evidence that the area was used in any way directly with the war effort.

In the early 1900s Gertrude and Joshua Petty built their home on land now occupied by the picnic area Gertrude Petty Place. Some of the existing trees, including the mango grove, were planted by Mrs Petty, who donated land for the construction of part of the Lookout road.

Development was initially slow in the Mt Gravatt district, with exploration and settlement to the north at Stones Corner and further south along the route between Ipswich and Cleveland. The district owes its development to the dray and coach traffic along Logan Road, Cobb & Co beginning a service through Mt Gravatt in 1864. In 1865 the government held the first major auction of land along Slack's Road between Creek and Holland Roads with German immigrants taking up much of the land for fruit growing and general agriculture. By 1870 Mt Gravatt was emerging as an established village. A postal line from Brisbane to Logan passed through Mt Gravatt in 1865 and in 1877 a post office was established there. The first school in the area was opened in 1874. General farming and fruit growing dominated the area until the 1890s. In 1885 the first section of railway to Beenleigh was opened and in 1889 this extended to Southport, drawing traffic away from the Mt Gravatt area and hampering development for a time.

In the 1880s and 1890s subdivisions in the area along Creek and Broadwater Roads brought settlers into the area. Development had stalled by the end of the First World War after which the Queensland Government resumed land for returned soldiers establishing soldier settler farms. Throughout the 1920s Mt Gravatt remained a village isolated from Brisbane. The boom in settlement of the district came after the Second World War when the Queensland Housing Commission established residential estates from Creek Road to Cavendish Road and the privately developed Chester Housing Schemes also began. The population in the area increased from 1,170 in 1947 to 12,630 in 1966. The first water supply arrived in 1950 and the first tram service commenced operation in 1951. In 1970 the Garden City Shopping Centre was opened in Upper Mt Gravatt and the area has continued to expand and continues to be a popular residential area.

Description

Mt Gravatt Outlook Reserve is an area of bushland bounded by Shire Road, residential estates along Logan and Mt Gravatt Roads and the Mt Gravatt Campus of Griffith University. The area contains vegetation types ranging from open forest, shrubland and woodland to heaths and scrub understoreys. Mt Gravatt Reserve contains areas of red mahogany, grey ironbark, brushbox, tallowwood and broad leafed spotted gum. Bailey's stringybark is an example of a species which is common in the Mt Gravatt Reserve but rare in the rest of the Brisbane area. The shrub layer consists of buttonwoods and cheese trees, acacias, she oaks, dogwoods, wild may and grass tree. The herb layer consists of species such as red natal grass, blady grass, native sarsaparilla, may vine and fern species.

Geologically, the Mt Gravatt Reserve contains regions of folded cherts and also a cave formed by percolating groundwater in a colluvial valley fill. This cave is the largest example known in southeast Queensland.

The Reserve accommodates a number of large reservoirs, two picnic areas and a lookout platform on the vantage point summit. Mount Gravatt Outlook Drive winds its way through the Reserve from the northeast corner off Shire Road and climbs up to the summit lookout. At 195m the summit is a prominent vantage point for Brisbane affording expansive views across to Moreton Island, Moreton Bay, Brisbane City and the Brisbane Hills. The summit is a small plateau and accommodates a lookout platform to the north, a feature garden bed to the centre, and a playground, picnic area and communications facility to the sloping edges to the east, south and west.

The Lookout Platform is a raised circular concrete platform enclosed by a round metal tubing fence. The platform is covered with irregular granite paving. A truncated concrete column bearing a small round concrete table stands on a small circular concrete pad in the middle of the platform. The table bears a brass disc which is a permanent survey marker north point. The concrete edge and surface of this table is badly broken up. A round disk supported by a vertical metal flange bearing a map indicating the landmarks observable from the lookout stands north of the podium.

A circular feature garden stands to the middle of the summit plateau and consists of two round beds encircled by a concrete footpath. A low stone wall stands to the bed adjacent to the footpath and another low stone wall with four squat concrete stone piers encircles the garden bed to the middle of the feature. The beds are planted with immature eucalypts, some groundcover vegetation and smothered with weeds.

The Gertrude Petty Place picnic area accommodates a number of picnic tables in a quiet treed setting to the northeast corner of the Reserve.

Mt Gravatt Outlook Reserve is an important vantage point for Brisbane.

The Mt Gravatt Outlook Reserve is in a satisfactory condition for a bushland area in an urban setting. Domestic pets and feral animals are having a negative impact on the bushland as is the dumping of garden and household waste. There is some weed infestation of certain areas of the Reserve, particularly the areas adjacent to residential blocks and there are also areas of erosion along some of the well used tracks. The operation of trail bikes within the Reserve is of concern.

There is concern that future planned development of the Mt Gravatt campus of Griffith University may involve the clearing of bushland which could threaten the integrity of the Reserve and surrounding forested areas.

The lookout platform and circular feature garden on the summit of the Reserve are in poor condition. The concrete table bearing the permanent survey marker is badly broken up and deteriorating. The circular feature garden is unkempt.

The toilet block adjacent to the water reservoir near the Gertrude Petty Place picnic area is vandalised and generally the surrounds are unkempt.

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 late nineteenth century recreation reserve and popular vantage point.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance as a large tract of bushland containing areas of high landscape value and visual amenity with prominent lookouts, ridgelines, creeks and gullies.

Social

CRITERION G

The place has a strong or special association with the life or work of a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons as a popular recreation reserve offering opportunities to engage in outdoor bushland activities and a prominent vantage point with scenic views.

Social

CRITERION G

The place has a strong or special association with the life or work of a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons as a recreation reserve in which much of the early site works were undertaken by local residents and later work undertaken through Depression intermittent relief work programs.

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 vantage point secured for the citizens of Brisbane by William Jolly during his term as first Lord Mayor of Greater Brisbane.

References

1. Brisbane City Council - City Assets Branch *Conservation Management Study* Stage 1 Report. November 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.

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



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