

## Heritage Citation

### Nudgee Beach Reserve

#### Key details

<b>Addresses</b>	At 18 Fortitude Street, Nudgee Beach, Queensland 4014; At 17 Fortitude Street, Nudgee Beach, Queensland 4014
<b>Type of place</b>	Reserve
<b>Period</b>	Federation 1890-1914, Interwar 1919-1939
<b>Style</b>	Queenslander
<b>Lot plan</b>	L1142_SL9743; L1145_SL9743; L1139_SL9743; L265_SL1021
<b>Key dates</b>	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 July 2003 Date of Citation — July 2013
<b>Construction</b>	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Timber
<b>People/associations</b>	Nudgee Beach Progress Association (Builder)
<b>Criterion for listing</b>	(A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (H) Historical association

The Toombul Shire Council proclaimed the Nudgee Beach Reserve in 1907. This resumption of a portion of private land that had been part of the extensive St. Vincent's Orphanage site since 1863 led to the creation of the Reserve. Private blocks of land were put on sale at Nudgee Beach in 1916. The Nudgee Beach Progress Association built the timber beach picnic shelter shortly after the Association's formation in 1922. It funded the construction of six public facilities between 1922 and 1926. The School of Arts, Concert Hall, First Aid & Ambulance building, Changing Rooms, cricket pitch as well as a Council kiosk have gone. Only the Beach Picnic Shelter now remains from the structures built on the Nudgee Beach Reserve.

## History

The area now known as Nudgee Beach was a hunting and fishing spot on the shores of Moreton Bay for the Aboriginal Turrarbul people before the arrival of European settlers onto their land. In 1863, Alexander McPherson became took freehold title of this site. The first Catholic Bishop of Queensland James Quinn (appointed 1859) purchased the 33 acres of land in 1865. A fervent Irish nationalist, he changed his surname in 1875 to O'Quinn. The Bishop gave the land to the Order of the Sisters of Mercy for an orphanage site. St. Vincent's Orphanage opened in 1869. The nuns and their wards would travel down to Nudgee Beach for excursions and picnics. It was hoped that a retirement home for elderly nuns would be built beside the beach.

Due to its close proximity to the fruit and wine-producing Nudgee District, Nudgee Beach became popular as a holiday camping ground even though it was on private land. Unofficially, it was called 'Brisbane's Super Sands'. On 16 July 1907, the controlling local government authority, the Toombul Shire Council declared a public space, the Nudgee Beach Reserve along the foreshore. One of the first structures on the Reserve was a small shop building that opened as a Kiosk and meeting room in 1915. In 1916, the Catholic Church partitioned the St Vincent's Orphanage land so that the area closest to the Reserve was subdivided into an estate comprising private blocks of land that were then put up for auction.

To retain its links to the Catholic Church, the small housing estate's main street was named O'Quinn Street to honour the Bishop (died 1881) who had helped establish St Vincent's Orphanage. Nudgee Beach developed into a small holiday and fishing village that held its own annual Sand Gardens Competition. A number of compact, nineteenth century cottages were relocated from other parts of Brisbane and transported by horse teams or truck onto the blocks that had been sold.

Enough residents had settled at Nudgee Beach that by 1922, they formed the Nudgee Beach Progress Association (NBPA) in November of that year. As a result, a number of community facilities were erected along the foreshore by the NBPA. A beach picnic shelter, a changing rooms shed, a First Aid & Ambulance building and a small Concert Hall were the first to be built. The NBPA undertook to have a second road access the Reserve. It was named Fortitude Street. This street and its two adjoining streets (Chaseley and Lima) were named after the three immigrant ships that had brought free settlers to the Moreton Bay settlement in 1849. A cricket pitch was also laid by NBPA and in 1926 the Association had the Nudgee Beach School of Arts constructed. It was placed to the right of the picnic shelter. It served as the suburb's first school until 1947 when it was replaced by a new school in Chasley Street. In 1930, the new Nudgee Beach Kiosk opened, replacing a small, relocated shop building that had previously served the local community as a kiosk. The Brisbane City Council added a brick toilet block to the Reserve in the 1930s. In 1942, during the Second World War, an Australian Army searchlight emplacement was dug into the Nudgee Beach Reserve.

After the war, due to the severe shortage of both housing and building materials, isolated public buildings or structures were sometimes vandalised and stripped of anything useful. This fate befell the NBPA's changing rooms shed, First Aid & Ambulance building and Concert Hall. The Nudgee Beach Kiosk burnt-down in the 1960s. The Nudgee Beach School of Arts fell into disrepair and was it condemned as unsafe and demolished in 1970. The Council toilet block has either been demolished or been severely altered in the course of renovations. Only the NBPA beach picnic shelter survived intact.

While numerous picnic shelters were constructed at Sandgate, Nudgee Beach, Cribb Island, Wynnum and Manly areas during the interwar period (1919-39), most have been demolished or destroyed. The Nudgee Beach Picnic Shelter is one of the few surviving examples of this particular structure to be found in Brisbane.

# 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

representative of Nudgee Beach's change in 1916 from St Vincent's Orphanage private beach to a public beach reserve.

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### Rarity

#### CRITERION B

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

as an interwar, in-situ beach picnic shelter.

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### 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 the only surviving structure from the six public facilities built in the 1920s by the Nudgee Beach Progress Association.

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## References

1. BANGEE Festival Committee, *Banyo-Nudgee Heritage Trail*, (Brisbane: BANGEE Festival Committee, 2000)

2. Brisbane City Council, aerial photographs 1946 & 2001
  3. Brisbane City Council, *City Assets Study – Nudgee Beach Reserve*, (Brisbane: Brisbane City Council, April, 2002)
  4. Brisbane City Council, Heritage Unit citation: *St. Vincent's Orphanage, 131 Queens Rd, Nudgee*
  5. Tremayne, Jean and Pechey, Sue, *Pioneers, Picnics and Pineapples*, (Brisbane: A.E.B.I.S., 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 June 2022)



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