

Heritage Citation



Orleigh Park

Key details

Addresses At 68 Hill End Terrace, West End, Queensland 4101

Type of place Club house, Park, Tree/s

Period World War I 1914-1918

Lot plan

L234_RP10977; L233_RP10977; L232_RP10977; L231_RP10977;
L230_RP10977; L229_RP10977; L226_RP10977; L220_RP10977;
L219_RP10977; L218_RP10977; L216_RP10977; L224_RP10977;
L215_RP10977; L214_RP10977; L223_RP10977; L222_RP10977;
L221_RP10977; L225_RP10977; L141_RP10977; L140_RP10977;
L139_RP10977; L138_RP10977; L137_RP10977; L136_RP10977;
L135_RP10977; L134_RP10977; L133_RP10977; L132_RP10977;
L211_RP10977; L236_RP10977; L235_RP10977; L143_RP10977;
L142_RP10977; L150_RP10974; L190_RP10974; L189_RP10974;
L172_RP10974; L171_RP10974; L170_RP10974; L167_RP10974;
L166_RP10974; L165_RP10974; L164_RP10974; L163_RP10974;
L162_RP10974; L156_RP10974; L152_RP10974; L151_RP10974;
L169_RP10974; L168_RP10974; L161_RP10974; L159_RP10974;
L158_RP10974; L157_RP10974; L148_RP10974; L147_RP10974;
L146_RP10974; L145_RP10974; L144_RP10974; L185_RP10974;
L186_RP10974; L187_RP10974; L182_RP10974; L213_RP10977;
L212_RP10977; L188_RP10974; L184_RP10974; L176_RP10974;
L175_RP10974; L174_RP10974; L173_RP10974; L181_RP10974;
L180_RP10974; L179_RP10974; L178_RP10974; L177_RP10974;
L228_RP10977; L227_RP10977; L155_RP10974; L153_RP10974;
L217_RP10977; L183_RP10974; L154_RP10974; L149_RP10974;
L160_RP10974; L1_RP10975; L2_RP10975; L196_RP10974; L195_RP10974;
L194_B3424; L193_B3424; L192_B3424; L191_RP10974; L8_RP137861;
L9_RP137861; L1_RP124659

Key dates

Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004
Date of Citation — November 2012

Criterion for listing

(A) Historical; (C) Scientific; (E) Aesthetic; (G) Social

Much of the riverfront area, including the site of present Orleigh Park was subdivided into the Orleigh Estate and by 1890 was dotted with timber houses. However, most of these were washed away by the 1893 floods. 'Cranbrook', a large timber house, survived the flood. A set of concrete steps running down toward the river are the only remnants left of this house. In 1900 'Cranbrook' became a home for Aboriginal girls and young women who had been forcibly removed from their families and communities by the government under the Aboriginals Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act, 1897. The home closed in 1906. In 1998 a plaque was installed recognising the land's connection with the 'Stolen Generation'. A plaque containing the Federal Government's Apology was erected in the park in 2012. The land that is now Orleigh Park was acquired by the City of South Brisbane in 1916. Sporting facilities such as tennis courts and sports grounds were established in the park, making it a popular sporting reserve in the early 1920s. In 1954 the South Brisbane Sailing Club erected their headquarters in the park on land leased from the Council. In 1977, the Brisbane and GPS Rowing Club opened their new boatshed within Orleigh Park. Today Orleigh Park is widely used by the local community for informal recreation and as a pedestrian thoroughfare. It is also a popular destination for family excursions and picnics.

History

Following the opening of Moreton Bay to free settlement in 1842, land in the area was subdivided for urban development. The area, including the site of Orleigh Park, was subdivided into the Orleigh Estate containing housing allotments. By 1890 the area was dotted with timber residences. In 1893 devastating floods washed away almost every house on the Orleigh Estate.

The land that is now Orleigh Park was acquired by the City of South Brisbane in 1916. In March of that year, the Council set up the "Orleigh Park Estate Account" with an overdraft facility of £1500 to purchase "land in the Orleigh Estate at West End for the purpose of establishing a Public Park in the river bank". On 9 September 1916 the notice of resumption was issued for subdivisions 170 to 174 of western suburban allotment 44 for park purposes. The purchase of the land was completed in November 1916. Sporting facilities such as tennis courts and sports grounds were established in the park, making it a popular sporting reserve in the early 1920s. Following the formation of Greater Brisbane with the amalgamation of local authorities in 1925, Hill End Park, as it was then known, was described as being "one of the most beautiful riverside promenades in the city." As plans for the establishment of the new University of Queensland campus on the slopes across the river progressed, local residents called for improved amenities in the park, which was soon to be a gateway to the university.

Within the park, the South Brisbane Sailing Club established their clubhouse in the 1950s. The club was one of the earliest sailing clubs established in Brisbane. Begun by sailing enthusiasts in 1903, the club continued its sporting activities on the Brisbane River throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first. The club was approved to lease a portion of land within Orleigh Park in 1954. The clubhouse was built in 1956 and was funded solely by fund raising and donations from club patrons. Many of the features within the club have been dedicated to past members and their families.

Within the park are a set of concrete steps leading down toward the river. These steps are the only remnant of a large house that once stood on the site. 'Cranbrook' was built in 1885 by Mr Morcom beside the river. Although partly submerged in the 1893 floods, the house survived unlike most of the other houses in the Orleigh Estate. In 1900 the house was acquired by the Queensland Government as a home for Aboriginal girls. Three years prior to this, the Aboriginals Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act was passed. This Act allowed the forcible removal of Aboriginal people from their traditional lands and onto reserves. It officially stripped Aboriginal people of their rights to freedom under the pretext of humanitarianism. Under this system many girls and young women were forcibly taken from their families, trained in domestic work and put to work as servants for whites. The Queenslander reported that the

Aboriginal Girls' Home, at West End, South Brisbane, was started for the purpose of receiving aboriginal and half-caste girls going to service, as a home for them when changing from one situation to another, and a place in which women passing through Brisbane could stay, instead of going to a boarding house."¹

As an institution from which the State could implement its policies, the home played a key role in the forced separation of Aboriginal girls and young women from their communities, their subsequent employment as domestic servants and the removal and separation of any children that the young women may have had to orphanages and children's homes. In 1900 in Brisbane there were 22 Aboriginal young women in service and by 1906 this had risen to 121 young women. In 1906 the home was closed after an inquiry was undertaken into the conditions in the home. The inquiry was triggered by concerns from the public and continued complaints from the women in the home. Although the West End home was closed, the so-called 'protection policy' continued to be enforced in Queensland until 1971. 'Cranbrook' was demolished in the same year. In 1997 the Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families prompted the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, Jim Soorley to issue an apology to Brisbane's Stolen Generation. Plaques were placed in five parks, including Orleigh Park, associated with, or near places of removal. Following The

Apology by the Federal Government in 2008 a memorial to the Stolen Generations was erected in Orleigh Park in 2012.

In 1977, the Brisbane and GPS Rowing Club opened their new boatshed within Orleigh Park. The club's long history in Brisbane began when the Brisbane Rowing Club (originally known as Breakfast Creek Rowing Club) was established in 1885 with its first boatshed on Breakfast Creek and another soon built at Kangaroo Point. By 1893 the club had moved to North Quay and changed its name to the Brisbane Rowing Club. The Great Public Schools Old Boys Rowing Club was established in 1925 and had a shed beside the river where the Queensland University of Technology now sits. In 1947 the two clubs merged to form the Brisbane and GPS Rowing Club. A series of unfortunate incidents forced the club to seek alternative club facilities: in 1970 the North Quay shed and racing fleet were destroyed by fire; a temporary home was found at the Emmanuel sheds at the University of Queensland until the 1974 flood destroyed the shed. The site at Orleigh Park was acquired in the late 1970s and the boatshed was officially opened in 1977.

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 evidence of the conversion of flood-affected residential land into parkland by the South Brisbane Municipal Council following the flood of 1893 and its subsequent use by the community for sporting and recreation.

Scientific

CRITERION C

The place has the potential to yield information that will contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the city's or local area's history

as it contains sites and subsurface remains of houses demolished or removed following the 1893 floods.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

for its avenue of mature figs, extensive river views and timber Sailing Club hall set amongst trees.

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

for its long associations with formal and informal recreation in the area; as the site of the Aboriginal girls' home, 'Cranbrook', it is associated with the Indigenous community and the Stolen Generation.

References

1. *The Queenslander*, 15 November 1902, p1120
 2. Blake, Thom, "Deported... At the Sweet Will of the Government: The Removal of Aborigines to Reserves in Queensland 1897-1939", *Aboriginal History*, 1998, Vol 22, p 52-61
 3. Gregory, Helen, *A Century of Sail: A History of the South Brisbane Sailing Club*, South Brisbane, Qld., South Brisbane Sailing Club, 2003
 4. Blake, Thom, "South Brisbane: An Historical Overview", *Queensland Division Technical Papers*, April, 1990, pp.1-3.
 5. Lavery, John, "South Brisbane: The Making of a City" *Brisbane in 1888- The Historical Perspective*, Brisbane History Group, Papers No. 8, 1988, p. 61-69
 6. *Brisbane Centenary Official Historical Souvenir*, "City of South Brisbane", Local Authorities of Queensland, 1924, p. 139-154
 7. Brisbane City Council, "1897 – To Protect and Civilise? Aboriginal Protection Act", *Brisbane 150 Stories, 1859-2009*, Brisbane City Council, Brisbane, 2009
 8. *The Queenslander*, Thursday 13 October 1932, p34
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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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