

Heritage Citation



Pair of Gas Lamps (William Street entrance - former Lands Administration Building)

Key details

Addresses	Outside 98 William Street, Brisbane City, Queensland 4000; Outside 142 George Street, Brisbane City, Queensland 4000
Type of place	Lamp
Period	Federation 1890-1914
Geolocation	-27.47292 153.024344
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2009 Date of Citation — June 2006
Construction	Lamp: Cast iron

People/associations Brisbane Gas Company (Architect)

Criterion for listing (A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (D) Representative; (F) Technical

This matching pair of gas lampposts was placed outside the Lands Administration Building soon after its construction in 1905 and, along with the matching pair on George Street, are believed to be the only surviving examples of this early form of street lighting in Brisbane. Gas street lamps were first introduced to Brisbane in 1865 and by 1880, 250 gas street lamps in the CBD were being lit every night. In the early twentieth century, gas lamps were gradually phased out in Brisbane and by 1917, were being replaced by electric lighting.

History

On 7 September 1859, the same year that Queensland separated from New South Wales to become a colony in its own right, the Brisbane Municipal Council was created to oversee the development of what became the new colony's capital. The first Municipal Council was elected in October 1859 and among the first improvements sought for the township of Brisbane was public street lighting.

In 1861, the Council formed a Street Lighting Committee to investigate the best and most cost efficient means of providing lighting for the streets within the boundaries of the Brisbane Municipality. The Street Lighting Committee recommended gas as the best option for street lighting.

With the lure of winning a contract to provide the street lighting for Brisbane, the Council approached a number of prominent citizens about the prospect of forming a local gas company. Architect and businessman James Cowlshaw, together with a number of other prosperous residents, formed the Brisbane Gas Company in 1864. The Company established its offices and gas towers on land at Petrie Bight.

The Brisbane Gas Company began to install gas street lamps in the Central Business District (CBD). The lamps and gas were rented from the company by the Municipal Council. By 1880, the Council had largely completed its street lighting program, having provided 250 gas street lamps that were lit for nine hours each night.

The matching pair of gas lampposts in William Street and George Street are located outside the two entrances to the former Lands Administration Building. Construction of this building began in 1901 and was completed by 1905. This prominent government building accommodated the Lands and Survey Departments and the Executive Council and Cabinet (until 1971). The lampposts would have been placed in their current locations soon after construction was completed.

Gas street lighting within the CBD was gradually phased out and replaced with electric street lighting from 1917 onwards. Over time, as new buildings were erected in the CBD, the remaining gas lampposts were removed. The gas lampposts in William and George Streets are possibly the only examples of this early form of street lighting remaining in Brisbane. In 1992, both pairs of street lamps were identified as having heritage value as significant items of CBD street furniture in a project that was conducted by the Queensland University of Technology.

Description

Each lamppost is made of cast iron and is approximately 2.5 metres in length. On top of each ornate lamppost sits a glass lamp case with a cast iron frame. The gas lampposts are now powered by electricity.

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 an example of the earliest form of street lighting available in Brisbane.

Rarity

CRITERION B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage as these are believed to be one of only two surviving pairs of gas lamps in Brisbane.

Representative

CRITERION D

The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class or classes of cultural places as a fine example of a matching pair of nineteenth century, cast iron, gas lamp posts.

Technical

CRITERION F

The place is important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technological achievement at a particular period

as an example of nineteenth century gas street lighting.

References

1. Brisbane City Council, 1946 aerial photographs.
 2. Brisbane City Council, Sewerage Map 1913
 3. Cole, John R. *Shaping a City: Greater Brisbane 1925-1985*. Brisbane: William Brooks Queensland. 1984
 4. Gray, Nathan, Kenny, Russell, Matheson, David & Zappala, Phillip, *CBD Survey of Street Furniture and Remnants report*, Brisbane, Queensland University of Technology, 1992
 5. John Oxley Library, photographic collection.
 6. Mahlstedt & Son, City of Brisbane Detail Fire Survey, Map No. 6, 1951
 7. Watson, Donald & Judith McKay 1994, *Queensland Architects of the 19th Century*, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia
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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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