

Heritage Citation



St Lucia Golf Course

Key details

Addresses	At 296 Indooroopilly Road, St Lucia, Queensland 4067
Type of place	Sportsground
Period	Interwar 1919-1939
Lot plan	L3_RP23347; L3_RP64896; L1_RP43716; L2_RP23349; L1_RP23349; L2_RP83143; L5_RP65420; L4_RP83143; L3_SP207851; L4_RP65420; L1_RP43714; L4_RP23347; L896_SL1909; L850_SL1909; L862_SL1909; L885_RP40783; L886_RP40783; L888_RP40783; L889_RP40783; L887_RP40783; L1_RP65420; L1_RP23347; L2_RP23347; L882_RP40783; L893_RP40783; L884_RP40783; L883_RP40783; L890_RP40783; L891_RP40783; L1_RP67569; L1_RP43715; L2_RP55137; L1_RP43713; L1_RP43712; L1_RP43711; L4_RP55137; L2_RP65420
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004 Date of Citation — September 2002
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (D) Representative; (E) Aesthetic; (G) Social

The sixth golf course to be established in Brisbane, St Lucia Golf Course is important for its association with the development of golf as a popular recreational sport in Brisbane. As only the second municipal golf course, the St

Lucia Golf Course is important in the development of public sporting facilities in Brisbane. As a purpose-built playing field for the playing of the game of golf together with associated clubhouse and other structures, St Lucia Golf Course is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a golf course. Distinguished by elevated ridges offering fine prospects across wooded areas, a meandering watercourse, weaving fairways and distinctive mature trees the course is an important visual element in the streetscape. The clubhouse terrace offering expansive views across the course and distinguished by the mature fig tree is a prominent landmark for Brisbane. The course is important as a place for the local and wider community to meet and relax informally and to play and engage in organised sport. The course is important for its association with the Indooroopilly Golf Club as the original course for the Club.

History

The origin of the game of golf is uncertain. However, it is generally thought that the game was being played in Scotland around the 15th century but did not gain wide acceptance outside Scotland for sometime. It was not popular in England until the second half of the 19th century.

Between 1870 and 1890, the number of golfing organisations in the United Kingdom increased from 34 to 387. The Victorian era in Great Britain coincided with an extended period free from major conflicts and, coupled with the development of its colonial empire, brought great prosperity to England and the growth of the middle classes of society. As golf was a social game providing the opportunity for extending the range of personal and business contacts, the newly prosperous merchants and industrialists were attracted to golf and could afford the cost of developing new courses. In addition, the invention of the grass mower made course management easier. Much cheaper than the old feathery ball, the introduction of the gutty (guttie) ball around 1850 brought the cost of the sport within the reach of a wider cross section of the population.

The major expansion of the game around the world began in the late 1880s and early 1890s with the migration of British players taking their equipment with them and forming clubs in their new lands.

The earliest record of a golfer in Australia is of Alexander Reid, who played at "Ratho" in Bothwell, Tasmania in 1822. In subsequent years, golf was played sporadically in various places in the southern Australian colonies. Royal Melbourne Golf Club was founded 2 May 1891 and is the oldest club in Australia with a continuous playing history.

The establishment of the game in Queensland lagged behind that of the southern states. Queensland was settled more slowly than the south and was less wealthy. It is generally accepted that the Ivory brothers were the first to have played the game in Queensland, laying out holes on their Eidsvold station during 1880s. The first golf club established in Queensland was the North Queensland (now Townsville) Golf Club, formed 4 January 1893. Toowoomba Golf Club was the first club founded in southeast Queensland holding its initial meeting in August 1896.

The pioneers of the game in Brisbane were immigrants from Scotland, England and Ireland. In the mid-1890s, the arrival of the new colonial Governor and keen golfer, Lord Lamington, was a boost to the popularity of the game in Brisbane. Organised golf began in Brisbane on 4 November 1896 with the formation of The Brisbane Golf Club. Lord Lamington was the first president and his regular participation in the Club's competitions ensured golf was seen as a socially desirable game to play. It was 24 years before another metropolitan club was formed – (Royal) Queensland Golf Club was formed 19 August 1920.

The intervention of the First World War delayed the formation of metropolitan clubs but also appears to have stimulated interest in the game among a wider section of the population as evidenced by the number of new clubs formed during the 1920s.

Generally, the cost of equipment and the restricted access to relatively expensive club membership had kept golf as a preserve of the middle and upper classes of the community. This changed with the improved economic conditions experienced during the relatively buoyant 1920s. Golf flourished in Brisbane in the 1920s and into the 1930s and Brisbane clubs formed at this time were Wynnum (1922), Sandgate (1922), Goodna (Gailles) 1924, Indooroopilly (St Lucia) 1925, Oxley (1928) and Nudgee (1929).

However, with the Depression of the 1930s and then the Second World War, many clubs struggled to attract new members and retain existing membership. Membership and attendances fell, petrol and liquor rationing affected income and new golf balls were unobtainable. Course maintenance suffered with enlistment in the services and engagement in war related work leaving few able bodied men available for such work. Membership fell across all metropolitan clubs. At Wynnum membership was 131 in 1939 and had fallen to 94 in 1944; Ashgrove had a membership of 120 in 1939 and 45 in 1944; Victoria Park, the only municipal course in Brisbane, had a membership of 360 in 1939 which had fallen to 228 by 1944.

The game of golf has seen many changes during the 20th century. Some of the mystique and romanticism has been lost with the change from names like brasseys, spoons, cleeks, niblicks, mashies to the modern numbering system for golf clubs; early sets of 6 or 7 clubs were easily carried in a light weight canvas or leather bag in contrast to the 14 clubs now towed on a buggy; improvements in the equipment – club shafts have changed from hickory to steel to graphite and balls have been greatly improved for durability and distance – have encouraged committees to lengthen and tighten their courses. The introduction of water hazards, bunkers, mounds and undulating greens are all attempts to offset the advantages the improved equipment has given the modern player. Advances in course machinery and equipment, grass propagations and course watering have greatly improved course presentation.

Due to the cost of establishing private clubs, few have been formed in and around Brisbane since the Second World War. However, numerous resort courses have been developed in the coastal tourist areas. Demand for membership of existing clubs has generally been strong during the 1990s and golf continues to be a popular sport in Brisbane.

ST LUCIA GOLF COURSE

Earlier known as Short Pocket, the St Lucia area developed as a farming district from the 1850s. The district gradually developed as a sugar producing area especially after 1865 with the establishment by William Dart of a sugar mill on the View of 13th hole from the tee. View of 14th green from the 15th tee. View of 15th hole from fairway. north bank of the Brisbane River (a little downstream from the present University of Queensland rowing sheds).

Though the district was slow to progress from a farming community to a suburban area, the proximity of the land to the river and the river views obtained from elevated parts of the district made it an attractive prospect for land speculators despite its distance from Brisbane Town. A number of estates with substantial residences were established in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Subdivisions of larger land holdings were undertaken from the 1880s. During the 1920s land at St Lucia continued to be subdivided and sold.

In the 1920s, municipal golf courses were established throughout Australia, enabling broader social access to the game. The Queensland Golfing Association, eager to foster golf in Queensland, first approached the Mayor of Brisbane in 1922 with a proposal for a 9-hole municipal course to be established at Victoria Park. In 1924 the Toowong Town Council investigated the possibility of establishing a municipal course on One Tree Hill (Mt Coot-

tha). Taringa Shire Council also investigated the possibility of developing a municipal course. A local councillor with the Taringa Shire, Bernard Boulton, proposed the formation of a municipal course but with the uncertainties surrounding the advent of the Greater Brisbane Council it was decided to form a private club and so the Indooroopilly Golf Club was established with a committee elected at the first meeting on 1 July 1925. This was the sixth golf course established in Brisbane.

Within six months, 124 acres was purchased in St Lucia with a frontage to the Brisbane River. Sydney professional, Dan Soutar, designed the layout and by June 1926 nine holes were ready for play. The official opening of Indooroopilly Golf Course (now St Lucia Golf Course) by the Premier, W. McCormack, took place on 3 July 1926. The second nine holes came into play at the end of the 1926 season when the membership totalled 319.

A report in the Sunday Mail, 26 May 1929 described the St Lucia Golf Course (then known as the Indooroopilly Golf Course) as occupying 124 acres of undulating country with an extensive frontage to the Brisbane River, bound on three sides by main roads and with the entrance and drive to the Club from Indooroopilly Road. The article went on to describe the view from the Clubhouse as

the) view in is broken by foliage of gums and numerous fruit trees and commands a wonderful vista of the Brisbane River... Sandy Creek babbles through... banks of darker foliage make a picturesque contrast with the surrounding gums.

Part of the Clubhouse was originally "Hillstone", the home of the Dart family. William Dart grew bananas and cotton on the St Lucia flats (where part of the University of Queensland now stands) before turning to sugar cane production in the 1870s. The cane was first crushed on board a steamer, the Walrus, until Dart constructed a mill on a site near the present University rowing sheds. Dart sold his plantation and mill around 1880 and moved to Redland Bay. Some years later he moved back to St Lucia and erected "Hillstone".

A map showing the original 1926 layout indicates that at this time three holes were played across land in a triangular wedge formed by Indooroopilly and Harts Roads west of Indooroopilly Road which is now the cluster of residences around Gilgandra Avenue. The course layout has changed a number of times since the first layout but many holes retain their original position, especially the holes that constitute the first nine.

After the Second World War a memorial terrace was built to the east of the clubhouse and one of the two mango trees planted at the time survives.

In 1962, the Brisbane City Council sought tenders for the lease of an area at nearby Long Pocket for development as a sporting ground. The club obtained a lease over 180 acres and constructed a second 18-hole course and clubhouse. The layout was designed by Sydney golf course architect, Al Howard and opened 8 March 1964 by Lord Mayor, Alderman C. Jones. In the early 1980s, Indooroopilly Golf Club negotiated the ceding of additional land at Long Pocket to the Club in exchange for the St Lucia course which became Brisbane's second municipal golf course. A 36-hole complex at Long Pocket was brought into play in 1985.

Since commencing play as a municipal course in 1985 the course at St Lucia has undergone a number of changes. The layout has been altered with some holes shortened, a number of bunkers removed and others reshaped, a number of greens reshaped, and the clubhouse and terrace facilities extended.

Course design advice was given to the Club by the renowned golf course designer, Alistair McKenzie, when he visited the course in 1926. Little evidence of this work remains.

Description

The St Lucia Golf Course is bounded by Carawa Street, Hillside Terrace and Indooroopilly Road and has Brisbane River frontage to the east. An 18-hole course laid out over undulating land, the course offers commanding prospects from the clubhouse terrace and various elevated tees and ridges across the course. The course is distinguished by picturesque wooded areas, a number of distinctive mature trees and water hazards formed by Sandy Creek as it winds its way through the course.

Entrance to the course is from the corner of Carawa Street and Indooroopilly Road. The clubhouse stands in the northwest corner of the course on an elevated ridge.

Holes 1 to 9 and 10 to 13 and 14 to 18 play out and back to the clubhouse. Play is characterised by drives from elevated tees, approaches to elevated greens, challenging blind doglegs, narrow guttered shutes from tee to fairway and negotiation of water hazards formed by Sandy Creek as it meanders across the course.

The course has a number of distinctive holes. The par-5 first hole plays from an elevated tee affording spectacular views across the course. The hole plays as a blind dogleg left, with the green hidden from view until the player is well down the fairway. The 3rd hole is a daunting par-4 at the eastern edge of the course running along the bank of the Brisbane River.

The hole plays from an elevated tee over Sandy Creek, driving between two large gum trees standing on the bank framing a narrow gutter onto the fairway. An elevated 4th tee affords views of the Brisbane River up and downstream. The 5th hole is a long par-5 playing blind across a stony gully along a fairway lined to the north by a row of distinctive silky oak trees. The par-3 8th hole plays across Sandy Creek to an elevated green protected by bunkers with the fairway and green falling away to the wooded edge of the creek to the north. The par-3 11th plays across a deep gully to a green protected by shallow bunkers with wooded bush to the north of the gully and north of the green. The par-4 14th is a blind dogleg right playing from an elevated tee affording sweeping views across the course. The blind par-4 15th plays across a stony fairway which slopes viciously towards the creek running along the edge of Indooroopilly Road. This fairway is distinguished by a number of mature trees that stand distinctively on and to the edge of the fairway. Approaching the clubhouse, the 18th hole plays down a treed fairway to an elevated green protected by deep bunkers to the front and sides and a grassed gutter to the back at the base of a steep grassed bank.

The clubhouse building has been extended and renovated a number of times and offers comfortable bar and dining facilities and commodious shower/toilet facilities. The clubhouse terrace is a landmark feature and affords sweeping views across the course. The 19th-hole kiosk adjacent to the clubhouse has a small terrace for patrons to enjoy the view of the course. A proshop north of the clubhouse offers a range of golfing equipment and associated goods and handles the course bookings and equipment hire.

A brief inspection of the course reveals that generally the course is in a satisfactory condition.

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 one of the earliest golf courses developed in Brisbane.

Rarity

CRITERION B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage as a municipal golf course in Brisbane.

Representative

CRITERION D

The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class or classes of cultural places

a purpose-designed playing field for the game of golf together with an associated club house and proshop.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

distinguished by fine prospects from elevated ridges and featuring lush wooded areas, a meandering watercourse and a weave of fairways.

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

valued by the local and wider community as a place for informal recreation and for organised sport formerly as the course for the Indooroopilly Golf Club and now as a municipal course.

References

1. Brisbane City Council - City Assets Branch *Conservation Management Study* Stage 1 Report. November 2002

Copyright Brisbane City Council

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 December 2023)



Dedicated to a better Brisbane