

Heritage Citation



Substation No.12

Key details

Addresses	At 416 Kingsford Smith Drive, Hamilton, Queensland 4007
Type of place	Substation
Period	Postwar 1945-1960
Style	Stripped Classical
Lot plan	L2_RP129584
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 17 May 2013
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (E) Aesthetic; (F) Technical; (H) Historical association

Brisbane City Council Tramway Substation No.12 and Brisbane City Council Electricity Substation No. 5¹ was

built in 1947 and designed by City Architect Frank Costello. The substation was built at a time when Brisbane City Council was increasing building and infrastructure projects that had been halted during the Second World War. Substation No.12 was designed as both a tramway substation and an electricity substation and as such is unusual in Brisbane. Situated at a busy intersection on Kingsford Smith Drive the design of the substation included a public toilet which was an unusual feature for a substation and is a reflection of the area's residential, commercial and industrial growth in this period.

History

The value of the Hamilton district had been recognised from the earliest settlement of Brisbane. And by the late 1840s wealthy free settlers were attracted to the Hamilton area by the elevated hilly country which offered river views and sea breezes. However, rough and swampy roads deterred settlement generally and residential development in the area was slow. By the 1860s the Hamilton area had become renowned for the establishment of several grand residences, for example Toorak, a stone residence on the top of the hill on Annie Street built for businessman James Robert Dickson in 1865 and Eldernell, another grand stone residence built in 1869 for William Hemmant atop of another of Hamilton's hills.

The Queensland Turf Club was granted a portion of land by the Queensland Government at Eagle Farm in 1863 for the purpose of establishing a racecourse. In 1865 the first race meeting was held. Coinciding with the development of the racecourse was the establishment of the Hamilton Hotel, giving the suburb its name. The area around the racecourse (in the suburbs now known as Hamilton, Ascot and Hendra) in this period, were predominately farming communities. By the 1860s the population of the district warranted the establishment of a school; the first in the area being the Eagle Farm School, opened in 1864 (renamed the Hendra School in 1908). Several churches were built in the area in this period, the earliest of which was a Wesleyan Methodist Church in 1869.

By the 1890s the development of Hamilton and Ascot followed a pattern that was common in Brisbane in this period. The wealthier residents bought the land on the rises and apexes of hills, ensuring breezes, views, protection from flooding and protection from waste run off. The less wealthy purchased land on the base of the hills. Many of the larger land holdings were subdivided into estates in this period.

As a result of the popularity of the racecourse it was deemed necessary to improve the transport service to the area. The first electric tramway began operating in Brisbane on 21 June 1897. Although a horse-drawn tram service had previously run along the Eagle Farm Road to Breakfast Creek and into the city, it was in 1899 that an electric tram service was introduced, the line extending all the way up Racecourse Road from Eagle Farm Road. This improvement not only encouraged greater numbers to the race venue but also heralded a wave of residential development. In 1891 the population of Hamilton alone was 2,660 and by 1911 this had doubled to 4,905. With the increase of residents in the area came improved services and facilities, for example the establishment of Hamilton State School in 1907, the first Anglican Church in 1895, a reservoir on Bartley's Hill in 1907, and an increase in retail and commercial facilities both along Lancaster Road adjacent to the Railway Station and along Racecourse Road. At the end of the First World War, it was clear the tramway system had become a necessity for mass transport. The system was expanded during the late 1920s and 30s by the newly formed Greater Brisbane City Council.

The interwar period saw major residential development in the racecourse suburbs. In Hamilton the population in 1911 was 4,905; by 1921 this had risen to 8873. As a reflection of this, new schools were established, for example the Ascot State School in 1920, as well as increased commercial activity in areas such as Racecourse Road and included businesses such as Ascot Garage, Arcadia Picture Theatre and the Hamilton post-office and store. In 1923 the Queensland Amateur Turf Club, now known as the Brisbane Turf Club, acquired a site to the east of Eagle Farm Racecourse for the purpose of establishing a second racecourse in the area. By 1933 Doomben Racecourse had opened.

The Second World War saw an influx of activity in the racecourse suburbs. The Eagle Farm and Doomben Racecourses were requisitioned by the Commonwealth Government in December 1941. Known as 'Camp Ascot' both of the sites were used by the American forces as military camps. As the Second World War drew to a close the U.S troops moved out of Brisbane and the everyday activities in the Hamilton and Hendra area that had been interrupted by the war resumed.

In June 1947 the Brisbane City Council, utilising the State Transport Facilities Act 1946, resumed a number of private bus services in an attempt to co-ordinate bus routes. The previous war years had proven the most profitable for the Council transport system. In 1947-48 the Brisbane City Council placed orders for thirty electric trolley bus chassis. As these were to arrive during the 1949-50 period it was necessary to have in place larger substations which would cope with the increased electricity demands of the trolley buses. This expansion included the purchase of both diesel and electric powered buses.

Substation No.12 was erected in 1947 as part of this post-war expansion of Brisbane City transport infrastructure. The structure was designed by Frank Costello who served as City Architect 1941-1952 and City Planner 1946-1952 before falling foul of the newly elected Roberts administration in 1952 which resulted in his and a number of other administrative staff's dismissal. Costello was involved in other numerous designs of municipal buildings which included a number of substations, Mt Coot-tha Look out, Eagle Farm Pumping Station, Second World War air raid shelters and the Mt Crosby Filtration Plant. Costello's contribution to Municipal architecture was impressive. He is credited with providing an 'architectural legacy to the city of Brisbane (which) was the architectural style new to Brisbane City Council.' His work is reputed to be heavily influenced by the work of Netherlander Willem Dudok.

With the post-war population increase and a decided increase in housing and industry through the Hamilton and Eagle Farm areas it became necessary for the installation of extra utilities to help service the area. Substation No.12 was one of only two substations built to combine the functions of electricity substation and tramway substation. The Hamilton Substation was the first of this type of station to be built in Brisbane, the other (Substation No. 42) on Waterworks Road at Ashgrove, was built in 1948. This dual usage within one station is unusual. It was deemed an efficient use of a site to incorporate both types of substations within one building.

Another unusual feature of Substation No. 12 was the inclusion of a set of public toilets within the design. This feature was also included in Substation No. 42. The decision was made to include the public toilets as a means of providing a service for the commercial and industrial area of Hamilton. The site of the substation sat parallel to the busy Eagle Farm Road (now Kingsford Smith Drive) with its bustling traffic, trams and pedestrians.

In 1969, Brisbane's electric trams were phased out and replaced completely by motorised buses. The property has continued to be controlled by the administrative electrical body.

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 remnant of Brisbane's electric tramway system and as evidence of the post-WWII expansion of the City's public transport infrastructure.

Rarity

CRITERION B

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

as one of only two substations in Brisbane that were purpose built for dual functions, the electricity substation and the tramway substation; as one of only two substations in Brisbane that incorporated a public toilet in the design.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

as a fine example of 1940s municipal architecture.

Technical

CRITERION F

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

as one of only two substations in Brisbane that incorporate dual functions, the electricity substation and the

tramway substation.

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 an example of the municipal work of City Architect and Planner Frank Costello.

References

1. BCC Substation No.5 and BCC Substation No. 12 will be referred to in this document as 'Substation No. 12'
2. Brisbane City Council Electricity Substation No. 42 and Brisbane City Council Tramway Substation No. 12, 1948, Frank Costello, City Architect, Elevations
3. Chaseling, Scott, Frank Costello: City Architect 1941-1952, City Planner 1946-1952. B. Arch. Thesis, University of Queensland, 1997
4. Greenwood, Gordon and John Laverty, *Brisbane 1859-1959: A History of Local Government*, The Council of the City of Brisbane, Brisbane, 1959
5. Osford-Jordan, Christopher William. *Study of the Architectural History of Brisbane Electricity Substations Before 1953*. (Unpub Thesis University of Queensland) January 1984
6. *Reports and Proceedings of the Brisbane City Council* For the years; July 1946-June 1947; July 1947-June 1948; July 1948-June 1949
7. Watson, Donald and Judith McKay. *A Directory of Queensland Architects to 1940*. (St. Lucia: U of Q Press, 1984)
8. Brisbane History Group, *Brisbane: Corridors of Power*, Brisbane History Group Papers No. 15, Brisbane History Group, Brisbane, 1997
9. University of Queensland, Queensland Places, <http://queenslandplaces.com.au/home>
10. Hamilton Town Hall', Department of Environment and Resource Management, Heritage Citation
11. 'Eagle Farm Racecourse', Department of Environment and Resource Management, Heritage Citation
12. *Booroodabin: A Sesquicentenary History of Breakfast Creek, Bowen Hills, Newstead and Teneriffe, 1823-2009*, The Queensland Women's Historical Association Inc, 2009
13. Lawson, Ronald 1973, *Brisbane in the 1890s: A Study of an Australian Urban Society*, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia
14. Donald Watson and Judith McKay, *Queensland Architects of the Nineteenth Century*, South Brisbane: Queensland Museum, 1994
15. E. Daniel Potts and Annette Potts, *Yanks Downunder 1941-1945: The American Impact on Australia*,

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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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