

Heritage Citation



Tram Shelter

Key details

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| Addresses | Outside 81 Chatsworth Road, Greenslopes, Queensland 4120 |
| Type of place | Tram / bus shelter |
| Period | Interwar 1919-1939 |
| Geolocation | -27.505819 153.054955 |
| Key dates | Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2003 Date of Citation — September 2008 |
| Construction | Roof: Corrugated iron; Structure: Timber |
| People/associations | Brisbane City Council Department of Works (Architect) |

This two-posted double-sided timber tram shelter was constructed by the Brisbane City Council around the 1930s and was originally the terminus of the electric tram route along Chatsworth Road. The shelter is significant for the evidence it provides of Brisbane's tramway system and for its contribution to the streetscape of Chatsworth Road.

History

This timber tram shelter is typical of those constructed by the Brisbane City Council on the city's tram routes during the 1930s. Although it is situated on a tramline constructed in 1914, tram shelters were not generally built during this period, but appeared later as part of the Brisbane City Council's efforts to improve the tramway system.

Brisbane's association with trams began in August 1885 with the horse tram, owned by the Metropolitan Tramway & Investment Co. In 1895, a contract was let to the Tramways Construction Co. Ltd. of London to electrify the system. The new electric tramway system officially opened on 21 June 1897 when a tram ran from Logan Road to the Victoria Bridge. Other lines opened in that year included the George Street, Red Hill and Paddington lines.

On 1 January 1923, the Brisbane Tramway Trust took over the Brisbane Tramway Company. During the period 1918-1922, no new lines or extensions were built and few rolling stock were constructed (in spite of growing traffic and serious overcrowding) due to the company nearing the end of its franchise. After the formation of the Greater Brisbane Council in 1925, the new Council took over the tramway system and instigated a programme of route extensions and shelter construction.

The extension of the tramline system to the Greenslopes/Coorparoo/Holland Park district was a stimulus to development in the area during the early decades of the twentieth century. In 1914, the Logan Road tramline was extended south along Logan Road before branching off along Chatsworth Road. The line was extended again along Logan Road to Arnold Street, Holland Park, in 1926.

Another tramline was built from Logan Road east along Old Cleveland Road to the intersection with Cavendish Road at Coorparoo in 1915. This was later extended along Cavendish Road to the edge of Holland Park in 1925. This meant that two tramlines now serviced the Greenslopes/Holland Park area.

The impact of this new public transport service on residential development can be seen in many estate map advertisements for the area during the interwar period. Proximity to the tramline was considered to be a major selling point for these new estates. One 1926 estate with '22 splendid building sites close to the New Logan Road Tram Extension' was named the 'Logan Road Tramway Extension Estate'.

Prior to the formation of the Greater Brisbane Council in 1925, Greenslopes and Holland Park were part of the Shire of Coorparoo. A souvenir publication at the time described the building boom in the Shire:

In the current year, Coorparoo Shire is generally regarded as one of the most progressive in the metropolitan

area. In 1923, there were 280 buildings erected and 90 buildings permits issued in the 5 months of 1924...The boom has set in and allotments which were unsaleable six months ago are to-day (June) fetching from £60 to £100...

Many of the fine interwar residences from the tramway era have survived in the Greenslopes/Holland Park area, particularly on the elevated hilltops with fine views. A more obvious remnant of the tramways is this tram shelter.

There are several remaining types of tram shelters to be found in Brisbane. The most common are the "standard waiting shelter" with four posts, the "standard small-type" two-posted shelters and the less common six-posted inner city shelters (one of which has been relocated to Logan Road, Holland Park West). All types were built of timber with either terracotta-tiled roofs (during the earlier period) or corrugated iron roofs. They were built to service not only tram routes, but also trolley buses and, later, buses. Referred to as 'A' type shelters, their construction was phased out by the Brisbane City Council during the 1960s with the introduction of aluminium and steel shelters, known as 'J' type shelters.

There are two main varieties of the old-style, two-posted shelters; those with a simple skillion roof and small double-sided shelters with a low pitched hipped roof. The shelter on Chatsworth Road is of the latter type. It is visible in a 1930s photograph of a tram traversing Chatsworth Road in the 1930s held by the John Oxley Library. The scalloped side battening was quite a common feature on these smaller shelters.

Many tramline waiting sheds were constructed by the BCC as a direct result of petitioning by the community or progress societies. The Council would then complete a survey over several days to see if a stop was needed. Waiting sheds promoted the system of public transport by providing a comfortable waiting area protected from the elements, and were often internally lit. Letters of thanks to the editor of the Telegraph and Courier Mail record that this detail was appreciated by passengers who could read the daily paper while waiting for trams or at night. After 1945, the Council realised revenue could be gained from the structures, and many were adorned with billboards and illuminated signs.

Two factors were responsible for the decrease in public transport usage after 1945: the end of petrol rationing in 1950 and the affordability of locally built cars such as the Holden. However, on 28 September 1962, the trams were dealt a blow from which they would never recover. The Paddington tram depot, a landmark in the district since 1915 was destroyed by fire along with 67 trams - 20 per cent of the fleet. To compensate for the loss, aging 'Dreadnought' trams and buses borrowed from Sydney were hurriedly brought into service. This incident forced the Brisbane City Council to consider whether to rebuild the trams or convert to buses.

By the 1960s, the car had become the dominant mode of private transport. This twentieth century phenomenon strangled the efficiency of trams and trolley buses as car traffic was held up while tram passengers embarked and disembarked. An important new direction in the city's public transport was taken when the Lord Mayor, Clem Jones, decided that diesel buses would provide the most effective service for the city.

In 1964, the tide began to turn against the tramway system. Reduced numbers of passengers and rising losses forced cuts in the frequency of many services. Also, the State Government had commissioned the US town planning company Wilbur Smith and Associates, to carry out a comprehensive survey of Brisbane's traffic requirements for the foreseeable future. The fate of trams and trolleybuses was sealed, as they stood in the way of proposed road widening and traffic islands and were seen to be inflexible, unlike the diesel bus.

On the night of Sunday, 13 April 1969, the last tram passed along Queen Street with a police escort on its final run to the workshops at Boomerang Street, Milton. On that day, 72 000 people travelled on the trams.

A number of Brisbane's former tram shelters have been moved or demolished for road works (eg. at the

Normanby Five-ways). Many of those that remain provide an attractive shady shelter for bus passengers and make an aesthetic contribution to the streetscape. They also serve as a physical reminder of an earlier form of public transport in Brisbane and an earlier period of Brisbane's development.

The Brisbane City Council renovated the Chatsworth Road tram shelter in the early 1990s. It makes an attractive contribution to the streetscape of Chatsworth Road.

Description

This tram shelter is located on the footpath parallel to Chatsworth Road, Greenslopes. The timber-framed structure supports a gabled roof of corrugated iron and square timber posts and timber brackets support the roof centrally along the ridgeline. The vertical boarding finished with perforated rounded edges decorates the gable ends.

The timber seating propped between the posts does not appear to be original. A downpipe connected to the gutter is fitted to the side of the outer post.

The shelter is currently in excellent 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

For the evidence it provides of the development of the tramway system in Brisbane and the pattern of development in the Greenslopes/Holland Park area during the interwar period.

Rarity

CRITERION B

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

As a rare, surviving example of an original, two-posted, gable roofed former tram shelter in the Greenslopes/Holland Park area.

References

1. Brimson, Samuel. *The Tramways of Australia*. Dreamweaver Books, Sydney, 1983
2. Brisbane Centenary Celebrations Committee 1924, *Brisbane Centenary Official Historical Souvenir*, Brisbane
3. Brisbane City Council Archives
4. Brisbane City Council Minutes and Meetings, 1915-1945
5. Brisbane City Council Water Supply & Sewerage Detail Plans
6. Brisbane Tramway Museum Society Archives, Ferny Grove
7. Clark, Bill. *Brisbane City Council Trolley Bus, Tram and Bus Shelters*. Brisbane: Queensland University of Technology. 1992
8. Clark, Howard. *The Australian Tram: a selection of views depicting the development and operation of Australian tramways*. Sydney: Australian Electric Traction Association. 1969
9. Greenwood, Gordon. *Brisbane 1859-1959 A History of Local Government*. Council of the City of Brisbane, Brisbane, 1959
10. Larkins, John. *Romance of Australian Trams*. Adelaide: Rigby Press. 1977
11. Steer, G.R. "Brisbane Tramways: Their History and Development". *Historical Society of Queensland Journal*, Vol. 3, No.3, May 1944, pp.209-233
12. Tyrrell, S. *The Trams of Brisbane*. Brisbane: The Brisbane Tramway Museum Society. 1971

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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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