

Heritage Citation



Valley Baths (facade only)

Key details

Addresses	At 424 Wickham Street, Fortitude Valley, Queensland 4006
Type of place	Sportsground
Period	Interwar 1919-1939
Style	Composite
Lot plan	L30_B32290; L29_SL12328
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 30 October 2000 Date of Citation — May 2006
Construction	Walls: Face brick
People/associations	Alfred Herbert Foster (Architect)

The Valley Baths facade was built in 1925 and designed by City Architect Alfred Herbert Foster. The design also included an Olympic Pool, diving board and spectator's gallery, however none of these survive today. They were constructed on the site of the original Booroodabin Baths, which had been built in 1901. The current pool and surrounding premises were built in 1985 under a Brisbane City Council Redevelopment Scheme and this facade is all that remains of either the 1901 or 1925 bathing complexes.

History

The baths were built on the site of the original Booroodabin Baths, completed in 1901 by Mr H Taylor, Contractor, and designed by architect, Mr JJ Clark and Mr JM Woodward, the Booroodabin Divisional Board's Clerk of Works. The building included two shops, dressing rooms and spectators gallery. The bath itself was 90 x 30 feet with a depth of three feet six inches to seven feet six inches. 60,000 or 80,000 gallons of water were pumped into the pool daily from Breakfast Creek.

In 1925 a new swimming complex was built on top of the original baths. These premises were designed by architect AH Foster and included an Olympic Pool, diving board and a spectators gallery for 2,000 people. The pool was constructed from reinforced concrete and faced with white glazed tiles. The complex cost 17,000 pounds to build.

In 1985 the Brisbane City Council launched a \$1.5 million - \$2 million redevelopment project to replace the existing pool complex. During the demolition process the original Booroodabin Baths were exposed but were subsequently destroyed. Today all that remains of the previous baths is the 1925 façade which was preserved at a cost of \$130,000.

The 1985 Bath complex includes an Olympic Pool, a three level grandstand with seating for 720 spectators, a meeting room, club room, media facilities and a kiosk.

Description

The symmetrical three storey façade of brick construction features dark brick pilasters with patterned polychrome brickwork infill panels. The centre panel contains double entry doors with doors centred above in a semi-circular arched opening with alternate rendered voussoirs and quoins, leading on to a bracketed balcony with wrought iron balustrading. A projecting cornice with dentil blocks separates the central brick parapet with a triangular pediment, crest, and the building's name.

The flanking panels contain square headed multi paned windows to the ground floor and doors with multi paned fanlights, surmounted by a continuous rendered lintel. The upper walls contain similar windows with a continuous

rendered sill band and lintel, with the end panels terminating in rendered triangular pediments and pentil blocks. At mid height, each panel contains circular port hole windows with rendered keystones.

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 site's use as a bath/pool complex since the 1920s and its continued importance to the local community throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

for its contribution to the streetscape; and, as a good example of polychromatic brickwork.

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

as the façade represents a site that has provided recreational and competitive swimming for the local and wider Brisbane community since the 1920s; and, as the headquarters of the Queensland Amateur Swimming Association since 1925.

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 work of City Architect Alfred Herbert Foster.

References

1. The Brisbane Courier, 20 December 1895
 2. The Courier Mail, 19 October 1985
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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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