

Heritage Citation



Water Police Residence (former)

Key details

Addresses	At 11 Thornton Street, Kangaroo Point, Queensland 4169
Type of place	Work residence, Police station / building
Period	Federation 1890-1914
Style	Queenslander
Lot plan	L291_SL5711
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 30 October 2000 Date of Citation — August 2010
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Timber

Criterion for listing

(A) Historical; (D) Representative; (H) Historical association

This former Queensland Water Police residence was constructed in 1901 from the building materials of the Marine Department Messenger's house. That house had been removed in 1900 for the construction of a new Naval Office. The Messenger subsequently took over the offices of the Water Police in the old Port Office and the Water Police were forced to relocate to this spot, which was in close proximity to a boat shed and the Brisbane River. In 1902, the small house had four rooms, two verandas and later, a detached kitchen. By 1939 it was being used solely as a sergeant's quarters and had been extended and modified to include three veranda rooms, a bathroom, breakfast room and a galvanised iron laundry underneath. The building remained in use as the Water Police residence until 1988 and was subsequently sold in 1993.

History

A police presence at Kangaroo Point was established since the early 1870s, with the construction of a lockup and accommodation for the constable.¹

Maps from the 1860s and 1870s indicate that a public bath was located on this particular site.² The provision of quarters close to work was an expected part of service in the force. The construction of this building came about as the result of the urgent need to relocate the Water Police.

In June 1900 the Marine Department requested the Water Police to vacate offices they used in the old Port Office (near the corner of Alice and Edward Streets) as they were urgently required for the Messenger. The messenger's house was being removed to make way for the new Naval Office.² (This building has been described as both a caretaker's and messenger's house).³

Police requested that the Messenger's house be handed over to them for re-erection as a Water Police Office. A site was sought inside the Botanic Gardens, near the Edward Street Ferry, and after demolition the materials of the Messenger's house were moved to the gardens.⁴ With no suitable space being available in the locality, the Water Police were forced to move to the Police reserve at Kangaroo Point. A small boatshed and slip belonging to the municipal Council, immediately below the existing Police Station was obtained on a rental basis.⁵

The concept of locating the Water Police at the Gardens was short lived. Between June 1900 and February 1901 a "paper war" raged between various Government Departments, which included the Architects, Department of Agriculture and the Police, concerning the suitability of plans and site for the proposed Water Police offices. No work however commenced on the building.⁶ After an inspection of the Kangaroo Point Police Reserve in March 1901, the Acting Commissioner suggested that if a part of the Ferry Reserve could be added to it in order to secure a boat shed site, the office for the Water Police could be erected there.⁷

The building material was moved to Kangaroo Point in April 1901 and a four room structure was erected there. In September 1901 an estimate was prepared to “erect a kitchen 10 feet by 14 feet. 9 foot hardwood walls. Iron roof and single brick chimney...” The acting Commissioner, ever conscious of the Government’s unwillingness to spend money, pencilled a notation to the estimate, “If authority is given for erection of the kitchen, one of the Water Police could occupy it and a saving on house rent be made.”⁹

A letter addressed to “The Officers in Charge, Police Depot,” from Sergeant Edwards, dated 1907, outlined the brief history of the building. It is stated that the constable took “possession of on the 1st of January 1902” and that at that stage “four rooms were erected with two verandahs.” Later, “a kitchen has been erected also authorised.”¹⁰

However, conditions must still have been primitive as shortly after construction in November 1905 Water Police Constable Bycroft wrote in a report;

*“I beg to report the need of water supply to any quarters at Water Police Cottage at Kangaroo Point ... I made application about 18 months ago for this convenience ... The supply of water to the bath would be a great convenience to my family and myself”.*¹¹

The request was approved provided the amount did not exceed 25/-.

The erection of the residence occurred at a time when the Water Police were undergoing change. Following a Royal Commission 1899 the River Police and Water Police were amalgamated. Johnston indicates the extent and importance of their work at the turn of the century;

*“Their regular work of attending on the arrival and departure of all trading vessels in the port of Brisbane, as well as of general patrolling, was extended by a health scare in 1900. With fears abounding about the spread of the plague, the Water Police had to detain all vessels in the river until they had passed by the Health Officer, to check certificates of fumigation and to inspect moorings”.*¹²

By 1939 the residence was being described as the Senior Sergeant’s quarters. An inspection report described it as constructed of wood with iron roof and consisting of 4 main rooms, 3 verandah rooms, bathroom, breakfast room (glassed in during 1936) and detached kitchen. A galvanised iron laundry had been constructed under the house and cement tubs emplaced. A new roof was place on both the quarters and the boat shed.¹³

The residence was occupied by the police until June 1988. In October 1993 both this property and the adjoining lockup were offered by sale for tender.¹⁴ Further improvements have been applied for with an application submitted to the Brisbane City Council in 1996.¹⁵

Description

This highset timber framed residence seated on timber stumps contains four central rooms bounded by a verandah to three sides, which has been enclosed in a small section. A detached kitchen to the rear of the dwelling is linked by an open covered walkway.

The building has a pyramidal roof crowned with an apex ventilator with separate verandah roof, both clad in corrugated iron. The walls of the building are clad in chamfer boards to the verandah and what appears to be

weatherboards to the rear sections including the kitchen.

Set on a steeply sloping site, the undercroft of the building is partially enclosed with corrugated iron cladding. The verandahs located on the river side of the dwelling provide panoramic views of the river. Accessed is gained by a wide stairway which rises to one corner. A door central to the riverside wall opens into the building. Otherwise the verandah walls have large double hung windows.

The verandah roof is supported on timber posts with balustrading consisting of hand and midrails. Part of the balustrading is sheeted with fibre cement panels. A small laundry with concrete tubs is situated underneath the dwelling.

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 presence, development and operation of the Queensland Water Police in Brisbane at Kangaroo Point from the early twentieth century.

Representative

CRITERION D

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

as an example of the types of dwellings provided for government employees in the early twentieth century.

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 a purpose built residence utilized by the Queensland Water Police for more than 80 years.

References

1. Please refer to the citation and file on the "Police Lockup"
2. Letter from the Marine Department to the Police dated 9 June 1900. Originally from Police Files.
3. Letter from Sergeant (?) Edwards to "The Officers in Charge Depot" Dated 12 April 1907. From Police Files & Memorandum Dept of Public Works, "re-Proposed Water Police Station, Botanical Gardens". Dated 23 January 1901.
4. *Ibid*
5. *Ibid* & Citation by B. Rough
6. *Ibid*
7. Letter to the Under Secretary of the Home Secretary's Department from Alex Douglas, Acting Commissioner of Police. Dated 15 March 1901.
8. Quotes included in citation from B. Rough. (Original documentation not acknowledged)
9. Letter from Sergeant (?) Edwards to "The Officers in Charge Depot" Dated 12 April 1907. From Police Files.
10. Report of Water Police Constable Henry Bycroft submitted to ? (illegible) Depot. Dated 7 November 1905.
11. W Ross. Johnston, *The Long Blue Line; A History of the Queensland Police*. (Brisbane; Boolarong Publications, 1992). P.144
12. Citation from B. Rough
13. Photocopy of sale pamphlet of sale marketed by Colliers Jardine. Dated 15/10/1993
14. Brisbane City Council Electronic records

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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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