

Heritage Citation



Witherby

Key details

Addresses	At 31 Rigby Street, Woolloowin, Queensland 4030
Type of place	House
Period	Victorian 1860-1890
Style	Queenslander
Lot plan	L80_RP19404; L81_RP19404
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004 Date of Citation — June 2003
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Timber

“Witherby” is a 19th century house, built on a large allotment in Woolloowin during the building boom of the 1880s. As one of the earlier houses built here, it is part of the history of the development of Woolloowin as an inner-city suburb for families and is a good representative of the movement of middle civil servants into Brisbane’s suburbs, attracted by the completion of the rail line.

History

The land on which this house is situated was part of over fifty acres originally purchased by brothers Aaron and John Adsett in the land sales of 1858-9. In 1866 John Adsett acquired title to a twenty-five acre portion, holding it for many years before selling it to John Lloyd Bale in August 1883. Bale engaged surveyors Hamilton & Raff to subdivide the land into 197 lots (virtually all sixteen perches except for nine smaller lots). These were marketed by auctioneers E. Hooker & Son as Maida Hill Estate, from December 1884 onwards.

The successful completion of the Ipswich-Brisbane rail line in 1876 had encouraged those desiring a rail link to Sandgate to press their claims. After consideration of several alternative routes, the Government in 1880 approved a line running from Roma Street, through Albion, and northwards and eastwards to terminate at Sandgate. The contract was let to George Bashford & Co, the line formally opened on 10 May 1882. Regular services began the next day.

When the line first opened, stations were constructed at Lutwyche (later renamed Woolloowin, and moved north by 140 metres in 1900), Thorrolldtown (inserted in 1885 600 metres north of Lutwyche), and Eagle Junction. The 1882 Lutwyche Station was regarded as being at the fringes of suburban development, but development was proceeding quickly, as indicated by the 1885 construction of Thorrolldtown Station as a part of a private land development. Thorrolldtown closed in 1890, after only five years.

In August 1886 bootmaker William Rowe bought four adjoining lots in the Maida Hill Estate, two on Rigby Street and two on Fraser Street. Rowe sold the Rigby Street lots a year later, and at about the same time, built a cottage on the Fraser Street frontage. It is probable that Rowe’s sale of the Rigby Street land financed the construction of his small house.

The purchaser of the two Rigby Street lots was Edward Thomas Trundle, an accountant in the Education Department. Trundle is listed in the *Queensland Post Office Directory* of 1890 as living at “Lutwyche”, as this part of Maida Hill had come to be named. It is probable that Trundle, and wife Charlotte Elizabeth to whom he transferred the property in January 1889, built their house immediately after purchasing the land from Rowe.

The Trundles were one of the earlier residents in Rigby Street. Even by 1893 they had only one neighbour on either side of them – commercial traveller W.H. Wright on the eastern side in “Tresyllian”, and accountant and paymaster G.H. Parminter some distance to the west in “Lizmar”. These three houses were quite large – the houses of successful public servants and businessmen, each on multiple lots. Later houses began to fill the gaps, but were more modest affairs, mostly each on an original single sixteen perch lot.

In December 1917 Charlotte transferred the property to their unmarried daughter Eleanor Gertrude, who held it for another three decades. In total the Trundle family owned the property for the first sixty years of its existence.

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 earlier middle-class houses built in Rigby Street.

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 a few remaining larger houses built in this part of Woolloowin.

References

1. Brisbane City Council Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board, Detail Plans
2. Department of Natural Resources, Certificates of Title
3. Kerr, J 1988, *Brunswick Street, Bowen Hills and Beyond: the Railways of the Northern suburbs of Brisbane*, Australian Railway Historical Society, Brisbane
4. John Oxley Library photographs & clippings files
5. Lawson, Ronald 1973, *Brisbane in the 1890s: A Study of an Australian Urban Society*, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia
6. McKellar's Estate Maps of Brisbane, 1895

7. Queensland Pioneers Index 1829-1889, Qld Registrar-General, March 2000
 8. *Queensland Post Office Directories*, 1887-1949
 9. Windsor & Districts Historical Society 2000, *A Walk Through the History of Thorroldtown and Maida Hill*
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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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