

Heritage Citation



Dovercourt

Key details

Addresses	At 124 Sherwood Road, Toowong, Queensland 4066
Type of place	House
Period	Victorian 1860-1890
Style	Filigree
Lot plan	L21_RP19798; L20_RP19798; L19_RP19798; L18_RP19798; L17_RP19798; L50_RP19798; L22_RP19798; L23_RP19798
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 July 2002 Date of Citation — February 2011
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Masonry
People/associations	W.H. Miskin (Occupant); William Henry Elleker (Architect)

This large Victorian house designed by architect William Henry Ellerker was constructed some time in the mid 1860s. Solicitor and local identity W. H. Miskin was a tenant for many years, and he finally purchased the property in 1887. It is an excellent example of Victorian domestic architecture and was one of the first grand acreage residences in Toowong. It has significant aesthetic value.

History

English architect William Henry Ellerker arrived in Brisbane from Melbourne in 1863. He had been engaged in private practice in Victoria for three years, and on moving to Brisbane he was employed by the Colonial Architect's Office as a temporary draftsman. By 1864 he had set up a private practice in Brisbane, and in that same year purchased an eight-acre allotment of land at Toowong on which he erected 'Dover Court Cottage' to his own design.

In 1865 Ellerker was heavily involved in the first St Thomas' Church of England, designing the church and also making a large donation towards its construction. In the same year Ellerker entered a Brisbane partnership with a former Melbourne architect Peter Kerr. The business lasted only less than a year, and by August 1866, Ellerker was in financial difficulty. In August 1866 a writ of fieri facias was issued against 'Ellerker and Another', causing two other properties in which he had interest, to be sold. Ellerker took the opportunity to again seek his fortune in Victoria and left Brisbane. His debts appear to have remained, and in March 1867 'Dovercourt' was auctioned by order of the mortgagee.

During his time in Brisbane, Ellerker was also responsible for the design of a number of commercial properties in Queen Street, a villa for Francis Gregory on North Quay, and James Gibbon's Teneriffe House. His entry in the competition for the design of the Queensland Parliamentary buildings was actually selected by the judges, but Parliament requested scrutiny by another architect and after some objections Ellerker's design was abandoned.

At the time of the 1867 auction, Dover Court Cottage contained just four rooms, with a detached kitchen and servant's room. It had a three-stalled stable, coach house, corn room and fowl house. A large water tank and pump were also provided. It was sold again in 1868 to accountant Walter H Snelling, who seemingly acquired the house as a rental property. Solicitor and local identity W H Miskin was a tenant for many years, finally purchasing the property in 1887.

By the 1890s the property was in use as a residence for the boarders of Mr Mark's School. J B Fewings described it then

as large, commodious, substantial and well ventilated. Being built on the summit of the ridge, it is well drained naturally as well as artificially and indeed both nature and art throughout combine to render this position one of the coolest, cleanest and most cheerful and most healthy imaginable.

It would appear extensions must have been made to the property since 1867.

Description

This low-set house has walls of brick and rendered brick and a corrugated steel roof, with the veranda roof separated from the main roof in typical 19th Century style. The veranda is edged in cast iron lace and timber fretwork. Three rendered chimneys share the roof with at least four ridge ventilators. The house faces east, parallel with Sherwood Road and a small semi-detached wing, without verandas, sits close beside the Sherwood Road frontage, adjacent the rear of the main house. The grounds contain many mature trees. The character of the house is one of a grand yet charming Victorian Period house, in an Arcadian setting.

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 first acreage grand residences in Toowong.

Representative

CRITERION D

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

as it displays typical characteristics of Victorian residential architecture.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

as an architect designed Victorian period grand residence in an extensive and established garden setting.

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 it has a special association with the life and work of both William Henry Ellerker, architect, and W.H.Miskin.

References

1. Gregory, Helen, (ed.). *Arcadian Simplicity: J.B. Fewings Memoirs of Toowong*. Brisbane: Library Board of Qld., 1990
 2. Summer, Ray, *More Historic Homes of Brisbane*, National Trust of Queensland, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, 1982
 3. Watson, Donald & Judith McKay 1994, *Queensland Architects of the 19th Century*, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia
 4. Queensland Government Gazette.
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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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