

## PROPOSED LOCAL HERITAGE PLACE

*Saxmundham* Stables (former), 25 Thurlow Street, Newmarket (LOT PLAN: part of 2\_RP125605 and 27\_RP20059)



### SUMMARY

Built by 1885, the former *Saxmundham* stables at 25 Thurlow Street, Newmarket, are a two-storey timber building with an elongated, gabled roof. A hoist point, used to load hay into the centrally located loft and attached to a transverse gable that protrudes from the main roof, is situated above an upper-storey doorway. The stables, built for merchant Robert Woods Thurlow and his family, demonstrate the way of life of affluent Brisbane families during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries who could afford to maintain stables for recreational use. Thurlow served as Mayor of Brisbane Municipal Council in 1896.

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# HISTORY

## A history of Newmarket

Newmarket, a suburb located five kilometres from central Brisbane, was first settled by Europeans in the mid-19th Century. Newmarket was initially named 'The Three Mile Scrub' because of the suburb's distance from central Brisbane. After European settlement, much early development occurred along the Enoggera Road, a major route north to Kilcoy and Gympie. The primary industry in the area at this time was farming.

Development in the area increased with the establishment of the Newmarket stock saleyard in Newmarket Road in 1877, which gave the suburb its name.<sup>1</sup> The first saleyards occupied an area bounded by Wilston, Newmarket, Enoggera roads, and Alderson Street. The saleyards operated until 1931, when they were moved to Cannon Hill. The saleyard was a significant factor in plans to establish a railway line through the district. When opened, the station was located adjacent to the saleyards.

The railway opening through Newmarket, Wilston, Windsor, and Alderley in 1899 provided further impetus to suburban development, as did the Kelvin Grove tramline extension along Enoggera Road in 1903. As the population grew, businesses, churches and other facilities were built. In 1883, a wooden church hall was erected by the Bible Christian section of the Methodist Church on the corner of Davidson Street and Enoggera Road. A post office was opened in 1888. Enoggera Road became a busy thoroughfare for both people and stock, and by the 1890s, Newmarket also boasted a hotel and several businesses, including a wheelwright, blacksmith, and butcher. Farming and the tanning industry also played an essential part in the early history of European settlement in the suburb. During the flood of 1893, Newmarket remained one of the few suburbs above water. The slopes were sought after as building blocks because of their cooling breezes and flood-free status. Enoggera Creek, also known as Breakfast Creek at this point, forms one boundary of the suburb.

The Newmarket State School opened in 1904 to cater to the needs of families who had settled in the area. In the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the area was essentially a middle-class residential district that had retained a rural atmosphere. In 1911, Newmarket had a population of 721.<sup>2</sup> During the interwar years, however, residential development intensified. Many fine homes were built on the hills west of Enoggera Road at Newmarket. In addition, the old saleyard site was developed for housing at this time, including a block of architect-designed stucco houses on Gray Street, Lind Street, and Greene Street off Newmarket Road.

After the Second World War, Newmarket continued to develop as a residential suburb, and in 1963, Newmarket High School opened to cater for the expanding population. By 1975, the population of Newmarket was 3,955.<sup>3</sup> However, despite a growing population, Newmarket High School closed in 1996.

## The life and career of Robert Thurlow

By 1885, noted Brisbane-based merchant Robert Woods Thurlow had the former *Saxmundham* stables at 25 Thurlow Street built. Thurlow, born in 1855 in the market town of Saxmundham, Suffolk, England, to a family of builders, became a noted politician and Mayor of Brisbane Municipal

<sup>1</sup> 'The Last Sale – Newmarket Yards,' *The Brisbane Courier*, 20 November 1931, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> 'Newmarket' (Centre for the Government of Queensland, 2018).

<sup>3</sup> 'Newmarket' (Centre for the Government of Queensland, 2018).



Council. Thurlow emigrated to Australia as a child with his family. They arrived in Brisbane in the 1860s.<sup>4</sup> In 1879, Thurlow married Phoebe Harrup of Limestone Farm, Eight Mile Plains.<sup>5</sup>

From 1870, Thurlow worked for the firm of J & J Burns, becoming a manager before purchasing the grocery business in 1884.<sup>6</sup> Re-branded as R.W. Thurlow and Co, the company, was highly regarded as one of the 'leading mercantile concerns in Queensland.'<sup>7</sup> The company was described in an advertisement of 1884 as a 'Wholesale and retail Grocers, Wine, Spirit, and Produce Merchants' of 191 Queen Street.<sup>8</sup> R.W. Thurlow and Co. also imported and manufactured foodstuffs and were the proprietors of the Crescent Packing Company.

In addition to the company's main premises on Queen Street, by 1890, R.W. Thurlow and Co. had a bulk store on Stanley Street, South Brisbane. In 1894, this was moved to a building on Charlotte Street.<sup>9</sup> However, by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, R.W. Thurlow and Co. sought to consolidate their operations. In 1900, Thurlow commissioned Robin Dods of the noted architectural practice of Hall and Dods to design a new four-storey building located on the corner of Adelaide and Wharf Street.<sup>10</sup> This building was described as:

The front Wharf Street elevation was built as two separate buildings with separate entrances but sharing a common façade. Each doorway had a cantilevered and arched canopy worked in cement render and with cornice between the windows on the two upper floors. The parapet was raised up at the corners as tower element with a scalloped profile on each face.<sup>11</sup>

This was the first design by Dods that was greater than two-storeys high. It remained owned by R.W. Thurlow and Co. until the 1950s, when it was sold to the radio station 4B.C.

As well as his work as a well-known businessperson, Thurlow played an active role in Brisbane's political and economic life. In 1887, Thurlow was elected a councillor in the Shire of Ithaca.<sup>12</sup> Due to Thurlow's standing in Brisbane, in early 1895, he allowed himself to be nominated for the vacant position of Alderman of the West Ward of Brisbane Municipal Council.<sup>13</sup> He served in this position between 1895 to 1898.<sup>14</sup> In 1896, Thurlow became Mayor of the Brisbane Municipal Council. Thurlow did not expect to be elected and held the job for a year.<sup>15</sup> As outlined in the *Municipalities Institutions Act of 1864*, Mayors of Brisbane's Municipal Council were chosen 'from its own ranks' and served a term of only a year, though the outgoing Mayor could seek re-election.<sup>16</sup> Thurlow also stood for election to the Queensland Government unsuccessfully.

Importantly during his tenure as Mayor, the Local Authorities Association of Queensland was formed, and Thurlow was its first President. The Association was created with the 'purpose of

<sup>4</sup> 'Obituary: Mr R.W. Thurlow,' *Queenslander*, 26 February 1913, p. 7.

<sup>5</sup> 'Former Mayoress Dies,' *The Courier-Mail*, 20 June 1953, p. 7.

<sup>6</sup> 'Advertising,' *The Telegraph*, 2 April 1884, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> 'Late Mr R.W. Thurlow,' *The Week*, 28 February 1913, p. 17.

<sup>8</sup> 'Advertising,' *The Telegraph*, 2 April 1884, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup> 'The Crescent Packing Company,' *The Queenslander*, 28 March 1896, p. 24.

<sup>10</sup> 'Messrs R.W. Thurlow and Co's New Warehouse and Factory,' *The Queenslander*, 27 April 1901, p. 822.

<sup>11</sup> Robert Riddel, 'R.S. (Robin) Dods, 1868-1920: The Life and Work of a Significant Australian Architect' (PhD Thesis, The University of Queensland, 2008), p. 609.

<sup>12</sup> 'Ithaca Elections,' *The Telegraph*, 19 September 1887, p. 5.

<sup>13</sup> 'West Ward,' *The Telegraph*, 25 January 1895, p. 4; 'West Ward: Requisition to R.W. Thurlow, Esq.,' *The Brisbane Courier*, 25 January 1895, p. 8.

<sup>14</sup> 'Resignation of Alderman Thurlow,' *The Brisbane Courier*, 14 April 1898, p. 4.

<sup>15</sup> 'The New Mayor of Brisbane,' *The Queenslander*, 15 February 1896, p. 31.

<sup>16</sup> John Laverty, *The Making of a Metropolis: Brisbane, 1823-1925* (Salisbury, QLD: Boolarong Press, 2009), p. 99.

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watching over and protecting the interests, rights and privileges of local authorities.<sup>17</sup> In 2022, this organisation is known as the Local Government Association of Queensland. Additionally, in 1896, Thurlow was made acting Consul in Brisbane for the united kingdoms of Sweden, Norway, and acting Consul for Belgium.<sup>18</sup> He served in these roles until 1900.<sup>19</sup> Finally, Thurlow was the 'originator' of the Union of Federated Traders' Association and served as the President of the Brisbane Chamber of Commerce between 1907 and 1909.<sup>20</sup> Thurlow died in 1913.

### The former stables at *Saxmundham*, 25 Thurlow Street

In 1859, merchant Robert Davidson acquired 61 acres of land (Portions 80 and 81) bounded by Enoggera Creek and Enoggera Road. During the 1860s, Davidson let his land for the agistment of horses.<sup>21</sup> This area became known as Davidson's Grant. Davidson then began subdividing and selling parts of his holding, including two acres on the southern side of his holding to Dr Joseph Bancroft, who lived directly across the creek. In 1881, the Kelvin Grove Estate 'comprising 39 Splendid Villa Sites, many of them having frontages to the Main Northern Road and Enoggera Creek' was advertised for sale.<sup>22</sup>

In 1882, Thurlow purchased three allotments (subdivisions 25, 27 and 29 measuring almost an acre) facing Edith Street. Edith Street was renamed Thurlow Street in 1920 in honour of Thurlow. By 1883, the Thurlow's had built a timber residence named *Saxmundham* after Robert Woods Thurlow's birthplace in Suffolk. An 1883 photograph showed the first *Saxmundham* as a neat and substantial cottage with a separate kitchen building at the rear.<sup>23</sup> The Thurlow's holding increased in 1884 when Phoebe acquired another two allotments (subdivisions 31 and 33) in Edith Street to the west of their existing land. Four additional allotments (subdivisions 20, 22, 24 and 26) adjoining the rear of the property and fronting Davidson Street to the north were acquired by Phoebe during the 1890s. The Thurlow's' estate then contained just over two acres of land. The house was extended again in 1896 when Brisbane architects, Hall and Dods, called for tenders for 'additions to residence of RW Thurlow, Edith Street, Enoggera.'<sup>24</sup>

The Thurlow family, who had a keen interest in horses, had the stables constructed around the same time as the original *Saxmundham* house. Equestrian activities were a popular pastime for affluent Brisbane families during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. A photograph of *Saxmundham* taken around 1885 from the home of Joseph Bancroft across Enoggera Creek to the south shows the cottage with an extended verandah and the stable building a short distance to the west.<sup>25</sup> Family photographs reveal that the Thurlow family were keen equestrians who participated in various events, including steeple chasing and 'following the hounds.'<sup>26</sup> The family were well known in Brisbane's equestrian community. In 1885, for example, one of Thurlow's horses, Meteor, ran in a private race over one mile at the Walgett racecourse in New South Wales against a horse

<sup>17</sup> 'Return of the Mayor,' *The Daily Northern Argus*, 17 August 1896, p. 3; 'Local Authorities Association,' *The Brisbane Courier*, 22 October 1896, p. 3.

<sup>18</sup> 'Consular Appointment,' *The Telegraph*, 10 August 1896, p. 4; 'Breezy News,' *The Week*, 14 August 1896, p. 20; *Queensland Government Gazette* LXVI, no. 104 (17 October 1896), p. 888.

<sup>19</sup> Norman Pixley, 'Consuls in Queensland – Part 1: The Colony,' *Journal of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland* 9, no. 5 (1974), p. 15.

<sup>20</sup> 'Chamber of Commerce,' *The Brisbane Courier*, 30 August 1907, p. 7; 'Chamber of Commerce,' *The Brisbane Courier*, 29 May 1909, p. 5; 'Death of Mr R.W. Thurlow,' *The Brisbane Courier*, 26 February 1913, p. 5.

<sup>21</sup> 'Classified Advertising,' *Brisbane Courier*, 25 June 1867, p.1.

<sup>22</sup> 'Classified Advertising,' *Brisbane Courier*, 3 October 1881, p. 4.

<sup>23</sup> SLQ, *Saxmundham in Newmarket, 1883*.

<sup>24</sup> Don Watson and Judith McKay, *Queensland Architects of the Nineteenth Century: A Biographical History* (Brisbane, QLD: Queensland Museum, 1994), p. 84; Riddel, 'R.S. (Robin) Dods, 1868-1920,' p. 609.

<sup>25</sup> Anon, *Davidson's Paddock: Heritage Trail* (Brisbane, QLD: Davidson's Grant (Newmarket) Historical Group, 2009), 4.

<sup>26</sup> 'Former Mayoress Dies,' *The Courier-Mail*, 20 June 1953, p. 7.

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owned by a Mr Everingham. While the winner was not recorded, it is known that the winner would take home £200.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, on being appointed Mayor of Brisbane Municipal Council in 1896, it was widely reported that Thurlow was an 'enthusiastic member' of the Brisbane Hunt Club and the Queensland Tufts Club.<sup>28</sup> As well as the former *Saxmundham* stables, Thurlow also owned a stable at Water Street, Kelvin Grove.

Aerial photographs from 1936 and 1946 reveal that the surviving stable building was part of a larger complex of outbuildings, including a smaller, one-storey timber building on the eastern side which may have been a tack room or accommodation for a groom or other employees.<sup>29</sup> The 1936 aerial photograph shows a semi-circular path in front of the stable building. A Brisbane City Council surveyor's plan from 1936 shows two buildings to the west of the stables. The former stables are the only surviving outbuilding from this period. The stables were described in 2009 as consisting of:

[a] double-storey building with separate areas for the horses, sulkies or drays, a small habitable room and a tack room to the east. A lifting hoist remains as part of the building today. A white-washed dairy area used for accommodating a 'house cow', formed part of the stable complex.<sup>30</sup>

The former stables have been used as a home office. Changes include the addition of a covered verandah in front of the building and a small balcony outside the opening on the first floor.

After the death of Thurlow in 1913, the next generation of the family continued to develop the site as homes for their families. A second Thurlow residence named *Saxmundham* was constructed on a site in front of the eastern end of the stables c. 1923 (on subdivisions 27 and 29) on the western side of the original *Saxmundham* (on subdivision 25).<sup>31</sup> The original *Saxmundham* was moved to Mark Street, Wilston, between the First and Second World Wars.

In April 1915, Thurlow's daughter, Eva, married Eric Cowlshaw, a dentist, and allotments 20 and 22 on the northern side of the *Saxmundham* estate were transferred into her name.<sup>32</sup> The newly married couple built a house on this land named *Nahoun*. A third-family home, *Jacana* was built by Alfred Thurlow on the site of the first *Saxmundham* (subdivision 25) in 1933. This is now 19 Thurlow Street.

The second *Saxmundham* was the new home to Thurlow's widow, Phoebe. In 1924, the title for subdivisions 25, 27 and 29 was transferred to Walter, Alfred, and Leonard Thurlow. Phoebe passed away in 1953. Leonard established a home facing Free Street on the part of the former *Saxmundham* estate. The property remained in the Thurlow family until 1983.

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<sup>27</sup> 'Sports and Pastimes,' *The Week*, 17 January 1885, p. 5.

<sup>28</sup> 'The New Mayor of Brisbane,' *The Queenslander*, 15 February 1896, p. 31; 'The Mayor of Brisbane,' *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 28 March 1896, p. 30,

<sup>29</sup> *Davidson's Paddock Heritage Trail*, pp.10-11.

<sup>30</sup> *Davidson Paddock Heritage Trail*, p. 11.

<sup>31</sup> *Davidson's Paddock Heritage Trail*, p.11.

<sup>32</sup> 'Weddings,' *The Week*, 30 April 1915, p. 6.

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## DESCRIPTION

The former *Saxmundham* stables are an example of a late-19<sup>th</sup> Century two-storey timber stables with a corrugated metal roof. The stables, not visible from the footpath, are located at the rear boundary of a substantial residential holding facing Thurlow Street. The stables are in a residential area surrounded by vernacular Queenslander-style properties.

### General description

The stables, running east to west along the rear boundary of a large holding on Thurlow Street, are a narrow, rectilinear timber building. The building consists of an elongated gable roof constructed of corrugated sheet metal that extends the structure's length. A smaller, transverse gable roof, also constructed of sheet metal, protrudes from the main roof. A small, non-original upper-floor balcony is located beneath the transverse gable. The balcony is accessed through the loft entrance that now incorporates non-original French doors. A hoist point attached to the transverse gable is located above an upper-storey doorway. This feature was used to load hay into the centrally located hay loft.

The south face of the building consists of several openings that have replaced the original stable doors. A doorway is located on the ground floor beneath the transverse gable with an additional larger opening to the western side. This opening contains non-original French doors. A bull-nose roof with bracketed posts now gives the walkway in front of the building the appearance of a verandah. The changes made to the building do not obscure its basic layout and form but have changed its appearance from that of a simple, two-storey stable building.

Adjoining the former stables is a smaller, gabled building to the east, recently used as a garage. The large holding also includes two other non-significant buildings, a large residence (c.1923) set well back from the front boundary and a substantial building with a hipped roof at the northwest corner. Lawn areas, several large, mature trees, and a fountain in front of the former stables are in the large yard. The front boundary is marked by a substantial masonry and metal fence with entrance gates.

### Significant features

Features of cultural heritage significance include:

- Views to and from the building
- The location and two-storey form of the building
- Gable roof form
- Transverse gable roof protruding from the main roof
- Articulation of the south-facing side of the building, including original entrances
- Original upper-storey loft entrance
- Remnant of original hoist point
- All surviving original fabric (interior and exterior)
- Internal room layouts, openings, and details, where original

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## Non-significant features

Non-significant features include:

- Non-original upper balcony
- Non-original balcony balustrade and French doors
- Non-original bull-nose roof and posts
- Non-original door to lower entrance.

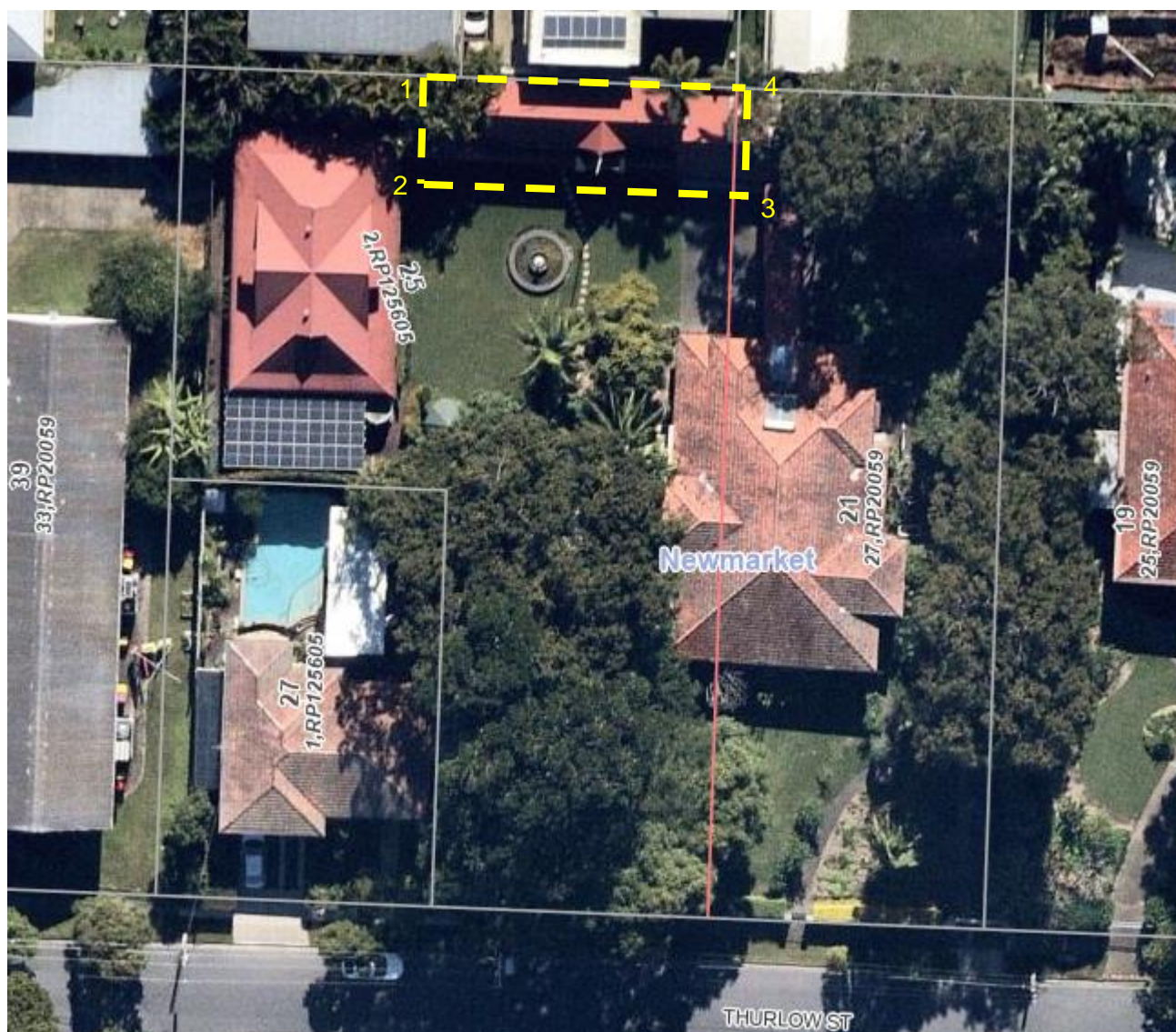
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## CURTILAGE

The curtilage captures all significant or original elements of the place as described and consists of part of lot 2, RP125605 and lot 27, RP20059, bound with the following coordinates (in accordance with the GDA 94 coordinate system).

ID	Latitude	Longitude
1.	-27.44122	153.00501
2.	-27.44129	153.00500
3.	-27.44130	153.00524
4.	-27.44123	153.00524



Source: Brisbane City Plan Online Mapping.

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## STATEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE

<p><b>Criterion A Historical</b></p> <p>The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the city's or local area's history.</p>	<p>The former <i>Saxmundham</i> stables are important as a rare and early example of private stables constructed for Robert Woods Thurlow and his wife, Phoebe, in the 1880s. The stables demonstrate the way of life of affluent Brisbane families during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries who could afford to maintain stables for recreational use.</p>
<p><b>Criterion B Rarity</b></p> <p>The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage.</p>	<p>The former <i>Saxmundham</i> stables are one of the few surviving examples of private stables built in Brisbane during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.</p>
<p><b>Criterion C Scientific</b></p> <p>The place has the potential to provide information that will contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the city's or local area's history.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Criterion D Representative</b></p> <p>The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class or classes of cultural places.</p>	<p>Although altered, the former stables continue to demonstrate the principal characteristics of 19<sup>th</sup> Century stables including their location at the rear of the property, an elongated, gabled roof with a transverse central gable over the loft and remnants of a hoist point for the storage of feed.</p>
<p><b>Criterion E Aesthetic</b></p> <p>The place is important because of its aesthetic significance</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Criterion F Technical</b></p>	<p>N/A</p>

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<p>The place is important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technological achievement at a particular period.</p>	
<p><b>Criterion G Social</b></p> <p>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.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Criterion H Historical Association</b></p> <p>The place has a special association with the life or work of a particular person, group or organisation of importance in the city's or local area's history</p>	<p>The former <i>Saxmundham</i> stables have an important association with Robert Woods Thurlow, a successful Brisbane merchant, Mayor and alderman, and his wife, Phoebe. The stables were constructed for the personal use of the Thurlow family who were early settlers in the Davidson's Grant locality and owned the property for 100 years. The Thurlow's were well known for their equestrian and sporting prowess. Phoebe Thurlow lived at <i>Saxmundham</i> for 70 years and was described on her death in 1953 as a former lady mayoress, Queensland tennis champion and keen horsewoman.</p>

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