

PROPOSED LOCAL HERITAGE PLACE

366 Lillian Avenue, Salisbury (LOT PLAN: 66_RP74647)



SUMMARY

Built in 1952, the house at 366 Lillian Avenue was constructed as part of a private residential estate developed by Englishman Cecil Askey. The house is an uncommon example of a post-Second World War home incorporating elements of the Old English style and provides evidence of Salisbury's expansion in the 1950s. The house also illustrates the influence that migrants played in the suburban development of Brisbane.

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HISTORY

A history of Salisbury

Salisbury remained a rural, sparsely populated farming district until the South Coast Railway Line opened in 1885. This line ran through Salisbury to Beenleigh. Like elsewhere in Brisbane, the railway's arrival spurred on development in the areas surrounding it. Several residential estates were developed between Rocklea and Coopers Plains, including Salisbury Station Estate (1886), Salisbury Park Estate (1888) and Salisbury Court Estate (1890). However, by 1911, the population of Salisbury was only 84 residents. Salisbury's population continued to grow, however. Between 1920 and 1930, the number of residents listed in the *Post Office Directory* almost doubled, from 102 to 194. During this period, significant improvements were made to the local area's infrastructure, including the development of roads, bridges, and drainage. To petition on behalf of residents for improvements to the growing suburb, the Salisbury Progress Association was formed in 1914. In the following year, the Salisbury Progress Association appealed for the building of a local primary school. A site on Lillian Avenue was eventually chosen for the school, and Salisbury State School was officially opened on 30 May 1920.¹

Lillian Avenue was the first road to provide access into the early settlement of Salisbury. Arthur Blackwood's Salisbury Township Estate was located on the northern side of Lillian Avenue, and lots were sold from 1912 onwards.² This considerable development consisted of 442 lots, each measuring 32 perches and created Ness, Henson, Blackwood, Kellett, Myra and Tamblyn Roads. The suburb section closest to the railway line remained the most populated area for many decades. Gradually, settlement expanded to the east in the years before the Second World War.

The most significant development in Salisbury was the establishment of the Rocklea Munitions Works during the Second World War. These factories were built along both the northern and southern sides of Compo (now Evans) Road, with housing built for civilian war workers to the west and north of the Rocklea Munitions Works. In addition, a tram line was extended along the Compo Road to service the industrial area. Following the Second World War, many industrial buildings were adapted for new uses, and the surrounding area became a hub for industrial and commercial uses. This led to a demand for housing nearby for the large number of people who worked there, which in turn triggered further residential subdivision and construction. This growth continued into the 1950s and 1960s and resulted in a boost in Salisbury's population. However, public transport links to the industrial area in Rocklea continued to be described as 'poor' in the early years after the Second World War.³ By 1976, Salisbury's population stood at 6,537.

The post-war expansion of Salisbury

After the Second World War, several private and Queensland Housing Commission residential developments provided new homes in Salisbury. These residential developments emerged to deal with a shortage of housing in Brisbane after the Second World War. However, even by 1950, the area east of Ainsworth Street remained as large farm holdings. This included Portions 217 and 218, each measuring 32 and a half acres of land, bordered by Lillian Avenue to the south. Humber Street to the east and Ainsworth Street to the west.

While both Portions 217 and 218 were purchased from the Queensland Government in 1864, the land remained undeveloped until after 1949, when Cecil Askey purchased Portion 217. In

¹ 'Salisbury State School,' *The Telegraph*, 8 June 1920, p. 3.

² 'Advertising,' *The Brisbane Courier*, 13 July 1912, p. 9.

³ Ross Fitzgerald, *From 1915 to the Early 1980s: A History of Queensland* (Brisbane, QLD: University of Queensland Press, 1984), p. 186.



September 1949, Askey announced plans to establish a private housing estate on the site, with the clearing of the land by Thiess Brothers already underway.⁴ In June 1952, Askey extended his landholding by acquiring 16 acres and eight perches on the eastern side of Portion 217, the western half of Portion 218.

Askey had arrived in Australia from the United Kingdom in 1948 as one of the many who emigrated to Australia after the Second World War. It is not clear what his previous experience was with property development, as he has no occupation listed on his immigration records and was recorded as a greyhound trainer on the 1939 England and Wales register. In 1945, the Commonwealth Government established the Department of Immigration to plan, manage, and implement an ambitious immigration programme to Australia.⁵ The need for immigrants was driven by the popular idea of 'populate or perish.' The Commonwealth Government recognised that it needed to increase its population to help the country develop and defend itself. However, while immigration into Queensland did occur, immigrants were encouraged to settle in rural areas rather than in Brisbane. The State Government's 'restrictive immigration policy' reinforced Queensland's 'ethnocentrism' where between 1947 and 1961, the number of people born overseas who resided in Queensland rose by only 58 per cent compared to 139 per cent for the whole of Australia.⁶ Nonetheless, several migrant communities contributed to Brisbane's suburban development in the late 1940s and early 1950s, including those involved in projects developed by the Queensland Housing Commission, such as the so-called 'Dutch' and 'French' houses in Coopers Plains and Zillmere

In 1951, Askey subdivided and developed Portion 217 and created new roads. This included laying out Southey and Meynell Streets, as well as extending Henson Road to the east. The 57 lots of this new residential estate all measured approximately 32 perches (809m²) – the first lot sold in November 1950. However, building application records suggest that rather than selling the vacant subdivided lots in his estate and allowing people to engage their own builders to construct a new house, Askey oversaw the building of the houses and then sold them. In addition to houses, Askey had also announced that the housing estate would include an amusement park, a swimming pool, and playgrounds.⁷ Of these, however, only the playgrounds were eventually built.

By August 1951, 18 houses were completed or nearing completion in the estate. The same month, nine unsold vacant allotments along Meynell Street and Lillian Avenue were transferred into the ownership of Askey's newly established company, Askey Constructions Pty. Ltd. Askey and his wife, Ethel, retained subdivision two in the estate, on the corner of Lillian Avenue and Meynell Street and built themselves a new home there. They named their house *Clovelly*, and this block would become 354 Lillian Avenue. By August 1951, Askey had also started developing the western half of Portion 218 as an extension of the residential estate.⁸

As evidenced by the location, design, size and presence of the houses, the most prestigious section of the estate appears to have been along Lillian Avenue between Southey and Portsdown Streets. Unlike the remainder of the estate, most of the houses in this stretch were built of rendered brick, and their designs were elaborate and decorative, including houses built in the Spanish Mission and Old English styles. Given this, it is probable that these houses were built to showcase the estate while also attracting wealthy buyers for these prominent properties.

⁴ 'House Block at Salisbury,' *The Courier Mail*, 9 September 1949, p. 4.

⁵ Anon, *A History of the Department of Immigration: Managing Migration to Australia*, revised edition (Belconnen, ACT: Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2017), p. 26.

⁶ Fitzgerald, *From 1915 to the Early 1980s*, p. 187.

⁷ 'House Block at Salisbury,' *The Courier Mail*, 9 September 1949, p. 4.

⁸ Greater Brisbane Area 1951, Aerial photograph, Qimagery. Retrieved 21 May 2021.

The construction of 366 Lillian Avenue

In April 1951, Brisbane City Council approved the construction of a new house on resubdivision 66 in Askey's new estate. This lot became 366 Lillian Avenue on the corner of Portsdown Street. Although Askey's name was noted on building records as the site owner, he did not produce title to the 16 acres and eight perches of land that contained the allotment until 18 June 1952.⁹ On the same day, the title to resubdivision 66 was transferred to Leslie Stewart Nielson. Nielson, a builder by trade, was recorded on building records as the builder for the new house. After construction, Leslie Nielson and his wife, Marjorie, a typist, took up residence.

The house incorporates elements of the Old English style of domestic architecture popularised in the interwar period as exemplified through the use of mosaic brick detailing in the gable infill, rendered exterior masonry walls, the use of corbelled brickwork, and an arched doorway surrounded by wedged-shaped porphyry stone (voussoirs).

During the years between the First and Second World War, Old English style houses became increasingly popular in Brisbane, particularly in the affluent suburbs of Ascot, New Farm and Greenslopes. This style was one of several, including Spanish Mission and Californian Bungalow, that emerged during the economic and population booms of the 1920s that saw an increase in residential development in Brisbane. The roots of the Old English style can be traced to the Arts and Crafts movement in Victorian Britain and is related to the development of the English domestic revival movement.¹⁰ However, the cost of materials and the design of such properties meant that such houses were often the preserve of the professional and business classes.

Some critics derided the style for encouraging nostalgic replicas for those with newly acquired wealth. Nevertheless, the Old English style appealed to a sense of loyalty and nostalgia for the United Kingdom. The style's predominant features include a picturesque aesthetic, asymmetrical massing, herringbone and corbelled brickwork, tiled roofs and rendered or face-brick exteriors.¹¹ Interiors frequently featured timber joinery, beamed or decorative plaster ceilings, multi-paned or leadlight casement windows and fireplaces. Brisbane architects who designed houses and other buildings in this style included E.P. Trewern, Blackburn and Gzell, and Horace Driver.

While Old English style houses enjoyed popularity before 1939, this changed after the Second World War, and such designs became increasingly uncommon. The initial years after the Second World War saw a turn towards more modest housing designed to meet the needs of, for example, returned service personnel. Nonetheless, given the style's relationship with ideas such as loyalty to the United Kingdom, examples of Old English houses were still occasionally constructed after the Second World War.

There have been several changes to 366 Lillian Avenue since it was constructed. In 1959, Brisbane City Council approved an application from Nielson to construct a garage on the site.¹² An application for a 'garage/workshop' was approved for a subsequent owner in 1976.¹³ Aerial photographs reveal that a small structure in the western corner of the backyard was enclosed in 2012. The non-original garage immediately behind the house facing Portsdown Street was extended in 2016, and a patio

⁹ Brisbane City Archive (BCA), Building Card entry, 1951.

¹⁰ Philip Goad, 'English Domestic Revivals' in Philip Goad and Julie Willis (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture* (Melbourne, VIC: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 235.

¹¹ Richard Apperly, Peter L. Reynolds, Robert Irving, and Solomon Mitchell, *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the present*, revised edition (Pymble, NSW: Angus & Robertson, 1994), pp. 204-5.

¹² BCA, Building Card entry, 1959.

¹³ BCA, Building Card entry, 1976.

and deck added. The exterior of the house itself remains substantially intact, and with its corner location and nostalgic style, it continues to make a positive contribution to the suburb of Salisbury.



DESCRIPTION

The house at 366 Lillian Avenue is located on the corner of Lillian Avenue and Portsdown Street and is set back from the street-facing boundaries of the allotment. Like other homes constructed in this period along Lillian Avenue, it is domestic in scale and appearance.

General description

The house is a two-storey masonry building styled to incorporate elements of the Old English style. It is broadly L-shaped in plan, with a cross-gabled roof. From the southern elevation, the house is asymmetrical with an offset, gabled entry porch to the right of an enclosed verandah. An enclosed garage at the western boundary retains the gable pitch and is offset towards the rear of the property. Entry to the house is from Lillian Avenue via a brick stair with metal balustrades.

The Portsdown Street (east) elevation is more symmetrical than the Lillian Avenue elevation, with evenly spaced window locations. Major alterations to this elevation include a non-original two-storey, blockwork garage with an undercover patio above, separated from the building by a covered walkway.

The house's roof is terracotta tile with exposed masonry gable ends on the Lillian Avenue and Portsdown Street elevations. External walls from floor height up to the eave line are stuccoed with exposed brick decorative features. Walls from floor height to ground level are of exposed brick.

All original window and door openings on the Lillian Avenue elevation, including timber joinery and exposed brick sills remain, and contrast against the stuccoed walls. On the Portsdown Street elevation, original door and window openings and joinery remain, while original windows have been replaced with sliding window arrangements on the ground level.

An original low-height masonry fence with stucco finish between masonry piers and metal gates encloses the property. Plantings are non-original.

Significant features

Features of cultural heritage significance include:

- Views to the house from Lillian Avenue and Portsdown Street across the garden
- Original location and orientation of the house
- Fenced garden, including low-height masonry fence, stucco finish brick piers and metal gates
- Two-storey, cross-gabled roof form
- Asymmetrical composition of Lillian Avenue elevation, including enclosed garage
- Symmetrical composition of Portsdown Street elevation
- Terracotta roof tiles
- Exposed masonry gable ends, including mosaic brick patterning
- Offset gabled entry porch, including the stone-quoined arched opening at the main entrance
- Brick stair to the entry porch, including a metal balustrade and feature splaying

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- Enclosed verandah, including metal screen
- Render finish on the external walls
- Exposed external walls on the ground floor with clinker brick patterning
- Exposed brick masonry details on the external walls, including:
 - Exposed brick corner details
 - Corbelled brickwork
- Terracotta brick wall vents
- Original door and window openings
- Original timber-framed casement windows, with exposed brick masonry sills

Non-significant features

Non-significant features include:

- Major non-original blockwork additions, including:
 - Blockwork walls
 - Double garage
 - Undercover patio
 - Driveway and crossover
 - Blockwork fencing, including batten infill
 - Any non-original fittings and fixtures
- Covered walkway, including non-original fittings and fixtures
- Non-original slider window arrangements on the ground floor of Portsdown Street elevation
- Non-original plantings

CURTILAGE

The curtilage captures all significant or original elements of the place as described. It consists of the entirety of Lot 66 on RP74647, being an area of 804m².



Source: Brisbane City Plan Online Mapping

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STATEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE

<p>Criterion A Historical</p> <p>The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the city's or local area's history.</p>	<p>Built in 1952 in the Old English style, 366 Lillian Avenue is important in demonstrating the pattern of Salisbury's residential development after the Second World War. As detailed in the citation's history, the house was one of the first houses to be built as part of a new private residential estate developed in the 1950s by Cecil Askey, a recent English immigrant to Brisbane. The housing estate, built in response to Brisbane's post-Second World War housing shortage, formed part of the development of housing provision along Lillian Avenue and illustrates the role migrants played in the city's suburban development after 1945.</p>
<p>Criterion B Rarity</p> <p>The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Criterion C Scientific</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>Criterion D Representative</p> <p>The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class or classes of cultural places.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Criterion E Aesthetic</p> <p>The place is important because of its aesthetic significance</p>	<p>Primarily constructed in the Old English style, 366 Lillian Avenue has aesthetic importance for its architectural qualities and makes a prominent contribution to the streetscape. In contrast to the simply styled 20th Century housing that surrounds it, the house is characterised by asymmetrical massing, a cross-gabled roof, an off-set gabled entry porch, contrasting stucco and polychrome brickwork, and casement windows. As expressed in the</p>

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	citation's description, notable design details include terracotta roof tiles, exposed masonry gable ends with mosaic brick patterning, an enclosed verandah with metal screening, and corbelled masonry. A low-height masonry fence with stucco finish between masonry piers and metal gates reflects the style and materials of the house and further enhances the appeal of the place.
Criterion F Technical The place is important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technological achievement at a particular period.	N/A
Criterion G Social 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.	N/A
Criterion H Historical Association 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	N/A

REFERENCES

Primary sources

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Secondary sources

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