

DUNWICH: Former Benevolent Asylum Building, 11 Parsons Street



Street Address	11 Parsons Street, Dunwich
GPS/RPD	Lot 1023 on D9046
Place Type	Built



Red-e-map (RCC, 2016).



Residence, 11 Parsons Street, Dunwich (AHS, 2016).

Condition	Fair	Integrity	Fair
Statutory Listings	Local Heritage Place		
Non-Statutory Listings	No current listing		
Inspection Date	21/12/2016		

Historical Context

A mid to late nineteenth century cottage, 11 Parsons Street is a former Dunwich Benevolent Asylum building.[1] Prior to the formation of Dunwich Benevolent Asylum, the area was used as a convict out station from 1827-1831, a Catholic mission for the local Indigenous population from 1843-1847, and a quarantine station from 1850-1864. 11 Parsons Street appears on the 1913 map of the Dunwich Benevolent Asylum and is therefore believed to be an in-situ example of a Dunwich Benevolent Asylum building.

The Benevolent Society in Moreton Bay was established in 1844 as a citizen run charity. In 1861, the Queensland Government passed the Benevolent Asylum Act, which provided funds to transform hospital wards into these asylums. The Dunwich Benevolent Asylum housed Queensland's poor and underprivileged, including the aged, infirm and individuals without access to required care from their families.[2]

In 1913, during a time of increasing patient numbers, the asylum site expanded greatly. At this time the buildings on site included a police station, visitor centre, public hall, ancillary service buildings, ward buildings, tent accommodation and recreational facilities. Facilities here catered for live-in staff, including cooks, administration staff, and wardsmen.[3]

Due to an overcrowded patient population and deteriorating health conditions on site, the asylum closed in 1947 after operating for over 80 years. The residence at 11 Parsons Street remains in-situ as a former asylum building, and contributes to the overall historical context within the Dunwich township. It therefore reflects the footprint and layout of the original asylum structures.[4]

Physical Description

This is a modest low set timber cottage from the mid- to late-nineteenth century, with a gable roof to the one room wide core. The roof is continuous over the front enclosed verandah and there is a skillion extension to the rear. The cladding is timber chamfer boards.

Statement of Significance

The residence at 11 Parsons Street, Dunwich is of local significance due to its historical value. As a remaining building from the Benevolent Asylum, it is a reminder of the social policies and attitudes of the late 19th century. The residence is one of a small collection of remnant buildings surviving from the asylum in its broader original context, and is significant as an important aspect of Redlands history.

Criteria A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the region's history.

11 Parsons Street is associated with the Dunwich Benevolent Asylum and is significant in demonstrating a particular pattern of Redland's history, reflecting the culture around systems of poverty and health at the time. The asylum was used to house the poor and sick from all over Queensland, and the surviving buildings represent the practices used in this facility.

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Criteria C	The place has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the region's history.
The former asylum building has the potential to contribute new knowledge about Redland's history, specifically relating to the asylum, that will lead to a greater understanding of the area's development. The building is believed to be in-situ and therefore has the potential to yield recreations of the Benevolent Asylum's history and physical layout. This site, along with the other in-situ asylum houses, is a reflection of greater philanthropic services and Benevolent Society facilities in the Redlands area.	

Primary Themes	
10.0 Providing Health and Welfare Services	10.02 Caring for the homeless and destitute

References	
[1] RPS, Redland City Council – Heritage Citation, "11 Parsons Street, Dunwich," 2012. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid. [4] Ibid.	