Monuments are generally sited in prominent and central locations. They are intended to be seen by as many people as possible and to reinforce the memories of the importance of the events and the people that they commemorate.

Inevitably many of the prominent locations for the siting of monuments in the past are threatened by present day development pressures. Often places which were formerly prominent in the city are now concealed, hidden by the development of the very features which were once the reason for their being there in that one particular place. The roads onto which they faced are now widened to accommodate faster and larger volumes of traffic and the former prominent locations in the city are often those which are subject to the greatest pressure for change.

Along with the change in physical surroundings, change also occurs in public attitudes. As well as being less visible to the eye, the meaning of many monuments also becomes less apparent, as new interests and interpretations of the past fade and the symbolism of the monument is reinterpreted. Memories and visibility are inter-connected. When change is inevitable, the task for the conservation practitioner becomes one of salvage or make-do. The priority is to secure the future of the monument and to retain as much of its cultural significance as is possible in a changing environment. This is the situation I address in the following discussion.

The discussion refers to three monuments: the World War I 'digger' memorial, at Pimpama and Ormeau on the Pacific Highway between Brisbane and the Gold Coast; and the statues of Queen Victoria and T. J. Ryan, in Queens Park, in the centre of Brisbane.

These monuments have recently come into prominence because of their displacement by two large scale development projects. The memorial at Pimpama stood within a road reserve required for the improvement of the Pacific Highway and was to be removed, repaired and re-sited on adjacent land. The monuments in Queens Park were affected by the Brisbane Casino Project. They were removed, cleaned and have now been re-sited in the new park between the Treasury Building and the Lands Administration Building.

In both circumstances the re-positioning of the monuments were the result of considerable development pressures. In Pimpama, the improvements to the highway were part of a long sequence of road upgrading which had proceeded incrementally over a number of years. The Brisbane Casino project involved the re-positioning of Queen Victoria's statue in front of the Land's Administration Building and the re-positioning of the statue of T. J. Ryan, the first Labour premier of Queensland, in a new Queens Park constructed above new underground accommodation for the Casino.

It is not intended to comment here on the many arguments surrounding these developments. The concern is mainly with the events surrounding the monuments themselves, how problems were realised and how action was taken. These deliberations in turn raise some fundamental questions on the nature of significance, space, place and contexts - past and present.

Space, place and significance

In an article concerning the successive movements of another 'digger' war memorial at Moggill, on the outskirts of Brisbane, Dierdre Gilfedder bases her observations on theoretical considerations of space and place by the French cultural theorist Michel de Certeau. The intention of this discussion is to expand on these observations and to demonstrate how they might generally assist in making decisions about the effect of re-siting on the cultural significance of monuments and their settings in practice.

de Certeau makes a distinction between space and place. Each place, according to de Certeau, is unique. It is the way in which elements are distributed in relation to each other and a configuration of positions each in their own distinctive place. A place is static, immobile and indicates stability. Space conversely exists when the dynamics of movement, time, and directions are considered. According to de Certeau, space is the effect produced by 'the operations that orient it, situate it and temporize it'. As an example, the street as a place on a map is transformed from its geometric configuration when it is experienced (or practised) as space by traffic and pedestrians. The determinations of place and space are typified by the difference from an inanimate 'being there', as opposed to 'operations' which specify spaces by actions. de Certeau points out that space and place are continuously interacting. In a metaphorical sense the city can be read

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like a text, or writing. He argues that this interaction between space and place, seeing and acting, creates stories of places and 'geographies of actions'.

These stories of space and place, when meaningful and organised, constitute what is referred to in the Burra Charter as the cultural significance of place. The context of a place consists not only in the formal experiences of the historic place and its origins but also in the way the people have interacted with the spatial context of these places. The context of places changes through the dynamic intercession of ways of seeing and physical changes to the surroundings.

There are informal and formal ways of looking at the cultural significance of places. The formal may be said to be recognised in the symbolic codes of the Burra Charter: the aesthetic, the historical, the architectural and the social or the scientific etc. The informal may be said to refer more to the fragmentary experiences of individual memories and recollections of experiences which are significant to the individual and are added cumulatively to a collective memory.

**The Pimpama and Ormeau Memorial**

The Pimpama and Ormeau memorial is located on the Pacific Highway at Pimpama. It was erected in 1919 and is classified by the National Trust (Queensland) (Fig. 1 and cover photo). It is of cultural significance as the most intact and first Petrie digger memorial with a standardised form of pedestal, and details which include a crossed flag relief with traces of paint and an unusual inscription:

_Given to their cross,_
_Given to their crown,
_Though they lie afar off graves,_
_And we think of their lives, a duty done,_
_Manly unselfish and brave!_

The figure rests on his reversed rifle. The arms of the figure are also reversed, to denote the commemoration of those that have fallen, and the figure stands at ease because it commemorates the fallen, the names of whom are written on the memorial.

The previous advisory heritage authority in Queensland, the Heritage Committee, received an application to re-site the memorial. The reason for the application was that a proposal had been made to improve traffic flows on the highway, including the building of a multi-level intersection to provide safer access across Pacific Highway to the growing residential development in the area. The memorial stood in the way of one of the ramps connecting to the main access road to Pimpama. The applicants, Queensland Transport, had already obtained prior consent from church and local government authorities. In addition, agreement had been obtained between Queensland Government departments, which under the interim heritage legislation then operating, made the question of the Heritage Committee’s endorsement a moot point. The applicants argued that the memorial would be located in the immediate area and the visual exposure to the highway would be maintained. The proposal was that the memorial be moved from its position in front of the church to the other side, about 60 metres from the existing position of the memorial, and 25 metres from the side of the church adjoining the cemetery (Diag. 1). The Committee approved the application subject to conditions. A later application proposed that a wall be built at the rear of the memorial to give it prominence, and the statue was to be repaired before being re-positioned in this new location.

In the period between 1919 and 1990, when the application was lodged, the highway had been widened and graded so that the connection with the memorial was gradually transformed by a series of incremental changes. The original intention - that the memorial be seen from the highway - lost some of its relevance as traffic flows and speeds increased and large commercial hoardings were built bordering the roadside (Fig. 2). The memorial was now experienced peripherally at speed through the windscreen of the motor car. The practice of giving the memorial a passing salute was
becoming a more difficult procedure. In addition, the fumes and vibrations from the highway had contributed to the little digger losing his original arm and rifle. A new member and firearm had been crudely attached with epoxy.

The memorial, once discernible as a landmark and connected to its residential community, was now to be experienced in a different way. Resistance to re-siting the memorial meant resistance to improving the transport corridor. Controlling development in the modern city prioritises communication. As Foucault points out "territory, communication and speed escape the domain of architects'. and no doubt other conservation practitioners as well." The only option left was to move the memorial to a safer place (Fig.3). It was argued that although re-positioning the memorial within the sanctuary of the church grounds might make it less of a landmark, at least it would be more protected and accessible to safe and detailed contemplation by the visitor.

Queens Park, Brisbane

The second case referred to is the movement of two of the most prominent monuments in Queens Park as a result of the redevelopment caused by the Brisbane Casino project. The issue here was one of ensuring that the monuments affected by the proposal were to be removed and replaced as near as possible to their original positions.

The statues of Queen Victoria and T. J. Ryan were situated at strategic positions in Queens Park, a small green square in the centre of Brisbane, situated between the Lands Administration Building and the Treasury Building (Diag. 2). Queens Park was an important public open space in the centre of the city. The Queensland Government wished to adapt the Treasury Building and the Lands Administration Building to new uses as part of the Brisbane Casino project. Queens Park was also included in the development as the area was to be excavated to accommodate seven stories of underground parking for 750 cars and back of house facilities for the Casino. The redevelopment of the park meant that the statues had to be removed and re-sited when the park was re-established over the car park.

According to the conservation plan prepared for the places affected by the project, Queens Park is significant because of historic and social associations, urban design and landscape qualities, and its statuary. The design was attributed to G. de Gruchy and Harry Oakman and dated from 1962. It had partly replaced an earlier and arguably more significant landscape by the architect of the Lands Administration Building, Thomas Pye. The statue of Queen Victoria was part of Pye's original design intention for the front of that building. The statue is similar to designs by the English sculptor Thomas Brock and was erected in 1906, occupying a central position in relation to the buildings and the landscaped parterre area in front. The statue of T. J. Ryan was the work of Bertram Mackennal; it had been erected in 1925 and stood at the corner of William Street and Elizabeth Street.

The proposals for the park changed over the period between the lodgment of the original application and the implementation of the final contract. The original application had proposed a formal layout linking the Land Administration Building and the Treasury Building with rows of palms, seats and a long pool bisecting the park and extending across the square. This application, made under
the Queensland Heritage Act (1992), was subject to a public exhibition and objections were invited early in 1993. The layout of the park and the position of the statuary was one of a number of matters raised in these objections. The Queensland Heritage Council recommended to the Minister responsible that the major project should not proceed. The Act however, did not bind the Minister, who could notify his intention to proceed with the development, and this he did. Nevertheless, there were a number of issues which could be negotiated to mitigate some of the concerns which had been included in the objections. The layout of Queens Park and the siting of monuments was one of those issues.

A number of objections to the project expressed the concern that public open space was being appropriated to serve the project, rather than recognising its civic significance as public open space in the centre of the city. The park was remembered as a place to stroll, to meet friends, or to sit and have lunch on one of the park benches. The statues were markers for meeting and reference points within the space. In the original proposals, the significance of the pathway between the Queen Victoria statue and Elizabeth Street was ignored. Ordinary strolling was inhibited. Public access was impeded by car ramps. Ventilation shafts competed in prominence with the monuments. The statue of Victoria was placed on a small traffic island to allow limousines to drive into the park to deliver patrons to a new entrance to the hotel in the former Lands Administration Building. The monument was to be placed a further few metres away from the building to accommodate this access. The spatial connection between the monument and the building was disrupted.

Alternative proposals were negotiated: vehicles were excluded; alternative sites and less obtrusive modes of ventilation chosen. The diagonal pathway which was part of the existing layout was reintroduced, a second new diagonal pathway created, and the landscape simplified for more informal public use (Diagram 3). The location of the statues of Queen Victoria and T. J. Ryan was reviewed, and other memorials, such as the pro-Cathedral marker and war trophy gun, retained in the park. The statues were eventually replaced as closely as possible to the positions they had previously occupied (Fig. 4).

Despite these changes and modifications, the space of the park is now less able to accommodate the movements which it had accommodated in the past. The edges of the park are shielded by car ramps, access stairs and ventilation shafts. Movement is consequently more inhibited and the presence of those features diminishes the original prominence of the monuments. Whilst the monuments have been spatially situated geographically in their original positions, there have been changes to the context of the place, both above and below the ground. The landscape is now only a surface treatment. The monuments are no longer rooted in terra firma. Instead we walk on the roof of a car-park.

Conclusion

The proposal to remove and re-position these monuments is a story of make-do. In circumstances where the juggernaut of large scale modern development cannot be assuaged, resistance may have to take a more pragmatic and negotiable stance.
The situation raises number of questions about place. When experience of the space around changes, by physical alterations to the environment and the speed and nature of the encounter, the place where the monument stands may lose its original context. Indeed, if the monument is a marker for the body interred in the ground, re-positioning the monument in another place may well render it meaningless. On this point there is a distinction between the formality of the statue commemorating Queen Victoria and the local significance of the war memorial which symbolically marks a resting place for those who have died.

On the other hand, if the monument as a symbol has lost its precise connection with one unique location, is its position in that one particular spot now as meaningful as it once was? Changes may have occurred in the places surrounding the original position. The spatial experience is different and the stories connecting space and place have changed.

The statues in Queens Park have now been returned to the park. Queen Victoria's monument is in its original position in relation to the Lands Administration Building. The T. J. Ryan statue also stands where it was originally situated. The negotiations on the return of the monuments to their original place were conditioned, not only on their formal qualities, but on a consideration of those informal spatial movements where the monuments were experienced with less deliberate and self-conscious reflection.

The digger statue which tops the pedestal of the memorial at Pimpama has not been placed back on site. The traffic fumes and the crude repairs of the past had taken their toll. After several adverse reports on the condition of the statue, a replica of the digger figure was commissioned. This was approved by the Queensland Heritage Council subject to a condition that the original should be taken down carefully and stored indoors in a safe place. Inevitable though it may be, the outcome here appears to be a diminution in significance. The present change in context and the loss of the original digger figure by A. L. Petrie have meant that the stories of experiencing the place will be rewritten and are in danger of becoming more indistinct and formless as a result.

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Figure 4: The statue of T J Ryan after the redevelopment, with the statue of Queen Victoria and the Lands Administration Building in the distance. (Author, 1995)
Endnotes


4 Listing of Queensland National Trust based on information from J McKay. Lest We Forget: A Study of Memorials in Queensland, Brisbane.


6 J White, 'Modernity Significance and Conservation Practice' MSc (Arch) (Cons) Thesis. University of Sydney.
Remarks on the effect of change on the significance of the Pimpama and Ormeau Monument were included as one of the case studies in this thesis.
