

Site:	The Boulevard Parklands	Significance:	B
Address:	The Boulevard, Richmond	Map Ref:	2H H10
Access:	Unrestricted	Survey Date:	27/4/98



Intactness:		Condition:	
E <input type="checkbox"/>	G <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	F <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	P <input type="checkbox"/>
Existing Heritage Listings:		Recommended Heritage Listings:	
Victorian Heritage Register	<input type="checkbox"/>	Victorian Heritage Register	<input type="checkbox"/>
Register of the National Estate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Register of the National Estate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Planning Scheme	<input type="checkbox"/>	HO Controls	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
National Trust	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Description

The area of parkland on The Boulevard, Richmond, was reserved in 1838 as the survey paddock., and described in 1862 as ‘..delightfully sequestered and the scenery exceedingly beautiful, the ground forming a succession of agreeable undulations profusely embellished with trees....’¹ The railway was continued over the river in 1861 following the construction of an imported iron bridge. The Horticultural Society of Victoria established experimental gardens in 1863, which later became the present Burnley Horticultural College. By 1888 the survey paddock had become Richmond Park, and featured lakes and lagoons, as well as tree lined walks. The Glen Iris railway line had been constructed through the eastern section of the Park by this time. The existing walkway between Bridge Road and Park Grove was created in 1921. Areas of the park were utilised during World War Two as a major American Army camp.

A major development, shaping the current landscape was the construction of the Yarra Boulevard in the 1930s as an employment scheme for sustenance workers, including extensive terraced basalt walls. Latter fragmentation of the park has been caused by the introduction of sporting facilities, school and commercial buildings and, most significantly, the South Eastern Freeway. As O’Connor & O’Conner note, ‘The lack of attention to planting has resulted in a reversion to a series of paddocks in what was earlier an Arcadian delight.’

Remnant Fabric (Man Made)

The Yarra Boulevard is the dominant feature of the area, and features rock retaining walls and terraced shrubberies. A series of pathways leading from Bridge Road to Park Grove were constructed in the 1920s.

Remnant Fabric (Vegetation)

The site features extensive plantings throughout, both remnant riparian vegetation and introduced exotic species. Of particular note is a dead River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) scar tree, associated with the Wurundjeri Aboriginal group in the area occupied by Burnley Oval. Other remnant River Red Gums are scattered throughout the parklands. More recent plantings include various Oaks (*Quercus* sp.), Elms (*Ulmus* sp.) and Canary Island Date Palms (*Phoenix canariensis*) along The Boulevard. Dense overgrown shrubberies also line the thoroughfare, many of the species being self-sown weeds.

Potential Threats

The site in certain areas is derelict, particularly the shrubberies along The Boulevard. Further degeneration of these plantings will impact significantly on the heritage value of the site, particularly the failure to replace senescent specimens with the same species. Further introduction of inappropriately detailed constructed elements, particularly in relation to sporting facilities, which will further challenge the heritage character of the area.

Management Steps

The site requires the preparation of a detailed master plan and management policy that should attempt to unify the various disparate elements throughout the extensive site, and reinforce the heritage character of the place. The plan should address maintenance and replacement strategies for vegetation, and appropriate detailing of hard landscaping. It should seek to encourage increased use of the site as a passive recreational area.

Statement of Significance

The Boulevard Parklands are locally significant as an early recreational area linked to the development of Richmond. The site is significant for the variety of uses it supports, and as a river frontage adjacent

¹ Gill and Chevalier, quoted in O’Connor, J & O’Conner, T. *Richmond Conservation Study*. Unpublished report prepared for the City of Richmond, 1985.

to a dense urban area. The site is also significant for the Yarra Boulevard, which represents major public works projects undertaken during the Great Depression. It is a very significant area for the City of Yarra of enormous potential for recreation and visual impact.

Reference

McCalman, J. *Struggletown: Portrait of an Australian Working Class Community 1900-1965*. Carlton, 1988.

O'Connor, J & O'Conner, T. *Richmond Conservation Study*. Unpublished report prepared for the City of Richmond, 1985.