

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 Background and Brief

The Conservation Management Plan (CMP) of Richmond Park North was commissioned by the City of Yarra, covering all land managed for public open space between Bridge Road and Swan Street, east of Park Grove.

The study area includes Burnley Park, the Circus site and Yarra Boulevard, including areas of parkland along the Yarra River. The Secondary College site and the Railway Reserve are not included within the study area, and this report does not cover in detail the development of the Yarra Boulevard and its rockeries.

Council approved a Master Plan for Burnley Park in 2003, with an emphasis on recreation planning. It only addresses heritage issues in passing. This report was consequently commissioned to identify and assess the cultural heritage of the site. It encompasses an in depth, the history of the site, including a physical survey to assess the cultural heritage significance of the various elements of the park, and the significance of the site as a whole. From this, a conservation policy and management plan has been prepared.

The most thorough heritage study undertaken previously within the study area is McPhee and Andrews' *History and Cultural Significance of the Vegetation and Landscape of the Yarra Boulevard, Richmond*. Whilst focussing on the development of the Yarra Boulevard, it provides a useful background to the history of the broader study area as well as an analysis of some features within the scope of this study.

### 1.2 Location

Richmond Park North is an amalgam of disparate public open spaces located between Swan Street and Bridge on the western side of the Yarra River. The study area includes Burnley Park, the Circus site on Swan Street and parkland between the river and the Yarra Boulevard.



Figure 1 Location Plan  
Source: Whereis.com

### 1.3 Listings and Classifications

The site is not included on the Victorian Heritage Register, maintained by the Victorian Heritage Council, nor the Register of the National Estate, maintained by the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Heritage.

#### *Planning Scheme*

Much of the site is covered by HO299 in the Heritage Overlay Schedule to the City of Yarra Planning Scheme as part of the Boulevard Parklands. This area includes most of the public open space in the south east of the municipality including Richmond Park North, the Circus Site, Burnley Golf Club and the balance parkland to the south of Swan Street, excluding Burnley Gardens (HO306). The Heritage Overlay does not cover the northern extent of the Yarra Boulevard or Yarra River Parklands on the east side of Melbourne Girl's College.

The Corroboree tree is covered by HO298 in the Heritage Overlay Schedule to the City of Yarra Planning Scheme and has been identified as an Aboriginal Heritage Place. Under the provisions to the overlay the place "is also subject to the requirements of the Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act 1972 and the Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984".

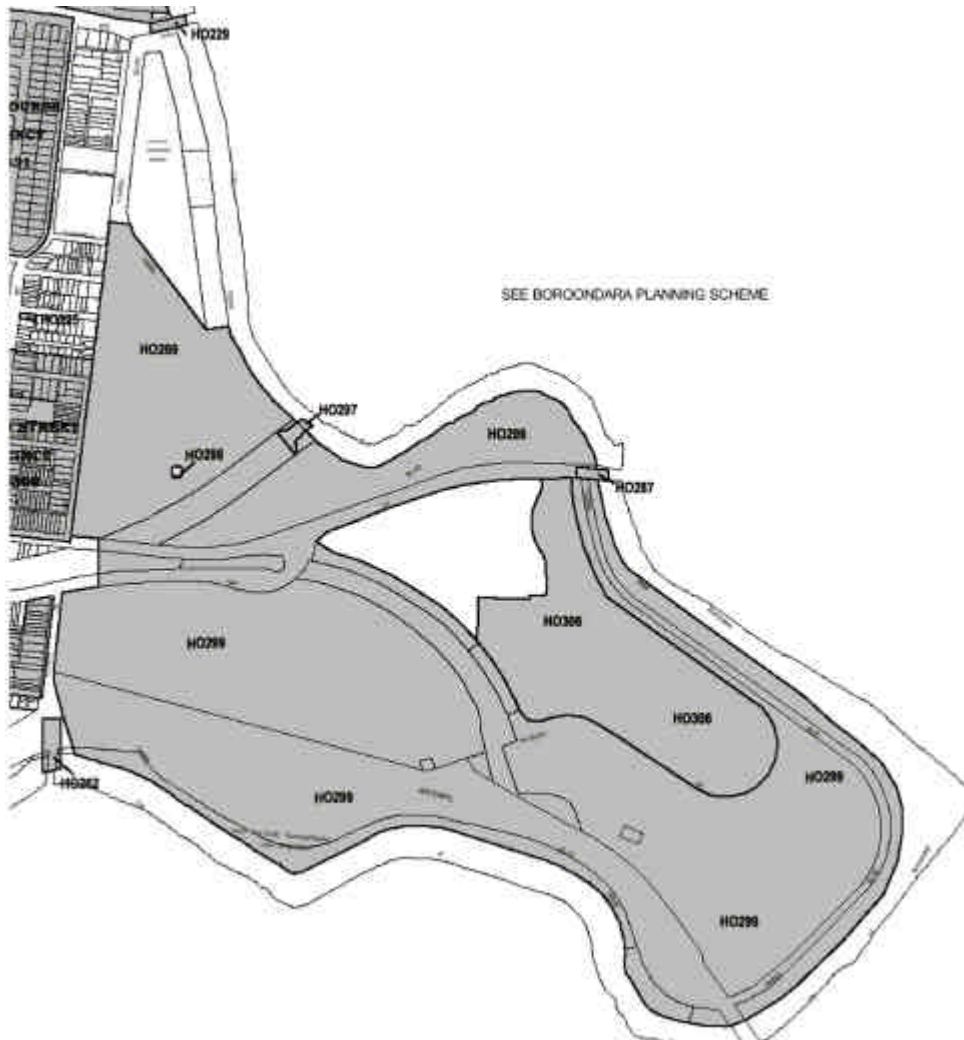


Figure 2 *Heritage Overlay Map No 9HO*  
City of Yarra

A planning permit is required for all subdivisions, buildings and works including the removal, destruction, pruning or lopping of trees.

#### 1.4 Methodology

The report broadly follows the format of the Australia ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) guidelines for the preparation of conservation plans and the principles set out in the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter, 1999.

#### 1.5 Terminology

The conservation terminology used in this report is of a specific nature, and is defined within *The Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (the Burra Charter)* as endorsed by all statutory and national heritage bodies (See Appendix A). The terms most frequently referred to are: *place, cultural significance, fabric, conservation, preservation, restoration, reconstruction, adaptation and interpretation*. These terms are defined in the revised charter as follows:

*Place* means site, area, land, landscape, building or other work, group of buildings or other works, and may include components, contents, spaces and views.

*Cultural significance* means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations. *Cultural significance* is embodied in the *place* itself, its *fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places* and *related objects*.

*Fabric* means all the physical material of the *place* including components, fixtures, contents and objects.

*Conservation* means all the processes of looking after a *place* so as to retain its *cultural significance*.

*Maintenance* means the continuous protective care of the *fabric* and *setting* of a *place*, and is to be distinguished from repair. Repair involves *restoration* or *reconstruction*.

*Preservation* means maintaining the *fabric* of a *place* in its existing state by removing accretions or by reassembling existing components without the introduction of new material.

*Restoration* means returning the existing *fabric* of a *place* to a known earlier state by removing accretions or by reassembling existing components without the introduction of new material.

*Reconstruction* means returning a *place* to a known earlier state and is distinguished from *restoration* by the introduction of new material into the *fabric*.

*Adaptation* means modifying a *place* to suit the existing use or a proposed use.

*Use* means the functions of a *place*, as well as the activities and practices that may occur at the *place*.

*Compatible use* means a *use* which respects the *cultural significance* of a *place*. Such a *use* involves no, or minimal, impact on *cultural significance*.

*Setting* means the area around a *place*, which may include the visual catchment.

*Related place* means a *place* that contributes to the *cultural significance* of another *place*.

*Related object* means an object that contributes to the *cultural significance* of a *place* but is not at the *place*.

*Associations* mean the special connections that exist between people and a *place*.

*Meanings* denote what a *place* signifies, indicates, evokes or expresses.

*Interpretation* means all the ways of presenting the *cultural significance* of a *place*.

## 2.0 HISTORY

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### 2.1 Introduction

The history of Richmond Park North dates back to the earliest days of settlement of the Port Phillip District of New South Wales, and to the early establishment of the current suburb of Richmond. The overall boundaries and layout of the Park (formerly the Survey Paddock) have not altered substantially since the time of Robert Hoddle's survey of Melbourne (Figure 3). The former Survey Paddock is now controlled by three bodies. Richmond Park North forms part of the City of Yarra, [still held by a Crown Grant]. Part of the former Department of Agriculture land within Burnley Gardens was sold to AMRAD/General Electric in 1994-5. At the time this occurred, the remainder of the Burnley Gardens site reverted to Crown Land and is now the University of Melbourne's Institute of Land & Food Resources, Burnley Campus.

### 2.2 Subdivision of Richmond

In 1838 the Colonial government in New South Wales offered for sale 88 portions adjoining Melbourne; the first 'suburban' land allotments to be sold outside the town reserve. Portions 1 to 47 to the east became Richmond, while portions 48 to 88 to the north became 'the district of Collingwood' and Newtown (now Fitzroy).<sup>1</sup> The original allotments were of varying size, most falling between 12 acres (5 hectares) and 28 acres (11.5 hectares). The land around western Richmond and Fitzroy was elevated, had good drainage and was therefore an attractive place for some of the wealthier pastoral or merchant families to settle within easy reach of Melbourne. However, the flats of Collingwood and East Richmond were originally two of the wettest areas in Melbourne, and a high incidence of disease was evident in these suburbs.<sup>2</sup>

The Municipality of Richmond was created on 24 April 1855. The Town of Richmond was proclaimed on 28 September 1872 and the City of Richmond was proclaimed on 17 February 1882.<sup>3</sup>

District Surveyor, Clement Hodgkinson (1818-1893),<sup>4</sup> (Figure 4) was responsible for laying out the streets of Richmond. His *Municipality of Richmond*, written in 1857, records the location and development of building stock, roadways and footpaths up to 1855.<sup>5</sup> Hodgkinson's 1855 plan does not include the former Caretaker's Cottage.<sup>6</sup> At that stage, much of Richmond was still to be laid out, particularly in the east part of Richmond and Burnley. The suburb was not at that stage densely built up, and most of the buildings were located between Hoddle Street, Victoria Parade, Mary Street and the Yarra River. Subdivisions were laid out on a geometric grid within the Government Road (later 'Richmond Road' and then 'Bridge Road') framework.

By the 1860s, small local industries had begun operating there; these included boot-making, furniture-making, a brewery and a wool-washing plant and tannery.<sup>7</sup> The proximity to, and use of, the Yarra River was a great incentive to develop industries, many of them noxious, in the inner suburbs of Richmond and Collingwood.

Writing in 1888, social commentator, *Garryowen* (Edmund Finn) considered Richmond to be 'a splendid section of green, undulating, well-timbered bush ... a favourite walk and drive with the citizens'.<sup>8</sup> Bounded by the Yarra River on three sides, the Survey Paddock was depicted with a lagoon and several other water holes.<sup>9</sup>

Citizens from Melbourne journeyed to Richmond's Survey Paddock to sail on the river or to enjoy a picnic in the open spaces.

### 2.3 Richmond Survey Paddock

Following the establishment of the Port Phillip District of New South Wales in 1836, the Governor, Sir Richard Bourke (1777-1855)<sup>10</sup> directed that a branch of the Surveyor-General's Department be set up in Melbourne.



Figure 3 Part of Robert Hoddle's Plan of Richmond, 1838  
 Source: B Hoddle Colville, Robert Hoddle Pioneer Surveyor 1794-1881



*Figure 4*

*Surveyor Clement  
Hodgkinson.*

Source: State Library of  
Victoria Pictures Collection



*Figure 5*

*Surveyor Robert Russell  
as an old man, c.1880*

Source: State Library of  
Victoria Pictures Collection



*Figure 6*

*Surveyor Robert Hoddle as  
a young man*

Source: State Library of  
Victoria Pictures Collection

The first survey officers, led by Robert Russell (Figure 5), were appointed on 10 September 1836.<sup>11</sup> Captain William Lonsdale was appointed Police Magistrate for the District, and arrived in Port Phillip late in September 1836. He served in this post until Charles Joseph La Trobe was appointed Superintendent of the Port Phillip District, arriving on 30 September 1839.<sup>12</sup>

Instructions from the Surveyor-General in Sydney to Russell (Figure 5) set out the major surveys of the District to be undertaken in the forthcoming years. However, Russell was soon replaced by Robert Hoddle (Figure 6) who arrived in Port Phillip in March 1837 with Governor Bourke. He was appointed senior surveyor over Russell, and was assisted by Frederick D'Arcy as draughtsman and William Darke as chainman.<sup>13</sup> Doubt was cast upon the suitability of Russell to hold the position of Assistant Surveyor, and he was recalled to Sydney 'with a caution that the utmost diligence is expected from him'.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, he returned to Melbourne several years later and became known for his art and architecture as much as his surveying.

The Port Phillip Branch of the Surveyor-General's Department operated until the colony separated from New South Wales in 1851, with Hoddle as Surveyor-General. The Department of Crown Lands & Survey took over the administration of the surveying and mapping of Victoria, and the sale, occupation and management of Crown lands throughout its existence (1857-1983).<sup>15</sup>

Surveyors, Assistant Surveyors, and District Surveyors were assigned to individual regions of the colony, later the State, and took their instructions from Hoddle until his retirement.<sup>16</sup> He was succeeded by Surveyor Andrew Clarke in 1853.<sup>17</sup>

The Survey Paddock at Richmond appears to have been created by Russell in 1836 for the resting of the Survey Department's horses. It was surveyed by Hoddle in 1837 for the same purpose and is shown on Hoddle's 1838 Plan of Richmond as 'Reserve for Survey Dept. Cattle' (the Survey Paddock)' (Figure 3).<sup>18</sup> The area which later became Richmond Park (and which included Burnley Horticultural Gardens), is shown on the earliest maps of Melbourne as the 'Survey Paddock'. An 1843 'Sketch of the Proposed Boundaries of the Village of Richmond' held at the State Library, includes an annotation by Hoddle. It reads: 'Transmitted with Description in my letter No. 63/150 dated 11<sup>th</sup> November 1843'.

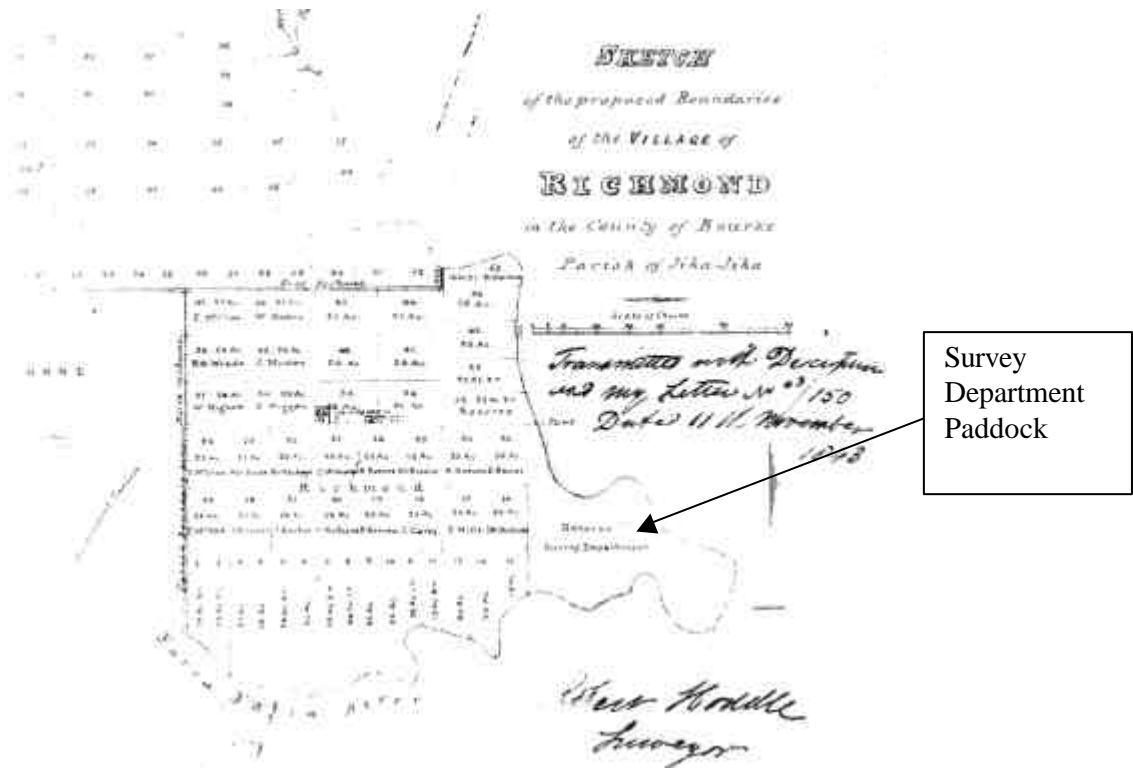


Figure 7 Sketch of the Village of Richmond annotated by Robert Hoddle, 1843  
Source: State Library of Victoria Maps Collection

The development of the Park is progressively documented on various maps and plans of Melbourne. The 1855 *Kearney Map of Melbourne and its Suburbs* shows the vegetation of the Survey Paddock (Figure 8).<sup>19</sup> In the following year, the 1856 Department of Lands & Survey indicates *Parish of Jika Jika*, simply shows the ‘Reserve for Survey Department’ without any detail (Figure 9).<sup>20</sup> The 1857 plan of the *Municipality of Richmond*, surveyed under the superintendence of Clement Hodgkinson (Figure 10) shows only the lagoon near Swan Street and the outline of huts.

By 1872, when surveyor A L Martin drew up his map of the Survey Paddock, it had been named Richmond Park (Figure 11). The Martin plan, the *Contour Plan of the Town Richmond*, dated 1873 (Figure 12)<sup>21</sup> and the Allan and Tuxen, *Plan of Melbourne and Suburbs*, 1888 (Figure 13) include the Horticultural Society’s Garden and the railway further to the south.<sup>22</sup>



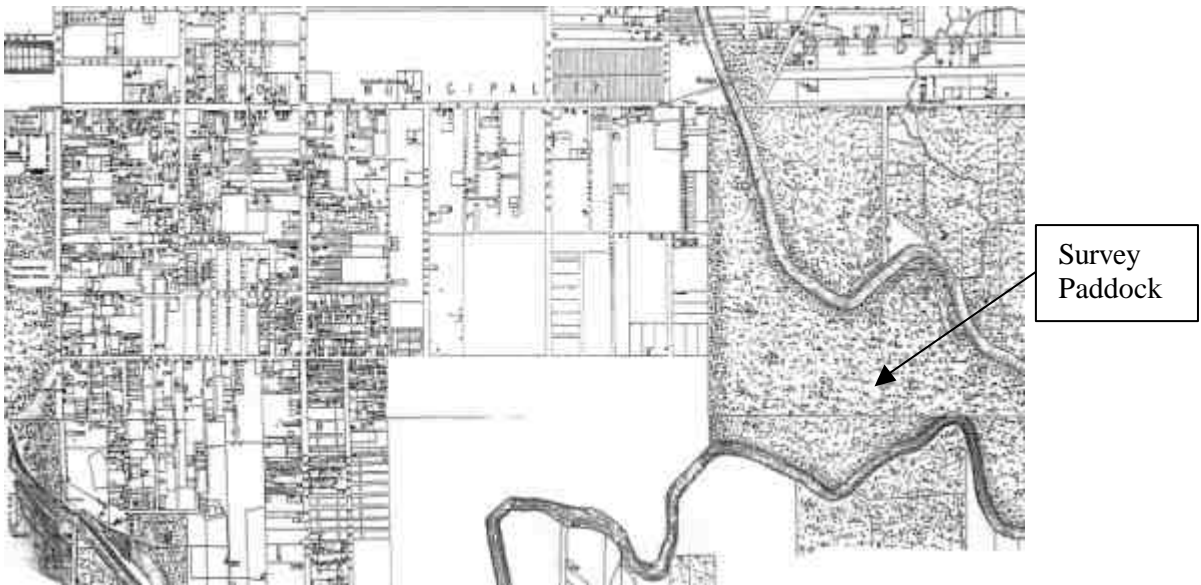


Figure 8 Portion of 1855 Kearney Map showing the Survey Paddock, Richmond  
 Source: State Library of Victoria Maps Collection

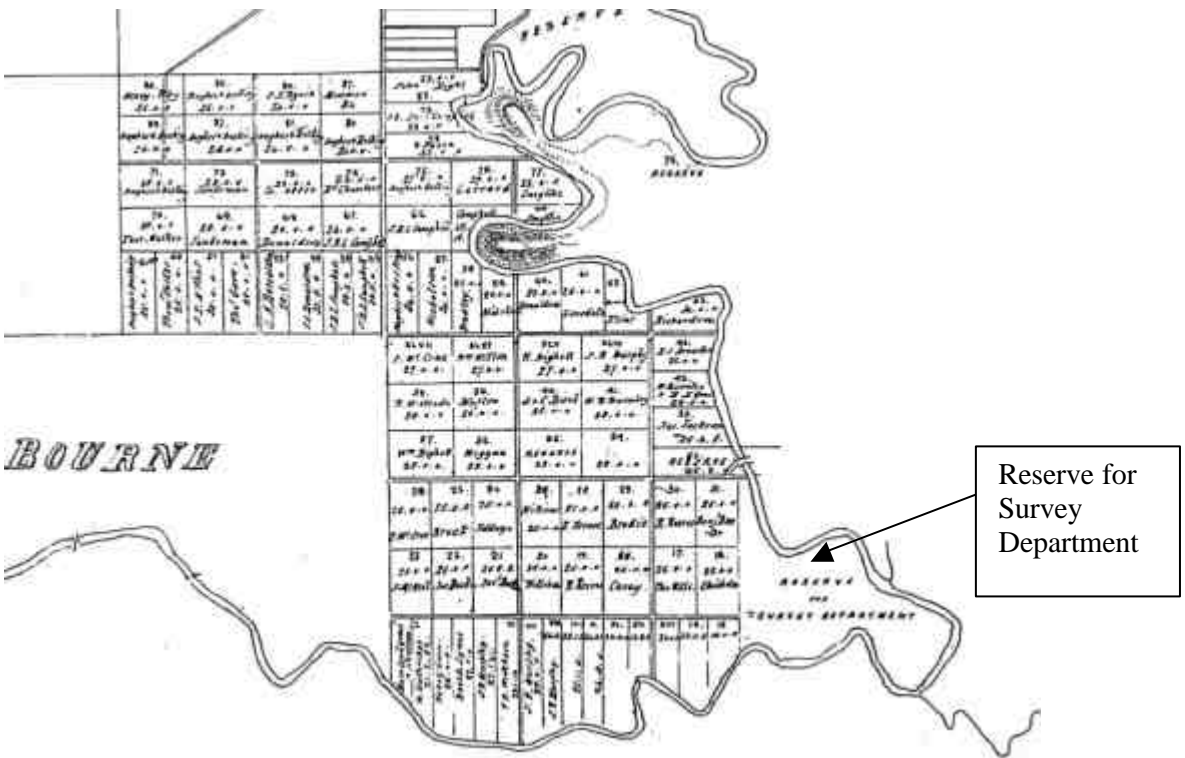
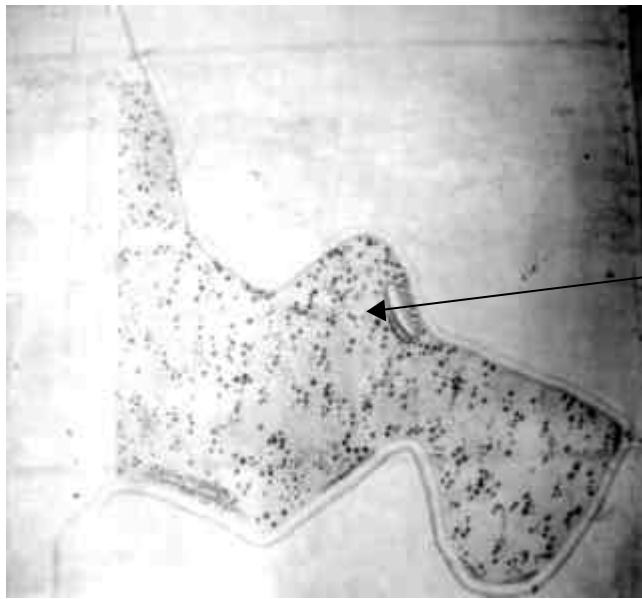


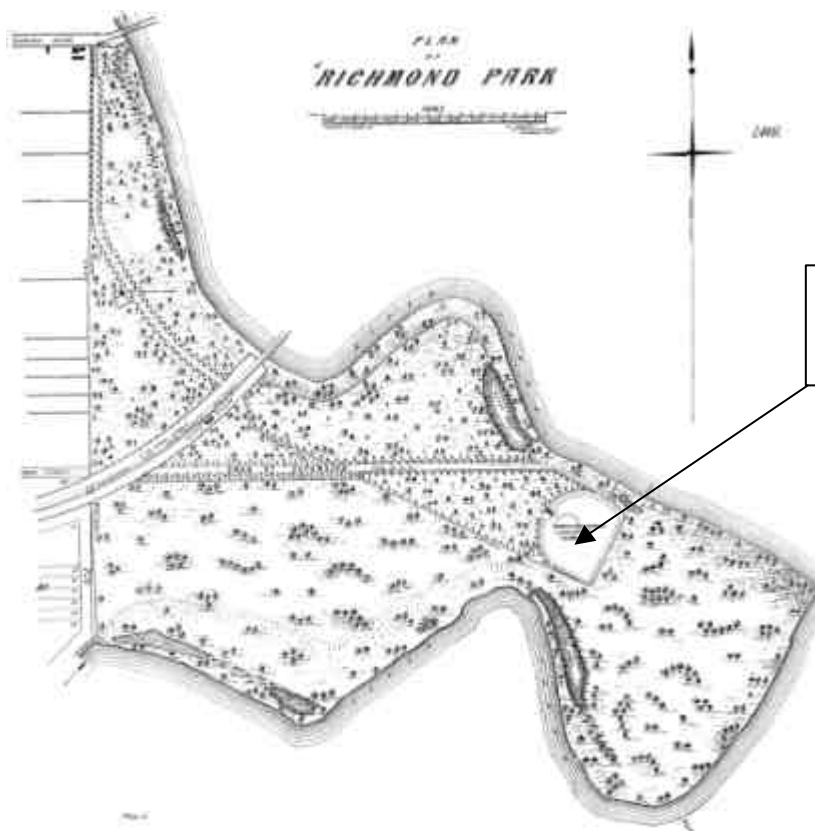
Figure 9 Reserve for Survey Department, on 1856 Parish Plan of Jika Jika.  
 Source: State Library of Victoria Maps Collection





1857 plan shows a group of huts near the lagoon.

*Figure 10 Municipality of Richmond 1857, Signed by the Governor in Council. Survey Paddock shows outline of huts near the current Swan Street and the lagoon once within the Horticultural Gardens site. Source: City of Richmond.*



Horticultural Society Gardens within Richmond Park

*Figure 11 6 September 1872, A L Martin Plan of Richmond Park showing the Horticultural Society's Garden. Source: State Library of Victoria Maps Collection*

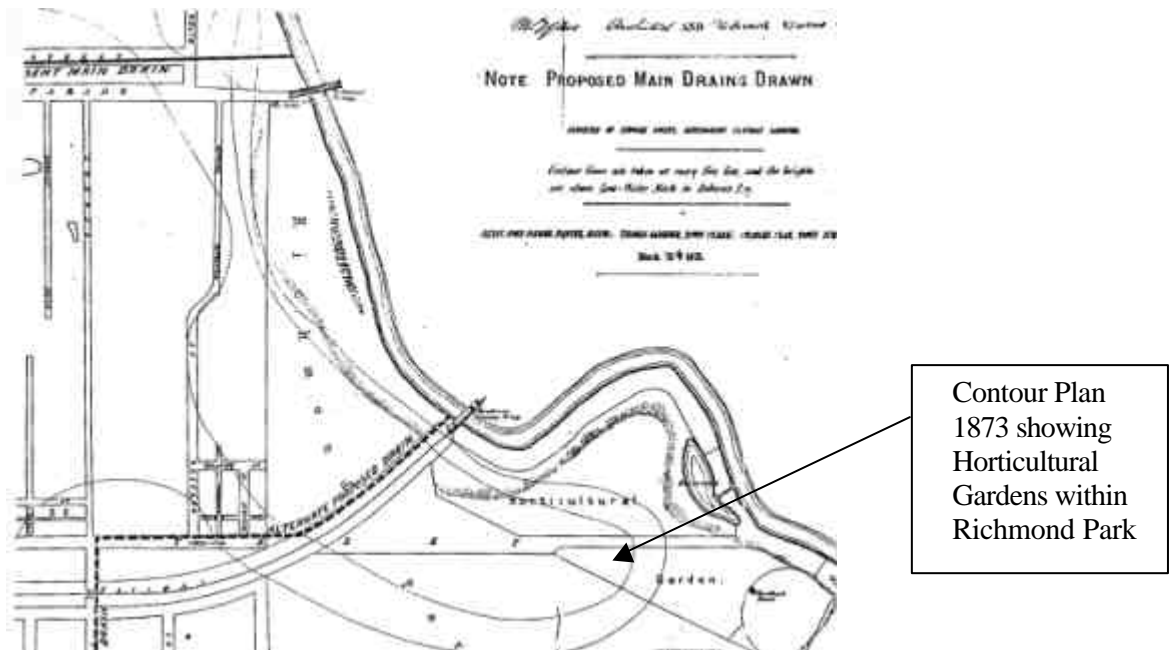


Figure 12 Detail of Contour Plan of the Town of Richmond, 25 March 1873 showing the Horticultural Garden.  
Source: City of Yarra

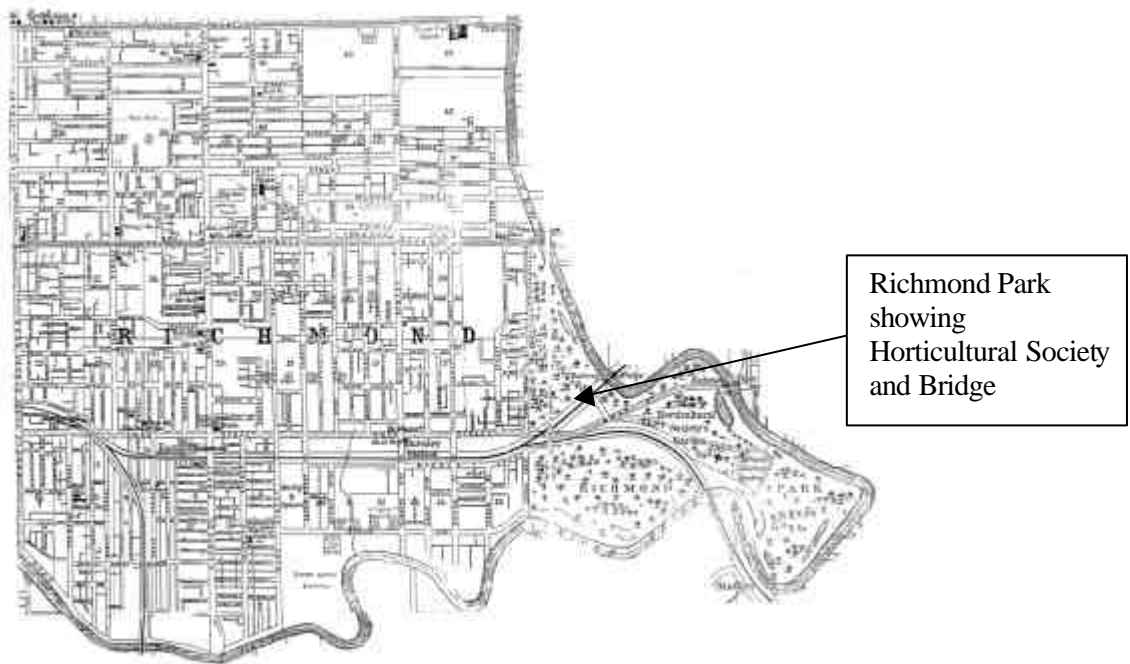


Figure 13 Detail of the Allan & Tuxen Plan of Melbourne and Suburbs, 1888  
Source: State Library of Victoria Maps Collection

## 2.4 The Creation of Richmond Park: 1862

Prompted by the proposed extension of the Melbourne and Suburban Railway through Richmond and the Survey Paddock in 1859, the Richmond Municipal District Council, together with a large number of its inhabitants, sent a 'Memorial' to the Board of Land & Works in protest against the proposal. Ten pages of signatures were attached to the letter.<sup>23</sup> The signatories to the 'Memorial' had heard with surprise and regret 'that a 13 acre portion of the reserve known as the survey paddock' was to be sold for 'no good reason' except for the proposed suburban railway.<sup>24</sup>

The citizens continued their plea:

[We] Respectfully yet earnestly request that the land in question be withheld from sale and the whole reserve known as the survey paddock not taken for the purpose of the railway may be appropriated for ever as a public park or place of public recreation and rest.<sup>25</sup>

The Hawthorn branch of the railway opened on 24 September 1860, the terminus was the 'Pic Nic Station', built in the Survey Paddock.<sup>26</sup>

On 1 August 1862, the extensive parkland, then still known as the Survey Paddock at Richmond, was 'temporarily reserved from sale, by Order in Council of 22 July 1862, for a park to be called Richmond Park 'to which the public are to be admitted subject to such rules and regulations as may be made by the Board of Land and Works'.<sup>27</sup> The Victorian Government *Gazette* described in full the dimensions of the park as 'one hundred and ninety-two acres, more or less, county of Bourke, parish of Jika-Jika'.<sup>28</sup> The land gazetted as Richmond Park commenced:

at the north-east angle of portion 31, parish of Jika-jika [sic]; thence south to the northern bank of the Yarra Yarra river, and by the inner banks of that river easterly, northerly, and north-westerly to a point on the bank of the river bearing due east about four chains from the commencing point: thence west about four chains to the point of commencement; as delineated on plan in the Crown Lands Office at Melbourne; deducting from above described area the land occupied by the Hawthorn branch of Suburban railway.<sup>29</sup>

The history of the parkland is well documented in the Government *Gazette* and the Minutes of the Richmond Council. The first gazettal of 192 acres 'more or less' was then reduced <sup>30</sup> in 1865, when 36 acres were Gazetted for use by the Victoria Horticultural Society in lieu of land temporarily reserved for that society on 17 December 1860.<sup>31</sup>

In 1865 the Richmond Council was appointed by the Lands & Survey Department to take control of the Park. At their meeting on 18 August 1865, the Town Clerk read:

a communication from the Lands & Survey Department advising of the appointment of this Borough Council to have control over Richmond Park as proclaimed in the Gazette of 11 August 1865.<sup>32</sup>

Horses had been grazing in the Survey Paddock from 1836 or 1837 and in September 1865 it was minuted that, with respect to the control of Richmond Park, the government would shortly remove the stock, other than the sheep, which were currently grazing.<sup>33</sup>

The section of Richmond Park between Bridge Road and Swan Street was permanently reserved from sale in three stages. The first was in 1868, and was two acres more or less, commencing

At the south-west angle of the site, being the point formed by the junction of the east side of River street with the north side of Campbell parade; bearing north; thence by allotment A, bearing east to the right bank of the Yarra River; thence by

that river, bearing southerly to the north side of Campbell parade; bearing west to the point of commencement.<sup>34</sup>

The second was on 14 November 1873, containing thirty-four acres, more or less, commencing

on the right bank of the Yarra Yarra River at the point where the south side of Campbell Parade abuts thereon; thence by that parade bearing westerly to the north-east angle of allotment 31; thence by allotments 31 and 16 bearing south to Swan street; thence by that street bearing east to the land included in the Hawthorn branch of the Melbourne and Hobson's Bay United Railway; thence by that land bearing north-easterly to the aforesaid river, and thence by that river upwards to the point of commencement.<sup>35</sup>

The last was on 19 November 1886, and at slightly over one acre was reserved in two separate portions. These portions commenced

from the south-east angle of allotment 16; bounded thence by the existing reserve; thence by the land permanently reserved for Gardens; thence again by the existing reserve bearing west; and thence by Swan street bearing north-easterly in an arc of a circle to the point of commencement. And

from the north-east angle of the above described portion; bounded thence by the existing reserve; thence by the Yarra River downwards; thence by the existing reserve bearing west; and thence by the land permanently reserved for Gardens bearing north-westerly to the point of commencement.<sup>36</sup>

## **2.5 A Permanent Residence in the Park: the former Caretaker's Cottage**

One of few elements of hard landscape located within Richmond Park is the former Caretaker's Residence, built in the 1870s, although the exact date of construction has not been finally established.

A Ranger, Caretaker, Parkkeeper, Bailiff or Curator, as the incumbent was variously known, of the Survey Paddock, and later Richmond Park, was first appointed in 1852. This was considered necessary for the security of the Surveyor's horses, as Melbourne was virtually deserted of males, following the discovery of gold in 1851, and protection of government land and property by police was considered essential.

### **2.5.1 Father and Son – James and Walter Murphy: the first Caretakers**

A letter in the correspondence book of the Melbourne Survey Office, (later Department of Lands & Survey), dated 8 June 1852, details the appointment of Mr James Murphy as Special Constable in charge of the Survey Paddock. Surveyor Robert Hoddle wrote to the Crown Surveyor, S A Perry, in Sydney thus:

Sir, In reference to your letter of the 3<sup>rd</sup> instant (B52/68) relative to granting the Constable in charge of the Survey Paddock. I have to request the favour of His Excellency to appoint Mr Murphy, late Sergeant of Police, as Special Constable to Survey Paddock it being absolutely necessary in these unsettled times to have a trustworthy man always there.<sup>37</sup>

In receipt of Perry's reply, Hoddle subsequently wrote to advise that:

In reference to my letter of the 8<sup>th</sup> ultimo (52/179) and [minuted] thereon I have the honour to inform you that James Murphy has returned from the gold diggings and is now in charge of the Survey Paddock and to request that His Excellency will be

pleased to approve of his remaining so at wages of six shillings per diem as it is absolutely necessary that a trustworthy man should be always there.

Possibly to emphasise his point, he added that two valuable horses had 'been missed out of the Paddock' in the previous week but 'fortunately have since been recovered (signed RH)'.<sup>38</sup> In her *History and Cultural Significance of the Vegetation and Landscape of the Yarra Boulevard*, Carmel McPhee describes the building as 'the Deputy Surveyor's dwelling, 'Murphy's Hut', later to become the park keeper's house'.<sup>39</sup> While it is unclear where McPhee found this reference to the building as the 'Deputy Surveyor's residence', as the position of Deputy Surveyor did not exist, it suggests that a house in the survey paddock was at that time occupied by an unnamed surveyor.<sup>40</sup> A group of buildings and yards are shown on the 1857 *Municipality of Richmond* (Figure 10),<sup>41</sup> roughly in the location of present day Swan Street. These presumably include the house at the time occupied by a surveyor. It therefore appears that the first Caretaker, James Murphy, built a 'hut', presumably timber, in the Survey Paddock for his own accommodation, and that this is the one described by McPhee as the 'Deputy Surveyor's' dwelling.<sup>42</sup> It is likely that this is the group of buildings shown on the 1857 plan of the *Municipality of Richmond*, a copy of which is held by the City of Richmond (Figure 10).

James Murphy died in December 1865, after thirteen years in the post; and his son Walter then applied for the position of Caretaker. The application was noted in the Minutes of the Council meeting on 22 December 1865.<sup>43</sup> This was the first of two instances where the Caretaker's son took over the position when the father died.

While many other aspects of Richmond Park were discussed in the Council meetings and minuted, little was recorded about housing arrangements until the following year. At the 12 April 1866 meeting of Council, correspondence was read from the Town Clerk to the Department of Lands & Survey in which he reminded the Commissioner that the possession of the Richmond Park Caretakers' residence had 'not been given up in March last' when promised, and that he 'respectfully request that possession may be given'.<sup>44</sup>

As drawings of the cottage have not been located within the Council's Building Services Administration files<sup>45</sup> or the Survey Department's records, it is assumed the present cottage was built by the Public Works Department.

## 2.5.2 Richmond Park Committee of Management

Although the Richmond Council did not explicitly record the details, correspondence between the Council and the Department of Lands & Survey, seems to indicate that the original cottage (known as Murphy's Hut) was demolished once the Council became responsible for Richmond Park and the existing residence was constructed. The exact date of construction has not been established, though it appears to have been constructed between the late 1870s or 1880s. The masonry building and timber addition and outhouses are clearly marked on the MMBW plans of the area in 1895.

In the Richmond Park Committee of Management file, a Memorandum dated 9 February 1917 regarding the Caretaker's residence, states that:

The Caretaker's quarters have been built for about 50 years and accommodation is inadequate. Ceiling of kitchen very low and wood-work under floor is in bad order.<sup>46</sup>

If the summary history of the residence, written in 1917, is accurate, the house could be dated to the 1870s, although, as stated, documentary evidence to confirm this hypothesis has not been found in either the Public Works Department files, Richmond Council Minutes or Richmond Park Management Committee Minutes. The cottage does not appear on the 1873 *Contour Plan of the Town of Richmond*, nor the 1888 Allen & Tuxen *Plan of Melbourne and Suburbs*, yet it is drawn in on the 1872 Martin plan. It is thought this plan may have been

altered to include it at a later date. Therefore, it would appear the house was built between the 1870s and the early 1880s.

Renovations to the cottage are well documented in the Minutes of the Committee of Management and the Richmond Council Minutes. The Richmond Park Committee of Management was appointed in 1888. A full set of Minutes for the years the Management Committee existed, from 1888-1920, are held at the Public Record Office and have been consulted.<sup>47</sup>

Small matters relating to the cottage are recorded in the Minutes of Richmond Council Meetings from 1867 onwards. For example, in January 1867 it was noted that the Caretaker of Richmond Park reported the attempted destruction of a Water Closet at the rear of the Park Keeper's house.<sup>48</sup> Only four months later, it was noted that an account, to pay in full the allowance of 12 shillings 6 pence to the family of Walter Murphy, the late Caretaker of Richmond Park, was approved in the accounts of the Council.<sup>49</sup> The cost of repairs to the Caretaker's house, the sum of 3 shillings 5 pence, was also approved at the same meeting.

### **2.5.3 Richmond Park and Dr von Mueller**

Following the death of Walter Murphy in 1867, a sub-committee of the Council was appointed to consider and report 'to the Committee on the occupation of the Park House and the Office of Caretaker'.<sup>50</sup> It was duly noted that a Caretaker be appointed, whose duties:

should be to protect and take charge of the Park at all times, and labour during the ordinary working hours of each day in trenching, planting, or doing such other work as may from time to time be required of him by the Council or its officers at a salary of thirty shillings per week and free use of the House.<sup>51</sup>

Applications were opened for the position in mid-April 1867 and a new caretaker, Edward Plant, was appointed. On 25 April, his first report was read to the Council Meeting. However, the term of the third Caretaker was brief: the resignation of Edward Plant occurred in November 1867 and was noted in the Minutes.<sup>52</sup>

Co-incidentally, another entry in the Minutes dated 25 April 1867 under the heading 'Richmond Park', notes that in his general request to Dr Mueller, the Town Clerk included a request for 150 shrubs and plants for the reserve [Richmond Park].<sup>53</sup>

Twice in two years, reference was made to trees requested from Dr Ferdinand von Mueller, Director of the Botanical Gardens.<sup>54</sup> On 3 June 1869 it was minuted 'That the report be referred to the Park & Reserve Sub-Committee with the power to act.' and 'That the town clerk convey the thanks of the Council to Dr von Mueller for the supply of trees etc. received from him.'<sup>55</sup>

Von Mueller had been appointed as Director of the Botanical Gardens in 1857. As Director of the Gardens, he was responsible for exchanging seeds and plants with botanists throughout Australia as well as European and American herbaria. However, whilst employed as Director, he also supplied many of Melbourne's parks and gardens with seeds and seedlings.

At the weekly meetings of the Richmond Park Management Committee, the Caretaker's report was noted. The report detailed the number of horses agisted, the income received, and any other matters requiring attention, such as fencing.

### **2.5.4 Managing Richmond Park: 1888-1920**

The Victorian Government *Gazette* published a notice, dated 1 April 1888, that a Committee of Management of Richmond Park, in the City of Richmond, had been formed to 'exercise control over the said Richmond Park'. The official notice read:

WHEREAS by the Crown Grant issued in favour of the Board of Land and Works and the Mayor, Councillors and Citizens of the city of Richmond, in respect of Richmond Park, in the said city of Richmond, it is provided and declared that the land thereby granted and the buildings for the time being thereon shall be maintained and used as and for a Public Park and place of Recreation and offices and conveniences connected therewith, under and in accordance with such regulations as shall from time to time be made by the Governor or other officer for the time being administering the Government of the colony of Victoria, with the consent of the Executive Council thereof, and in the meantime under and in accordance with such rules, orders, bye-laws, and regulations as shall from time to time be made by the Board of Land and Works and the Mayor, Councillors, and Citizens of the said city of Richmond: Now therefore the Board of Land and Works and the Council of the city of Richmond do hereby make the Regulation following in respect of the said Richmond Park ...

The nominated members of the Committee of Management were Alexander Black, Michael Callaman, David Martin (later its President), William Davison, George Henry Bennett, John Shanks Jenkins and John McRae.<sup>56</sup>

The control of Richmond Park was vested in the Committee of Management until a decision was taken in 1919 to place the management of the Park in the hands of the Richmond City Council. At their meeting No. 20 on 9 February 1920, the existing Management Committee agreed:

That the Council forego Government subsidy and take over control of Park and a Management Committee of five be appointed at the same time.<sup>57</sup>

The motion was carried and Councillors Robinson, Fear, Strafford, Bell and Barcelo were elected as the Management Committee of Richmond Park.

This occurred in 1920, when

### **2.5.5 Father and Son – Richard and George Page**

On 12 June 1888, a motion in the Minutes of the Management Committee agreed that

Richard Miles Page be continued as Caretaker at a salary of £1 per week, free house, wood and water, and grass for one horse.<sup>58</sup>

Additionally, it was noted that four weeks notice on either side was required to terminate the agreement.<sup>59</sup> Richard Page had been appointed ‘keeper’ of Richmond Park on 21 August 1876. An official letter on the letterhead of the Office of Lands and Survey, Melbourne, nominated the subject of the letter as ‘Richard Miles Page Caretaker of Richmond to be a Crown Land Bailiff – Hugh Brown also ...’.<sup>60</sup> This appointment was instigated by the Town Hall, Richmond, who wrote to the Commissioner of Lands & Survey on 21 July 1876 seeking his appointment as Bailiff. The official Schedule of Appointments confirms Page ‘to be a Crown Lands Bailiff in and for the Colony of Victoria’.<sup>61</sup>

At this distance in time it is only possible to speculate on the difference in the management of the Park when it was transferred from the Council directly to the Management Committee. It may be for this reason that in December 1888, only one month after the Committee had been appointed, that the Caretaker ‘verbally applied for some improvements to his house’.<sup>62</sup> However, the pace of renovations and improvements to the Caretaker’s cottage hastened slowly from this point onwards.

While agreeing in December 1888 to improvements to his house, Council resolved that Mr Bickford (the engineer) ‘bring up estimates of cost at the next meeting’; despite this resolution, at the next meeting, on 8 January 1889, the matter was postponed. No reason was given for this postponement. The matter was again postponed: on 8 February the meeting lapsed altogether



because of the funeral of the late Honourable Peter Lalor (1827-1889).<sup>63</sup> It was not until April 1889 that a tender was let for repairs to the Caretaker's house; Mr Boorman's tender was accepted on 11 June 1889.<sup>64</sup> There is no indication in the minutes as to the nature of the repairs.

No mention is made of the cottage again until 13 October 1891 when it was resolved that the Caretaker 'be authorised to purchase 300 bricks to be used in the improvement of his house'. In March 1892 repairs not to exceed 50 shillings and 'to have the window altered at a cost not to exceed 30 shillings' were authorised in the Committee minutes.<sup>65</sup> Little of note regarding the Richmond Park's Caretaker or his residence is minuted in the Management Committee Minutes between March 1892 and July 1896. No mention of a timber extension to the masonry building appears in the Minutes, yet the MMBW plan of 1895 indicates that a timber addition had been made to the original masonry building. Timber outbuildings are also included on the 1895 plan (Figure 14).

In both July 1896 and August 1897, salary increases are recorded for the Caretaker – to £65 p.a. in 1896 and increased again to £75 p.a. in 1897.



*Figure 14* 1895 MMBW Plan  
Source: State Library of Victoria Maps Collection

#### *Death of Richard Miles Page*

On 14 June 1899, the death of the Caretaker Richard Page, is minuted in the Committee of Management's Minute Book. The resolution read:

The secretary reported the death of the Caretaker (R M Page) after — years of faithful service. Letter of condolence to Mrs Page.<sup>66</sup>

Page had been Caretaker for 26 years, and had raised a family in the close confines of the small Caretaker's residence. In the same item recording Page's death, an additional sentence that

'Mr Geo. Page, son of late Caretaker be appointed Acting Caretaker at a salary at the rate of £65 p/a during the pleasure of the Committee' confirms Page junior in the role of Caretaker. By April 1900, Page's salary had been increased to £78 per annum.

A steady stream of improvements now began. On 11 July 1900 Mr Kelly [possibly the town engineer] prepared a specification for painting and papering the Caretaker's quarters. Tenders were invited for the work, the committee having decided that they were necessary. The annual inspection of Richmond Park and possibly of the Caretaker's residence, by the Management Committee, may have convinced them of the need for repairs. At the same meeting, the Secretary reported that the roof of the Caretaker's house needed to be repaired and he had received two tenders for the work required.<sup>67</sup>

Young George Page, who was possibly in his early to mid-20s at this stage, had managed to move improvements ahead quickly. On 16 January 1901 it was agreed that Mr Kelly be asked to give an estimate of the cost of 'creating a bath room and wash-house at the Park Ranger's residence'. The cost was estimated to be around £22-10-0. This estimate, which included a washhouse and copper, was accepted. Additionally, Council agreed to the payment of Fire Insurance on the dwelling. The wash-house may be part of the timber structure shown on the 1910 Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works Plan of Drainage (Figure 15).

The second volume of Richmond Council Richmond Park Trust Minutes<sup>68</sup> details repairs to the Caretaker's residence, and the fortunes of the subsequent Caretakers.

In August 1906 the Council was authorised to 'expend a sum of money not exceeding £15 on the repair and renovation of the Caretaker's quarters'.<sup>69</sup> A further minute was recorded on 17 October 1906 that the builders, Messrs Admans and Johnson had successfully tendered for painting and renovating the quarters.

Three years later, in July 1909, gas pipes were laid to the Caretaker's residence and suitable fittings purchased. The house was sewered in August 1910 and the cost of wall-papering of a further two rooms was refunded to the Caretaker. The MMBW Plan of 1910 for the property, shows the additions to the original square plan of the cottage.<sup>70</sup>

Work to the residence appears to have ceased until 1916 when authority was given 'for obtaining prices for increasing the window accommodation in the dining room'.<sup>71</sup> Later that year, in September 1916, Councillor Cotter referred to the condition of the Caretaker's dwelling and it was decided to ask the City Surveyor to inspect the house and report on what improvements were required. At the 8 December meeting, correspondence between the Secretary and Chairman of the Richmond Park Trust Committee relative to the improvements required were read:

That tenders be invited for carrying out the A Scheme of alterations which are estimated to cost £140 and that the Chairman and Secretary have power to accept a tender on behalf of the Committee.<sup>72</sup>

It was also decided to ask the City Surveyor to prepare a specification of the work embodied in Scheme A to evaluate contractors to tender for the work. The files do not reveal the details of this scheme.



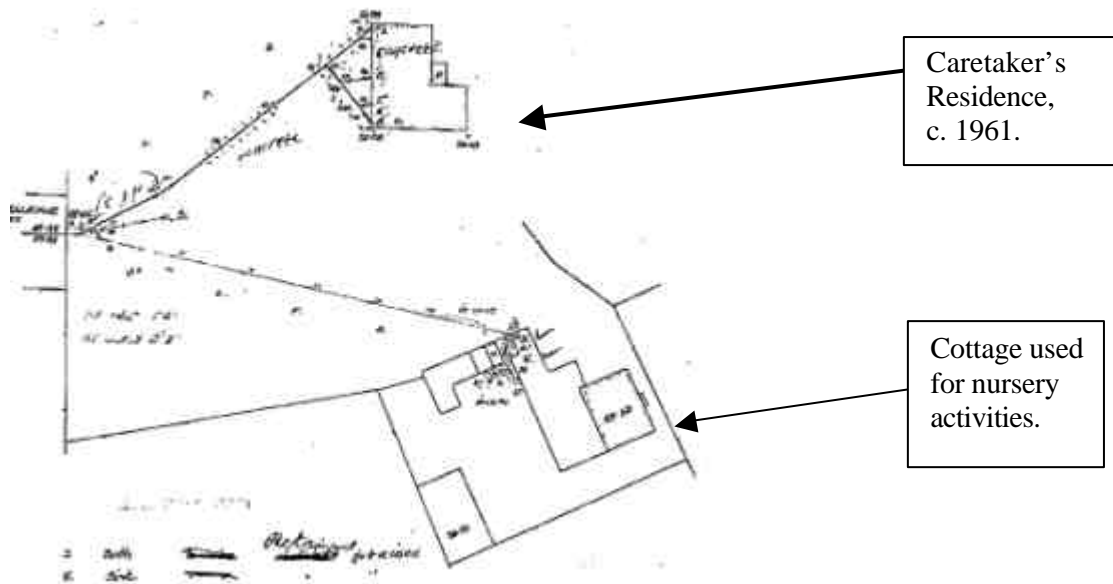


Figure 16 MMBW Drainage Plan, 1961  
Source: Casey Services

The MMBW Plan of Drainage, dated 1961, shows a new cream brick Caretaker's residence north of the existing Caretaker's cottage. It appears the cottage and associated buildings were used as a nursery and for the propagation of seeds and plants at that time (Figure 16).

## 2.6 Richmond Park in the Early Twentieth Century

Around the turn of the century, Richmond Park was regularly used for organised sport, the great demand for the use of the cricket pitches and football ovals evident from the records of requests in the Richmond Park Trust Minutes. The introduction of a cycling track, and new paths and plantings were all part of works carried out to beautify the park, and allowed for greater access, use and enjoyment of the park by Richmond residents and visitors.

### 2.6.1 Yarra Boulevard Construction

The Richmond section of the Yarra Boulevard was built in response to rising unemployment during the late 1920s and 1930s. In 1933, almost 29% of men and 13% of women in Richmond were unemployed.<sup>77</sup> In an effort to provide some employment, the State Government contributed money to be used for wages from the Unemployment Relief Tax to the local council for approved public works.<sup>78</sup> The Richmond section of the Yarra Boulevard was to join existing sections of the road, and was to last three months. In a recollection of working on the Yarra Boulevard, one man describes the difficulty of the labour, because

there were no big slicers like they've got today – it was pick and shovel and blisters on blisters. And if you didn't work you never got your sustenance.<sup>79</sup>

Work on the Yarra Boulevard began in August 1934 from Loyola Grove, and the first section of the Boulevard, from Grange Road Bridge to Swan Street was opened on 8 September 1937. The section of the Yarra Boulevard between Swan Street and Bridge Road was opened by the Mayor of Richmond on 18 February 1937.<sup>80</sup>

## **2.7 Changes to Richmond Park**

### **2.7.1 Richmond High School**

From 1940 Richmond Council lobbied for the provision of public secondary education, but it was not until 5 December 1967 that the *Richmond High School Land Act* revoked the permanent reservation of the section of Richmond Park near Bridge Road to reserve the land as a site for a State High School. Richmond High School amalgamated with Richmond Technical School to become Richmond Secondary College, and in 1988 became the Melbourne Girls' Secondary College.<sup>81</sup>

### **2.7.2 Burnley Primary School**

In 1987, the students of Burnley Primary School were housed temporarily in classrooms near Burnley Oval while their old school building was demolished. Falling student numbers resulted in the old school building site being turned into parkland instead of a new school building being constructed, and the Burnley Primary School students were enrolled in amalgamated primary schools in the Richmond area.

### **2.7.3 Richmond Council Depot**

In 1986, the Caretaker's cottage and surrounding buildings were expanded to become a Council Depot, with the new dwelling built on the northern part of the site. In 1993, the form of the drawings of the house show the addition to the north filled in and a verandah attached to the two buildings. The former Caretaker or Caretaker's cottage is currently leased by the City of Yarra to the Jesuit Mission who until recently used it as a nursery as part of their outreach programme.

### **2.7.4 Paths and Park Furniture**

The remainder of the site is Crown Land, reserved as a site for Public Park and recreation, and is under the control of the City of Yarra. The Richmond Park Trust minutes of 22 January 1907 approved the installation of seats along the main avenue. A bicycle/pedestrian path forms the western perimeter of the park, and a sporting oval, pavilion, playground and barbeques are also located within the site.

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- 6 Ibid. Plan held at the City of Yarra.
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- 24 Ibid, Item 58/6732, RS152.
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- 28 Ibid.
- 29 Ibid.
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