

## 3.0 PHYSICAL SURVEY

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### 3.1 Introduction

The following physical survey of Richmond Park is based on an examination of the available documentary evidence and on a physical examination of the hard landscape features as they exist. The objective of the survey has been to establish, as far as possible, those elements which are significant, and those elements which may not be significant.

### 3.2 Documentation

This physical survey is largely based on site inspections of the Park undertaken in 2005. The *History and Cultural Significance of the Vegetation and Landscape of the Yarra Boulevard, Richmond* by Carmel McPhee and Lee Andrews & Associates, the *Burnley Park Management and Master Plan*, as well as various Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works plans of Richmond Park were also consulted. The inspections, in combination with an analysis of the earlier documentation, were used to determine the history and significance of the Park features.

### 3.3 Hard Landscape Features

#### 3.3.1 Park Entrances

##### *FEATURE:*

Richmond Park pedestrian entrance on the corner of Swan Street and Park Grove.



##### *Description*

The southern pedestrian entrance to the site features the park name sign, and asphalt bike path extending from the Yarra Boulevard with a concrete kerb garden bed and a cyclone wire fence with steel pipe posts and rail, following the Park Grove boundary.

##### *Significance*

The pedestrian entrance on the corner of Swan Street and Park Grove is of no significance.

### *Recommendations*

Retain or redevelop as required.

### *FEATURE:*

Richmond Park vehicle entrance.



### *Description*

The vehicle entrance is on the western boundary of the park. It is accessed from Bellevue Street, and leads to the car park in front of the Caretaker's Cottage.

### *Significance*

The vehicle entrance is of no significance.

### *Recommendations*

Retain or redevelop as required.

*FEATURE:*

Richmond Park pedestrian entrance on Yarra Boulevard.



*History*

During 1924-1925, half a mile (805 metres) of picket fencing in Richmond Park was removed and replaced with post and angle rail, and by the following year, post and angle rail fence had been installed throughout the Park.<sup>1</sup>

*Description*

The northern pedestrian entrance to the site features an asphalt bike path extending along the western boundary of the site, from Yarra Boulevard at the northern end to Swan Street at the southern end. A timber post and angle rail fence runs perpendicular to this path adjacent to Campbell Street, which delineates the northern extent of the park.

*Significance*

This fence was considered to be of primary significance by McPhee and Andrews as being demonstrative of an early (1920-1930s) type of fencing used in Richmond Park. Judging by the physical condition of the fence, some parts may be original, while others are probably replacements. The fence is assessed as being of contributory significance because of its ability to demonstrate a type of historical park infrastructure.

*Recommendations*

The Richmond Park pedestrian entrance and fence on Yarra Boulevard should be retained, although there may be scope for alteration and adaptation.

*FEATURE:*

Richmond Park pedestrian entrance on Yarra Boulevard.



#### *History*

The rockeries/embankments along Yarra Boulevard were essential for construction of the Boulevard to retain soil and stabilize the steep riverbanks.<sup>2</sup>

#### *Description*

The eastern pedestrian entrance to the site features an asphalt path extending from the Yarra Boulevard footpath up to the park site. On the western side of the path there is a dry stone wall.

#### *Significance*

Of primary significance.

#### *Recommendations*

Retain the form of the rockery and path alignment at this entry.



### *FEATURE:*

Richmond Park pedestrian entrances - eastern and western boundaries.



### *History*

Not known.

### *Description*

There are three pedestrian entrances on the western boundary of the site. Two of these entrances are treated with concrete kerbs and channels with an asphalt path. The third entrance comprises a concrete paver path, with concrete kerbs and channels, and a gravel path crossing over the bike path towards the brick amenities block. On the eastern edge of the site the entrance from Yarra Boulevard, consists of an asphalt path, and bollards to prevent vehicular access.

### *Significance*

The pedestrian entrances of the eastern and western boundaries are of no significance.

### *Recommendations*

Retain or redevelop as required.

### 3.3.2 Built Features

#### *FEATURE:*

Burnley Oval.



#### *History*

According to McPhee and Andrews, an oval has existed in the Park from at least the 1890s.<sup>3</sup> Despite further research, no additional information was attained to confirm the date of creation of the oval currently located in Richmond Park.

#### *Description*

Located along the south-western corner of the site, the oval is a flat open grassed space, and features a galvanised steel pipe frame fence surrounding the perimeter, and two new soccer goals.

#### *Significance*

The Burnley oval is of contributory significance because of its ability to demonstrate a continued use of the Park since the late nineteenth century. The Burnley Oval soccer goals are of no significance.

#### *Recommendations*

The Burnley Oval should be retained, but the soccer goals may be retained or removed as required.

### *FEATURE:*

Brick Pavilion (southern, eastern, northern and western elevations).



### *History*

Date of construction, c. 1970s?

### *Description*

A rectangular flat roofed red brick building featuring two entrances in the southern elevation, and one entrance in the northern elevation. Four windows are located in both the southern and northern elevations, and two windows are located in the eastern and western elevations.

### *Significance*

The pavilion is of no significance.

### *Recommendations*

Demolish or redevelop as required.

*FEATURE:*

Caretaker's Cottage.



*History*

See Section 2.5 for a complete history of the caretaker's cottage.

*Description*

The caretaker's cottage is located near the north-western border of the park, and is surrounded by a recent cyclone wire fence. The former Caretaker's cottage is a single-storey rendered masonry and weatherboard building constructed in three main stages. It has been substantially altered internally and externally.

*Stage 1*

The original, nineteenth century masonry section of the cottage, appears to be the rectangular plan section on the eastern side with rendered brick walls and a hipped corrugated galvanised steel roof. Physical evidence indicates the cottage was substantially altered in the c.1930s, although the overall form and elements, such as the rendered chimney and cast-iron wall vents, are discernible as nineteenth century in origin.

External elements dating from the c.1930s include the corner feature bricks and the timber-framed, double-hung sash windows with corbelled brick sill brackets. The original entry, located in the centre of the east elevation, has been infilled.<sup>4</sup> The only original window opening is located on the south elevation.

Internally, walls are hard plastered brick with non-original skirtings. When the original cottage was extensively refurbished c.1930, with the exception of Room 3, all ceilings were rebuilt and



have Art Deco style moulded plaster cornices. Alterations to the floor plan at that time include the small vestibule with a curved walls (Room 2), which appears to have functioned as an entry porch. A remnant section of the original chimney-breast is discernible in the north-east corner of Room 4, suggesting that the internal wall between Rooms 3 and 4 is not original.

### *Stage 2*

Abutting the west side of the cottage is a weatherboard clad wing with a gabled corrugated galvanised steel roof and corbelled brick chimney. This section is presumably the timber structure shown abutting the east side of the original masonry cottage on the 1895 MMBW plan and may possibly date from the 1889 to 1891 improvements referred to in the Richmond Park Management Committee Minutes.<sup>5</sup> It has timber-framed, double-hung sash windows with moulded timber architraves and a modern flush panel door. The 1910 MMBW plan indicates that the weatherboard wing was extended further to the north and had outbuildings abutting its west side.

Internally, the c.1889-1891 wing contains two rooms and a north-south corridor. It has a timber floor structure and timber stud walls with a lath and plaster finish. Doors are four-panel timber with moulded timber architraves. Ceilings have been rebuilt and feature Art-Deco style moulded plaster cornices. All internal door openings appear to be non-original. Other alterations include the removal of a section of wall between the rooms 6 and 7 to create a wide door opening.

### *Stage 3*

Part of the weatherboard addition, which appears to have included the bathroom built in 1901, was demolished in the late 1980s or early 1990s to make way for a new single-storey weatherboard addition with a hipped corrugated galvanised steel roof and timber-framed windows, shown on the 1993 MMBW Plan of Drainage.<sup>6</sup>

### *Significance*

Although the existing cottage has some historic interest as a nineteenth century park staff residence, its significance has been severely compromised by the substantial external and internal alterations and additions. These changes have resulted in the loss of much of the original fabric and the building as it now exists is an unremarkable structure of little architectural merit. The former Caretaker's cottage is considered to be of little significance.<sup>7</sup>

### *Recommendations*

If demolition is the option chosen by the City of Yarra, it is recommended that an archival record be prepared prior to demolition.<sup>8</sup>

*FEATURE:*

Children's playground.



*History*

Installed c. 1980s-1990s?

*Description*

The playground is constructed from treated pine, rubber tyres and steel. It is located near the western border of the site, north of the sports oval and features a woodchip soft fall surround with a timber edge strip.

*Significance*

The children's playground is of no significance.

*Recommendations*

Remove, relocate or redevelop as required.

*FEATURE:*

Caretaker's Cottage car park.



*History*

Not known.

*Description*

The car park in front of the Caretaker's Cottage is accessed via the vehicle entrance from Bellevue Street. Round treated pine post and rail barriers surround the perimeter of the car park, which is surfaced with bitumen. It is secured by a galvanised steel-framed wire mesh gate.

*Significance*

The car park is of no significance.

*Recommendations*

Redevelop as required.

### **3.3.3 Corroboree Tree**

*History*

The Corroboree Tree is significant to the Wurundjeri people and the Kulin nation. Prior to European settlement, the Wurundjeri, Bunurong, Wauthurong, Kurung and Taungurong people gathered at least once a year to hold corroborees at this site.<sup>9</sup>

*Description*

The Corroboree Tree stands as a singular element in the in the south eastern corner of the park. The Tree is set on a concrete foundation, presumably as a treatment for pedestrian traffic, that is causing deterioration at the base of the tree because of inadequate water drainage.<sup>10</sup> The tree is dead, and retained more as a monument or historical marker.

Note: The Tree is potentially at risk from vandals.

*Significance*

The Corroboree Tree is of Primary significance.



#### *Recommendation*

Investigate another pavement treatment to reduce the potential for further deterioration at the base of the tree, and repair deterioration if possible. Install interpretative signage.

### **3.3.4 Public Amenities**

#### *FEATURE:*

Seats.

#### *History*

Installed at various times since c. 1970s.

#### *Description*

The site contains several styles of seating (Refer to photos). These include the monier concrete and timber slat seats, as well as at least two styles of steel frame and timber slat seats. Some of the seats at the northern end of the park have a bluestone pad.

#### *Significance*

The seats are of no significance.

#### *Recommendations*

Remove or relocate as required.





#### *FEATURE:*

Barbeques.



#### *History*

Not known.

#### *Description*

An electric barbeque is located near the children's playground north of the sporting oval, and is constructed from steel and timber slats. Another barbeque, located at the northern end on the

park, is constructed from bluestone pitchers with raised pointing and a brick top. Both are set on concrete slabs.

#### *Significance*

The barbeques are of no significance.

#### *Recommendations*

Remove or relocate as required.

#### *FEATURE:*

Rubbish bins.

#### *Description*

Most of the Park's bins are standard City of Yarra, heritage green steel lattice cage with gate, bearing the City logo. They generally date from the 1990's. There is also a freestanding, unsecured wheelie bin.

#### *Significance*

The rubbish bins are of no significance.

#### *Recommendations*

Remove or relocate as required.



*FEATURE:*

Picnic tables.



*History*

Installed c. 1990s.

*Description*

Three picnic tables are located near the children's playground, north of the sports oval. A fourth picnic table is located at the northern end of the park beside the bluestone barbeque. All are constructed of horizontal timber slats on a steel frame with a concrete pad.

*Significance*

The picnic tables are of no significance.

*Recommendations*

Remove or relocate as required.

*FEATURE:*

Drinking fountain.

*History*

Very little detail is recorded in the Council minutes or Richmond Park records regarding the provision of drinking taps in Richmond Park.<sup>11</sup> Although no history was found, the construction materials and style of the former drinking fountain suggest it may date from the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century.

*Description*

A former drinking fountain is situated immediately adjacent to the northern perimeter of the park. It is constructed of crazy slate, with an intact basin, but no tap. It is set on a concrete slab.



#### *Significance*

The drinking fountain may be of contributory significance.

#### *Recommendations*

The drinking fountain should be retained, although there may be scope for alteration or removal.

#### *FEATURE:*

Water taps.

#### *Description*

Two tap outlets were identified. One is located west of the forked bike path, between two flower beds north of the Caretaker's Cottage. It is attached to a timber post, set in red brick paving. The other is situated near the car park, and is attached to a galvanised steel pipe set behind a concrete slab.

#### *Significance*

The water taps are of no significance.

#### *Recommendations*

Remove, relocate or redevelop as required.





### 3.4 Paths and Fences

#### *FEATURE:*

Bicycle path.



#### *History*

Not known.

#### *Description*

The asphalt bike path runs along the western boundary from Yarra Boulevard at the northern end to Swan Street at the southern end. At the northern end of the site, the path forks and is separated by garden beds, with rock edging.

#### *Significance*

The bicycle path is of no significance.

#### *Recommendations*

Redevelop as required, although the rock edging should be exempt from redevelopment.

#### *FEATURE:*

Park fences.



### *History*

During 1924-1925, half a mile of picket fencing in Richmond Park was removed and replaced with post and angle rail, and by the following year, post and angle rail fencing had been installed throughout the park. This style of fence was traditionally painted white, and located to indicate boundaries in public reserves and to act as a safety barrier in median strips.<sup>12</sup>

### *Description*

The extant fencing along the north-eastern and northern end of the site is comprised of sections of timber post and angle rail. The angle rail is attached to the uprights with a section of galvanised hoop iron.<sup>13</sup>

A steel mesh fence borders the western boundary of the park along the length of Park Grove, from Swan Street to Brooks Street. The remaining western boundary of the park to Campbell Street is bounded by abutting residences.

A steel mesh fence also borders the south-eastern boundary of the park along the train line separating the Circus Site from the northern sections of the park.

### *Significance*

The timber post and angle rail fence is of contributory significance because of its ability to demonstrate a type of historical park infrastructure. The steel mesh fence is of no significance.

### *Recommendations*

The Richmond Park timber post and angle rail fence should be retained, although there may be scope for alteration and adaptation. The steel mesh fence can be retained or removed as required.



### *FEATURE:*

Bicycle path kerbing and flower/garden beds.



### *History*

During the 1920s, beautification works were carried out at Richmond Park. In 1926-1927, 290 yards of additional rockery was formed and planted with flowering shrubs and trees, and the stone borders were completed from Bridge Road to Swan Street.<sup>14</sup>

### *Description*

Flower beds border the western boundary of the park, west of the bike path. The kerbing along the flower beds north of the Swan Street entrance is concrete until just north of the Caretaker's Cottage. North of this point, stone bordered flower beds abut both sides of the bike path for the remaining length of the park. The garden beds on the eastern perimeter of the park are not bordered.

### *Significance*

The rock edging along sections of the flower beds is of primary significance, as they are largely intact, original, and demonstrative of a typical form of construction in the area from the earliest years of the municipality.<sup>15</sup> The concrete kerbing is of no significance.

### *Recommendations*

The rock edging and form of the flower beds should be retained. The concrete kerbing may be retained or replaced as required.



### 3.5 Soft Landscape Features

#### 3.5.1 Elm Avenue



##### *History*

The Dutch Elm Avenue (*Ulmus x hollandica*) was established c.1859, flanking the carriage drive that ran from Bridge Road through the centre of the site, terminating at Pic-Nic Station. McPhee and Andrews state that the original avenue contained a second row of Pines (*Pinus* sp.) on either side of the elms. *The Richmond Guardian* of 1890 describes "...the avenue through the Richmond Park leading from Bridge Rd to Swan St (which) is a cool promenade, and is a favourable place on Sunday afternoons". The avenue terminated at the northern end just short of the Bridge Road entry.

Aerial photographs throughout the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century show the Elm Avenue as the dominant feature within the park. Fears were raised over the trees at the northern end during the construction of the Yarra Boulevard in the 1930's, which in itself was a contentious issue opposed by Council. In the main, the elms at the northern end were retained and incorporated into the new roadway, with some removed from the eastern side where the Boulevard joined the old carriage drive near the site of the current Melbourne Girl's College.

Council records show that these trees were actively managed and replaced as necessary by the council throughout the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, signifying their importance within the Park. During construction of the Boulevard, raised rockeries were built on the western side of the roadway to protect the roots of the trees.

Despite the apparently careful management of the avenue by Council through most of the Park's history a large section was removed in the 1970's to provide room for the temporary relocation of Burnley Primary School to the park. This entailed the removal of nearly the entire southern section of the avenue.



*Figure 15 Aerial photograph  
c. 1960*

Note the continuity of the central Elm Avenue



*Figure 16 Aerial photograph  
c. 1980*

Note School buildings across former avenue alignment

Recent activities along the Avenue have included the selective removal and replacement of over-mature and senescent specimens along the Yarra Boulevard section, ensuring the ongoing survival of this important feature within Burnley Park.

#### *Description*

The Elm Avenue consists of three main sections. The trees at the northern end that were incorporated into the Boulevard are very large, mature specimens. A number have recently been removed and replaced with juvenile specimens of the same taxa.

The second section consists of generally smaller, though still mature trees within the Park proper, terminating at the car park adjacent to the old Park Keepers cottage.

There are two remnant trees in the far southern section near the railway line, isolated from the balance of the avenue. The enormous gap between these two trees and the balance of the Avenue illustrates how many trees were removed during the brief relocation of Burnley Primary School to the Park in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### *Significance*

The Elm Row is of primary significance within the Park. The trees are the earliest extant introduced plantings within the site. The trees in the northern section contribute strongly to the character of the Yarra Boulevard as street trees, and all illustrate the alignment of the early park carriageway, the dominant feature within the site until the construction of the Yarra Boulevard in the 1930's.

### *Recommendations*

Monitor and continue replacing senescent specimens or gaps in the avenue as part of an overall tree management plan, to ensure the Avenue's ongoing contribution to the amenity of the Park and the Yarra Boulevard precinct generally.

Remove poorly performing juvenile specimens planted on the west side of the avenue adjacent to the site of the demolished former Park Keepers residence. Replant avenue trees on the western side to match extant trees on the eastern side of the avenue located within the Park proper, following the original alignment of the avenue.

Consider re-planting both sides of the missing section of the Avenue that was removed for the temporary re-location of Burnley Primary School, from the old Park Keepers Cottage to the two remnant trees in the southern section of the Park.

### 3.5.2 Casuarina Avenue



#### *History*

The northern section of the Yarra Boulevard to Bridge Road followed the alignment of the former Park carriageway, but extensive works were required to modify levels for the new roadway, including the construction of rockeries beneath the elms on the western side of the Boulevard, and regrading at the intersection of Bridge Road. Early plans of the site indicate the Dutch Elm Avenue did not extend to the intersection.

McPhee and Andrews suggest the short avenue of Casuarinas (*Casuarina cunninghamiana*) was probably planted as part of the works associated with the construction of the Richmond High School in the *late 1960's*, though an aerial photograph dated 1960 clearly shows a number of well-established trees that are likely to be the Casuarinas extant in this location.

#### *Description*

The Casuarina Avenue consists of a fine group of Casuarina planted on either side of the northern section of the Yarra Boulevard, including trees in the section known as *Scullin Walk*. A number of mature specimens are also located in the rockery between the school complex and Bridge Road.

#### *Significance*

The Casuarina Avenue is of contributory significance as a fine mid-20<sup>th</sup> century planting group within the Burnley Park precinct. The trees form a fitting feature at the northern entry to the Yarra Boulevard, and offer a strong contribution to the amenity of the streetscape, pedestrian walks and general precinct.

#### *Recommendations*

Manage the trees in accordance with an overall tree management plan for the site, including replacing gaps in the Avenue.

Remove woody and arborescent weeds that are growing in competition with the Casuarinas, including a suckering Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) (declared noxious weed), Pepper



Tree (*Schinus molle*), Sweet Pittosporum (*Pittosporum undulatum*) and Canary Island Date Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*).

### 3.5.3 Triangular Bed



#### *History*

Although the rockeries throughout Burnley Park are generally associated with the construction of the Yarra Boulevard in the 1930's, rockeries are mentioned within the site in Council records prior to the construction of the Boulevard, including a park report dated 1904. A plan of Richmond, dated 1921, shows a number of rockeries and garden beds throughout the park, including a garden area north of the original Park Keeper's house situated in the apex of the elm avenue and western boundary path. The short section of path bisecting the northern tip of the garden area, adjacent to Park Street, can also be seen on the plan.

In about 1960, a new caretaker's residence was constructed on the northern side of the vehicular entry from Bellevue Street over much of the southern section of the garden bed. It is not known if the garden beds in this area were still being maintained at this time, but it would appear that the siting of the new building was insensitive to the historical fabric of the site, entailing the removal of at least one mature tree from the main elm avenue and the awkward re-routing of an original path alignment around the north-eastern corner of the building.

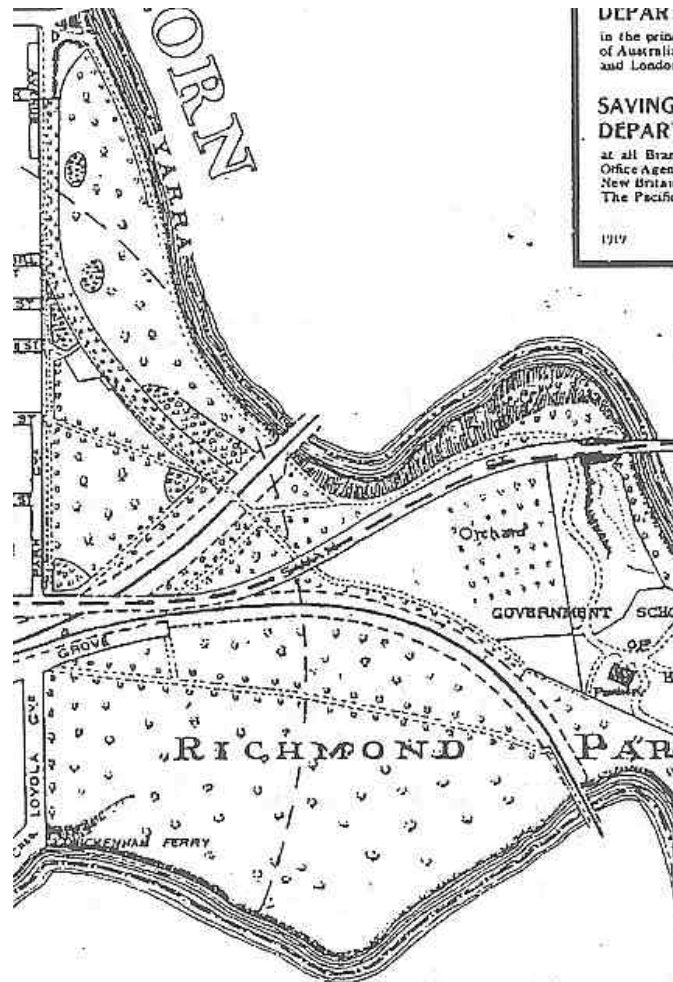


Figure 17 Detail of Plan of Richmond, 1921, showing the location of garden beds throughout the site.

Other elements that appear to have been associated with the construction of the residence include construction of rock edging and garden beds at the rear (north side) of the building and the establishment of a native border on the south side, adjacent to the Bellevue Street entry.

The residence has recently been demolished, and the altered rock edged garden bed and path alignment and most of the native border sitting awkwardly without the building that provided their context.

#### Description

What remains of the triangular bed is a confusion of smaller angular garden beds, a turfed area, poor quality plantings and the forlorn, former Park Keeper's residence site. Garden beds are edged with basalt fieldstones and are dominated by the resilient *Agapanthus* (*Agapanthus praecox*) and a host of weedy species, notably Pepper Trees (*Schinus molle*) and Sweet Pittosporum (*Pittosporum undulatum*). The separated northern tip of the beds formed at the intersection of three paths appears to be the only section that retains some integrity of form from the 1920's plan.

There are a number of mature elms (*Ulmus x hollandica*) and Eucalypts (*Eucalyptus cladocalyx*, *E. camaldulensis*) located within this section in varying condition. The elms appear to be contemporary with those located in the elm avenue immediately to the east.

Border plantings along the southern side of the area, associated with the demolished Park Keepers house, consist of predominantly Australian native taxa, such as *Melaleuca* spp. The informal, mid-20<sup>th</sup> character of these plantings, as well as their scale and siting, sits uncomfortably within the context of the Park.

### *Significance*

Due to the much-altered form of this area, it is not considered to be of significance.

The individual mature elms and eucalypts are of primary significance as surviving trees from the early history of the site.

### *Recommendations*

Reconstruct the much simpler, triangular form of the area, removing weed species and inappropriate mid-20<sup>th</sup> century plantings associated with the demolished Park Keeper's residence.

Assess, manage and replace the mature trees as part of an ongoing tree management plan for the Park.

### 3.5.4 Former Council Depot Site



#### *History*

The cottage located at the north eastern corner of the former council depot site was constructed between the early 1870's and 1880's, and served as the Park Caretaker's residence well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. With the construction of a new cream brick Caretaker's residence immediately to the north, c.1960, "it appears the cottage and associated outbuildings were used as a nursery and for the propagation of seeds and plants at that time".

In 1986 the cottage and other buildings were incorporated into an expanded council depot occupying a large segment of the central section of the Park. The entire area was enclosed by a cyclone wire fence, and contained various propagation buildings, glasshouses and other associated structures.

The depot has since been demolished, though the wire fencing remains as does the old Caretaker's Cottage.

#### *Description*

Like the demolished Park Keeper's residence site, this area has a rather neglected quality. Plantings around the old Park Keeper's Cottage are generally of poor quality, and include an almost completely defoliated, senescent Lilly Pilly (*Acmena smithii*).

Two notable exceptions include a single Canary Island Date Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) on the northern side of the cottage and a mature Desert Ash (*Fraxinus oxycarpa*) on the southern side. In this location, within close proximity to the Yarra River, the Desert Ash is not an entirely appropriate specimen, with its propensity to prolifically self-sow.

The balance of plantings associated with the former depot site along the western and southern boundary fence lines could be charitably described as an eclectic mix. These include the near indestructible survival species Agapanthus (*Agapanthus praecox*) and Oleander (*Nerium oleander*), woody weeds (*Coprosma repens*, *Pittosporum undulatum*) and juvenile trees such as Cypress (*Cupressus* sp.) and Chilean Willow (*Salix humboldtiana* 'Pyramidalis').



### *Significance*

The Canary Island Date Palm is of contributory significance as a mature mid-century planting within the Park.

The balance of plantings and garden areas are considered to be of no significance.

### *Recommendations*

Retain and manage the Canary Island Palm as part of an overall tree management plan for the Park.

Remove weedy species, including the large Desert Ash.

Develop the vacant depot site as part of an overall Master Plan for Burnley Park.

### 3.5.5 Burnley Oval Eucalypt Plantations



#### *History*

Two informal avenues of Eucalypts (*Eucalyptus* spp.) are clearly visible on the series of aerial photographs of the area, from the 1930's onwards. These flanked two straight paths that ran from Park Grove from the north and Swan Street from the south, along the respective boundaries of Burnley Oval, terminating near the southern end of the old Elm Avenue.

The size of the trees visible on the earliest aerial photograph, dated 1931, suggests they were planted around the turn of the century, if not earlier.



*Figure 18 Detail of Aerial photograph c. 1960, showing path system around Burnley Oval.*

A report on the numbers of trees planted in the Park, dated 1904, records over one thousand individual specimens of Eucalypt. Most numerous of these were 640 River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) and 304 Sugar Gum (*E. cladocalyx*). Other species recorded

include Yellow Box (*E. melliodora*), Southern Mahogany (*E. botryoides*) and Marea (*Corymbia calophylla*). It is likely these numbers were planted across the entire area formerly known as Richmond Park, which also included all the parkland south of Swan Street to the municipal boundary. It is notable however that amongst those described, Sugar Gums remain the dominant mature Eucalypt within Burnley Park.

The aerial photographic record shows that between 1960 and 1981 the two paths on either side of Burnley Oval appear to have deteriorated and are barely visible. The paths today are essentially rough tracks. The coarse gravel base is still evident in some areas, suggesting their deterioration was due to lack of maintenance rather than active removal.

### *Description*

The Burnley Oval Eucalypt Plantations are located on the northern and southern sides of the playing field, converging to the east near the railway reservation. Many of the trees are senescent, or require ameliorative works to ensure their ongoing amenity or to address public safety issues.

The majority of trees are Sugar Gums (*Eucalyptus cladocalyx*). The trees form two informal avenues and although the paths associated with the trees have almost been covered by turf, wear tracks along both sections illustrate their continued use as walkways through the site.

### *Significance*

The Burnley Oval Eucalypt Plantations are of primary significance as substantially intact plantings dating from the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. They offer considerable amenity value and are amongst the most characteristic of plantings in the southern section of the park.

### *Recommendations*

Manage and replace the trees, as required, as part of a tree management plan for the entire Park.

Investigate the exact alignment of the associated path system with the view to possible reconstruction of this early element of Burnley Park.

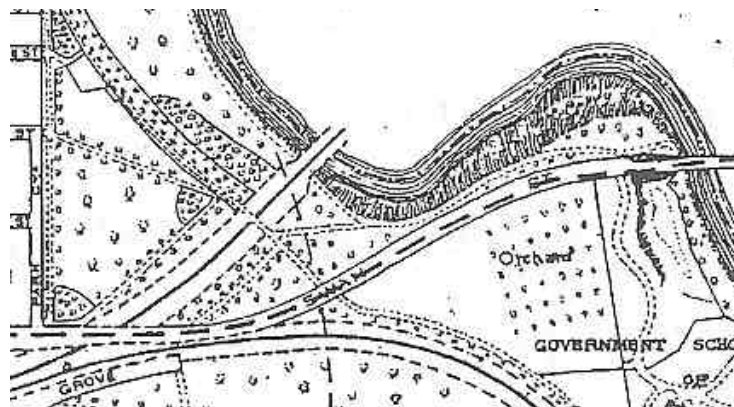
### 3.5.6 Circus Site



#### *History*

The general form of the Circus Site was established when Swan Street was extended and a new bridge built over the Yarra River to Wallan Road in 1880. The 1921 Plan of Richmond shows a series of paths through the area and what is likely to have been an at-grade crossing over the railway line, to the southern end of the Elm Avenue. The paths continued eastwards to the narrow section of parkland between Swan Street and the Yarra River.

The size of many of the Eucalypts extant within this section of the Park suggests they were planted during the same period as those immediately to the north on the other side of the railway line, at about the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Some are likely to be even older.



*Figure 19 Detail of 1921 Plan of Richmond, showing path system south of the railway reserve.*

With the construction of the Yarra Boulevard in the 1930's, the area became even more isolated, with steep rockeries constructed along much of the eastern side to cater for the sudden



level change required for the new roadway. The completion of the first stage of the Boulevard from Loyola Grove to Swan Street in 1937 completed the physical isolation of this area from the balance of Burnley Park.

Following the Second World War the area played host to a number of circuses. McPhee and Andrews note, “As a large, flat site with excellent public visibility, it was in high demand, occasionally being also used for other events”. However by the late 1980’s, with public anguish over circuses featuring performing animals, they were eventually banned from the municipality. Plans were proposed to establish a sports complex on the site, but they were never carried through.

In the ensuing years, performing animals have largely been phased out of circus performances, and the site again regularly plays host to circus events.

### *Description*

The Circus Site is a relatively open turfed expanse located between the railway reservation and Swan Street in the southern section of the site. The area is punctuated by a number of mature Eucalypts, planted at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Some of these trees are over mature or require works to ensure their ongoing amenity. The predominant species are River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) and Sugar Gum (*Eucalyptus cladocalyx*).

### *Significance*

The Circus Site is of primary significance for the large number of trees that date from the early history of the site which provide high amenity value to this section of the park, as well as to the adjacent streetscape.

The area is also of significance within the municipality for its long association with circus performance and is an iconic part of the heritage of the Yarra River Precinct.

### *Recommendations*

Assess and maintain the trees within this section of the park as part of an overall tree management plan, including tree replacement where required.

Implement measures to protect trees within this area, especially in relation to the siting of vehicles and temporary structures associated with circus performances.

### 3.5.7 Eastern Swan Street Section



#### *History*

Like the circus site, this area has become an isolated section within the wider Burnley parklands, confined by the river to the north and east, and the extension of Swan Street over the Yarra in 1880. The completion of the first stage of the Yarra Boulevard to Swan Street left an even narrower and awkwardly shaped section of parkland, completely surrounded by roadway and on the unfavourable side of the Boulevard (ie away from the River), discouraging general use as a pedestrian promenade.



*Figure 20 Detail of 1945 aerial photograph.*

Aerial photographs dated 1945 show very few mature trees were present in this area, though regular rows of smaller plantings are visible. The majority of mature trees are therefore likely to be associated with the Yarra Boulevard construction works.

### *Description*

The Eastern Swan Street Section is a mounded, lozenge shaped area surrounded by roadway on all sides, and as such is a relatively isolated section of the Park.

The area is open in character, with expanses of rough turf and features a mixture of exotic and native trees and shrubs. The general quality of the plantings is low. A short row of elms (*Ulmus x hollandica*) extends along part of the Swan Street frontage, and two large Lombardy Poplars (*Populus nigra`Italica`*) are located adjacent to the Swan Street Bridge on the Yarra Boulevard level. The majority of plantings are associated with the construction of the Yarra Boulevard. An Osage Orange (*Maclura pomifera*) predates the construction of the Boulevard, and is a possible remnant from the very early, post-settlement history of the site.

### *Significance*

The Osage Orange is of primary significance as a remnant from the early history of the site, possibly linked to agricultural uses (The Osage Orange was primarily used as an agricultural hedging species), though this association on the site has not been verified.

The other mature trees throughout this section are of contributory significance, planted as part of the works associated with the construction of the Yarra Boulevard in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

### *Recommendations*

Further investigate the origin of the Osage Orange as a remnant from the early history of the site and its possible agricultural associations.

Manage all mature trees within the area in accordance with a Tree Management Plan to ensure their ongoing contribution to the amenity of Burnley Park and the adjacent streetscape.

### 3.5.8 Yarra Parkland, Bridge Road to Railway Bridge



#### *History*

The section of Burnley Park on the east side of the Elm Avenue has been whittled down to a narrow linear park along the River by two major works programs.

Little is known of the exact form of this area during the Park's early history. The 1921 plan of Richmond shows two large oblong garden beds east of the Elm Avenue and a path is shown following the bank of the River. A 1931 aerial photograph shows that the area was far more open with less tree cover than more westerly sections of the Park. This situation was still reflected in the 1945 and 1960 aerial photographs.

The construction of the Boulevard in the late 1930's essentially split the Park into two halves. Rockeries located adjacent to the Hawthorn (Bridge Road) Bridge required reconstruction, and new rockeries were built on the eastern side of the Boulevard near the Railway Bridge to cater to the new road and resultant level changes. With the exception of a cluster of trees at each end of this section adjacent to the two bridges, there appeared to be very few trees along the riverbank. Specimen tree planting was apparently undertaken along the River in conjunction with, or shortly after, the completion of the Boulevard.

A second fundamental change to this area occurred in the late 1960's, when a large parcel of land on the east side of the Boulevard was set-aside for a new High School, which would eventually become the Melbourne Girls' Secondary College in 1988. The construction of the school further isolated this area of the park, forming a narrow linear reserve along the riverbank. In conjunction with the barrier of the Yarra Boulevard and its rockeries, the contextual link between the River and the balance of Burnley Park was largely severed.

Recent revegetation works have been undertaken along sections of the area, including land adjacent to the school boundary.

#### *Description*

A fine, maturing Moreton Bay Fig (*Ficus macrophylla*) is located at the northern end of this section near the Bridge Road bridge, but generally the quality of plantings along the River is poor. Some indigenous plantings have been established, but will struggle without effective weed



control, especially of herbaceous species, which appear to be a particular problem. Arborescent species, weedy in this context, include Desert Ash (*Fraxinus oxycarpa*), Canary Island Date Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) and Elm (*Ulmus x hollandica*) and Poplar suckers (*Populus* sp.).

Plantings associated with the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, probably associated with construction of the Yarra Boulevard include an alternating, mature row of Mahogany Gum (*Eucalyptus botryoides*) and Prickly Paperbark (*Melaleuca styphelioides*) on the riverbank.

A very large River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) is located at the southern end of the area, and may well be a remnant specimen, pre-dating European settlement, though this requires further investigation. A small copse of regenerating trees of the same species is located in close proximity.

### *Significance*

This section, as a discrete element within the broader Burnley Park precinct, is not considered to be of significance.

The River Red Gum, a likely remnant, is of primary significance as the only surviving tree from the pre-European history of the site.

### *Recommendations*

Implement a weed control and revegetation program throughout the area, as appropriate. Consider replacement of non-indigenous native specimens with locally indigenous trees, particularly the Mahogany Gums, which have a limited useful amenity lifespan due to their susceptibility to borer within the Melbourne region, and resultant propensity for massive limb drop.

Manage the large River Red Gum as part of a Tree Management Plan for the entire site. Consider its use as a seed source for revegetation activities within this area.

### 3.5.9 Yarra Parkland, Railway Bridge to Swan Street Bridge



#### *History*

This section was once part of a broader, continuous area of the Park that also included what would become the Circus Site, sandwiched between the railway line to the north and Swan Street to the south. Paths shown on the 1921 Plan of Richmond led through this area to Swan Street, opposite the entry to Burnley Horticultural College.

The construction of the Boulevard in the 1930's divided this section of Park into a number of discrete areas, including the Circus Site, the isolated area adjacent to the Swan Street Bridge, and a narrow linear path between the river and the roadway.

Photographs of the area beside the railway bridge over the Boulevard c.1939 show very little vegetation on the Yarra Boulevard side of the river, and later aerial photographs reveal much of this section remained lightly wooded and rather open in nature.

#### *Description*

This narrow section of the Park is essentially a linear shared pathway, sandwiched between the Yarra Boulevard and the steep embankments of the River. A concrete pedestrian path parallels the Yarra Boulevard at a relatively consistent level, and was part of its original construction. The broader asphalt shared bicycle path, located closer to the River, undulates along its length.

The quality of vegetation in this area is generally poor. There are a number of dead or senescent remnant indigenous trees at various points on the River escarpment. The understorey varies between mown grass adjacent to the pathways and infestations of herbaceous annual and perennial species on the steeper sections of riverbank. There are dense thickets of arborescent weed species such as Desert Ash (*Fraxinus oxycarpa*), Sweet Pittosporum (*Pittosporum undulatum*) and Pepper Tree (*Schinus molle*) interspersed with Casuarina (*Casuarina cunninghamiana*) planted as part of more recent revegetation activities.

### *Significance*

Due to the overall poor quality of the vegetation in this area, it is not considered to be of significance.

### *Recommendations*

Undertake an extensive weed control program, particularly aimed at controlling the large number of woody weeds.

Replant as required, utilising a suitable palette of locally indigenous species.

### 3.5.10 Other Garden Areas



#### *History*

Rockeries and garden beds are mentioned within the site in council records prior to the construction of the Boulevard in the 1930's. Beautification works were carried out throughout Richmond Park, including, in 1926-1927, 290 yards of rockeries planted with flowering shrubs and trees, with stone borders completed from Bridge Road to Swan Street.

The 1920's map of Richmond clearly shows garden beds located elsewhere throughout the site, most notably the Triangular Bed (3.5.3), as well as garden areas at the apex of various paths and at least three major beds on the east side of the Elm Avenue.



*Figure 21 Detail of 1921 Plan of Richmond showing garden beds in southern section of site.*

Many of these beds on the east side of the Elm Avenue were presumably removed during the extensive construction works of the Yarra Boulevard, although a major feature of the Boulevard were new rockeries constructed on the slope between the roadway and the Park through which it cuts. The western rock edged garden beds were incorporated into the Boulevard rockeries at the northern end of the Park, to protect the roots of the already mature Elms in this location.

During the late 20<sup>th</sup> century the garden beds were generally pared back. The beds depicted on the 1920's map are gone, and with the exception of the northern tip of the triangular bed, rock edging has been removed from the southern section of the Park Grove perimeter Bed. The area



has been extensively replanted with a palette of predominantly native species. Other beds forming part of the extensive rockeries which have retained their rock edging, are generally in poor condition, dominated by survival species and weeds.

Informal native beds have been established on the eastern side of Burnley Park behind the Yarra Boulevard rockeries, as well as along sections adjoining the railway reservation where they function as a visual screen.

### *Description*

Garden beds within Burnley Park are generally confined to boundaries on the western, eastern and northern perimeters.

Garden areas on the eastern and southern sides are late 20<sup>th</sup> century in character, dominated by native taxa including herbaceous species and woody shrubs planted beneath a mature canopy of predominantly native trees dating from the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The extensive rockery and garden beds that ran from the south western corner of the study area northwards to join with the rockeries associated with the construction of the Yarra Boulevard are much altered or are generally in poor condition. The rock edging has been removed from the southern section between Swan Street and Brooks Street and replanted in a more contemporary style utilising mass plantings of native understorey species and juvenile trees, including Eucalypts (*Eucalyptus* spp.), Brush Box (*Lophostemon confertus*), Illawarra Flame Tree (*Brachychiton acerifolius*) and White Cedar (*Melia azedarach* var *australasica*).

The northern section of the old boundary rockery retains much of its rock edging, but the quality of the plantings within these beds is poor. Survival species such as Privet (*Ligustrum lucidum*), Agapanthus (*Agapanthus praecox*), Spider Plant (*Chlorophytum comosum*) and Cordylines (*Cordyline* spp.) dominate this area.

### *Significance*

The garden areas within Burnley Park are not considered to be of significance, with the exception of remnant sections of rock edging, described in *Section 3.4 Bicycle path kerbing and flower/garden beds*.

### *Recommendations*

Develop garden beds as required, ensuring remnant rock edging along western boundary is retained.

Ensure any replanting activities do not impinge on the growth of the significant tree over-storey, where present, especially through root competition.

### 3.5.11 Other Trees – Burnley Park



*Palm copse at Swan Street entry.*



*Mature Eucalypts adjacent to the railway line*

## History

Burnley Park is dominated by two main layers of tree plantings. The earliest of these is the remnant section of Elm Avenue extending along the Yarra Boulevard into the Park proper, with two remnants located in the southern section of the Park (see section 3.5.1). Other Elms (*Ulmus x hollandica*) of similar age are scattered elsewhere throughout the site, namely as specimens around Burnley Oval and within the triangular bed north of the old Park Keepers cottage (see Section 3.5.3). Many of these trees date from c.1859, though council records suggest replacements have been undertaken at various stages throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The second dominant layer of trees is the mature Eucalypts (*Eucalyptus cladocalyx*, *E. camaldulensis*) scattered mainly throughout the southern section of Burnley Park, including the informal Avenues adjacent to Burnley Oval and the Circus site. Another notable plantation is located in the southeastern section of Burnley Park west of the Yarra Boulevard near the railway reservation.

Council records, aerial photographs and the sheer scale of many of these specimens suggest they date from at least the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Some specimens are likely to be older.

Another notable, more recent feature is a copse of palms located at the southwestern, Swan Street entry. McPhee and Andrews note the purchase of 86 palms from Preston Nursery in 1934. It is likely these palms and others scattered throughout the Yarra Boulevard precinct date from this period. The palms are Canary Island Date Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) and a single Mexican Fan Palm (*Washingtonia robusta*).

Beyond these plantings the majority of trees within Burnley Park appear to be of late 20<sup>th</sup> century origin, often planted as lawn specimens at various points within the park. These developing trees vary greatly in condition.

## Description

The bulk of mature trees within Burnley Park are mature Dutch Elms (*Ulmus x hollandica*) and Eucalypts (*Eucalyptus cladocalyx*, *E. camaldulensis*). These trees date from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The individual health of these trees varies enormously, and is noted in Appendix 1, *Tree Survey*. There is evidence of poor pruning practice on many of these trees, some of which are senescent and require replacement.

Trees within Burnley Park of mid-20<sup>th</sup> century origin include a Palm copse at the south western Swan Street entry. Whilst these specimens are in generally good health and indeed form a fine feature to this entry point, there is evidence of partial soil coverage over the base of two trees on the Swan Street boundary that could affect their long-term health.

## Significance

The mature elms and Eucalypts within Burnley Park are of primary significance as early plantings within the precinct. They contribute enormously to the heritage character of the site and provide considerable amenity to the Park and adjacent streetscapes. The widespread use of Eucalypts as feature plantings dating from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century is notable, as exotic broadleaves, conifers and subtropical, non-sclerophyllous native taxa were generally favoured in public parks at this time.

The Palm copse is of contributory significance as a substantial and effective planting dating from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, illustrating the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century development of the site. The copse forms a fine feature at this major Park entry point, and contributes to the amenity of the surrounding streetscape.

The significance of each tree is described in Appendix 1.

### *Recommendations*

Manage the trees identified as of significance as part of an overall Tree Management Plan for the site, including replacement strategies for over-mature and senescent specimens.

More detailed recommendations for each tree are located in Appendix 1.



- 1 McPhee & Andrews, Op cit., p. 121.
- 2 McPhee & Andrews, Op cit., p. 113.
- 3 McPhee & Andrews, Op cit., p. 31.
- 4 MMBW Detail Plan 1093, c.1895.
- 5 PROV VPRS 9984/P1/Unit 18, Minutes, 8 January, 8 February, 26 March, 9 April and 11 June 1889.
- 6 Allom Lovell & Associates, *Heritage Appraisal: Richmond Park Caretaker's Cottage*.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Stratcorp Consulting, *Burnley Park Management and Master Plan*, p. 7.
- 10 Stratcorp Consulting, *Burnley Park Management and Master Plan*, p. 61.
- 11 McPhee & Andrews, Op cit., p. 125.
- 12 McPhee & Andrews, Op cit., p. 121.
- 13 McPhee & Andrews, Op cit., p. 120.
- 14 McPhee & Andrews, Op cit., pp. 32-33.
- 15 McPhee & Andrews, Op cit., p. 110.