

Significance

The grandstand is of primary significance. Architecturally, it is a fine and substantially intact example of a nineteenth century grandstand designed by notable architect Nathaniel Billing. It is also believed to be one of the oldest and most intact examples of the few surviving nineteenth century grandstands in metropolitan Melbourne and is the most prominent element of nineteenth century fabric in the Gardens. Collectively, with the oval, pavilion and gatehouse, it is demonstrative of the leisure pursuits of the community since the nineteenth century and which remain popular today, albeit at another location. Like other such facilities in the Gardens, it occupies a place in the broader thematic history of the Gardens and the Fitzroy area. Its association with the now defunct Fitzroy Football Club, who occupied the ground from 1884 until 1967, is of historical and social significance.

3.4.2 Freeman Street Entrance Gatehouse

History

The former entrance gatehouse was possibly constructed c. 1895 and is discernible on a c.1901 MMBW plan (Figure 24). During this period the Fitzroy Football Club was enjoying great on-field success, winning four premierships and playing in nine of the first ten VFL grand finals. Large crowds flocked to the oval, necessitating the construction of additional spectator facilities. It appears that the ground floor originally contained some sewer facilities, such as toilets, while the upper floor was possibly a viewing area.

Description

The former entrance gatehouse comprises a double storey red-brick building on a narrow rectangular plan. The building has a corrugated galvanised steel clad roof with distinctive pyramidal roofs to either end, surmounted by turned timber finials. Eaves have a beaded tongue and groove board lining with a carved timber valance to the north elevation only. The south elevation is divided into seven regular articulated bays, four of which are gabled. The walls are articulated by brick pilasters and contain a continuous band of render along the ground floor and a moulded string-course at the first floor level. The four gabled bays have a rendered segmented arch at the ground floor and paired timber louvres at the first floor. Alternating bays are square-headed and finished with a dog-tooth brick course surmounted by a rendered panel. Two of the bays contain small louvred vents with rendered lintels and chamfered sills. The ground floor bay to the western end contains a painted sign which reads: 'VISITING MEMBERS' GATE CORNER'.

The east elevation contains a recessed brick panel at the ground floor with a rendered segmented-arched head and non-original double-leaf flush panel door. At the first floor is a blank recessed brick panel. The west elevation is similarly detailed, although there is an infilled window/door opening at the first floor. The ground floor has been overpainted while the south-west corner displays evidence of the removed boundary wall. Abutting the centre of the north elevation is a recent timber-framed stair providing access to the first floor. The first floor has a weatherboard infill and contains a non-original flush panel door and tripartite timber-framed, double-hung sash windows fitted with metal security bars. A double-leaf flush panel door is located to the centre of the ground floor. At the western end is a small red brick addition with a flat concrete roof, presumably an infilled toilet entrance.

Significance

The former entrance gatehouse is of primary significance. It is one of only two surviving nineteenth century structures associated with the cricket ground and the Gardens, the other being the grandstand. Architecturally, it is a rare example of late nineteenth century sporting pavilion and is distinguished by its unusual pyramidal roofs. Collectively with the oval, and

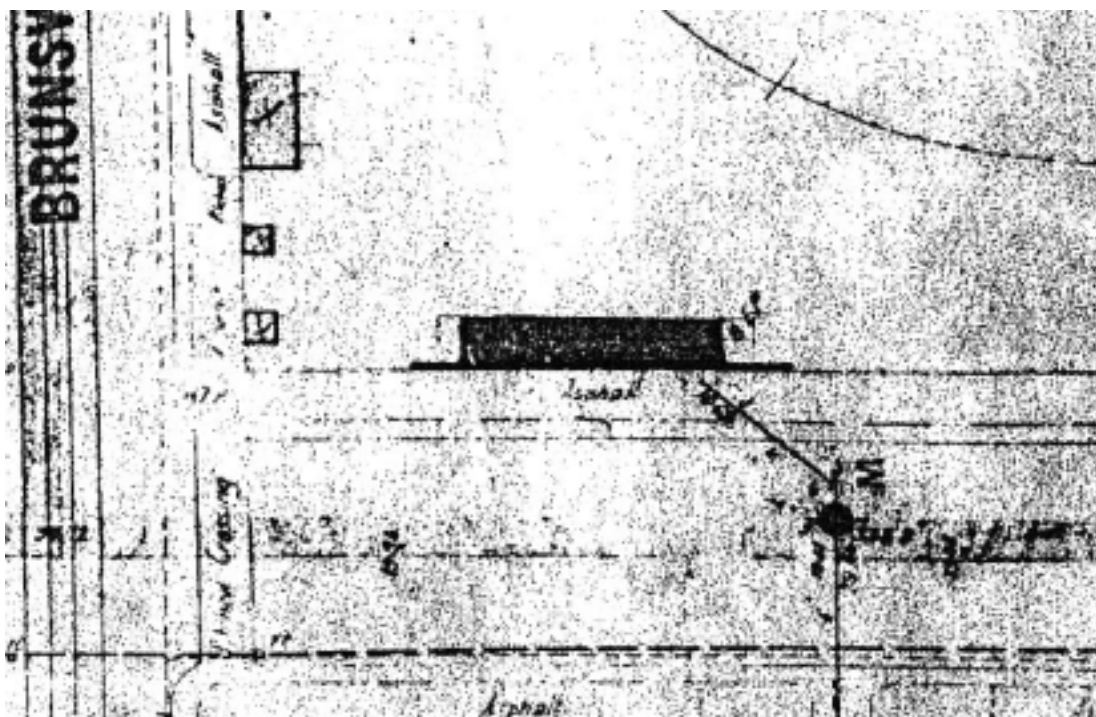


Figure 24 Detail of a c.1901 MMBW plan showing the former entrance gate to the centre.



Figure 25 Southern entrance to the Oval

pavilion, it is demonstrative of the leisure pursuits of the community since the nineteenth century and which remain popular today.

3.4.3 Oval Surrounds

History

A playing field was first established on the site of the existing oval in 1863. Improvements undertaken by the Fitzroy Cricket Club during the 1870s included the laying of a footpath and running track around the field. MMBW plans dated c.1901 show a fence to the oval perimeter, possibly the simple timber picket fence visible early twentieth century photographs. *Annual Reports* of the Cricket Club record the construction of a brick drain right around the perimeter of the playing field.⁵

The picket fence appears to have been removed in the post-War period. By the 1970s, the oval perimeter was encircled by a galvanised steel pipe and wire fence and a continuous timber bench.⁶ The existing fence and path appear to date from recent upgrading works to the community oval. The drain may have been built c.1912-13.

Description

The perimeter of the oval is edged by an open drain, which is lined with red brick, and fenced by a non-original steel-framed Cyclone wire fence with powdercoated finish. The oval is encircled by a path with asphalt finish.

Significance

The drain, fence and path to perimeter of oval are of little or no significance in their fabric.



Figure 26 *Drain, Fence and Path to perimeter of Oval*

3.4.4 Cricket Practice Nets



Figure 27 Cricket Practice Nets

History

Possibly erected in the 1980s as part of the redevelopment of the community oval.

Description

The cricket practice nets comprise four concrete and artificial turf wickets with a galvanised pipe and cyclone wire enclosure.

The nets also incorporate a remnant of the concrete boundary wall, featuring a painted mural, which formerly ran along the boundary of the cricket/football ground.

Significance

The practice nets are of little or no significance.

3.4.5 Timber Entrance Pavilion

History

The building is a reconstruction of the original entrance pavilion, which was destroyed by fire in 1996. Constructed c.1900, the pavilion first appears on the MMBW plan dated c.1901,



Figure 28 Timber entrance pavilion, viewed from the north-east

located between the 1888 grandstand and the 1905 grandstand. In the early 1980s, as part of the redevelopment of the community oval, the pavilion was relocated to its present site on the main through path.⁷

Description

The entrance pavilion is a utilitarian, timber-framed building on a narrow, rectangular plan. It has a framework of stop-chamfered timber posts and beams with V-jointed board cladding. Passing through the centre of the pavilion, are two wide openings fitted with V-jointed board gates and surmounted by panels of diagonal boarding. The openings are flanked at either end by bays fitted with narrow V-jointed board doors.

The gabled roof is clad in corrugated galvanised steel with cast iron cresting and a central gablet to either side. The eaves are battened and feature a carved timber valance.

Significance

The entrance pavilion is a recent reconstruction of the original pavilion. While the fabric has no intrinsic significance in itself, the reconstructed structure has historical and aesthetic significance as a reinstated lost structure which makes a positive contribution to the amenity of the Gardens and which emphasises their Victorian origins. Collectively with the oval and gatehouse, it is demonstrative of the sporting activities of the community since the nineteenth

century. Like other such facilities in the Gardens, it occupies a place in the broader thematic history of the Gardens and the Fitzroy area. Of primary significance.

3.4.6 Community Hall



Figure 29 Community Hall (right)

History

Erected in the early 1980s as part of a \$500,000 upgrade of oval facilities undertaken by the City of Fitzroy.

Description

Located to the east side of the grandstand, the community hall is a steel and timber-framed building with a gabled roof clad in corrugated galvanised steel. The east elevation comprises a brick wall with a stepped parapet, arched at the apex. Extending across the north of the building is a verandah with timber lattice screens while both the north and south elevations contain large, timber-framed glazed sliding doors.

Significance

The community hall is of recent origin and as such is of little or no significance.

3.4.7 Tennis Club & Courts

History

The tennis club was established in 1888.⁸ Fitzroy Cricket Club records for that year note the demolition of a tennis court, described as an 'adjunct to the bowling club', to make way for the new grandstand.⁹ Tennis courts first appear in plans of the Gardens dated c. 1901 (Figure 30). Asphalt tennis courts, occupying the site of the existing courts, are shown along with a number

of buildings and structures. Two small rectangular plan buildings are located along the south of the tennis courts, the one to the west side is marked 'pavilion'. The existing clubhouse may possibly be the building visible directly to the right of the grandstand, albeit in a modified form. In 1894, two tennis courts were constructed at a cost of £57 and a third tennis court was added in 1901-1902.¹⁰ By 1929-30 there were five tennis courts, two asphalt and three resurfaced with concrete. A ladies dressing room was added to the tennis pavilion between 1933-34 at a cost of £54 and a new shower and toilet block constructed 1953-5. An additional tennis court was erected in 1955-56.¹¹

A 1966 plan of the cricket ground shows the tennis courts with a Cyclone wire fence to the perimeter and two small buildings in the south west corner (Figure 31). One is of brick construction while the other is labelled 'old fibro and weatherboard clubhouse'. This is presumably the existing clubhouse although it appears to have since been relocated further to the north.

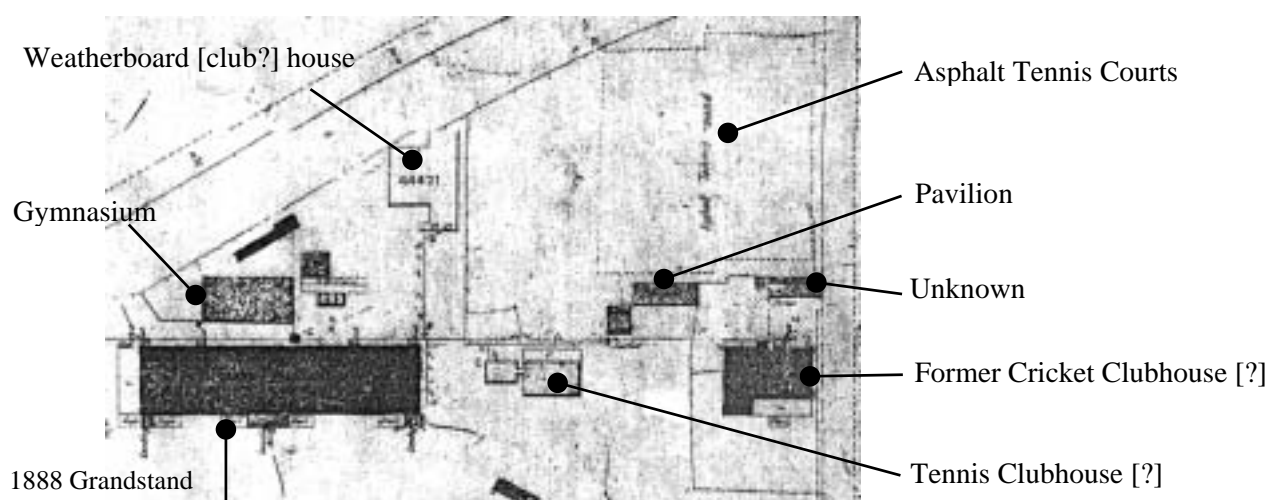


Figure 30 Detail of a c.1901 MMBW plan showing the arrangement of the tennis club

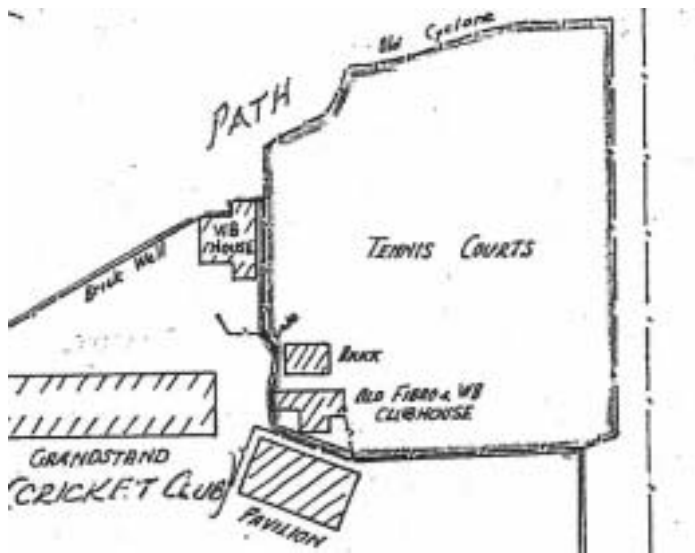


Figure 31 Detail of a 1966 plan of the gardens showing the tennis club
Source: Department of Sustainability and the Environment



Figure 32 Tennis Club

Description

The tennis club is located to the east of the grandstand. The site contains six *en-tout-cas* courts with a high galvanised steel pipe and Cyclone wire fence to the perimeter. The clubhouse, located to the west side of the courts, is a single-storey, timber-framed building with battened fibro-cement cladding above a weatherboard plinth. It comprises two parts: a gambrel-roofed section at the northern end and skillion-roofed section at the south, each with corrugated galvanised steel roof cladding. The skillion-roofed section has a timber-framed verandah extending along the east elevation, facing the tennis courts.

The main entrance, located on the south elevation of the gambrel roof section, has a bracketed awning and a non-original flush panel door. Extending across the north elevation of the gambrel-roofed section is a verandah supported on timber posts with prominent carved timber brackets and a central gablet. The wall behind the verandah contains a recent glazed, timber-framed, double-leaf door, flanked on either side by paired timber-framed, double-hung sash windows. Recent timber decking runs around north and east sides of the building.

Significance

The tennis club has an intrinsic historical association with the Edinburgh Gardens, having occupied its present site since c.1888. It is demonstrative of the leisure pursuits of the community since the nineteenth century and which remain popular today. Like other such facilities in the Gardens, it occupies a place in the broader thematic history of the Gardens and the Fitzroy area. The clubhouse, though possibly dating from the early twentieth century, has been modified and apparently relocated variously in the vicinity of the tennis courts. The building is one of the older elements in the Gardens and is similar to the example in the Carlton Gardens.

The tennis courts have been altered and resurfaced a number of times and as such their fabric is considered to be of little or no significance. However their existence and location date from at least 1901 and as such they are demonstrative of the leisure pursuits of the local community since 1888. As an entity the tennis courts and pavilion are considered to be of primary significance.

3.4.8 Bocce Courts

History

It is understood the Bocce courts were constructed following the redevelopment of the community oval in the 1980s.

Description

Two gravel bocce courts with timber edging, located to the north of the grandstand. The site is enclosed by a recent steel mesh fence with a low hedge to the south side.

Significance

The bocce courts are of social interest in that they reflect the sporting pursuits of the migrants from Mediterranean countries who moved into Fitzroy in great numbers from the post-War years and which differed from the more familiar Anglo-Saxon games of tennis, bowls, cricket and football.



Figure 33 Bocce Court

3.4.9 Fitzroy Bowling Club & Green

History

The establishment of a bowling green on the site was approved in 1877 by the Fitzroy Cricket Club in its capacity as the Committee of Management.¹² Subscriptions from the public and members of the Cricket Club raised £160 towards the laying of a two-rink green. Within the next two years an additional rink was laid. A timber shed, which had initially served as the Club's pavilion and canteen was replaced by a timber cottage, relocated from the Collingwood Commercial Cricket Ground.¹³ An MMBW plan of 1896 shows the early arrangement of the bowling green with the timber cottage at its northern end (Figure 34). The cottage would appear to be that visible in a 1912 photograph of the bowling club which also shows the greens enclosed by a timber picket fence with a hedge along the Brunswick Street/St Georges Road boundary.

In 1893, financial difficulties prompted the Bowling Club to become affiliated with the Cricket Club (Figure 35). A further two rinks were added in 1910-1911 and in 1913 construction of a new pavilion was commenced at a cost of £1,600 (Figure 36).¹⁴ In 1929-30 the paths around the bowling greens were paved with old stone flags, donated by the Fitzroy Council.¹⁵

A memorial gate was erected on 17 September 1943 in honour of Mr W Hannah, President of the Club from 1936 to 1942. During the 1947-48 season a memorial fountain was erected in memory of T S Rowe, secretary of the club for 16 years, and an additional fountain was placed between the two greens to honour the 1946-47 champion fours.¹⁶



Figure 34 Detail of an 1896 MMBW plan showing the Bowling Green.
Source: State Library of Victoria Map Collection

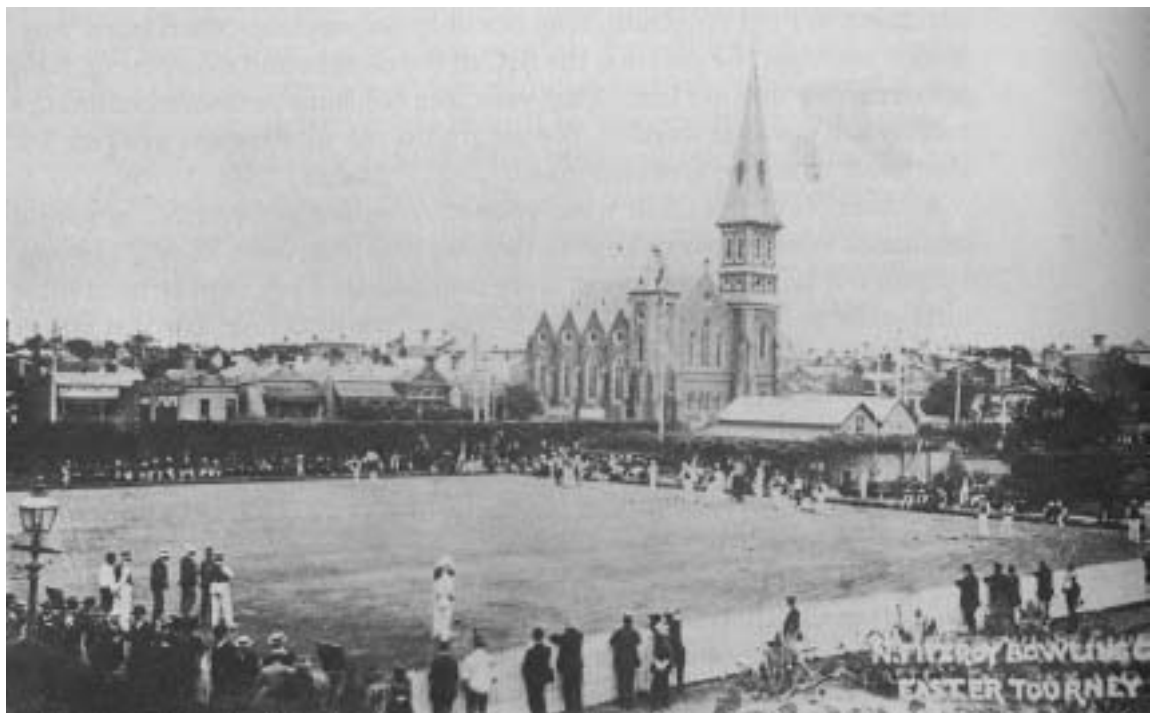


Figure 35 The Bowling Green, 1912.
Source: Fitzroy Cricket Club Annual Report 1912-13

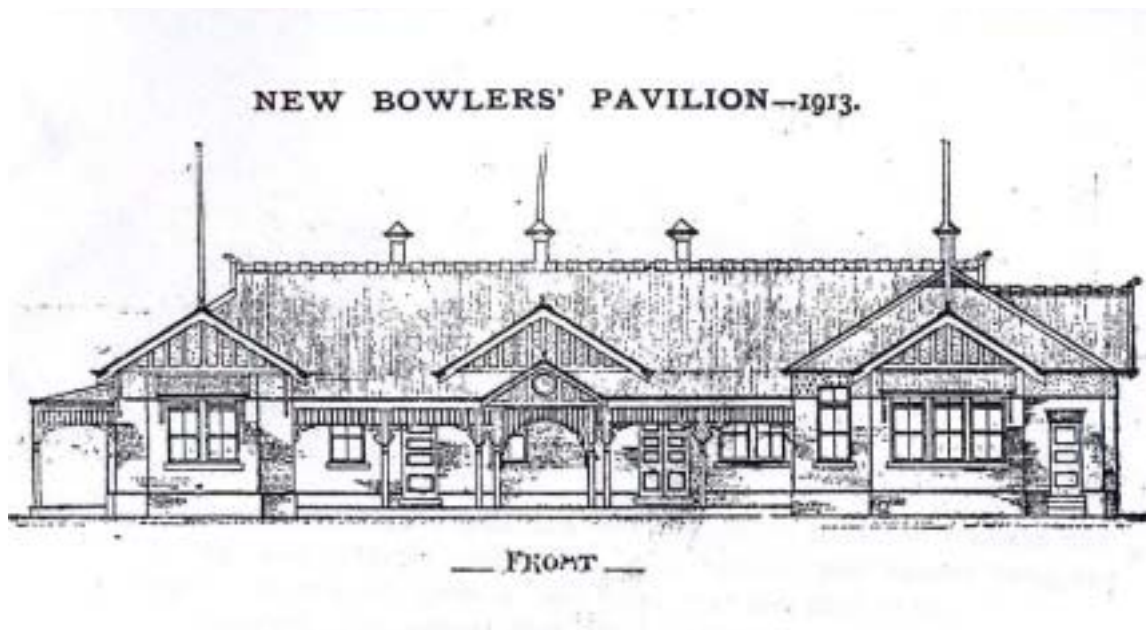


Figure 36 *Elevation of the new bowlers' pavilion, c.1913.*
 Source: Fitzroy Cricket Club Annual Report 1912-1913.



Figure 37 *Fitzroy Bowling Club & Green*



Figure 38 Hannah memorial gates at the entrance to the Bowling Club

Between 1969-70 the Pavilion was demolished to make way for a new clubhouse. Building works were completed by 1971 at a cost of \$95,000.¹⁷

In the late 1990s the site underwent a general upgrading and redevelopment. This was carried out as part of the amalgamation of the Fitzroy Club with the Victoria Club to form the Fitzroy Victoria Bowling and Sports Club. Shortly after, the Ladies Bowling Club also relocated to the site, from its location in the centre of the Gardens, and was integrated into the new Club. The upgraded facilities included the enlargement of the clubhouse, installation of a synthetic surface to the green nearest the clubhouse, additional storage sheds, and the relocation of a shed from the Brunswick Street boundary to the eastern boundary adjacent to the Gardens. A new fence was constructed around three sides of the perimeter in chain mesh and to a height of 2 metres.

Description

The Fitzroy Bowling Club comprises a clubhouse, greens and various ancillary structures. The clubhouse is a single and double-storey utilitarian brick building on a long rectangular plan. It has a flat roof with an aluminium fascia and walls with a bagged render finish and aluminium-framed windows. There is one ten-rink synthetic green and one seven-rink Tidrawf grass green, with a central stone retaining wall and rose bushes planted around the perimeters. The site is enclosed by a chain mesh and galvanised steel pipe fence with the main entrance from Brunswick Street through a wrought iron memorial gate with red and brown brick piers. Other structures on the site include recent timber lattice shelters, prefabricated aluminium sheds, and earlier steel-framed shelters to the centre of the green with canvas awnings.

Significance

The Bowling Club as an entity, has occupied the present site since 1877 and has an intrinsic historical association with the Edinburgh Gardens. It is demonstrative of the leisure pursuits of the community since the nineteenth century, and which remain popular today. Like other such

facilities in the Gardens, it occupies a place in the broader thematic history of the Gardens and the Fitzroy area. The Bowling Club is of primary significance. However, the recent fabric of the place – greens, clubhouse and ancillary structures – are of little or no significance in their own right.

3.4.10 War Memorial Arbour & Substation

History

The memorial was erected in 1919 by the various sporting clubs which occupied the Edinburgh Gardens to the fallen who had been connected with the clubs.¹⁸ The arbour originally stood over the main path running along the northern side of the cricket ground.

Description

A concrete arbour supported by six Tuscan order columns resting on pedestals with simple moulded caps. The perimeter beams have a textured rendered frieze and a moulded cornice and support a series of parallel rafters carrying Wisteria. The beam to the east elevation contains a central pediment with pressed cement swags surmounted by a moulded cornice. Below the pediment is a recessed panel with the inscription 'IN MEMORIAM' in incised lettering. Urn finials, originally located at either end of the east beam, are missing (Figure 39). On the south elevation, the beam contains a marble plaque which reads: 'THIS MEMORIAL HAS BEEN ERECTED BY THE FITZROY CRICKET, FOOTBALL, BOWLING, BASEBALL AND TENNIS CLUBS TO PERPETUATE THE MEMBERS WHO FELL IN THE GREAT WAR 1914-1919'. The plaque originally appears to have been fixed to the panel on the east elevation. A steel-framed cabinet for the display of wreaths is fixed to one of the columns and is in poor condition with all of its glass broken.



Figure 39 Anzac Day service at the memorial arbour, 1932
Source: Fitzroy Local History Collection



Figure 40 War Memorial Arbour

A concrete substation now abuts the west end of the arbour and the joist ends along the north side have been cut short to accommodate the bowling clubhouse. The substation has been partly detailed to match the arbour.

Significance

Of primary significance. Historically and socially the arbour is of significance as a memorial to the fallen of the First World War and like other elements, it occupies a place in the broader thematic history of the Gardens and the Fitzroy area. Architecturally, it is a rare example of a memorial arbour in the late Edwardian classical style. However, the re-routing of the main path away from the arbour, the siting of the adjacent bowling clubhouse and the construction of the substation have severely detracted from its setting. The substation is intrusive.

3.4.11 Chandler Drinking Fountain

History

The annual report of the Edinburgh Gardens Committee of Management for 1895 records the purchase of four drinking fountains – the location and type is not specified.¹⁹ Drinking fountains were introduced into Victorian streets as early as the mid-nineteenth century under the influence of Temperance movements and philanthropic organizations concerned with the quality of drinking water in the city. The connection to the Yan Yean Reservoir was also a major factor. Nineteenth century drinking fountains tended to be of cast iron with attached taps. The design of fountains where outlets were housed within a small temple-like structure, became a popular style for memorial fountains during the first two decades of the twentieth century when the majority were constructed in stone, grey Harcourt granite being the most popular choice.²⁰



Figure 41 Chandler Drinking Fountain

The fountain was presented to the city of Fitzroy by Councillor D J Chandler in July 1920. Chandler was a prominent local identity and president of the Fitzroy Football Club from 1911 to 1931.

Description

Located on a path intersection, to the north of the ticket booth/entrance gate, it is square-plan, with polished granite basin on a plinth of rock-faced Harcourt granite. Two semi-circular bowls extend outwards from the sides of the fountain and are fitted with non-original bubblers. Surmounting the fountain, is a small four-sided 'temple' form with arched openings between polished granite columns and a domed top with an orb finial. The whole of the fountain rests on a bluestone plinth.

An engraved inscription on the side of the fountain reads: 'PRESENTED TO THE CITY OF FITZROY BY COUNCILLOR D J CHANDLER JULY 1926'.

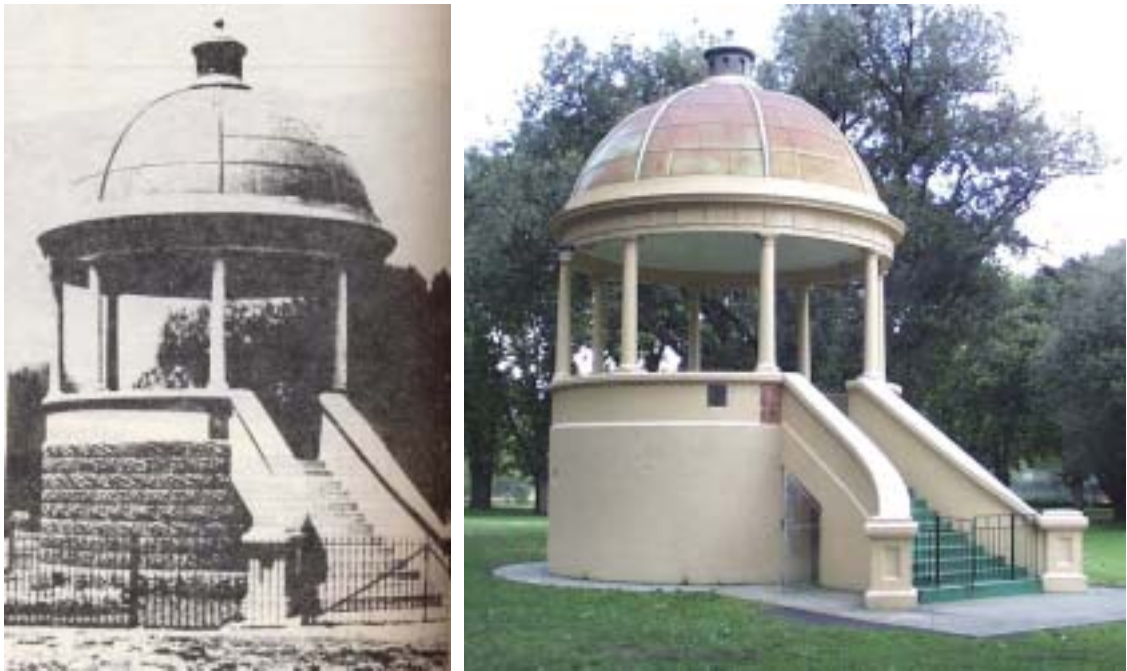
Significance

The fountain is of primary significance as an early element within the Gardens. Aesthetically it is a typical example of a memorial fountain of the period. The fountain's association with D J Chandler is of local historical significance and, like other elements, it occupies a place in the broader thematic history of the Gardens and the Fitzroy area.

3.4.12 Rotunda

History

The bandstand rotunda was constructed in 1925 as a memorial to those who served in the First World War.²¹ It was designed by Edward Twentyman, founder of the well known architectural firm Twentyman and Askew, and long serving office bearer with the Fitzroy Cricket Club.



*Figure 42 View of the rotunda, c.1920s (left) and as existing (right).
Source: Reproduced in North Fitzroy Conservation Study*

The rotunda originally had a rusticated bluestone base and was encircled by garden beds enclosed by an iron picket fence. A photograph of the rotunda dated 1927 also shows surrounding garden beds with timber post and rail fences. The appearance of the rotunda has also been altered by the rendering of the quarry-faced bluestone plinth. In its early days, the rotunda was a venue for weekly performances by the Fitzroy Municipal Band and during the 1950s it was used by the Ladies Bowling Club.²² In more recent times it has served as a meeting room for the local branch of the Australian Labour Party and as a clubhouse for the Bocce Club. Local folklore has it the rotunda may have been used as an air-raid shelter during the War, though evidence to support this rumour has not been found.

Description

An inter-War Classical Revival rotunda of rendered masonry and concrete construction. Circular in plan, it has a platform raised above a lower storey base and surmounted by a copper clad dome. The dome is finished by a copper lantern and is supported by eight Tuscan order columns with an entablature containing a moulded cornice and a frieze with triglyphs and plain metopes. The platform is accessed via a flight of stairs with a solid balustrade which curves outwards at the ground floor where it is terminated by panelled and capped piers. A non-original steel gate is fitted to the stair entrance. Two copper plaques are affixed to the drum, either side of the stairs. The plaque to the south side reads:

PEACE MEMORIAL ERECTED BY THE FITZROY CITY COUNCIL AND THE
PEACE YEAR (1918-1919) COMMITTEE IN HONOUR OF THE CITIZENS OF
FITZROY WHO SERVED IN THE GREAT WAR 1914-1919 ENLISTED-1453
WOUNDED-521 KILLED-213 – 1925.

The plaque to the north side contains the names of the various committee office bearers responsible for the erection of the rotunda. Adjacent to the south plaque is a small bronze plaque which reads

ERECTED BY THE FITZROY CITY COUNCIL IN HONOUR OF THE
CITIZENS OF FITZROY WHO SERVED IN WORLD WAR II 1939-45.

The base walls contain perforated metal vents and two sets of steel-framed, louvred windows with wirecast glazing and external wire mesh security screens. Access to the interior of the base is through a V-jointed board door located below the stairs. Openings to the understair area are enclosed by recent wire mesh security gates. Modern floodlights are fitted to the dome entablature and the whole structure stands on a non-original concrete paved apron.

Significance

The rotunda is of primary significance. It is of historic and social significance as a memorial to the citizens of Fitzroy who fell during both World Wars and, like other elements, it occupies a place in the broader thematic history of the Gardens and the Fitzroy area. Aesthetically, it is a distinctive landmark in the Gardens and a good example of an inter-War rotunda in the Classical Revival style.

3.4.13 Queen Victoria Statue Pedestal and Shrub Bed

History

While the exact date has not been determined, it is thought that the circular Queen Victoria Shrub Bed was established about 1902 as part of a larger memorial scheme. It included a statue of Queen Victoria mounted on a base. It was presented to the citizens of Fitzroy by MLC, George Godfrey, following Queen Victoria's death in 1901. This is consistent with the establishment of many such commemorative memorials throughout the British Empire,



Figure 43 Queen Victoria Statue Pedestal (left) and original statue c.1910 (right).
Source: State Library of Victoria

erected as a tribute to her more than sixty years on the Throne.

The MMBW Plan No. 50, depicting the northern half of the Gardens in 1900, does not show the diagonal path layout and shrub bed which accommodated the memorial, although both are shown in the 1905 plan of the Gardens, consistent with their construction in the intervening period.

An early photograph of the statue shows a setting of what appears to be Chinese Windmill Palms (*Trachycarpus fortunei*) and round leaf shrubs, camellias or perhaps roses, enclosed by a low iron fence.

The reportedly wooden statue is thought to have disappeared in the 1930s, although the pedestal, the circular shrub bed, surrounding path and diagonal approach paths remained. The north-east and south-west diagonal paths were removed sometime after 1966, possibly during the 1970s, as part of a general move to reduce maintenance costs.

In 1991 Council restored the shrub bed to a design by Patrick and Wallace, based on historic photographs of the feature. The design included reinstatement of a sympathetic iron fence and a low clipped Box (*Buxus sempervirens*) hedge. The initiative was plagued by continued theft with 80 plants reported stolen in 1992. Theft of replacement plants continued and by mid-1993 some \$2,000 had been spent on plant replacements.²³

Description

The memorial comprises a cement rendered pedestal with moulded cornice and a stepped plinth, located to the centre of a circular garden bed and which was originally a focal point in the Gardens. The south face of the plinth contains a small raised panel, to which a plaque was presumably affixed.

The circular shrub bed is much neglected and large sections of planting are missing; the form of the planting scheme has been all-but obliterated. All that remains of the original planting are Chinese Windmill Palm specimen (*Trachycarpus fortunei*), some Mexican Orange Blossom (*Choisya ternata*), and various grass species.

Significance

The Queen Victoria memorial is of intrinsic historical significance as it is demonstrative of one of the many commemorations made to Queen Victoria following the death the Monarch in 1901. Secondly, the state was named after Queen Victoria. And a further connection exists with the original naming of the Gardens after Prince Alfred, the Duke of Edinburgh, Queen Victoria's son. While it is an early and major ornamental and commemorative feature in the Gardens, the pedestal is hard to understand without interpretation, which has been provided by way of a sign which makes its purpose and origins clear. The pedestal is considered to be of primary significance, notwithstanding the loss of the statue.

The shrub bed is of contributory significance as an important element of the layout of the Gardens. The existing planting is a degraded remnant of the 1991 restoration and is not significant.

3.4.14 Ladies Bowling Club & Green

History

The ladies bowling club was established in 1948, possibly in response to the all-male membership of the adjacent Fitzroy Bowling Club. A room inside the base of the nearby Rotunda served as the first clubhouse until the existing structure was built c.1961.²⁴ The club house was disbanded in the late 1980s or early 1990s and the site remains unused.

Description

The clubhouse is a utilitarian, rectangular plan building, located at the southern end of the bowling green. It has a gabled roof, re-clad in metal tiles, with exposed rafters at the eaves. External walls, presumably originally weatherboard, have been reclad in *faux* brick cladding.



Figure 44 The Ladies Bowling Club

The building is entered through a wrought iron gate located under a timber-framed pergola on the north elevation. Flanking either side of the gate, are windows fitted with steel roller shutters, while the side elevations contain timber-framed louvred windows. The site perimeter has bluestone pitch edging and is enclosed by a wire mesh and galvanised steel pipe fence surmounted by strands of barbed wire. Two small brick shelters and a prefabricated aluminium shed are located at the northern end of the now overgrown green.

Significance

Historically, the existence of the ladies bowling club has some level of local interest, however its fabric is of little or no significance.

3.4.15 Emily Baker Infant Welfare Centre

History

The Infant Welfare Centre was erected in 1972, just to the north of a site previously occupied by an elaborate fountain dating from c.1887. Prior to the construction of the existing building, the Infant Welfare Centre was housed in a 1926 timber structure, located adjacent to the former gardener's residence.²⁵ Security concerns and the need for ease of supervision appear to have prompted the relocation of the Welfare Centre to a site on the perimeter of the park.²⁶

Description

The infant welfare centre is an undistinguished, single-storey, tan-brick building with aluminium-framed windows and a skillion roof clad in metal tray deck. A brick wall with tile coping extends outwards from the side elevations, enclosing the front of the building.



Figure 45 Emily Baker Infant Welfare Centre

Significance

The Infant Welfare Centre is of little or no architectural significance. The siting of the building in a prominent position on the Garden's perimeter is considered to be intrusive.

3.4.16 Former Gardener's Residence

History

The building was constructed in c.1964, replacing the original caretaker's residence, which is believed to have dated from the 1870s.²⁷

Description

The former gardener's residence is a double-fronted, cream-brick building, typical of suburban villas of the period. It has a hipped roof clad in glazed terracotta tiles with a chimney on the south elevation. Windows are timber-framed and fitted externally with retractable canvas awnings. A recently constructed disabled access ramp leads up to the front door. To the front of the building is a lawn enclosed by a low hedge and remnants of a timber post and wire fence. Located to the centre of the lawn is an elongated oval-shaped garden bed with bluestone pitcher edging. A recent timber-paling fence encloses the north-west corner of the residence.

Significance

The former gardener's residence is of little or no historic or architectural significance.



Figure 46 Former gardener's residence

3.4.17 Former Plant Nursery & Depot



Figure 47 Glasshouse and shadehouse, Former Nursery

History

The general locale of the nursery developed as a service yard following the construction of the first caretaker's cottage on the site in the 1870s. The service yard expanded incrementally over the years and appears to have been largely developed to its present state by the mid 1960s.

A shift away from the practice of maintaining labour-intensive flowerbeds in the parks and gardens of Fitzroy began in the early 1970s, effectively leaving the nursery redundant. Also around this time the city discontinued the traditional June mayoral ball, for which the nursery had played an important role in providing palms and other potted plants.²⁸ The nursery was vacated in the 1990s, and at the time of writing this report, the City of Yarra is proposing to demolish the complex.

Description

The nursery complex contains a range of single-storey utilitarian structures, including a garage, toilets, glasshouses, sheds and a shadehouse. Most of the buildings appear to date from the 1960s and later. The site is enclosed by a galvanised pipe and wire mesh fence, surmounted by a row of razor wire. The garage and toilets are located on the west boundary of the site and comprise a single storey building with parapeted cream-brick walls and a skillion roof. The shadehouse is a rectangular plan building with slatted timber wall and roof cladding. The

earliest of the structures on the site appears to be a small weatherboard shed with a gabled corrugated galvanised steel roof and a V-jointed timber door to east elevation.

Significance

It is of some historical interest that the nursery complex evolved from a service yard established on the site in the late nineteenth century. Accepting that all of the existing structures are of recent origin and in a dilapidated state, the nursery complex is considered to be intrusive.

3.4.18 Centenary Pavilion

History

The Centenary Pavilion was erected in 1977 and officially opened in January of the following year to mark the Centenary of the City of Fitzroy.²⁹ When constructed, it backed onto the National Can Company industrial site. However, with demolition of the industrial complex and the reincorporation of this land into the Gardens on the western side of this building, it is now highly visible in a manner which would not have been anticipated when it was constructed.

Description

The Centenary Pavilion is a single-storey building with walls of recycled brick and a parapeted skillion main roof clad in metal tray decking. A steel-framed verandah with an aluminium fascia extends along the east and side elevations.



Figure 48 Centenary Pavilion

Significance

Historically it is of some local interest in commemorating one hundred years of local Government by the City of Fitzroy, however, in terms of its physical fabric, the Centenary Pavilion is of little or no significance.

3.4.19 Public Toilets

History

The toilet block was one of three structures introduced to the park in 1972, the others being the Infant Welfare Centre and the pedestrian shelter. The need for vandal resistance, security, ease of supervision and economy appear to have dictated the design and siting of the toilet block.³⁰

Description

Located in the north-east corner of the park, the toilet block is an undistinguished, utilitarian structure with a flat concrete roof and tan brick walls, matching the nearby Infant Welfare Centre.

Significance

The toilet block is considered to be an intrusive element.



Figure 49 Toilet Block

3.4.21 Skate Park



Figure 50 Skate Park

History

The skate park was constructed in 1991, continuing the trend towards the provision of both passive and active recreational facilities in the Gardens.³¹

Description

Located immediately to the south of the former gardener's residence, the skate park comprises a series of an excavated concrete bowls enclosed by a steel mesh fence.

Significance

While the skate park is popular with the youth of the surrounding community, it is of little or no cultural heritage significance.

3.4.22 Playgrounds

History

Approval for the construction of playground in the northern end of the Gardens, opposite the state school, was granted in 1925.³² Playgrounds were built in many of Melbourne's parks and gardens during this period, largely in response to lobbying by the Guild of Play. Established in Melbourne in 1912, the Guild of Play advocated the need for supervised play as an essential component of a child's development.

Their beliefs stemmed from an international playgrounds movement formed in the United States and England and active in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The movement sought to alleviate some of the social problems experienced by families living in crowded inner cities areas.³³

The existing playgrounds are of recent origin.

Description

The northern playground is located close to Alfred Crescent, opposite the primary school while the southern playground is located at the southern end of the section of the Gardens used as a sports ground. Both are enclosed by recent steel fences and have Soft-Four ground covering. The play equipment is steel framed in the northern playground and of treated pine log construction in the southern playground.

Significance

The playgrounds are popular with the children and family groups who congregate in the Gardens and use these facilities. It is also of some historical interest that a playground is likely to have existed in the general locale of the northern playground since 1925. While the provision of playground facilities is of local historical interest, the existing fabric is of no cultural heritage significance.



*Figure 51 Playground in the Edinburgh Gardens, sited opposite the primary school, 1965. Note the fountain in the background behind the power pole.
Source: Fitzroy Local History Collection*



Figure 52 Northern Playground



Figure 53 Southern Playground

3.4.23 Basketball Court



Figure 54 Basketball Court

History

One of a number of active recreation facilities introduced to the Gardens in recent times.

Description

An asphalt court with steel framed goals, located directly to the north of the Centenary Pavilion.

Significance

The basketball court is of little or no historic or aesthetic significance.

3.4.24 Shelter

History

The shelter was constructed in 1972, replacing a Victorian, timber lattice gazebo which had a slate-roof (Figure 56).³⁴



Figure 55 *Detail of a 1965 photograph of the Gardens showing the original timber gazebo.*
Source: Fitzroy Local History Collection



Figure 56 *The existing shelter*

Description

A non-descript brick structure with timber benches to all sides and a steel framed butterfly form roof clad in metal deck.

Significance

While the historical precedence for a shelter is of some local interest, the fabric of the shelter is considered to be an intrusive element.

3.4.26 Paths

History

Laying out of the main path network appears to have commenced around 1883. The path routes were possibly dictated by established foot tracks through the Gardens. The main north-south path followed the fenceline of the cricket grounds while the path running from Jamieson Street to Falconer Street broadly followed the line of an infilled creek bed – the location of two bridges which crossed the creek is now marked by path intersections. By the early 1900s a secondary system of diagonal paths was in place, emphasising focal points within the Gardens such as the fountain, Queen Victoria statue and circular garden beds.

Following the extension of the cricket ground in 1934, a section of the north-south path along the side of the ground was pushed several metres further eastward to its present alignment. By the late 1930s the path along the south and east perimeter to Alfred Crescent was taken up and grassed over. In the late 1960s the fountain and its radiating diagonal path system was removed and by the late 1970s the serpentine path from the Grant Street entrance had been taken up to allow for an expansion of the school sports field.

During the 1980s redevelopment of the cricket ground, a path was laid around the perimeter of the oval whilst the path running along the north of the cricket ground from the Brunswick Street entrance was realigned. Other recent changes include the removal of the path from the east side of the Bowling Club, the removal of a diagonal path intersecting the Queen Victoria statue site, and the formation of a path following the route of the demolished railway line.



Figure 57 View along a path in the gardens, c.1927.



Figure 58 Path through the centre of the Gardens, looking west toward the Ladies Bowling Club



Figure 59 Path in northern section of the Gardens, looking south

Paths within the Edinburgh Gardens were originally surfaced with gravel.³⁵ *Annual Reports* prepared by the Committee of Management from 1897-1899 record expenditure on 'ashes' for the paths, while MMBW plans dated c. 1901 show most paths to have been asphalted by this time. The bluestone rock edging is possibly an early feature of the gardens, however the original nature of the path edging has not yet been established. Similar edge treatment was a feature of many of Melbourne's parks and gardens in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A photograph of the gardens dated c.1927 shows garden beds with bluestone rock edging (Figure 57). Sections of lawn alongside the path, however, appear to be without edging.

Description

The path network is essentially utilitarian in nature. Entry points correspond to the surrounding street pattern and almost all paths run in a straight line. Most of the secondary diagonal path system, connecting points of interest within the Gardens, has been removed. A path has been created along the curving route of the demolished railway line and incorporates a remnant section of railway track.

All paths are asphalted. Flush bluestone pitcher edging has recently been laid along some paths while some sections of the earlier rock edging remain. There are also some sections of concrete kerbing, generally located in the vicinity of the community oval.

Significance

With the exception of the removal of a number of secondary paths and the alteration to paths around the community oval, the main path network through the Edinburgh Gardens remains essentially unchanged since its creation in the 1880s and 1890s. The principal path structure is of primary significance to layout, but not the majority of materials. However, remnant early basalt scoria rock path edging is of contributory significance.

The remnant railway track and the alignment of the curving path along the former railway track is of contributory significance as being demonstrative of the former railway line. Together they provide the last remaining evidence of the Fitzroy Branch line which operated from 1888 up until its closure in 1981. The railway footbridge located at the southern end of the Gardens, though not part of this study, is, we understand, to be relocated.

3.4.27 Open Drain

History

The open drain, lined with bluestone, is believed to have been constructed in c.1945 when the path along the side of the tennis courts and cricket oval was relocated further east.

Description

An open concrete drain with bluestone pitcher edging, running north-south along eastern perimeter of the oval.

Significance

The open drain is of little or no historic significance.



Figure 60 Open drain lined with bluestone pitchers

3.4.28 Bluestone Retaining Wall (Alfred Crescent)

History

The retaining wall appears to be of comparatively recent origin.

Description

Bluestone pitcher retaining wall, running along the southern section of the Alfred Crescent boundary.

Significance

The retaining wall is of little or no historic or architectural significance.



Figure 61 Bluestone retaining wall along Alfred Crescent

3.4.29 Captain Cook Memorial

History

The Captain Cook memorial appears to be of comparatively recent origin.

Description

Located at the Rowe Street entrance to the Gardens, the memorial comprises a granite plinth featuring a bas-relief bronze sculpture of Captain Cook and a memorial plaque. At the time of writing the statue had been stolen from its concrete base.

Significance

The statue is of little or no historical cultural significance to the Edinburgh Gardens.



Figure 62 Captain Cook memorial

3.4.28 Sundry Items (Lighting, Seating, Signage, Furniture, Bollards)

History

The sundry furniture, lighting and signage throughout the Gardens is predominantly of recent origin. Two exceptions to this are the small number of cast-iron nineteenth century gas lamp standards in the vicinity of the rotunda and the memorial arbour and the early cast iron bollards. Swanson suggests that gas lamps were possibly never installed in the Gardens, and that the lamps adjacent to the rotunda and memorial were erected in the 1920s.³⁶

Annual Reports prepared by the Edinburgh Gardens Committee of Management in 1899 record the purchase of 50 wooden seats and 12 iron seats.³⁷ The exact nature of these early seats remains unknown, as pictorial evidence has not been found. Simple timber seats, seen in a photograph of the rotunda dating from c.1927, possibly date from the 1920s. Cast iron

reproduction Victorian seats were introduced to the gardens in the late 1980s, replacing some earlier concrete-frame timber seats. It would appear that a small number of additional seats of contemporary design have been introduced since this time.

The history of other elements, such as signage, furniture and bollards is more unclear. It is of relatively recent origin and would appear to have been introduced to the Gardens over the past 20 or so years.



Figure 63 Reproduction aluminium standard (left) and early cast iron standard (right)



Figure 64 Contemporary steel standard (left) and combined power pole and light (right)



Figure 65 Reproduction seat (left) and contemporary steel and timber seat (right)



Figure 66 Contemporary signage including interpretive signs (right)



Figure 67 Picnic & BBQ facilities (left) and drinking fountain (right)



Figure 68 Early cast iron bollards (left) and later steel bollards (right)



Figure 69 Galvanised steel boom gates



Figure 70 Electrical sub board and rubbish bin enclosure

Description

Lighting throughout the gardens is ad hoc in its style and placement. It is generally provided by mercury vapour lamps cantilevered from either steel, concrete or timber poles, many of which double as power poles with overhead wiring. Three electrified cast-iron nineteenth century gas lamp standards are located in the vicinity of the rotunda (one has lost its top half) and one to the south of the bowling club. There are also a number of aluminium reproduction Victorian gas lamps, contemporary steel lamp standards and bollard style lighting.

Seating within the gardens largely consists of reproduction Victorian seats with stained timber battens and painted cast iron frames fixed to a concrete slab. Two frame designs are evident: the first is an elaborate Victorian pattern while the second is simpler with curvilinear, Art Nouveau inspired detailing. In the vicinity of the community oval and the northern playground the seating types are of various contemporary designs comprising stained timber battens on painted wrought iron frames. In addition there is a timber picnic table and seats and a small number of concrete-framed timber seats.

Signage is of a relatively recent origin and is typically of powdercoated steel panel construction. A small number of decorative wrought iron interpretative signs have also been recently introduced to the gardens in the vicinity of significant early structures such as the grandstand, band rotunda, Queen Victoria memorial and D J Chandler fountain. In addition there are also instructive signs for the use of the park relating to dogs, parking etc. They are generally of standard design and fixed to galvanised steel poles with small steel signage panels.

Adjoining the northern playground is a recent BBQ and drinking fountain constructed of coursed bluestone.

A small number of early cast-iron bollards remain at entrances to the gardens in addition to later cast iron bollards of a simpler design. Other, intrusive, bollard designs include painted treated pine posts and contemporary removable painted steel bollards. A galvanised steel pipe gate is located at the vehicular entrance point to the depot off Alfred Crescent and across the Brunswick Street vehicular entrance to the Gardens, south of the bowling club.

The path in front of the former gardener's residence and the vehicular entrance from Brunswick Street, south of the Bowling Club are gated by galvanised steel boom gates.

Rubbish bins are housed within perforated powdercoated steel enclosures of a contemporary design and electrical sub-boards throughout the park are housed within plain, powdercoated steel cupboards.

In addition to the above-mentioned sundry items, are a number of what would appear to be surplus timber and steel posts, poles, and concrete pad footings which appear redundant.

Significance

The cast-iron nineteenth century gas lamp standards and cast iron bollards are of contributory significance as early elements within the Gardens. None of the other sundry elements are considered to be of significance.

4.0 PHYSICAL SURVEY OF SOFT LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS

4.1 Introduction

The following physical survey of the soft landscape elements of the Edinburgh Gardens is based on an examination of the available documentary evidence and on a physical examination of the fabric as it exists. The objectives are the same as those for hard landscape outlined in Section 3.1.

4.2 Soft Landscape Elements

4.2.1 Kurrajong Row - St Georges Road vicinity

History

The earliest evidence of the boundary treatment to St Georges Road between the Bowling Club and the present toilet block, is a MMBW plan dating from the beginning of the twentieth century which indicates a scalloped garden bed in this location. It is not clear whether trees were planted at the apex of the scallop patterns, however the 1905 plan of the Gardens which also depicts the scallop beds suggests that there may not have been tree planting along this boundary.

By 1945¹ the scalloped beds had been removed and a row of trees had been established along the boundary. The row appears to extend to the present northern entrance to the Gardens opposite the Primary School. These trees are still evident in the 1966 aerial photo, although those at the southern end appear small and possibly depleted in number.



Figure 71 Kurrajong (*Brachychiton populneus*), St Georges Road

Given the size and apparent age of many of the Kurrajong (*Brachychiton populneus*) specimens in this location it is thought that the existing row is the same planting evident in the aerial photos of 1945 and 1966. Some of the specimens in the 1945 photograph have moderately developed canopies, suggesting a planting time before 1940, possibly in the 1920s or 1930s. Such a planting time would be consistent with the heightened sense of national identity and sentiment following World War I which was expressed in several parks through the use of Australian species, such as a plantation of Red Flowering Gum (*Corymbia ficifolia*) in the Domain, and Kurrajongs in Central Park, East Malvern.

Description

A row of Kurrajongs (*Brachychiton populneus*) is planted along the north-west boundary of the Gardens fronting St. Georges Road and running north of the Bowling Club to the northern entrance opposite the Primary School.

There is considerable variation in the size of the trees with some responding to site conditions markedly better than others. The row includes a number of exceptionally good examples of the species within the Melbourne context, particularly those at the northern end.

Significance

The row of Kurrajongs in the St Georges Road vicinity is of contributory significance as an example of a formal planting of this Australian species which is relatively unusual in Melbourne's public parks. Its relationship with a similar row planting on the eastern boundary of the Gardens along Alfred Crescent is also of significance. (Refer to Section 4.2.3 Kurrajong and Illawarra Flame Tree Row Alfred Crescent)

4.2.2 Alfred Crescent Desert Ash Row



Figure 72 Desert Ash (Fraxinus angustifolia) Alfred Crescent

History

The 1905 plan of Edinburgh Gardens indicates a row of trees planted along the Alfred Crescent frontage between the northern entrance to the Gardens and the former railway line as part of the early landscaping scheme established in the nineteenth century. The location roughly corresponds to the section of the Gardens directly opposite the Primary School.

This row had been removed by 1945, and is not apparent in the 1966 aerial photo.

The present planting therefore seems to have occurred since the mid-1960s as a substantially later date would not be consistent with the level of maturity of the existing specimens.

Description

A short row of nine Desert Ash (*Fraxinus angustifolia*) and one Claret Ash (*Fraxinus angustifolia* 'Raywood') is planted along the northern frontage of the Gardens to Alfred Crescent opposite the Primary School. The trees are mature and in fair to good condition.

Significance

The presence of a row of trees along this section of the perimeter of the Gardens is of contributory significance as an element of the early landscape design for the Gardens. However, the existing trees are of recent origin, and the species choice reflects mid-twentieth century tastes and is unlikely to have been part of the early planting palette. The existing trees are not of heritage significance.

4.2.3 Kurrajong and Illawarra Flame Tree Row Alfred Crescent



Figure 73 Kurrajong (Brachychiton populneus) Tree Row Alfred Crescent



Figure 74 Illawarra Flame Tree (Brachychiton acerifolia) interplanted with Kurrajong (Brachychiton populneus) along eastern sectors of Alfred Crescent

History

The 1905 map indicates that the early landscaping established in the nineteenth century included an avenue planting along the boundary path to Alfred Crescent which extended from the Falconer Street entrance to a location opposite Grant Street.

During the late 1930s this path was removed and grassed over.² The 1945 aerial photograph shows a single row of generally very small trees along this boundary, with frequent and wide gaps, suggesting that they may have been planted, or replanted, when the path was removed. This date would be consistent with the likely period of the planting of the Kurrajong (*Brachychiton populneus*) row on the north-east boundary of the Gardens along St Georges Road.

The 1966 aerial photograph shows a similar planting pattern to that indicated in 1945 but with larger specimens as might be expected.

The existing row planting consists of many more specimens than evident in the mid-1960s indicating that subsequent infill planting has occurred. The location of specimens shown in the 1945 and 1966 aerial photos tends to correspond with the existing Kurrajong plantings. These specimens are larger and more established than the Illawarra Flame Tree (*Brachychiton acerifolia*).

The *Edinburgh Gardens Landscape Study* makes specific reference to the Kurrajong row, noting that there are numerous gaps and that it peters out at the southern end.³ It makes no mention of the Illawarra Flame Trees. As the latter are still young they appear to have been planted subsequent to this study to infill the gaps in the Kurrajong row i.e. since 1987. Both species are Australian natives from NSW and Queensland, and as they are of the same genera, are closely related botanically.

Description

A row of Kurrajong (*Brachychiton populneus*) and Illawarra Flame Tree (*B. acerifolia*) is established along the north-eastern frontage of the Gardens extending from the Falconer Street entrance to the vicinity of Grant Street. The planting consists of some fourteen Kurrajongs which are generally larger in size and dominate the northern end of the row. However, a number of the Kurrajongs are not large, particularly toward the south, suggesting more inhospitable conditions in this vicinity.

The Illawarra Flame Tree plantings consist of about seventeen specimens interplanted with the Kurrajongs. These are predominantly located south of the Rowe Street entrance. They are generally significantly smaller than the Kurrajongs although this could be expected given the relatively recent planting, their slow growth habit, and the fact that they are still young. Both species are in good to fair condition.

Significance

The presence of a boundary row of trees along this section of the perimeter of the Gardens is of contributory significance as an element of its early landscape design. However, the existing trees are not thought to be the original planting. The Kurrajongs are considered to be of contributory significance as part of a broader boundary planting scheme undertaken on both sides of the Gardens, possibly in the 1920s or 1930s. They represent an example of a formal planting of this Australian species which is relatively unusual in Melbourne's public parks. (Refer to Section 4.2.1 for the Kurrajong Row – St Georges Road vicinity) The significance of the row planting is likely to increase as the Illawarra Flame Trees come into maturity as this species is even more unusual as a formal row planting in Melbourne's parks and when in flower forms a spectacular sight.

4.2.4 Elm Row Alfred Crescent South



Figure 75 Dutch Elm (Ulmus x hollandica) Alfred Crescent South

History

Although the 1905 plan indicates the presence of a row planting along Alfred Crescent between Grant Street and Jamieson Street, there were no trees shown in this location in either the 1945 or 1966 aerial photos.

The present Dutch Elm (*Ulmus x hollandica*) are semi-mature and date from a relatively recent planting in the last decade or so.

Description

Four semi-mature specimens of Dutch Elm (*Ulmus x hollandica*) are planted along Alfred Crescent between Grant Street and Jamieson Street. The trees are in fair to good condition.

Significance

The presence of a row of trees along Alfred Crescent is of contributory significance as an element of the early landscaping scheme established in the nineteenth century. However, the trees are of recent origin. The species is consistent with the dominant species of the nineteenth century planting of the Gardens.

4.2.5 Elm Avenues and Rows

History

The initial avenue trees appear to have been planted about 1884 following the survey and construction of the principal paths in the preceding year. (Refer to 1883 Plan) A report by the committee for the Lands Department in December 1883, notes that works in the Gardens included the survey and marking out of trenches along either side of the paths with the object of creating ornamental avenues. The same report also records that the avenues were prepared and ready for the reception of the young trees at the proper season.⁴ In June 1884 approval was given for trees to be planted in the Edinburgh Gardens.⁵ Prior to the planting, the prepared trenches were filled with street scrapings, presumably containing manure, as a soil improvement measure.

Only four years later, approval was given to excise land for construction of a railway line and station which bisected the Gardens. This action resulted in removal of sections of the east-west avenue plantings which crossed the newly created branch line.

Avenue plantings seem to have been undertaken as the path layout developed with the addition of diagonal routes and the construction of a second major north-south route roughly where the stream had been put into a barrel drain sometime after 1887. By 1905 the major path network and accompanying avenue plantings were in place. (Refer to 1905 plan).

Between 1934 and 1938 further avenue losses occurred when the Elm rows east of the Fitzroy Cricket Club were removed to extend the sports ground. By 1945, the avenue planting along the path south-west of the fountain no longer existed. West of the former Ladies Bowling Club site, another section of Elm avenue planting was removed by the mid-1960s. The removals occurred along the length of the bowling green and were possibly undertaken when the greens were constructed in 1948, or subsequently to prevent shading of the lawns.

A section of the Elm avenue planting along the western side of the Alfred Crescent school's sports oval has also been lost. However, it is not clear if this loss is associated with the initial construction of an oval in this vicinity in the late 1940s, or with its later enlargement in the 1980s. Certainly, the avenue was generally intact up until the mid-1940s.



Figure 76 Avenues of Dutch Elm (Ulmus x hollandica) lining the main path system.

Description

Mature avenues of Dutch Elm (*Ulmus x hollandica*) line much of the path network forming a major feature of Edinburgh Gardens. ⁶

Although the avenues do not represent the full extent of the historical plantings, the original scheme is still largely intact. Some sections, as noted above, have been removed, while in other avenues occasional specimens may be missing.

The remaining trees are generally in fair to good condition, although there is evidence of some deadwood in upper canopies. At the time of writing, thin canopy growth was frequent, reflecting severe elm leaf beetle attack and possum browsing. The prevailing drought conditions may also be aggravating the situation although most of the Gardens are irrigated.

Significance

The Elm avenues are of primary significance as a major element of Edinburgh Gardens which dates from its early development in the mid-1880s to the early 1900s, and which remains substantially intact. The Elms are also significant as the overwhelmingly dominant species in the early planting scheme. The almost exclusive reliance on a single species is unusual in Melbourne's nineteenth century parks and gardens where a broader planting palette was typical. The Elm avenues are also significant as a good example of a traditional ornamental use of this species; which is increasingly rare with the loss of most European and North American examples as a result of Dutch Elm Disease.

4.2.6 English Oak Avenue



Figure 77 *Avenue of English Oak (Quercus robur)*

History

The avenue planting is thought to date from the early planting of the Gardens as the path system was developed between 1884 and 1900. However, it is not clear why this one section of the path network should have been planted in English Oak (*Quercus robur*) when the remainder of the paths were planted with Dutch Elm (*Ulmus x hollandica*).

Description

The southern fork of the path opposite Rowe Street is planted with an avenue of English Oak. Two specimens are missing mid-way along the southern row.

The trees are well-established but have not thrived in the conditions and are somewhat small. They are in fair to good condition although there is evidence of deadwood in the upper canopy of a number of specimens, and some appear to have been subject to possum browsing.

Significance

The English Oak avenue is of primary significance as part of the early planting scheme for Edinburgh Gardens, carried out between 1884 and the early 1900s, and which remains substantially intact.

4.2.7 Dutch Elm Row East of the Tennis Courts



Figure 78 Self seeded row of Dutch Elm (*Ulmus x hollandica*) (left) and detail of old fence rails showing through trunks

History

The row of Dutch Elm (*Ulmus x hollandica*) east of the tennis courts is thought to date from the early 1940s when it established, possibly as a self-seeded row, along the fenced boundary to the former rail siding.

Prior to this a formal avenue planting of Elm dating from the 1884 layout, had existed immediately to the west, as a southern extension of the path running north past the former Ladies Bowling Green. This avenue was removed between 1934 and 1938 to enable the Cricket Ground to be extended eastward. An adjacent strip of land was purchased from the Railways Department to which the present main north-south path was relocated. The Elm row runs along the eastern side of the relocated path on former railway land. In 1954 the National Can company occupied the site and remained there until the cessation of the industrial activities in 1996 when the land was converted to parkland by Yarra City Council. The boundary fence was presumably removed at this time.

Description

A row of Dutch Elm (*Ulmus x hollandica*) is established along the east of the tennis courts and the abutting path. The trees are irregularly and closely spaced, often only 2-3 metres apart. Many appear to have originated as two or more seedlings which have self-grafted to form multi-trunk trees. In several specimens the remains of the former fence can be discerned where old rails now curiously protrude through sections of the trunk which have grown over and around them. The trees are poor examples of the species with an inherently weak structural form.

Significance

The Dutch Elm row east of the tennis courts is not significant. It does not relate to the early layout and planting of Edinburgh Gardens, nor does it reflect the early boundary of the land excised from the Gardens to create the rail reserve. The trees are of poor form and are of mid-twentieth century origin.

4.2.8 Purple Leafed Plum Avenue

History

The diagonal path in the north-west of the Gardens is thought to have been originally planted between 1884 and the early 1900s as part of the avenue planting of the early path network. The 1905 map which is the earliest planting plan identified for the Gardens, shows an avenue planting along this path. The 1945 aerial photo, however, shows no canopy trees along this path. Instead there appears to be a newly planted avenue of young specimens. These either failed or were removed by the mid-1960s when an aerial photograph shows two trees only in the vicinity of the existing toilet block.

A single specimen of Cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*) in this location may, or may not, give a clue to the planting which appears to have taken place in the 1940s. The existing avenue of Purple Leafed Plum (*Prunus x blieriana*) was planted sometime after 1966, possibly in the 1970s when the toilet block and Infant Welfare Centre were constructed (1972) nearby.



Figure 79 *Avenue of Purple Leafed Plum (Prunus x blieriana)*

Description

An avenue of Purple Leafed Plum (*Prunus x blieriana*) is established on the diagonal path leading from the intersection of St Georges Road and Alfred Crescent. The trees are small and with foliage colour which does not sit harmoniously with the stately scale and character of the avenues of Dutch Elm which dominate the Gardens. A number of the specimens are missing so that the avenue form is diminished and weak. The trees are in fair condition and are approaching the end of their effective horticultural value.

Significance

The Purple Leafed Plum avenue is intrusive. It is a recent planting which does not harmonise in scale or colour with the stately heritage character of the nineteenth century avenue plantings which typify Edinburgh Gardens.

4.2.9 Sweet Pittosporum and Oleander Rows

History

The section of path where the Sweet Pittosporum (*Pittosporum undulatum*) and Oleander (*Nerium oleander*) are now located, is shown on the 1883 plan and was possibly first planted as part of the 1884 works which established the main elm avenues along the network of paths. However, the integrity of this planting would have been short-lived with the excision of the railway land in 1888 which cut a swathe across the path. The 1905 plan indicates a gap in the avenue planting along the sections of path adjacent to the railway land, although the trees along the eastern end of this section of the path are still intact.



Figure 80 *Off set rows of Sweet Pittosporum (*Pittosporum undulata*) and Oleander (*Nerium oleander*) on the south side of the central east west path.*