

## Identification and location

**Name of place:**

**Other Name**

**Address**

**Place Identifier**

**Heritage Significance**

**Creation date(s)**

**Map (Melway)**

**Boundary description**

**Local Government Area**

**Ownership Type**

## Description

**Site Type:**

### Physical Description

Planted as combination of elms and ash in an avenue extending east of Hyde Street to Moreland St where they join with an oak and elm avenue. Mature trees in the block Mooreland to Whitehall- 5 (2 ash, 3 elms) on the north side, 6 (5 elms, 1 ash) on the south; Whitehall to Cowper St - 8 on the north (2 ash, 6 elms) and 7 (4 elms, 3 ash) on the south; and Cowper to Hyde St - 3 (1 elm, 2 ash) on the north, 4 (2 ash, 2 elms) on the south . Intermixed are immature elm plantings, planted in recent years to fill in gaps. These trees are planted in a grassed median which has basalt kerbing as an addition to the original basalt kerb and channel. Similar medians are in Cowper and Whitehall Streets. These medians appear to be after the 1895 MMBW plans but echo the placement of trees in tree guards shown in those plans.

#### Elms

`The 20 or so species in this genus of trees and shrubs occur naturally in temperate regions of the northern hemisphere. During the 1920s and 1930s, and again in the 1960s and 1970s, elm trees in Europe and North America were devastated by Dutch elm disease, caused by the fungus *Ophiostoma ulmi*, which is transmitted by the elm bark beetle. Except for a few East Asian species, they are deciduous, turning yellow in fall (autumn). The leaves are usually alternate, one-sided at the base, with prominent, parallel, lateral veins and regularly toothed margins; the small, disc-like fruits have a membranous wing and are carried in clusters. Most elms are large limbed

with furrowed grey bark and high, domed crowns {Botanica}'.

**Ash**

`This genus consists of 65 species of mainly deciduous, fast-growing trees, ranging throughout the northern hemisphere except for the coldest regions and lowland tropics. It differs from other woody members of the olive family (Oleaceae) in having pinnate leaves consisting of several leaflets, small insignificant flowers that in most species lack petals, and single-seeded, winged fruits botanically called samaras. One group of species known as the 'flowering ashes', typified by *Fraxinus ornus*, produces showier flowers with small petals in large terminal panicles at the tips of the branches. Several larger species are valued for their tough, pale timber {Botanica}'.

**Condition**

good (partially disturbed, well preserved)

**Integrity**

substantially intact/some intrusions

**Context**

Set in a related Edwardian-era and Victorian-era residential streetscape with basalt kerb and channel, asphalt footpaths.

**Threats:**

Pruning for added and existing service lines, pollution, removal with maturity, new crossovers, carparking, root compaction, adjoining development.

**History**

An observer writing in the `Williamstown Chronicle' of 1880 noted of Footscray that, 20 years before, there had been "scarcely a tree to be seen and the place looked as bare as an earthen pot". Since that time street tree planting (mainly elms by observation of surviving trees) had shown its value although the writer noted an unwarranted pause in municipal planting {FHS newsletter }.

The Parks & Gardens Curator's (David Matthews) report on street trees, in 1933, noted many complaints about suckering of the root system of elms and poplars (silver poplars). He also noted that the Oriental plane ( `Platanus orientalis') had been extensively used. This tree was subject to the Plane Tree Disease and troubled by borer along with the elms. These trees had been planted for over twenty years and Matthews observed that, had the varieties selected proved more suitable, the streets would have been furnished with well grown trees and would have been giving pleasure instead of annoyance to the ratepayers. He was forced to conclude that elms, poplars and planes were unsuitable but that surviving trees should be preserved for as long as possible until they could be replaced.

This report was the turning point in street tree planting policy and the result of the maturity of the trees planted in the late Victorian-era and Edwardian-era, plus the spreading network of overhead wires. New electric street lighting was being obscured by tree canopies- the canopies and the trees under them had to go. An aerial view taken by Charles Daniel Pratt, photographer, around the 1930s-40s shows mature tree avenues in Cowper, Bunbury, and Whitewall Streets and Moreland Road . Another aerial view of 1931 shows the same. The 1945 aerial views show many street trees in Footscray and Yarraville. Most of these trees have gone.

The MMBW Detail Plan (DP 197, 198) of this area from the mid 1890s did not show any street trees in Bunbury St. Instead they show lines of trees, planted at about 9-10m centres in tree guards along nearby Moreland St, between Wingfield St and Napier) and parts of Napier St (5 trees at about 6m centres), east from Cowper St: similarly sited but immature trees remain at these locations set in early plantation medians. In 1903 an application for trees to be planted in Bunbury and Albert Streets was granted by Council with the usual conditions {VPRO}. In 1905 the City Surveyor was to confer with applicants for tree planting in Bunbury Street owing to the rocky nature of the ground and its unsuitableness for ordinary street trees. In 1908 a meeting of the Gardens Committee were told that tree planting at the east end of Bunbury Street was to be completed soon {VPRO}.

The trees in Bunbury St are shown in the 1931 aerial view. It is likely that the elms were planted in the Edwardian-era (c1903-8), in a new median formation to defeat the rocky ground, and the ash infill-planted in the 1930s.

Surviving mature 20th century street trees in the former Footscray municipality today also include elms in Stephen and Bunbury Streets and Ballarat Rd.

### Thematic context

Australian Principal Theme	Developing cultural institutions and ways of life	
PAHT Subtheme	Creating public landscape	Local Theme(s) Developing Local Government

### Cultural Significance

This elm and ash avenue is significant to the City of Maribyrnong:

- for the combination of its maturity and extent, as compared to other street planting in the City (Criterion B2)
- as a reflection of the role of the Footscray Railway Station and the perception of Bunbury Street as one of the main entry points to the municipality (Criterion A4).

### Comparative Examples:

Mature elm street trees in the former Footscray municipality include those in Commercial Rd, Stephen Streets and Ballarat Rd.

## Recommendations

Heritage Victoria Register

Register of the National Estate:

National Trust Register:

Other Heritage Listings

Planning Scheme Protection

External Paint Controls Apply?:

Internal Alteration Controls Apply?:

Tree Controls Apply?:

Included on the Victorian Heritage Register under the Act:

Are there Outbuildings or Fences not Exempt?:

Prohibited Uses may be Permitted

### Recommendations:

The following management objectives have been drawn from the Statement of Significance:

- to conserve and enhance the listed trees and the planting pattern at the place along with the associated medians and stone kerbs where enhancement includes replacement of missing original components in the planting scheme;
- to conserve and enhance the visual relationship between the trees;
- to conserve and enhance the public view of these trees;
- to ensure that works or plantings at or near the place are visually recessive and related to the trees;
- to ensure replacement trees match the existing specimens and planting pattern; and
- to further research the detailed origins of the rows and maintain the link with their history, via promotion and publication of the findings.

## Australian Heritage Commission Criteria

*A4 Importance for their association with events, developments or cultural phases which have had a significant role in the human occupation and evolution of the nation, state, region or community.*

as a reflection of the role of the railway station and the perception of this street as one of the main entry points to the municipality

*B2 Importance in demonstrating a distinctive way of life, custom, process, land-use, function or design no longer practiced, in danger of being lost, or of exceptional interest.*

for the combination of its maturity and extent, as compared to other street planting in the City

## Historic Places - Significant Trees in the City of Maribyrnong

historical significanc  architectural significan  social significance  scientific significanc

### Documentation

#### References

'Botanica' CD Rom 1997 (Beaver Multimedia P/L, Random House Australia)  
Butler, 1989. City of Footscray Urban Conservation Study  
City of Maribyrnong collection - 1931 aerial view  
MMBW Detail Plan, State Library of Victoria;  
Footscray Council committee minutes (VPRO) VPRS 005337

### Data recording

Assessed By:

Assessed Date:

Historic Places - Significant Trees in the City of Maribyrnong

