

Identification and location

Name of place: **Washingtonia palm**

Other Name

Address

Place Identifier

Heritage Significance

Creation date(s)

Map (Melway)

Boundary description

Local Government Area

Ownership Type

Description

Site Type:

Physical Description

A large specimen located north of what appears to be a brick Edwardian-era villa (78), on a vacant grassed area close to the footpath.

The *Washingtonia* genus is made up of 2 species of fan-leaved palms from arid parts of western Mexico, southern California and Arizona. Their stately appearance makes them ideal specimen or avenue trees. They have an upright, single trunk, and are sometimes called petticoat palms because the dead fronds hang down in a mass around the trunk, almost to the ground. The large leaves have many strap-like segments and spiny leaf stalks. The small white flowers cluster at intervals on long flowering branches that arch out well beyond the leaves. The fruit are small dark drupes {Botanica}.

'*Washingtonia filifera*' is from southern California and Arizona. This palm develops a fat trunk and grows 40-50 ft (12-15 m) tall. The greyish green leaves form a broad, spherical crown about 15 ft (4.5 m) across. The common name of cotton palm derives from the white, cotton-like threads on and between the leaf segments. Its small hard black berries ripen in winter {Botanica}.

Condition

The tree is in good condition.

Integrity

The house and the tree are substantially intact/some intrusions.

Context

Set next to a late Victorian-era duplex.

Threats:

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

History

The many occupiers of 78 Cowper St included:

1960s- Mrs AL Howson;
1930s-50s- Bertie C Howson;
1920s-30s Henry G Heald;
1900s-20s Sidney Fella;
1900s Thomas B Kennedy;
1900s- Charles Hart;
mid 1890s- William Coope;

The MMBW Record Plan of 1910 shows the house next to the Footscray Ladies College at 80; directories suggest that Coope may have been the first occupier c1895 and thus a possible owner of this palm. The 1931 aerial view shows the building and the palm (indistinct). It is likely that the palm was planted early in the 20th century (c1910). It compares with the palm at the former Tweddle Baby Hospital (place 22584 planted c1925) and may date from the occupation of Heald or Howson.

Thematic context

Australian Principal Theme Developing cultural institutions and ways of life

PAHT Subtheme Creating landscape Local Theme(s) Cultural development

Cultural Significance

Washingtonia palm at 78 Cowper Street is significant to the City of Maribyrnong:

- for its maturity and rarity within the City (Criterion B2).

Comparative Examples:

Another example is at the Multiple Sclerosis Centre, Barkly St, former Tweddle Baby Hospital, place 22584.

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 tree at the place;
- to conserve and enhance the public view of this tree;
- to ensure that new plantings or elements within the place are visually recessive and related to the tree; and
- to further research the detailed origin of the tree and maintain the link with its history, via promotion and publication of the findings.

Australian Heritage Commission Criteria

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 its maturity and rarity within the City

- historical significanc architectural significan social significance scientific significanc

Documentation

References

'Botanica' CD Rom 1997 (Beaver Multimedia P/L, Random House Australia)
State Library of Victoria MMBW plan collection RP4, 1895

Historic Places - Significant Trees in the City of Maribyrnong

City of Maribyrnong collection 1931 aerial
Footscray Council committee minutes (VPRO) VPRS 005337

Data recording

Assessed By:

Assessed Date:

Historic Places - Significant Trees in the City of Maribyrnong

