

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

Oak avenue with a total of 35 trees, with some very mature specimens (i.e. near no.46 Fehon Street), extending north from Francis Street to the Beaton Reserve: starting on the west side on the north at 44 with 9 to the corner of Blackwood Street, 4 to Marjory Street, another 5 to the corner of Beatrice Street, and 5 to Francis St. On the east side of Fehon Street, there are 2 from Hance Street to the corner of Clarendon Street, another 3 to the corner of Hawthorn Street, and 2 to Gladstone Street. There has been some unrelated replanting to Blackwood Street, with no examples to Ovens Street, 3 mature specimens to Tarrengower Street, and 2 mature examples to Simpson Street.

Most oaks are from temperate regions but a surprisingly large number of the 600 or so evergreen, semi-evergreen and deciduous species come from tropical and subtropical regions of Mexico, Southeast Asia and even New Guinea. Oaks range from shrubs 3 ft (1 m) high to trees of 120 ft (36 m), and are mostly very long lived; some species have been used for centuries for their hardwood timber. Their leaves, mostly lobed and leathery but in some species thin and lustrous, provide a dense canopy for a multitude of animals, birds and insects and make wonderful compost for acid-loving plants. The leaves of some deciduous oaks develop magnificent hues during the cooler months before they drop. Oaks can be divided into 'white oaks' and 'red oaks', the former with rounded leaves and edible acorns that mature in one year,

while the latter have pointed leaves and acorns that mature in 2 years and are too bitter to eat. The female flowers are small, insignificant and greenish, while the male flowers appear as yellow catkins in spring {Botanica}.

Condition

good (partially disturbed, well preserved)

Integrity

substantially intact/some intrusions

Context

Close to inter-war and Edwardian-era housing groups.

Threats:

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

History

Transport routes that were opened up during the 1850s seem to have been an incentive for private developers to market estates or private villages. The (soon to be built) Williamstown railway line was a selling point at Yarraville as was the Ballarat Road at Braybrook and Maidstone. Often developers carved land up into tiny allotments, very few of which were probably actually built upon during the 1850s or soon after. Some remnants of these old street configurations can still be made out at Braybrook and Maidstone, while the township of Yarraville still retains the streets that were laid out in the 1850s{ Barnard, 1999}'. The east side of Fehon St was the western border of the old Yarraville township survey: it was not shown as a street on that survey.

The Cox 1864 survey plan shows no street formations in the Yarraville town survey and only one or two structures. The 1895 MMBW Record Plan shows Fehon Street populated on the east side only, with a higher concentration of houses south of Blackwood Street juxtaposed with a quarry. Even by the 1920s there were few houses on the west side of the street and only four south of Blackwood Street. By 1930 both sides of the street, where this avenue occurs, were lined with houses {D1915-30}. The 1987 City of Footscray urban conservation study analysis of the street gave a 33% representation of inter-war housing for the 47 places identified there. Council Minutes note that trees were proposed for Fehon St in early 1935 as well as beautification of the quarry which adjoined the street.

It is likely that the oaks were planted in the late 1930s, once housing had been built along both sides of the street. The 1945 aerial view shows the trees as semi-mature.

Thematic context

Australian Principal Theme Developing cultural institutions and ways of life

PAHT Subtheme

Local Theme(s)

Cultural Significance

The oak street tree avenue of 35 trees in Fehon Street is significant to the City and the Western Region because:

- the maturity, type and integrity of the planting is unusual in the City, as is the use of oaks for street trees (Criterion B2);
- the planting represents the interwar period when the street was almost fully developed for housing (Criterion A4).

Comparative Examples:

There are no similar oak avenues in the City and they are rare in the region.

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 planting pattern at the place, where enhancement includes replacement of missing original components in the planting scheme (filling any gaps in the row);
- to conserve and enhance the visual relationship between trees at the place;
- to conserve and enhance the public view of these trees;
- to ensure that new plantings, works or elements within the place are visually recessive and related to the trees;
- to ensure matching replacement specimens in row; and
- to further research the detailed origins of the tree 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.

the planting represents a period when the street was almost fully developed for housing

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.

the maturity, type and integrity of the planting is unusual in the City as is the use of oaks for street trees

historical significanc architectural significan social significance scientific significanc

Documentation

References

Butler, 1989. City of Footscray Urban Conservation Study
Barnard, 2000 Historic Places Review Environmental History City of Maribyrnong, Volume 2
MMBW Record Plan 1895 copy held
Sands & McDougall Directories;
Land-info 1945 aerial photo;
Footscray Council committee minutes (VPRO) VPRS 005337

Data recording

Assessed By: Francine Gilfedder, G B

Assessed Date: 7/2000

Historic Places - Significant Trees in the City of Maribyrnong

