

Identification and location

Name of place: **English oaks at The Oaks**

Other Name

Address

Place Identifier

Heritage Significance

Creation date(s)

Map (Melway)

Boundary description

Local Government Area

Ownership Type

Description

Site Type:

Physical Description

Two large, mature `Quercus robur' are set symmetrically either side of the front gate of a notable but altered coloured brick Victorian-era house. The trees appear to have been truncated and pruned to maintain their size within the confines of the front yard. The rear of the allotment has been developed as two storey cream brick flats.

The English oak is arguably `the most famous of all the oaks and with a life span of 600 to 700 years, this species has spreading, heavily leafed branches providing good shade. Its 4 in (10 cm) long leaves are deciduous and remain dark green through fall (autumn). It eventually reaches a height of 120 ft (36 m) and trunks with a circumference of more than 70 ft (21 m) have been recorded. It is one of Europe's most valuable timber trees. 'Fastigiata' is grown for its narrow, upright habit, while 'Concordia' is a rounded tree to 30 ft (9 m) {Botanica}.'

Condition

Integrity

Context

Set in front of a notable 19th century stone and brick house, in a streetscape of weatherboard houses of a similar period.

Threats:

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

History

Over time this house at 99 Gordon Street was occupied by:

- FC Bradley in the 1960s-70s;
- William C Bradley in the 1930s-50s;
- Angus Grant/ William Brodie in the 1920s;
- Mrs Sarah Watson in the Edwardian-era;
- John H Hooper in the c1898-1901;
- Mrs Jane Eggleston late 1890s;
- William McKelvey mid 1890s;
- John Clemenger early 1890s;
- William Drayton from c1890 its probable construction date.

The house is first listed in Melbourne directories in 1891 and is shown on the July 1894 MMBW Record Plan but there is no indication of when the oaks were planted. The confined nature of the planting may have affected the growth of the trees although the placement and species indicate an Edwardian-era or Victorian-era origin. One interesting occupant was John Hooper who was described as 'one of Melbourne's and Footscray's great retailing success stories'. Hooper was a shop assistant until 1885 when he opened a small drapery in Barkly St which grew rapidly. By 1890 they had a Williamstown branch and in 1894 enlarged both stores. They continued to expand into the Edwardian-era { Lack, 1991,161}. Hooper commissioned architect TFM Smith to design the house in 10 Geelong Rd in 1901 and lived there until the 1930s {Butler, 1989, V4: 53}.

Thematic context

Australian Principal Theme
PAHT Subtheme Local Theme(s)

Cultural Significance

Two English oaks at The Oaks, are significant to the City of Maribyrnong:

- for the rare combination of maturity and distinctive symmetrical placement with in a small Victorian-era villa front garden (Criterion B2)

Comparative Examples:

There are oaks of this size in the City, particularly on private land and located in such a confined location. Less mature specimens, as street trees, are at the south end of Fehon Street, Yarraville.

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 at the place where enhancement includes replacement of missing original components in the planting scheme;
- 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 or elements within the place are visually recessive and related to the trees; and
- to further research the detailed origins of the trees and maintain the link with 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 the rare combination of maturity and distinctive symmetrical placement with in a small Victorian-era villa front garden

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)
Sands & McDougall Directories
State Library of Victoria plan collection-1894 MMBW Record Plan 2
Footscray Council committee minutes (VPRO) VPRS 005337

Data recording

Assessed By:

Assessed Date:

Historic Places - Significant Trees in the City of Maribyrnong

