

Identification and location

Name of place: **Moreton Bay fig at the Footscray Hotel**

Other Name

Address

Place Identifier

Heritage Significance

Creation date(s) **Map (Melway)**

Boundary description

Local Government Area

Ownership Type

Description

Site Type:

Physical Description

This large Moreton Bay fig tree is west of the present bluestone building. The building reflects major alterations in the 1920s or 1940s.

'Ficus macrophylla' is a ` large, spreading evergreen tree, this species occurs naturally in coastal rainforests of eastern Australia. It grows to about 130 ft (39 m) with a spread nearly as great and a buttressed trunk. It bears large, leathery, dark green leaves with rust-toned undersides, and abundant fruit that turn reddish brown when ripe { Botanica}'.

Condition

Integrity

Context

Threats:

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

History

The Footscray Hotel has a long history intimately associated with its industrial neighbours, such as tanners Michaelis & Hallenstein, and its near riverside location. Licensees there included:

W Farrow from the first directory entry in 1876 to the late 1870s;
 William A Marris in the 1880s;
 R Keir in the 1880s-90s;
 Mrs M Williams c1900;
 Mrs Annie Keir c1905;
 James Broderick c1910;
 Mrs Campbell, c1915;
 Mrs A Bunnell c1920;
 John S Giles c1930;
 Geo Phillips c1935; and
 anonymous through the 1940s-50s.

The 1864 plan of the area shows Dynon Rd bridge but no Hopkins St, with the main access into the town (Footscray) being along the waterfront from this point, south to Napier St and then west. William Farrow appears to have been the first licensee of the hotel in c1875; a William Farrow was buried at Footscray Cemetery in 1919. The 1895 MMBW plan shows the hotel but no precise date is known for the planting of this tree. Its size indicates a 19th century origin probably c1870-1890.

Thematic context

Australian Principal Theme	Developing cultural institutions and ways of life
PAHT Subtheme	Creating landscape
Local Theme(s)	River Crossings: Fords, Punts, Hotels and Bridges

Cultural Significance

Moreton Bay fig at the Footscray Hotel, is significant to the City of Maribyrnong:

- as a very mature tree which is uncommon within the general planted context of the City, judged by their maturity and type (Criterion B2) ;
- its association, with the Footscray Hotel, an early and historic place in the City (Criterion A4).

Comparative Examples:

Other mature figs in the City include the lesser sized specimen at the Cuming Reserve

Recommendations

Historic Places - Significant Trees in the City of Maribyrnong

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 tree;
- to conserve and enhance the visual relationship between the tree and the hotel;
- to conserve and enhance the public view of the tree;
- to ensure that new plantings or elements near the tree are visually recessive and related; and
- to further research the detailed origin of the tree and maintain the link with the tree and hotel's history, via publication and promotion.

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.

its association, with the Footscray Hotel, an early and historic place in the City

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.

as a very mature tree which is uncommon within the general planted context of the City, judged by their maturity and type

☒ historical significance ☒ architectural significance ☐ social significance ☐ scientific significance

Documentation

References

'Botanica' CD Rom 1997 (Beaver Multimedia P/L, Random House Australia)
Butler, 1989, City of Footscray Urban Conservation Study

Historic Places - Significant Trees in the City of Maribyrnong

Barnard, 2000, Historic Places Review Environmental History, City of Maribyrnong
Lack, 1991, 'A History of Footscray'- no reference to hotel or Farrow.
Footscray Council committee minutes (VPRO) VPRS 005337

Data recording

Assessed By:

Assessed Date:

Historic Places - Significant Trees in the City of Maribyrnong

