

City of Prahran
Significant Tree & Garden Study

GARDEN INVENTORY

Survey Date | 12/12/91 | Reporter | ML&TFH | Map No | 20 | Ref | L12 | No | 068 |

Property | Thurla | Address | 1 Avalon Road, Armadale |

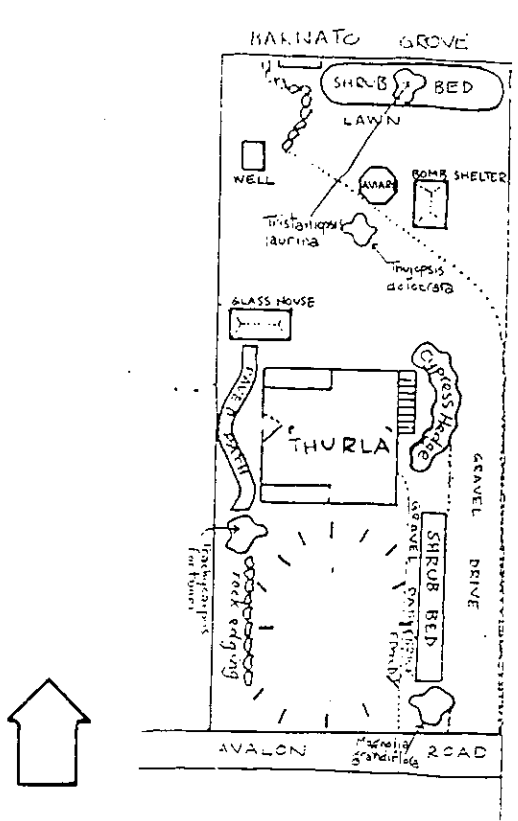
Title Details Zoning Ownership
Vol | | Fol | | | Res C -Cons. Public | | Private | X |

Status Signif Integrity Condition Style

HBR		Nat'al		Ex'lent		Ex'lent		Flats	
RNE		State	X	Good	X	Good	X	Cottage	
NTA	X	Reg'al		Fair		Fair		Sub'ban	X
PCC		Local		Poor		Poor		Terrace	
STR								Mansion	
								Pub Pk	

Significant Owner/Tenant Designer/Gardener
Mr and Mrs Ricardo, owners (1904- Walter Butler, architect
Miss Bertha Ricardo Mrs Ricardo, 2nd owner

Statement of Significance
One of the few properties in the municipality of Prahran to remain in one family, Thurla at 1 Avalon Road, Armadale is of state significance as an example of Walter Butler's work, as the creation of Mrs Ricardo, for various unusual features and for its rare plantings. The house and garden represent Butler at a smaller scale than usual and the site has special associations with him having been built for his sister.



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History

Thurla was built about 1900 for Walter Butler's sister and was designed by him. A family trouble soon forced its sale in 1904 to Mr and Mrs Ricardo whose daughter, Miss Bertha Ricardo, an only child still owns it.¹ The garden barely changed over the years except for the construction ("by a thoroughbred German") of an air-raid shelter during the Second World War. At least the Cypress and Pittosporum hedges were planted by Butler but his other involvement is not certain.²

Description

The garden is densely planted with now mature trees and shrubs. A gravel path and separate carriage drive lead from the Caslake iron front gates and fence. The base of the front fence was made by a local stone mason and matches several in the vicinity. There is a remarkably high wall along the eastern boundary supported by flying buttresses.³ There is an aviary, in ruins, beside the air-raid shelter and a small glasshouse beside the back door.

Major Plantings

TOOO

T000

Magnolia grandiflora
Acmena smithii
Gordonia axillaris
Hibiscus syriacus cv
Camellia cvs
Trachycarpus fortunei
Solandra maxima

Cupressus macrocarpa (hedge)
Aesculus hippocastanum
Tristaniopsis laurina
Pyrus sp
Rhododendron cvs
Michelia alba
Strelitzia reginae

Scope & Context

To the extent of the whole of the title. Garden is associated with others by Butler including Edzell, 76 St George's Rd, Toorak (G049); Duncraig, 31 Hampden Rd (G026); Studley Flats, 398 Toorak Rd, (G056).

Conservation Recommendations

Garden should be maintained in its present mature condition with a long term program for replanting major trees and shrubs.

Potential Threats

Sale and development or subdivision on the death of Miss Ricardo.

Footnotes

- 1 Miss Ricardo provided much, apparently very reliable, information on site on 21 December 1991.
- 2 Miss Ricardo insists that her mother was responsible for most of the planting including the Chinese Magnolia, *Michelia alba*.
- 3 According to Miss Ricardo it was built before 1910 to block out the neighbours' view into the garden and was not designed by W Butler.