

# Fulling Gordon Ford's adobe house, outbuildings & property



250 - Gordon Ford Property and Garden Eltham - Shire of Eltham Heritage Study 1992



250 - Gordon Ford Property and Garden Eltham 02 - Shire of Eltham Heritage Study 1992



250 - Gordon Ford Property and Garden Eltham 03 - Shire of Eltham Heritage Study 1992



250 - Gordon Ford Property and Garden Eltham 04 - Shire of Eltham Heritage Study 1992



250 - Gordon Ford Property and Garden Eltham 05 - Shire of Eltham Heritage Study 1992



250 - Gordon Ford Property and Garden Eltham 06 - Shire of Eltham Heritage Study 1992



250 - Gordon Ford Property and Garden Eltham 07 - Shire of Eltham Heritage Study 1992



250 - Gordon Ford Property and Garden Eltham 08 - Shire of Eltham Heritage Study 1992



250 - Gordon Ford Property and Garden Eltham 09 - Shire of Eltham Heritage Study 1992



Gordon Ford Property and Garden Eltham Colour 1 - Shire of Eltham Heritage Study 1992



Gordon Ford Property and Garden Eltham Colour 10 - Shire of Eltham Heritage Study 1992

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## Location

139-141, 76 PITT ST, John Street ELTHAM, NILLUMBIK SHIRE

## Municipality

NILLUMBIK SHIRE

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO153

## Heritage Listing

Nillumbik Shire

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 7, 2010

REVISED STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE, CONTEXT, 2010

### What is significant?

Fulling - owned, designed and occupied by Gordon Ford, including the garden established in 1948, the c1948 (or later) adobe house and the c1950s-c1980s additions, and all outbuildings.

### How is it significant?

Fulling, including the house, outbuildings and garden, is historically and aesthetically significant to the Shire of Nillumbik and potentially to the State of Victoria.

### Why is it significant?

The garden is historically significant because it was designed by the noted landscape designer, Gordon Ford, who went on to have an enormous influence on the development of an Australian bush garden aesthetic. The garden is also significant because Ford was associated with a number of other prominent designers, who worked in the Shire - John Harcourt, Alistair Knox and Peter Glass - all of whom played a significant role in the

development of the 'Eltham style' of architecture and design and were associated with the development of the Australian bush garden aesthetic. The garden also reveals the influence of other Australian landscape designers, including Ellis Stones (for whom Ford worked at one stage) and Edna Walling (Criterion H). The garden is historically and aesthetically significant because it epitomises the 'Eltham style' of design (with the garden and buildings designed together to form an integrated whole) and encapsulates the major themes and trends of Australian garden design in the 20th century (Criteria A & D).

The adobe house is historically and aesthetically significant because it is associated with the Gordon Ford (Criterion H). The house is architecturally, aesthetically and historically significant as a good example of the 'Eltham style' of architecture. Like many other 'Eltham-style' buildings, it was constructed in stages by an owner/builder using local materials. Several outbuildings are also significant for their construction in the 'Eltham style' (Criteria D & E).

### **BICK STUDY, 1992**

Gordon Craig Ford's garden at Fulling encapsulates the major themes and trends of Australian garden design in the second half of the 20th century and shows the influence of Ellis Stones but also that of Gordon Ford, Peter Blass, Alistair Knox and Edna Walling, all of the major participants in landscape design the middle years of this century in Victoria. More significantly the garden has been the focus of an awakening of Australia's role in landscape design and epitomises the Eltham style of garden. Ford became and is an important landscape designer and constructor in his own right and had an enormous influence on the natural Australian garden development that has swept the country since the 1950s. The garden and buildings form a fully integrated whole, rather than the norm of a house surrounded by a garden. Constructed in stages, the residence is a good example of the common mid 20th century practice in Eltham of building progressively and of integrating house and garden.

BASIS OF SIGNIFICANCE:

GARDEN

STREETSCAPE

DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE: STATE SIGNIFICANCE

EXTENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: ENTIRE GARDEN, ALL BUILDINGS AND SITE

Heritage Study/Consultant Nillumbik - Shire of Eltham Heritage Study, David Bick, 1992;

Construction dates 1948, 1948, 1950,

Architect/Designer Ford, Gordon,

Other Names 141 PITT ST, ELTHAM, Fulling,

Hermes Number 104495

Property Number

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## **Historical Australian Themes**

EMERGENCE OF AN ELTHAM LIFESTYLE

PROMINENT RESIDENTS (GORDON FORD - DEVELOPMENT OF A NATURAL AUSTRALIAN GARDEN)

DISTINCTIVE BUILDING STYLES

3.14.2 Using Australian materials in construction

8.10.4 Designing and building fine buildings

8.12 Living in and around Australian homes

8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements

## Physical Description 1

### Garden

The Fulling garden is a carefully cultivated re-creation of the Australian bush in a form that never could exist in nature. Grass is largely omitted from the garden only providing space in upper terraces in the garden. Elsewhere there are dramatic pools, which replaced lawns, however the bulk of the garden is quite dense native planting with enclosed, informal paths winding through the vegetation.

Retaining walls throughout the garden are built from rock in an informal way and steps of a similar form link different terrace levels. Close to the house are paved terraces providing an extension of the house space into the garden. To the north these open out into stepping stones across the upper pond. Gravels, sand and mulches provide path surfaces which lack an edge allowing a totally informal appearance to be established. It should be noted that not all of the plants are native in origin, for many are exotic including *Cotoneaster salicifolia*, *C. serotina* and *Arundinaria sp.* while the native plants are not indigenous but include a large number of plants around Australia including *Angophora costata* and *Eucalyptus maculata*.

The fence line and gate along the south boundary are especially attractive retaining considerable rural character. Placing the garden at Fulling into an historical context is not easy. The garden has developed through the last 50 years or so and as the vegetation has matured the character of the garden has changed somewhat. This established the style and trends of native plant design influencing younger practitioners' such as Paul Thomson, Robert Boyle and Andy Avard and even reaching into the work of Tract as seen in their work at Vermont park.. In this the garden is a *locus classicus* and deserves the fullest attention and protection. It represents a stepping stone for there was not the confidence to permit only the use of Australian native plants, so the garden also incorporates introduced species.

### House

Style Eltham.

Design unique.

Plan irregular.

Part two storeyed.

Walls solid mud brick.

Roofs gabled, corrugated iron clad. Features are the various parts of the house, first floor which can be reached outside from ground level and the various outbuildings which are similarly constructed, though all single storeyed.

## Usage/Former Usage

Original and Continuing Use: House and garden

Original and Present Owner: Gordon Craig Ford, builder and landscape designer

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*