
Lake Reserve

Location

2A Gaffney Street, COBURG NORTH VIC 3058 - Property No 4642

Municipality

MERRI-BEK CITY

Level of significance

Incl in HO area indiv sig

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO390

Heritage Listing

Merri-bek City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 1, 1900

What is significant?

The Lake Reserve, created between c.1919 and c.1940, which is generally bounded by De Chene Parade, Lake Grove and Murray Road, Coburg. The following features contribute to the significance of the place:

- The mature trees dating from prior to 1945
- Built landscape features including the pathway system (but not the materials) dating from prior to 1945
- The weir across Merri Creek
- The rustic drinking fountain dating from c.1935
- The men's toilet block dating from c.1929

Plantings and built landscape elements dating from after c.1950 are not significant.

How is it significant?

The Lake Reserve is of local historic, social, aesthetic and scientific significance to Moreland City.

Why is it significant?

Historically and socially, it demonstrates the efforts made by the Coburg municipality to improve parks and gardens within the city during the 1920s and is a place of recreation used and enjoyed by successive generations of Moreland residents. The Avenue of Honour is historically and socially important as tangible evidence of the impact of World War I upon the Coburg community and the uniquely Australian tradition of planting trees in honour of returned soldiers. Its associations with the early penal settlement are also of particular importance. (Criterion A,

D & G)

Aesthetically, it is significant as an example of a large formal twentieth-century park in the City of Moreland. The park is especially notable for the collection of now-mature exotic formal trees, which create one of the most impressive cultural landscapes in Moreland City. (Criteria D & E)

Description

Physical Description

The Lake Reserve is a semi-formal Inter-war era reserve, which occupies land on both sides of Merri Creek on the north side of Gaffney Street in Coburg. It comprises a series of serpentine pathways lined with mature trees, as well as mature specimen trees set within lawned areas. The centerpiece of the reserve is the lake, which is formed by the basalt weir across the Merri Creek at the eastern end of the reserve.

Generally speaking, the significant fabric (Vegetation, hard and soft landscaping etc.) includes those features and elements associated with the establishment and development of the reserve from c.1915 to c.1945. As demonstrated in the history, this was the period when the park was laid out and planted and reached perhaps the peak of its development under the curatorship of Jack Gray. A detailed physical description of the Lake Reserve has been prepared for the Cultural & Heritage Assessment, Conservation Analysis & Recommendations for The Lake Reserve, Coburg, prepared for Moreland City Council. The following comments provide a summary of the surviving significant features in the reserve.

Vegetation

Significant vegetation within the reserve includes the two intersecting avenues of Dutch Elm (*Ulmus x hollandica*) forming a cross and an avenue of Plane Trees (*Platanus x acerifolius*) along the lake edge, which were planted in 1919 to commemorate local residents who died in WW1. Of the 160 trees originally planted (which included Monterey Cypress that have since been removed) approximately 55 Elms and 22 Planes survive today.

Important specimen trees on the south side include a Himalayan Cedar (*Cedrus deodara*), and a number of Common Oak (*Quercus robur*). Canary Island Date Palms (*Phoenix canariensis*) and a Cotton Palm (*Washingtonia robusta*) are also a distinctive planting along the edge of the lake along with a Norfolk Island Hibiscus (*Lagunaria patersonia*). Willows (*Salix babylonica*) on the banks of the lake are representative of the early penal use of the area. A very large Pepper Tree (*Schinus molle var areira*) once situated close to Murray Road and listed on the National Trust (Victoria) Significant Tree Register, has died and been removed. A replacement tree has been planted.

The Northern bank features a number of English Elms (*Ulmus procera*), Monterey Pine (*Pinus radiata*), Kurrajong (*Brachychiton populneus*) and a mature Desert Ash (*Fraxinus oxycarpa*).

Built landscape features

Significant built landscape features include:

- The remnant layout of the original pathway system in the southern part of the reserve (but not the materials)
- The weir across Merri Creek
- The rustic drinking fountain constructed by Mr Taylor dating from c.1935
- The men's toilet block dating from c.1929, which according to the Cultural heritage and conservation Analysis is the most intact of the original two toilet blocks.
- The remnant rockery along the southern perimeter of the reserve
- Early bluestone retaining walls
- Bluestone steps on the northern bank
- Bluestone terraced steps and spectator terraces surrounding the sites of the diving tower and model boat pool

Other features and elements

Archaeological features including the sites of the wading pool and children's pool, now filled in.

The site also contains a number of remnant indigenous vegetation types, principally escarpment shrublands, riparian vegetation and instream aquatic herbfields occurring in various areas, and of differing quality. Their presence is remarkable considering the active destruction of native vegetation that has occurred since European colonisation.

Sources

Cultural & Heritage Assessment, Conservation Analysis & Recommendations for The Lake Reserve, (CHACARLR) Coburg, n.d. c.2010

Heritage Study/Consultant	Moreland - City of Coburg Heritage Conservation & Streetscape Study, Timothy Hubbard Pty Ltd, 1991; Moreland - City of Moreland - North of Bell Street Heritage Study, Context Pty Ltd, 2013; Moreland - City of Moreland Heritage Review, Allen Lovell and Associates, 1999;
Hermes Number	206111
Property Number	

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/>