
Footscray Park



HO20(1) - Footscray Park.jpg



HO20(2) - Footscray Park.jpg

Location

Ballarat Road FOOTSCRAY, Maribyrnong City

Municipality

MARIBYRNONG CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO20

Heritage Listing

Maribyrnong City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

The product of an unexpected alliance between an influential private club and municipal and state governments, the park's actual creation is firmly tied to 'direct' participation by interested ratepayers and newspaper campaign.

Far from being a disparate collection of donated plants, the early and long involvement of a curator (Matthews) and a strong initial executive committee has left an impressive man-made landscape in an ideal setting (ie. north-east facing, river-side), albeit with an exotic character firmly of the period 1920-40. Only the few elements added after Matthew's retirement do not relate to this strong theme.

Heritage Study/Consultant Maribyrnong - City of Footscray Urban Conservation Study, Graeme Butler, 1989;

Hermes Number 35106

Property Number

Physical Description 1

Laid out on the Moore Street north-south axis, with stone entrance, pergolas and an axial pathway leading to the river, the park distributed itself east and west along less formal contour pathways, with incidental bedding and tree planting throughout. Along the main axis, the park's major attractions descended the hill side in the form of ovals or circles, as landings or beds. Its east and west termination points are at the Pioneer Hotel and the Footscray Institute complex, on land once intended to be part of the park.

In the walk from the stone Nicholson Street gates (rebuilt) to the Byron Moore memorial portal, old elms survive, along the north side of the path, among recent shrubbery. Cypress and Poplar specimens also date from the early plantings. Despite the emphasis placed on native planting in the 1913-14 annual report, there is dominance of exotics in today's surviving planting. One major type is the palm. Cotton and Canary Island palms dominate the central axis, with some native specimens such as Silky Oaks, Tristania and She-oaks predominantly at the eastern end of the main east-west path. Lower planting consists of acanthus, fatinia, agapanthus, veronica and lobelia.

Although the V.R.C. pavilions have gone, the rubble stone shelters (toilets, etc.) with their pergola links combine well with generally rubble-stone dry-joint rockeries and borders elsewhere in the garden. A plaque from the dismantled Samuel Mauger memorial has been fixed to one pavilion at the park's eastern end.(1) Basalt steps, kerbs and copings are also common, together with asphalt and gravel pathways. Down at the river, the mature canopy falls away, severing the visual link with the park-proper. However, the same rubble-stone and pergola vernacular prevails around the various ornamental lakes and the axial path is a string element. The long Wisteria (?) covered walk is also notable.

Some additions to the park are less integrated. The standard approach to play equipment and barbecue design does not account for the special qualities of the ornamental section of the park. Similarly, incidental sporting structures show an unrelated utilitarian character.

1 Lack 20.10.88

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/>