
Hillsley



Hillsley - Shearing Shed



Hillsley -Stone cool store



Hillsley Trees - Podocarpus totara in driveway



Hillsley Trees - Podocarpus elatus



Hillsley Trees - Hoop Pine



Hillsley Trees - Brachychiton acerfolius



Hillsley Trees - Erythrina caffra



Hillsley Trees - site of early homestead and remnant Cypress

Location

90-92(part) Robinson Road and 94-104(part) Robinson Road NARRE WARREN NORTH, CASEY CITY

Municipality

CASEY CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO57

Heritage Listing

Casey City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - December 31, 2021

What is significant?

Hillsley Homestead Complex and Garden located at 90-104 Robinson Road Narre Warren North. The significant elements of the place are located across two titles. Those on the land at 90-104 Robinson Road, Narre Warren North are:

- The Victorian brick homestead (c.1870) and its later additions (c.1935);
- The driveway form and layout from Robinsons Road to the homestead including the turning circle, and associated planting of a variety of mature trees on both sides;
- The rare specimens of Totara, Plum Pine and Himalayan Oak (included as plantings along the driveway);
- The boundary plantings of trees, particularly those north of the house, including specimens of Smooth Arizona Cypress, Algerian Oak, English Elm and English Oak;
- The interwar outbuilding
- The mature garden located to the front and sides of the residence, including all mature trees and shrubs, any paths and their layout and all garden features. Of particular interest are the mature specimens of Coral Tree, Bull Bay Magnolia, Illawarra Flame Tree, Holly, Irish Strawberry Tree, Oleander and Windmill Palm.
- The stone and earth cool store, located on a hill north east of the main residence;
- The vernacular corrugated iron and timber shearing shed and yards, located north east of the main residence

The modern corrugated iron shedding, garages and fences are not significant.

How is it significant?

Hillsley Homestead Complex and Garden is of local historical, aesthetic and scientific (botanical) local significance to the City of Casey.

Why is it significant?

The farming complex at Hillsley is of historical significance as a comparatively rare intact example of a farm complex within the municipality, which demonstrates, through its fabric the history and variety of agricultural pursuits in the Narre Warren North area over a period of 100 years. The original homestead was constructed as the centre of a farming enterprise focused on orcharding and cropping, demonstrated by the early surviving cool store, which, judging by its construction, dates from the 1870-1900 period. By the 1890s, the property was primarily focused on grazing and vegetable growing, the shearing shed being evidence of the grazing pursuits, while the cool store continued to be used for storing vegetables. By the interwar period, orcharding and grazing had once again become the primary source of income for the family. The house also demonstrates historical changes in fashion, the Robinson family fortunes over time, constructed as a fine residence in the 1870s, it was extended and 'modernised' through the addition of render to its chimneys and sills, and a new wing of the house in c1935. There are relatively few examples of farming complexes with a variety of the original residence and intact farm buildings surviving within the locality. (Criterion A and B)

It is of aesthetic significance for the fine Victorian residence, designed by George Washington Robinson and constructed in 1872, in its elevated garden setting. Several of the trees are also of outstanding aesthetic value for their size and form, including the Bull Bay Magnolia and Coral Tree in particular. (Criterion E)

The range and variety of unusual specimens of trees in the garden are of scientific interest (botanical) as some are particularly rare in residential gardens of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, particularly the Himalayan Oaks and the Totara and Plum Pine specimens (Criterion B and F).

(Criterion A)

Many of the garden plantings and individual specimens of trees are rare in cultivation.

(Criterion B)

(Criterion E)

(Criterion F)

Theme

4. Transforming and managing the land

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| Heritage Study/Consultant | Casey - Casey Heritage Study, Context Pty Ltd, 2004; Select Review of Casey Heritage Places, Review of sites for proposed Heritage Anomalies Amendment, Context Pty. Ltd., 2018; |
| Construction dates | 1872, 1935, |
| Architect/Designer | Robinson, George Washington, |
| Hermes Number | 62911 |
| Property Number | |

Physical Description 1

Hillsley is a substantial rural homestead complex set in the remnants of a large garden at the rise of a hill, accessed by a tree lined driveway from Robinson Road. The complex comprises a large Victorian brick homestead (c1870) in a mature garden setting, a glasshouse, vernacular stone and earth cool-store, shearing shed and outbuilding, set within a broad rural landscape, on a rise half way up a large hill. The residence is asymmetrical in plan, with undecorated verandah returning on both sides, and original chimneys and joinery. The house has a series of double-hung six-paned windows with characteristic arched lintels. Later additions (c.1935), in timber and brick are evident towards the rear of the property, and include a kitchen, bedroom, dairy and office.

The original house site (pre 1870) is located approximately 370m north of the main residence, marked by a mature *Cupressus sempervirens* (Italian Cypress) and some other exotic trees.

The complex is accessed by a long tree lined driveway which comprises a mix of specimens, including *Araucaria cunninghamii* (Hoop Pine), *Cupressus macrocarpa* (Monterey Cypress), *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* (Lawson's Cypress), *Eucalyptus maculata* (Spotted Gum), *Grevillea robusta* (Silky Oak), *Cedrus atlantica* (Atlas Cedar), *Quercus robur x canariensis* (Hybrid oak), *Podocarpus totara* (Totara), *Podocarpus elatus* (plum pine), *Quercus leucotriophora* (Himalayan Oak), *Pinus canariensis* (Canary Island Pine), *Schinus molle* (Peppercorn), *Cedrus atlantica* (Atlas Cedar), *Olea European* (Olive) and *Syzigium australe* (Brush Cherry or Lillypilly). All of these trees are of a significant age, and many, such as the Plum Pine, Totara, Himalayan Oak are rare in cultivation and exhibit an excellent size. Other plantings are located around the boundary fence and cow paddock to the north of the homestead. These include *Cedrus atlantica* (Atlas Cedar), *Araucaria cunninghamii* (Hoop Pine), *Podocarpus elatus* (Plum Pine), *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* (Lawson's Cypress), *Quercus suber* (Cork Oak), *Cupressus arizonica* (Smooth Arizona cypress), *Quercus canariensis* (Algerian Oak), *Quercus canariensis* (Canary Island Oak), and *Ulmus procera* (English Elm).

The garden, located immediately west of the homestead is overgrown, but exhibits a rich diversity of shrubs and trees including a fine specimen of *Magnolia grandifolia* (Bull Bay Magnolia) and a specimen of outstanding size of *Erythrina sp* (either *x skyesii* or *caffra*) Coral Tree, as well as the remains of extensive beds of Azalea, Rhododendron and underplantings of shrubs, creepers, lillies and groundcovers. Other trees which are of significance within the garden are the *Ilex aquifolium* (Holly), *Brachychiton acerifolius* (Illawarra Flame Tree), *Arbutus unedo* (Irish Strawberry Tree), *Nerim oleander* (Oleander), *Syzigium australe* (lillypilly), *Prunus laurocerasus* (Cherry laurel) and *Trachycarpus fortunei* (Windmill Palm).

The cool-store, located on the hill behind the main residence is a vernacular structure, part cut out of the side of the hill and part walled with local field-stones, which form a wall on the western side. The cool-store is in ruinous condition.

The shearing shed, located approximately 90 metres north east of the main residence is a simple vernacular structure of corrugated iron and timber, and appears to date from the late nineteenth century or early twentieth century.

Three outbuildings are located immediately north east of the residence. The central of the three outbuildings is a modest interwar outbuilding constructed of corrugated iron, used to store machinery. There are other more modern sheds on either side of the interwar shed, and a large garage/shed on the northern boundary fence of the homestead block.

Historical Australian Themes

Developing Primary Production

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/>