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# Mount Waverley Avenue of Honour



8-1 - Looking west along High Street Road - Monash Heritage Study 1998

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## Location

High Street Road MOUNT WAVERLEY, MONASH CITY

## Municipality

MONASH CITY

## Level of significance

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## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO36

## Heritage Listing

Vic. War Heritage Inventory

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - February 1, 1999

The War Memorial trees planted by the community along High Street Road, Mount Waverley after the Great War (although originally an avenue of honour) are historically and socially important for their commemoration of local service people who served at the war. This row, along with the row at Clayton Railway Station are all that survive of the 3 original Avenues of Honour planted in the Shire of Mulgrave (Criterion A and G). These trees are similar in nature to the many avenues of honour which were planted throughout Victoria during this period and after later

wars. They are a "peculiarly Australian - and predominantly Victorian - form of memorial, and form an interesting chapter in the making of the Australian landscape" (Haddow). English trees, such as Oaks, were commonly used as a symbolic link to the 'mother country' (Criterion D). Other examples of Avenues of Honour in Victoria, and more well known, include those in Mt Macedon and Ballarat.

Heritage Study/Consultant Monash - Monash Heritage Study, Gerner Consulting Group, Andrew Ward, 1998;

Hermes Number 127229

Property Number

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## Physical Description 1

Single line of mature Portugal Oaks (*Quercus ssp*) planted along the naturestrip on southern side of High Street Road, between Fleet Street and Baringa Street.

## Physical Conditions

Poor to fair. One appears to be dead.

## Integrity

Low. A relatively continuous line of 13 trees along the south side of High Street Road, with only two trees missing. The form of these trees has been heavily modified to accommodate overhead powerlines. The whole of the north row has been removed to accommodate the widening of High Street Road

## Veterans Description for Public

The Mount Waverley Avenue of Honour, located at 464-492 High Street, was planted to commemorate the First World War. The trees were a tribute from the people of Mount Waverley, and were planted by the local community at what was the centre of the town. Portugal Oak trees were selected because of their long life and freedom from disease. Each tree planted represented one local service person who served in the war and originally a plaque noted each person's name at the base of each tree, these are no longer intact. The trees once lined both sides of the street, today only a single line of mature Portugal Oaks exists along the nature strip on southern side of High Street Road, between Fleet Street and Baringa Street.

In Australia, commemorative trees have been planted in public spaces since the late nineteenth century. Arbor Days were held regularly in most Victorian State Schools during the late 1800s and early 1900s, and numerous trees were planted in parks in Melbourne and throughout Victoria to mark the visits of important and famous people.

This tradition of commemorative planting was continued in 1901 when at the end of the Boer War trees were often planted for each soldier of the district who was killed in South Africa. These plantings, however, rarely consisted of more than two or three trees in each town.

During and after the First World War avenues of honour consisting of trees lining significant streets became a popular form of commemoration. They represented a new egalitarian approach to the commemoration of soldiers where rank was not a consideration: each tree symbolises a person.

Avenues of honour are a uniquely Australian phenomenon. Australians, and in particular Victorians, embraced the idea of planting them more enthusiastically than any other country in the world. The earliest known planting of an avenue of honour in Victoria is at Eurack which commenced in May 1916.

By the time of the Second World War avenues of honour had declined in popularity as a means of commemoration. Today it is estimated that over 300 avenues of honour have been planted in Victoria to commemorate service personnel since 1901.

*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/>*