



Moreland City Council

Victorian Heritage Database place details - 22/2/2019 GA Bridges Reserve



Location:

Bell Street, Coburg, Moreland City

Heritage Overlay Number: HO31

Listing Authority: HO

Extent of Registration:

Statement of Significance:

The Bridges Reserve and City Oval (Bell Street) Precinct comprising the semi-rectangular reserve that is located at the corner of Bell Street and Russell Street, Coburg. The precinct includes contributory trees, the City Oval, grandstand, Coburg Bowling Club and Coburg Elderly Citizens Club. On the north-west corner of the reserve is the State listed Coburg Primary School.

The Bridges Reserve and City Oval (Bell Street) Precinct is of local historical, aesthetic and social significance to the City of Moreland.

The Bridges Reserve and City Oval (Bell Street) Precinct is of local historical significance to the City of Moreland as a major and well-used park within the central Coburg area, which demonstrates the considerable

improvements made to the provision of open space by Coburg during the early part of the twentieth century when the city was undergoing considerable growth.

The Bridges Reserve and City Oval (Bell Street) Precinct is of local aesthetic significance (although somewhat diminished) as a representative example of an Edwardian-era park, which is notable for its remnant mature trees and the Cr. Harry Malcolmson Rogers Memorial fountain (erected in 1935). The park contributes to the heritage character of the surrounding precinct, which contains a number of other culturally significant landscapes and buildings. Furthermore, the plantings within the site contribute to the amenity value of the surrounding streetscape.

The Bridges Reserve and City Oval (Bell Street) Precinct is of local social significance as an example of successful negotiations between local citizens and the city council in acquiring land for public gardens and sporting grounds. The precinct is a well-used park that has encouraged meetings and social interactions within the community since its official opening in 1915 and has subsequently been home to many local sporting clubs including the Coburg (Lions) Football Club which uses the main grandstand and change rooms erected for the Council in 1925 - 26 to the design of architect C. R. Heath. The local cricket, bowling and women's bowling club have all been in the reserve since it opened in the early 20th century. Also within the reserve is the former clubhouse of the Coburg Trugo Club.

Description

The GA Bridges Reserve is a large suburban Edwardian-era park consisting of an informal avenue and a number of specimen trees set in an expanse of lawn. A path runs the length of the park in a roughly north-south alignment. The Cr Harry Malcolmson Rogers Memorial Fountain is a prominent feature situated at the northern entrance of the park on the Bell Street frontage (refer to separate citation in this Study).

The Coburg Oval is situated at the southern end of the park adjacent to Harding Street (refer to separate citation in this Study).

Significant trees include:

- Mature Canary Island Date Palms (*Phoenix canariensis*) along the south side of Bell Street, which clearly identify the park and are an important part of its identity and character.
- An informal avenue of Plane Tree (*Platanus x acerifolius*), which follows the alignment of the central pathway.
- A large, multi-trunked Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) to the north of the Rogers memorial, which has cracked and disfigured the surrounding crazy paving.
- Other specimen trees including a number of Common Oaks (*Quercus robur*) which are scattered throughout the site.

Potential Threats:

Introduction of inappropriate plant species, eroding the heritage value of the park. Failure to replace senescent trees with appropriate species. Vandalism, particularly to the prominent memorial on the Bell Street frontage.

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| Heritage Study | 1990 - Moreland - Keeping Brunswick's heritage: A Report on the Review of the Brunswick Conservation Study, 1999 - Moreland - City of Moreland Heritage Review, 1991 - Moreland - City of Coburg Heritage Conservation & Streetscape Study, 2004 - Moreland - Moreland City Council: Local Heritage Places Review |
| Year Construction Started | 1912 |
| Architect / Designer | |
| Architectural Style | |
| Heritage Act Categories | |
| Municipality | ["MORELAND CITY"] |
| Other names | City Gardens |
| History | |