

## Item Details

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**Name**

Street Trees: Brachychiton, Ficus or Jacaranda trees over 3 metres in height.

**Other/Former Names**

**Address**

Road Reserves SOUTH GRAFTON NSW 2460

**Local Govt Area**                      **Group Name**

**Item Classification**

Item Type	Item Group	Item Category
Landscape	Landscape - Cultural	Trees of social, historic or special significance

**Statement Of Significance**

The street trees in South Grafton Urban Area demonstrate historical and aesthetic significance as part of a planned cultural landscape to provide civic beauty. Avenue plantings and traditional grassed verges where in situ, form a significant aesthetic element of established streetscapes, both within and outside the South Grafton Heritage Conservation Area, enhancing the setting of many buildings, framing views and vistas, creating avenues, and providing important shade.

The street trees are a significant element of this urban settlement which demonstrates an identifiable pattern of domestic, industrial and commercial settlement by early settlers, and evolved pattern of development of civic infrastructure. South Grafton is historically significant as the first settlement on the Clarence River and demonstrates design, location and purpose in the economic development of a township on the banks of the Clarence River between the mid-19th century to the mid 20th century.

Assessed Significance Type	Endorsed Significance	Date Significance Updated
Local	Local	05/31/2023

**File Number**

**Listings**

Listing Name	Listing Date	Instrument Name	Instrument No.	Plan No.	Gazette Page	Gazette Number
Local Environmental Plan	23/0/2011	Clarence Valley Local Environmental Plan 2011	I943	C7		701

Heritage Item ID	Source
6000623	Local Government

## Location

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Addresses

Records Retrieved: 1

Street No	Street Name	Suburb/Town/Postcode	Local Govt. Area	LALC	Parish	County	Electorate	Address Type
	Road Reserves	SOUTH GRAFTON/NSW/2460						Primary Address

Title Information

Title Information Updated

Records Retrieved: 0

Lot/Volume Code	Lot/Volume Number	Section Number	Plan/Folio Code	Plan/Folio Number
No Results Found				

Aboriginal Area	Hectares	Latitude	Longitude
Gumbainggar			
Location Validity	Spatial Accuracy	Map Name	Scale

Description

DesignerBuilder/Maker

Construction Year Start & EndCircaPeriod  
NO

Physical DescriptionUpdated 06/05/2023

Jacaranda, Ficus and Brachychiton Street trees within road reserves of the South Grafton Urban Area are largely located within the South Grafton Heritage Conservation Area and the town approaches along Ryan Street, with some plantings located in later developed streetscapes

South Grafton Heritage Conservation Area is bounded by the southern banks of the Clarence River, Bent Street to the east which is the gateway to the 1921 Grafton Road and Rail Bridge, Ryan Street to the south, which marks the edge of the historical township, and Minden Street to the west. It includes buildings with fine examples of commercial, governance, ecclesiastical, domestic and social development dating from the 1850s to the 1960s which demonstrate confidence in the development of a township during this period.

The civic precinct is centred on the Post Office and School of Arts which both continue in operation, the latter as a community centre. Spring Street contains evidence of the two former Council Chambers with another former chamber of Nymboida-Ulmarra (Pristine Waters) on Through Street.

Skinner Street is the notable commercial precinct which has withstood the waves of fashion and redevelopment and retains a fine collection of 19th and early 20th century commercial buildings in an attractive streetscape. The areas surrounding the commercial core are largely residential with a predominance of lightweight timber and iron dwellings in leafy streetscapes with some notable prominent residences along the riverbank. Streetscapes outside of the Heritage Conservation Area are included for the listing of relevant street trees.

Physical ConditionUpdated 05/31/2023

Generally good although storm events can cause loss or damage. Trees in road reserves are managed by Clarence Valley Council.

Physical Condition Summary

Good

Archaeological PotentialUpdated

Not assessed

**Modifications And Dates**

Street tree plantings have evolved and require replacement at intervals to maintain plantings at regular intervals.

**Further Comments**

## History

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**Historical Notes or  
Provenance**

**Updated** 06/05/2023

**INDIGENOUS HISTORY**

South Grafton lies within the lands of the Gumbayngirr Aboriginal people whose territory stretches from the Nambucca River to the Clarence River in Grafton. The Clarence Valley Aboriginal Heritage Study 2015 by Australian Museum Services provides an overview of Aboriginal Heritage of the Clarence Valley and notes publicly listed sites of significance in, or adjoining the South Grafton Heritage Conservation Area which include the Clarence River, Susan and Elizabeth Islands.

Clarence Valley Council adopted a policy in 2018 on Cultural Heritage which states:

Aboriginal places and objects are an important part of the rich heritage of the Clarence Valley local government area (LGA), providing links to culture, environment and knowledge for local Aboriginal communities.

Council acknowledges the Bundjalung, Gumbayngirr and Yaegl peoples as the traditional owners and custodians of the lands and waters that lie within the Clarence Valley Council boundaries.

Council in its role as a planning and consent authority and as a land manager is committed to working with Aboriginal custodians and native title holders within the LGA to protect places of cultural significance.

**NON INDIGENOUS HISTORY**

The Thematic History of Grafton dated 2004 by Brett Stubbs provides an overview of the historical themes which have shaped the development of the Grafton and South Grafton. There are many other publications available which provide historical information. A brief summary is provided below to provide a historical context.

The credit for discovering the Clarence River is often given to a convict named Richard Craig who, after escaping from Moreton Bay, spent a year making his way south towards Port Macquarie where he arrived in 1831. It is probable that he made good use of his knowledge in his employ with Sydney timber millers Thomas and John Small, and it seems likely that it was at Craig's suggestion that the brothers sent the Susan to the 'Big River' in 1838. No official interest, however, seems to have been taken in the region until after Butcher's report late in 1838. (Stubbs)

The southern banks of the Clarence River (now South Grafton) were the first to be settled by cedar getters in 1838. In 1841, Joseph Sharp constructed a wharf on the northern bank and collectively, the settlements on both sides of the river became known as "The Settlement". The Settlement grew based on the introduction of the sheep and cattle industry along with continued timber getting and the establishment of shipbuilding. Farming was already well established around The Settlement by 1857 and saw a growth in population with associated businesses.

In 1859 Grafton was declared a Municipality which included South Grafton. At this time, a punt operated for those travelling between the north and south banks of the Clarence, but it was South Grafton that was easily accessible by road from the Northern Tablelands, settlements at Inverell, Glen Innes and Armidale, (the road to Tenterfield being much more difficult). The river provided the transport opportunity from the wharves on the southern side for sailing vessels to ply a trade to Sydney. Two of those vessels were the Susan and the

Elizabeth, two islands now named in their honour.

Ship building became a staple industry as ships “were then the life of transport, and transport was the life of trade” (Daily Examiner; 2/11/1938, p 33).

In May of 1851, newspapers were reporting that buildings were ‘gradually springing up’ in the township of Grafton, ‘especially on the south side of the river’. As there was neither brick nor stone locally available, they were all built of wood, and it was hard to obtain even that, ‘for the sawyers [were] few in number and fully employed’ (Maitland Mercury, 24 May 1851).

South Grafton advanced rapidly in the early 1870s, a result of the increased trade brought to the town by traffic on the newly upgraded road to Glen Innes, through Newton Boyd. By 1873 the town of South Grafton boasted of ‘saddlers’ shops, blacksmithing and wheel wrighting establishments, all of whom seem to be kept pretty busily employed, boot and shoe shops, and ample hotel accommodation; while the stores would do credit to any country town’. ‘The number of teams camped on the flat, and the busy appearance of the place, would lead one to believe that South Grafton is no longer the sleepy hollow of former years but is all life and animation.’ (Stubbs, 2007/2010).

The incorporation of the Municipality of Grafton in July 1859 marked the beginning of local government in the Clarence River district. In 1896, a petition of rates payers saw South Grafton separated from the Grafton Borough to form a distinct municipality called the Municipal District of South Grafton. The formation of South Grafton into a separate local government area took place in 1896.

In 1891 a new building was constructed to replace rented premises for the School of Arts at South Grafton. The two-storey timber structure in Skinner Street, adjoining the Post and Telegraph Office, contained a hall, library, reading room, and various other compartments. It was officially opened in May 1892 and has survived largely intact. In addition, in 1910, the Orara and Dorrigo Councils which adjoined the South Grafton area built new Council chambers and offices in Spring Street. In 1927 a Town Hall was completed and occupied early in 1928.

Growth in the area continued in the early 20th Century enhanced by the arrival of the railway in 1924, and the completion of the road and rail bridge over the Clarence River in 1932. The 1930s depression and a severe flood had an impact upon South Grafton. Post WW2 new commercial developments and industrial developments tended towards (north) Grafton which saw more redevelopment and subsequent losses of its historic building stock in its commercial CBD. As a result South Grafton retains a main street which has a highly intact stock of historic buildings. In 1957 the two Councils were once again amalgamated into one council area and in 2003 into a large Clarence Valley Council.

Due to flooding, a planning decision was made by the then Grafton City Council in the 1980s to rezone some of the residential areas around the CBD to a business zone to encourage light industrial uses and service industries of a non residential nature. This has resulted in the fragmentation of some of the streetscapes around Skinner Street with modern industrial type developments which has impacted upon its integrity. Despite this, many streetscapes of timber residential buildings and tree lined avenues have survived reasonably intact.

Street tree planting has been a part of the city's planning since its inception. The street trees in South Grafton Urban Area demonstrate historical significance as part of a planned cultural landscape to provide civic beauty. The Grafton Jacaranda Festival continues to this day and is an event of great social significance to the local community and associated cultural events which attracts visitors from around the world to see the stunning purple blossom lined streets.

Historic Themes

Records Retrieved: 1

National Theme	State Theme	Local Theme
4. Settlement	Cultural sites	Settling and Managing the Land

Uses

Current Use

Street trees in road reserves including grassed verge settings.

Former Use/s

Thematic Listings Program  
Theme

Assessment

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Criteria a)

Historical Significance

The street trees are a significant element of this urban settlement which demonstrates an identifiable pattern of domestic, industrial and commercial settlement by early settlers, and evolved pattern of development of civic infrastructure. South Grafton is historically significant as the first settlement on the Clarence River and demonstrates design, location and purpose in the economic development of a township on the banks of the Clarence River between the mid-19th century to the mid 20th century. Street tree plantings are historically significant as civic response to beautify the city and enhance amenity.

Criteria b)

Historical Association  
Significance

Grafton seed merchant and nurseryman Henry Volkers in 1879 was engaged for the planting of the city streetscapes with the Jacaranda tree; Jacaranda mimosifolia and during the 1880s he supplied hundreds of trees. By the 1920s, as the avenues became established, this attracted regular visitors, and in 1934, led to the formation of a Floral Festival. Some plantings may hold associations with prominent citizens and further research is warranted.

Criteria c)

Aesthetic/Technical Significance

The street trees in South Grafton Urban Area demonstrate aesthetic significance as part of a planned cultural landscape to provide civic beauty. Avenue plantings and traditional grassed verges where in situ, form a significant aesthetic element of established streetscapes, both within and outside the South Grafton Heritage Conservation Area, enhancing the setting of many buildings, framing views and vistas, creating avenues, and providing important shade

Criteria d)

Social/Cultural Significance

Street tree plantings are widely acknowledged for their contribution to the civic beauty of the township by the community.

Criteria e)

Research Potential

The plantings demonstrate a planned civic response to providing shade and amenity in a sub tropical historic town.

Criteria f)

Rarity

Locally rare in the layout of street plantings and wide avenues compared to newer areas.

Criteria g)

Representative

South Grafton street trees cultural plantings are representative of a Australian historic regional riverside township that developed through the late 19th to mid 20th centuries.

Integrity/Intactness

Updated

Generally good. Trees are impacted by natural attrition and storm events and require replacement but well managed by Clarence Valley Council.

References

References

Records Retrieved: 3

Title	Author	Year	Link	Type
Clarence Valley Aboriginal Heritage Study	Australian Museum Consulting	2015		Other
Grafton Community Based Heritage Study	J.Gardiner	2004		Other
Grafton Heritage Study		1985		Other

Heritage Studies

Records Retrieved: 0

Title	Year	Item Number	Author	Inspected By	Guidelines Used
No Results Found					

Recommended Management

Management

Records Retrieved: 0

Management Category	Management Name	Date Updated
No Results Found		

Management Summary

1.Conserve cultural heritage significance and minimise impacts on heritage values and fabric in accordance with the ‘Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance’.

2.Seek advice from a qualified tree specialist during all phases of a proposed project or works.

3.Maintenance and repair: Undertake annual inspections and proactive routine maintenance works

4.Consider potential impacts on the heritage significance of the street trees as part of any proposed project such as driveways, intrusions into grassed verges.

record changes

5.Ensure staff are aware of consent requirements in relation to lopping or removal of any street trees or trees within the South Grafton Urban Area

Custom

Custom Field1

Custom Field2

Custom Field3

Custom Field4

Custom Field5

Custom Field6

Admin Code1

Admin Code2

Admin Code3

## Stakeholders

Records Retrieved: 0

Stakeholder Category	Stakeholder Type	Stakeholder Name	Organisation	Position	Mobile	Email
No Results Found						

## Notes

Records Retrieved: 0

Application ID / Stakeholder ID	Type	Date	Added By	Notes	Attachments
No Results Found					

## Data Source

The information for this entry comes from the following source:

Data Source	Record Owner	Heritage Item ID
Local Government	Clarence Valley Council	6000623
Internet Available		Item Redundant
True		False

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## Merged Heritage Items

Merged Heritage Items

Records Retrieved: 0

Name	Address	Date Merged
No Results Found		

Images

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