

Item Details

Name

Street Trees: Brachychiton, Ficus and Jacaranda over 3 metres in height in all road reserves

Other/Former Names

Address

All road reserves in Grafton Urban Area both within and outside of the Heritage Conservation Area. GRAFTON NSW 2460

Local Govt Area

Clarence Valley

Group Name

Item Classification

Item Type

Landscape

Item Group

Parks, Gardens and Trees

Item Category

Streetscape

Statement Of Significance

The street trees in Grafton Urban Area demonstrate historical and aesthetic significance as part of a planned cultural landscape to provide civic beauty. Wide streets contain avenue plantings, including the notable Jacaranda avenue plantings and large Figs which are significant to the sense of place and strong identity attached to Grafton. Views and vistas of the Clarence River and surrounding of rural landscapes are important elements from many sites. The cultural plantings hold associative significance to Grafton seed merchant and nurseryman Henry Volkers who 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. The 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.

Assessed Significance Type

Local

Endorsed Significance

Local

Date Significance Updated

06/05/2023

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	I135			701

Heritage Item ID

6000626

Source

Local Government

Location

Addresses

Records Retrieved: 1

Street No	Street Name	Suburb/Town/Postcode	Local Govt. Area	LALC	Parish	County	Electorate	Address Type
	All road reserves in Grafton Urban Area both within and outside of the Heritage Conservation Area.	GRAFTON/NSW/2460	Clarence Valley	Grafton-Ngerrie				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
Bundjalung			
Location Validity	Spatial Accuracy	Map Name	Scale

Description

DesignerBuilder/Maker

Construction Year Start & EndCircaPeriod
NO

Physical DescriptionUpdated 06/05/2023

The Grafton Urban Area is bounded by the banks of the Clarence River, and sits within a bend of the river as it turns northeast towards the coast. The city retains a core of buildings in a fine landscaped setting with examples of commercial, governance, education, ecclesiastical, domestic and social development dating from the 1850s to the 1960s which demonstrate confidence in the development of the city during this period. The wide streets containing avenue plantings, including the notable Jacaranda, Ficus and Brachychiton are located throughout the road reserves of Grafton both within and outside the Heritage Conservation Area. Mature fig trees are landmarks elements within the city and the jacaranda and brachychiton are notable for their floral displays in purple and red. The Jacaranda tree is emblematic to the identity of Grafton and its long-standing Jacaranda floral festival.

Physical ConditionUpdated 05/31/2023

Excellent.
Trees are subject to natural attrition and weather events and ongoing maintenance and replacements are required to conserve these cultural plantings.
Well maintained by Clarence Valley Council.

Physical Condition Summary

Excellent

Archaeological PotentialUpdated

Modifications And Dates

Ongoing maintenance and replacements are required over time.

Further Comments

History

Historical Notes or Provenance

Updated 06/05/2023

INDIGENOUS HISTORY

Grafton lies within the lands of the Bundjalung Aboriginal people whose territory stretches across the far north east coast of NSW from the northern side of the Clarence River in Grafton. 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 Grafton Heritage Conservation Area which include the Clarence River, Susan and Elizabeth Islands and Fisher Park Lagoon near the Showground.

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, Gumbaynggirr 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.

THIS ITEM

One of Grafton's most striking features is undoubtedly its splendid trees; thousands of individuals, of many species, line the city's thoroughfares and ornament its parks. Planting began in the 1870s, and became a continuing activity, extending into new areas and sometimes requiring replanting in places where the originals were in inconvenient positions, or were of unsuitable types.

The idea of planting trees in Grafton's wide streets was the subject of a public meeting held at the School of Arts in August 1866. By that time the town area had been denuded of most of its natural vegetation, and it was thought that trees would not only add to the beauty of the town, but would also provide much-needed shade.

It was not until May 1874 that the council of the Borough of Grafton adopted a by-law for the planting and protection of trees in its streets and parks, and the work began in that year. By 1881 it could be said that 'a good deal' of Victoria and Prince Streets had been planted at intervals of 30 feet and at a distance of 12 feet from the footpaths. Trees used included Moreton Bay chestnut (black bean), fig tree, camphor tree, white and red cedar, silky oak, bunya pine and pittosporum. In 1884 it was said that the street trees were 'growing immensely', and that Grafton would soon deserve the title of the 'grove city'. 'Walks, miles in length' could already be made under their shade.

An indication of the extent of planting by 1888 can be gained from the 'bird's-eye view' of Grafton in Figure 2.1. It soon became apparent that mistakes had been made with some early plantings. Some species, such as silky oak

and fig, were heavy growers and required severe lopping to limit their size. Pepper trees, planted freely in early years, were liable to internal decay and consequently to blowing over, so were largely replaced by other varieties. White cedars became infested with hairy caterpillars so were 'evidently unsuitable for street planting'. The Examiner in 1882 was advocating that they be replaced 'as speedily as possible'.

By 1897 the trees in the main business sections of Prince Street were so large that they were said to take away one-third of the width of the street. Some were then '3ft in diameter, and...40ft high'. A strong movement emerged to have them removed and replaced by a single row in the centre of the street.

It was many years, however, before this happened. In September 1918, Grafton City Council gave consideration to a proposal to remove all the trees in Prince Street between Pound and Bacon Streets (which included many that were dead or dying) prior to beginning the work of remodeling the street. There was strong public opposition, and comparisons were made with the recent destruction 'by the Hun' of the beautiful trees on the battlefields of France.

The remodeling of Prince Street that began about 1918 included the creation of a garden bed, planted with palms, in the centre of the street. For a while this co-existed with the side-trees, but as can be seen in Figure 2.12, the latter were eventually removed from the busiest part of the street, probably in the 1930s.

Renewal of dead, dying or unwanted trees from old plantings was accompanied by the extension of planting to other parts of the city, sometimes

on special occasions. One example is the eastern end of Pound Street, between the river and Clarence Street, which was planted with jacaranda trees in May

1935 to commemorate the silver jubilee of King George V. A memorial tablet of marble, affixed to the side of the railway viaduct, was unveiled to mark the creation of 'Jubilee Avenue'.

Another notable example is the Memorial Avenue planted in June 1949 as a tribute to the servicemen who lost their lives in the First and Second World

Wars. The avenue extended along Bacon Street, from the public school to Cranworth Street, and comprised more than 130 trees, including jacarandas, pecan nuts, weeping figs, cape chestnuts and magnolias. Of these trees, 45 were selected to bear plates inscribed with the names of fallen soldiers.

In June 1953, an avenue of cassia trees was planted in Clarence Street, between Bacon and Pound Streets, in recognition of the coronation of Queen

Elizabeth II. A commemorative plaque was affixed to the railway viaduct where it crosses Clarence Street

In addition to its street trees, several public parks adorn Grafton's townscape. Notable among these are Fischer Park and See Park in North Grafton, and

McKittrick Park in South Grafton. Like the town's streets, these have been planted with a variety of species of trees, native and exotic, over many years.

Ref; Thematic History of Grafton- Stubbs, B.

With reference to the Jacaranda, in 1879 nurseryman Henry Volkers 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. The Jacaranda Festival continues to this day and is an event of great social significance to the local community and attracts visitors from around the world to see the stunning purple blossom lined streets.

The garden suburb of Dovedale developed as an interwar era suburb along the eastern river front, and takes its name from the property Dovedale of about 60 acres and the residence of W. A. B. Greaves, the district surveyor. Mr Greaves was born at Mayfield in Staffordshire, England, and named his property after the famous beauty spot called Dovedale, in the Peak District now under ownership of the National Trust.

Council continues to maintain, plan and conserve the important streetscape and parks plantings throughout the city.

National Theme	State Theme	Local Theme
4. Settlement	Cultural sites	Garden Suburbs

Uses

Current Use

Road reserves

Former Use/s

Road reserves

Thematic Listings Program
Theme

Assessment

Criteria a)

Historical Significance

Street tree planting has been a part of the city's planning since its inception. The street trees in Grafton Urban Area demonstrate historical significance as part of a planned cultural landscape to provide civic beauty and the Jacarandas are linked to the establishment of a Floral Festival 1934. The 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.

Criteria b)

Historical Association
Significance

The cultural plantings hold associative significance to Grafton civic leaders and to seed merchant and nurseryman Henry Volkers who 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.

Criteria c)

Aesthetic/Technical Significance

The street trees in all road reserves and associated grassed verges are highly contributory to the sense of place and civic identity of Grafton. Collectively each tree contributes to creation of stately avenues which frame the streetscapes of historic and later infill developments. The amenity of these civic plantings is a legacy from the early planning and beautification of the city.

Criteria d)

Social/Cultural Significance

The City trees form an important element of the City of Grafton's identity and social cultural significance. The Jacaranda festival inaugurated in 1934 is of great social significance to the community of Grafton which attracts visitors from around the world to see the stunning purple blossom lined streets.

Criteria e)

Research Potential

The cultural plantings provide evidence of the planned civic beautification of a historic city in a sub-tropical climate.

Criteria f)

Rarity

The plantings have rarity locally and are considered the best example of a whole city planned tree lined streets in the north coast region.

Criteria g)

Representative

The street tree plantings are representative of planned civic beautification from the late 1880s to early 1900s and beyond.

Integrity/IntactnessUpdated

Mostly intact. CVC management and planned replacements due to natural attrition, decay and weather events. Threats to integrity of avenue plantings and grassed verge settings due to proposals for widening of or additional crossovers and hard stands, and occasional losses.

References

References

Records Retrieved: 2				
Title	Author	Year	Link	Type
Jacaranda Festival	Jacaranda Festival Committee	2023	https://www.jacarandafestival.com/stories	Electronic
A Thematic History of the City of Grafton	Brett Stubbs	2007	https://www.clarence.nsw.gov.au/Building-and-planning/Heritage/Heritage-studies-and-history	Written

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

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

Specialist advice: Seek advice from a qualified arborist in relation to any proposed works.

Any proposed intrusions or works on grassed verges and impacts on street trees must be very carefully assessed to ensure that there is no damage to street trees, root health and canopy. Replacement plantings must be made for any losses.

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	6000626
Internet Available	Item Redundant	
True	False	

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Merged Heritage Items

			Records Retrieved: 0
Name	Address	Date Merged	
No Results Found			

Images



Caption: White Fig

Photographer: Deborah Wray

Copyright Owner: No Credit

Date: 6/5/2022 12:00:00 AM



Caption: P1050645

Photographer: Deborah Wray

Copyright Owner: No Credit

Date: 10/31/2018 12:00:00 AM



Caption: 20221105_135806

Photographer: Deborah Wray

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Date: 11/1/2022 12:00:00 AM



Caption: 20181029_171345

Photographer: Deborah Wray

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Date: 11/1/2022 12:00:00 AM



Caption: 20221105_140038

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