

# HAMILTON BOTANIC GARDENS MASTER PLAN

VOLUME 2: BACKGROUND REPORT

April 2015



LIDLAW & LIDLAW DESIGN



Figure 1: Local School Marching Band and Thompson Fountain

## Introduction to Volume 2

This volume contains the background information and supporting documentation for the 2014 Hamilton Botanic Gardens Master Plan. It should be read in conjunction with Volume 1, which covers the Master Plan recommendations, drawings, costings and priorities.

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# 1 Background and Process

## 1.1 Project Background

In December 2013 the Southern Grampians Shire Council undertook a tender by invitation for the appointment of a consultant to produce a Master Plan for the Hamilton Botanic Gardens. These Gardens, located in the centre of Hamilton in Victoria's western district are over 140 years old, and one of the most intact landscapes designed by William Guilfoyle. The decision to produce a Master Plan was made as part of Council's ongoing public realm upgrade program and as part of the implementation of the Hamilton Structure Plan. This Master Plan for the gardens will be the first produced since William Guilfoyle's 1881 design and was lobbied for and supported by the Friends of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens.

The Master Plan was produced in consultation with Council, staff, Friends of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens and the community to provide fresh ideas and a long term vision for the site. As the first major design for the Gardens in over 130 years it is hoped that this Master Plan will continue to guide the development and maintenance of the Botanic Gardens as a rare and valuable asset for the Hamilton Community.

## 1.2 Brief

The brief for this project was to provide a new Master Plan to guide the development of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens over the next twenty years, the general project objectives being:

- To provide an agreed direction for the future of the gardens;
- Consolidate the Gardens within the community and within the Shire;
- Ensure that funding is appropriately directed;
- Conserve and rejuvenate the gardens;
- Provide an emphasis on historical and botanical value.

Throughout the consultation process the following elements emerged as the key issues to be addressed by the Master Plan:

- The management and care of the ageing tree population including tree replacement and succession planning;
- Role of the Friends of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens – recognising the significant contribution they have made to the Gardens in the past and identifying ways they can continue to contribute;
- Identify appropriate staffing levels for the Gardens now and into the future, including any increase in maintenance required as the result of new projects;
- Review of current use of the Gardens by the public to determine what level of use the Gardens can support and what activities are appropriate. This includes the development of user guidelines for events in the Gardens;
- Look at ways that public use and events can be channelled into the support of the Gardens
- Provide recommendations on living collections policies including labelling and record keeping
- Provide recommendations on signage and interpretation
- Review the location and longevity of the current toilet block within the context of the Council Toilet Strategies and the availability of other public toilets in the vicinity
- Review the current suite of Gardens furnishings, making recommendation on appropriate styles, quantity and location of furnishings
- Need to rationalise the number of monuments within the Gardens, acknowledging that some are large and intrusive (both visually, and from a heritage perspective)
- Develop guidelines for future commemorative items within the gardens.

- Look at how the Friends' Cottage sits in the landscape and can be better incorporated into the rest of the Gardens. This includes looking at providing a demonstration garden for older residents at the front of the cottage.
- Removal of the smaller concrete aviaries and review and recommendations on the long term future of the flight aviary
- Rationalise the works area and reduce the size to make more space available for general garden use (noting that the current works area is larger than necessary)
- Removal of the animal enclosure (now unused) and replacement with a more appropriate landscape development
- Review of the lake including size, location and design of bridge and general functionality



Figure 2: Main lawn and established trees

### 1.3 Process

This Master Plan was produced in consultation with council staff, stake holders and the public. The following contains an overview of the process undertaken to complete the Master Plan:

- Laidlaw & Laidlaw Design first met with the Southern Grampians Shire Council and Project Control Group as a conference call to discuss the project and the consultation methodology
- Laidlaw & Laidlaw Design travelled to Hamilton to review the site and meet with Council Stakeholders and the PCG.
- A public consultation session was held in the Gardens on the afternoon of Friday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> 2014. This session included a BBQ and plant sale by the Friends of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens. Prior to this session it was advertised in the Hamilton Spectator, a media release was issued, and Andrew Laidlaw spoke to the local radio station. Arrangements were also made with the Hamilton Art Gallery to display William Guilfoyle's plan for the Gardens. These advertisements also provided alternative options for people who could not attend the open day to lodge submissions.
- Based on the results of the initial consultation a preliminary issues paper was developed to inform the Master Plan

- Laidlaw & Laidlaw Design travelled to Hamilton on August 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 2014 to again review the site and discuss preliminary design options with the PCG
- In consultation with the PCG preliminary recommendations were formalised into a final Issues Paper and Preliminary Recommendations document. These results of these documents were presented to local Councillors at a meeting on August 27<sup>th</sup> 2014. In particular, this presentation focused on getting in principal improvement for the development of the new Community Hub at the Kennedy Street / Martin Street corner of the gardens.
- In principal approval was provided by the Councillors and a draft Master Plan drawing was developed by Laidlaw & Laidlaw Design. After gaining approval from the project control group this was presented to local Councillors and approval was given for release for preliminary public consultation.
- The preliminary draft Master Plan was released for public comment in December 2014. This document was intended to only be a preliminary draft which allowed public comment on the proposed changes to the Gardens, most especially in relation to the path system, animal enclosures and the proposed new Community Hub. Seven submissions were received in response and these were reviewed by the Project Control Group.
- The concept was presented to Heritage Victoria and in principal support was received subject to minor modifications.
- The draft Master Plan was revised to incorporate changes as a result of the public consultation and to finalise the design. The back ground report and draft policies were also completed and circulated to the Project Control Group for review and approval.
- Changes were made as a result of comments by the Project Control Group and the drawings and reports were finalised for submission and adoption by Council in mid 2015.

## 1.4 Scope

The Master Plan for the Hamilton Botanic Gardens includes the entire 4ha area of the Botanic Gardens bounded by Thompson, Martin, Kennedy and French Streets Hamilton known as 78 French Street, Hamilton. The road area surrounding the Gardens, include access from the surrounding streets was also considered.

## 1.5 Previous Reports

A number of previous reports have been produced on the Botanic Gardens and have been reviewed as part of the background research for the production of this Master Plan. It is not the role of this Master Plan to reproduce the contents of these documents, however it is recommended that all future works adhere to the relevant sections of these strategies and plans.

### 1993 Conservation Analysis and 1994 Conservation Policy and Strategy for Implementation

Across 1993 and 1994 two associated documents were produced which, when combined, provided a Conservation Management Plan for the Hamilton Botanic Gardens. These were:

- *Hamilton Botanic Gardens Conservation Analysis*, produced by Nigel Lewis Richard Aitken Pty Ltd in association with Francine Gilfedder & Associates produced in 1993 followed by:
- *Hamilton Botanic Gardens Conservation Policy and Strategy for Implementation*, produced by Francine Gilfedder & Associates in association with Nigel Lewis and Richard Aitken Pty. Ltd. produced in 1994

These two documents were extensively reviewed in the development of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens Master Plan and informed the development of the drawings and policies. They are both excellent documents, produced by Victoria's preeminent landscape heritage consultants. However, as they were both produced over 20 years ago they are in need of review, especially in light of the production of this new Master Plan.

In the case of the *Conservation Analysis* very little will have changed in 20 years. The main element requiring updating being the existing conditions and comparative analysis sections of the report, with a consequent review of the significance ratings for individual elements. The discovery of the Guilfoyle plan only occurred after much of this document was already completed and also needs to be incorporated into the Analysis. A detailed map showing the location of individual elements of significance, in particular trees, would also be very useful, but it is noted that no survey plan was available when the report was produced and this would have prevented such a drawing being produced. In any case, these changes are minor and merely reflect the fact that 20 years has elapsed since the original document was produced.

However, in the case of the *Conservation Policy and Strategy for Implementation* a significant review is required. This is much more a working document than the *Conservation Analysis* and therefore becomes outdated much more quickly. Indeed, the document recommends review at maximum 10 year intervals.<sup>1</sup> The completion of recommended works, changes to management structures and budgets, technological advancements, wider industry developments and changes to prescribed methodologies all influence the recommendations made in documents of this type. This being said, the document is excellent, and a large portions are still relevant and have informed the production of the Master Plan.

A summary of the cultural significance of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens as described in the *Conservation Analysis* is provided at Appendix 1 (page 46). Relevant sections of the *Conservation Policy and Strategy for Implementation* have been incorporated into the Master Plan, with recommendations on the application and review of this documents being made in section 3.10 of Volume 1.

#### Southern Grampians Shire Council Public Toilet Strategy 2014

The Southern Grampians Shire Council Public Toilet Strategy 2014 addresses the long term viability and adequacy of the public toilets at the French Street side of the Gardens. The following is an excerpt “*Rated as a 3 star (scored 2.85) facility. This facility is in moderate condition and is close to the eastern boundary... The size of the facility is in keeping with catering for a coach load of tourists, for which there would usually be adequate parking. The primary issue raised in consultation is the significant steep hill within the gardens and the distance to the playground and other key features at the top of the hill. The gradient and distance make these toilets less effective than they would be at the top of the hill. Given that these toilets have a reasonable life remaining; Council may contemplate supplementing the toilets with a single disability unit in the vicinity of the playground and entry. This should be considered in concert with any gardens master plan.*”

Public consultation on the Gardens backed up these findings, but demonstrated that there was demand for a full set of public toilets near the playground as opposed to a single disability unit.

#### Hamilton Structure Plan

The Hamilton Structure plan was produced by Hansen Partnership in 2012 and adopted by Council. These five documents were developed to provide “a coherent, practical and sustainable path for development” over the next 20 years. The five documents are as follows with Volume 2 being the most relevant to the development of the Master Plan:

Volume 1: The **Hamilton Structure Plan**: guides the broader land use and development of the whole city

Volume 2: The **Hamilton city centre urban design framework**: provides more detailed directions, plans and strategies to guide the future development of the city centre

Volume 3: The **Hamilton design guidelines**: provides both broad guidelines for built form and some specific guidelines for particular ‘types’ of development in a Hamilton context



Volume 4: The **Hamilton Master Plans**: affect six key areas of the city and provide a greater level of detailed guidance as to how these areas will change and develop over time

Volume 5: The **Hamilton CBD Parking Strategy**: outlines a broad approach to the management of car parking in the CBD and forms a basis of a schedule of Parking Overlay

The development of a Master Plan for the Hamilton Botanic Gardens is a specific recommendation of the structure plan which encourages Council to produce a Master Plan to “ensure appropriate integration of uses, to improve amenity and use, and to ensure a detailed succession plan is prepared to guarantee the ongoing viability of the gardens, in close collaboration with the Friends of the Botanic Gardens.” Additionally, recommendations made in the Master Plan address a number of broader recommendations of the Hamilton Structure Plan. The Structure plan also makes the following specific recommendations which have implications for the Hamilton Botanic Gardens Master Plan:

- Integration of the city’s green spaces centred around the Botanic Gardens and Melville Reserve to enhance the built environment and make Hamilton an “attractive, amenable and comfortable ‘people place’”.
- Establish links with the Botanic Gardens from key gateways. In particular it recommends enhancement of the French Street Gates through the creation of an arboretum\* and the addition of signage; and enhancing the Gardens entries with defined pathways.
- Creation of a ‘gateway’ planted Avenue along French Street to connect it to the Botanic Gardens and act as an arboricultural training tool
- Use of asphalt or another stabilised surface for paths around the Botanic Gardens to connect it as part of a broader running track
- General recommendations street tree plantings, public furnishings and materials selection

## 1.6 Findings of the Consultation Process

The initial consultation process included discussions with Southern Grampians Shire Council Staff and the Friends of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens. The initial round table discussion was held as a conference call, and followed up with a further meeting in Hamilton on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2014 and another on 4<sup>th</sup> August of the same year. Consultation with this core group continued throughout the Master Plan process and included representatives from the Southern Grampians Shire Council and the Friends of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens.

### Friends of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens

The Friends of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens have been operating since 1987 and their work has been influential in the success of a many projects in the Gardens. This work includes extensive lobbying for the production of the Master Plan. Discussions with the Friends started with a discussion of the value they place on the significance of the gardens and their desires for the Master Plan – the Friends wanting a document that will conserve the gardens, give credibility to future funding applications and take the Gardens forward into the future. General comments made by the Friends included:

- Picnic facilitates – remove concrete chairs and tables, unify design and location
- Integrate cottage and surrounding structures including playground, green house, gazebo bird enclosures and works area
- Issues were raised in relation to working with community groups – as there had been problems with gaining appropriate insurance cover
- Installation of boundary planting as per Guilfoyle’s plan

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\* Volume 1 proposes to enhance this entrance in alternative ways to the creation of an arboretum but still adheres to the intent of the Structure Plan

- The aviary is closed on weekends. They want to Council to commit to bringing it up to best practice.
- Toilets are too far from playground/activity hub
- Toilets could be built in works area as services are already there
- Discussion around lighting – security vrs attracting vandals
- Colour of cottage - friends would like to repaint it
- Thompson Fountain needs repair
- Lake needs attention – water level is low (possibly leaking). Want to reinstall the reticulation system, rock pillar and fountain
- Signage to be streamlined
- Need a tree assessment and management plan
- Need to improve planting near entrances and around the fountain
- Discussion about risk management - possible closing of Gardens on extreme weather days
- Focus on plant collections - themes relevant to Hamilton area/current trends, possibly native plants
- Possible community garden behind the cottage, sensory garden for the disabled or positive aging space

### Project Control Group meeting

The following items were discussed at the initial PCG meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2014

Overview of the Master Plan process including the need to:

- Working towards an agreed vision
- Identify tasks
- Prepare budget
- Prepare for planning
- A master plan is a "living document"
- The first stage is for listening and gathering information which is documented and reported on to form an agreed approach
- Need to consider new "Hamilton Structure Plan" by Council and Hansen Partnership

Round table discussion of issues:

- Toilet block
  - possible need for a new block closer to cottage and play area – any new toilet block needs to be well planned
  - existing toilets are close to foot path, old, too far from playground
  - lighting and hygiene are an issue. Current toilets need renovating
- Irrigation and water supply
  - Water tanks next to current toilet block are filled with water from the reservoir - not the town water supply. There to guarantee long term supply of water to the Gardens
  - General water usage on gardens not known.
  - Irrigation system is 38 years old. Pumps are old (possibly historic). Some issues with irrigation system
- Animal enclosures
  - Public pressure to keep the enclosures
  - Heritage Victoria pressure to keep the enclosures
  - Sentimental attachment to birds especially
  - There have been a variety of animals over the years. Monkeys, kangaroos, emus, peacocks

- Wildlife permits required and qualified staff
- Given the budget, animal enclosure and the related issues are a specialist area and are therefore expensive to maintain. However they could aid as an attraction to the gardens.
- The kangaroo enclosure takes up valuable land and could be used for gardens.
- Cottage.
  - Used by Friends of HBG for meetings, activities and training
  - Well loved
  - Historic
  - Kitchen and toilet
  - Not open to public
- Works area.
  - Area too large
  - Shedding too old and not needed since Parks & Gardens moved out
  - Hot house needs repair
  - Need for proper facilities – lunch room, female toilets
- Infrastructure
  - Paths need upgrading (note, some recent resurfacing but damaged by garbage collection vehicles)
  - Fountain need upgrading (note money currently set aside to repair Thomson Fountain)
  - Lake is operational
  - There is no lighting in the Gardens (note, spot light under central Bunya Pine)
  - Lake - water can be flushed with reservoir water. No issues with algae. Historically recycled in a system.
  - Rotunda - needs painting and replacement of some rotting timbers. Used a lot for concerts, events markets and community festivals. 15 booked events per year. Damage to lawns from events can be a concern.
- Use
  - Need to balance use with conservation
  - Need to bench mark other gardens to see how they manage this issue
  - Is the garden there for social connection or scientific collection?
  - Feasibility of charging a small fee for events to offset costs
- As a regional garden including William Guilfoyle connection
  - A plan for a "Guilfoyle trail" is in the pipe line by the garden history society
  - Schools are active users for exercise and art activities
  - World tree day
  - Collections
  - Friends group tours.
- Plant collections
  - Collections need to have a point of difference
  - Mapping, curating and data storage for living collections
  - Testing acclimatization
  - Ensure relevance - provide "take home messages"
  - Currently HBG has Abutilon collection with 24 species and a NZ collection is to be developed
  - Micro-climate needs to be considered
  - Need for a shire wide approach with link to arboretum at Coleraine, Peshurst Botanic Garden and Grangeburn River
- Trees
  - Historic

- Assess management
- Need for tree replacement strategy
- Current policy is to replace like with like
- Play space and BBQ area
  - Discussion around existing facilities, their location and proximity to each other and their aesthetic qualities.
  - Elements: low key kids space, water play, animals, drinking fountains, bbqs bins, wishing well.
- Signage
  - Is limited
  - Current \$2000 grant for tree labels
  - Signage throughout is poor and lacks unity of design
- Access and Safety
  - Disability access is adequate
  - Health and Safety audit
  - Tree assessment – risk assessment arboricultural report last year and 2004 was the last general arboricultural report

### The Public

A public consultation date was held on the afternoon on May 23<sup>rd</sup> 2014, with the public providing feedback through face to face discussions and written feedback forms. The key issues to emerge through the consultation process were:

- The lack of toilets at the top end of the Gardens;
- The future of the aviary;
- The animal enclosure, which is no longer being used;
- The small bird aviaries near the playground



Figure 3: Public Consultation, May 23rd 2014

Following the production of draft Master Plan concepts these were released for public comment in a basic form across December 2014-January 2015. Limited feedback was provided by the public, with seven submissions being received. The plan was generally supported but with some criticisms in

relation to pathway modifications by two letters and the proposed removal of the flight aviary by one. Some suggestions were also received for additional features in the Gardens. Where appropriate feedback was incorporated into the final Master Plan.

#### Heritage Victoria

The concept for the Master Plan was presented in draft format to John Hawker at Heritage Victoria by Laidlaw & Laidlaw Design on March 5th 2015. In principal support for the concept was provided, subject to two minor modifications. These were the removal of the play equipment in favour of a nature based play space and the retention of a picket fence around the cottage for security purposes. The proposed redevelopment of the animal enclosure and Martin Street / Kennedy Street corner was supported, as were the changes to the pathways and bridge alignment.

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<sup>1</sup> Francine Gilfedder & Associates , 1994 pg. 17



**Figure 4: Botanical Gardens (Entrance) Hamilton, 1910**  
Source: State Library of Victoria

## 2 Location and Context

### 2.1 Regional Context

Hamilton is a township of approximately 10,000\* people located in Victoria’s Western District, 290km from Melbourne and just over 100km from the border with South Australia. Dunkeld, at the southern end of the Grampians lies to the township’s north, and Warrnambool, on the Southern Ocean is 100km to the south. Hamilton has long been a major service centre and the principal town in Victoria’s wool rich ‘Western District’. Hamilton’s CBD (including the botanic gardens) services a large regional community, with Warrnambool acting as a supplementary regional centre.<sup>2</sup>

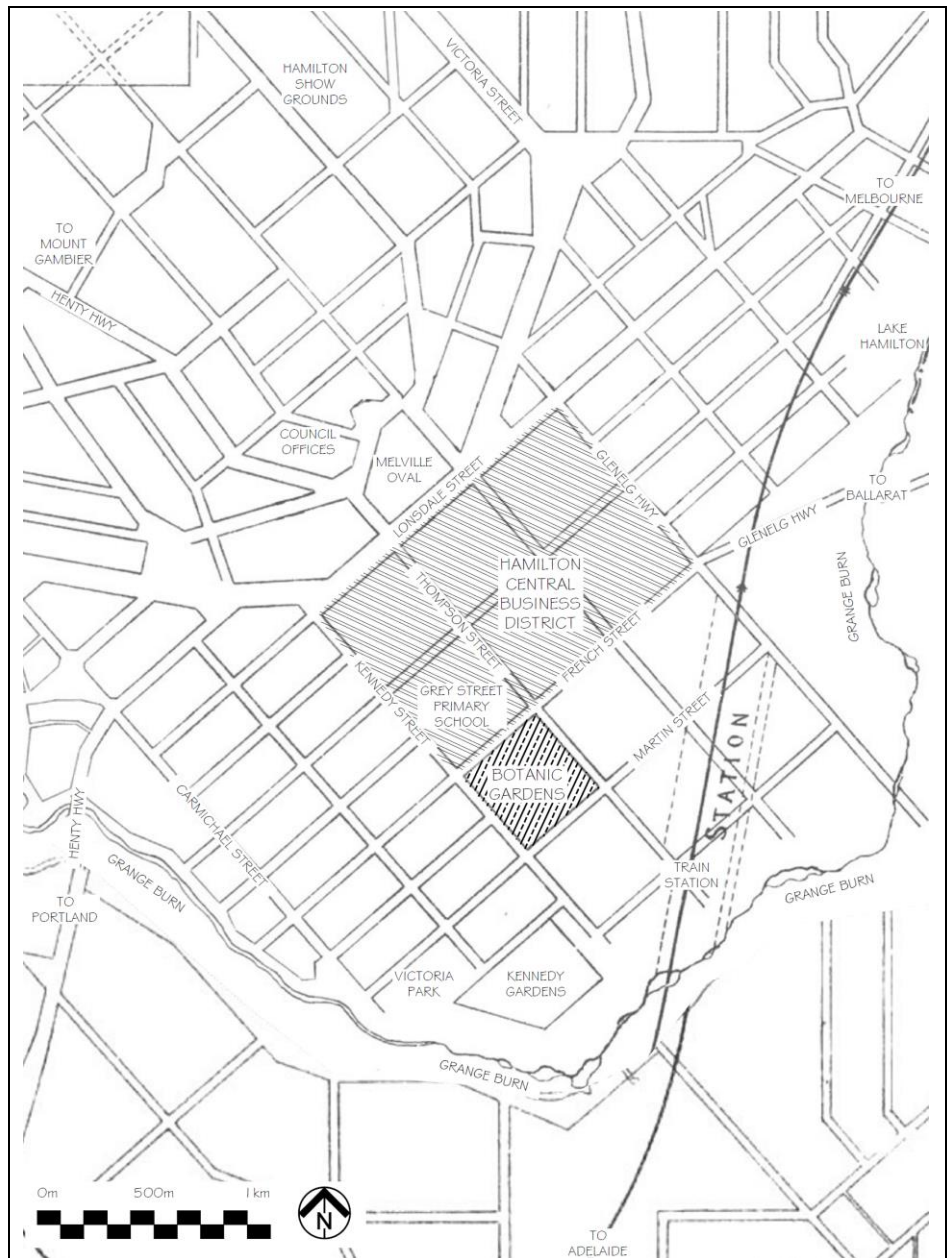


Figure 5: Hamilton Botanic Gardens Context Plan

Base Plan Source: Department of Crown Lands and Survey, 1959 and 1896, State Library of Victoria

\* 2011 Usual residents as per profile.id

Built on the wool trade, the township was once known as “the wool capital of the world” and the area in a 50km radius from the township still has more sheep per hectare than anywhere else in the world.<sup>3</sup> The township’s principal role continues to be the service of the agricultural sector, with this industry (agriculture, forestry and fishing) being the largest employer in the Shire with 1,252 jobs in 2011. The town has also been known as a “collegiate city” due to the high standard of secondary education offered by local schools.<sup>4</sup> Seven primary schools (three private and four public) and four secondary schools (three private and one public, Baimbridge College). At a tertiary level both RMIT and South West Institute of TAFE have campuses at Hamilton, with the RMIT campus offering a Bachelor of Nursing degree amongst its courses.

Hamilton has four major public open spaces, the Botanic Gardens, Melville Oval, Lake Hamilton and Grange Burn wetlands. Each of these spaces performs different functional roles, Melville Oval being a sporting reserve, Lake Hamilton for general recreation, Grange Burn as a natural environment and the Botanic Gardens as a manicured Garden.

## 2.2 Location and Surrounding Streets

The Botanic Gardens are located in the centre of Hamilton, just to the south of the central business district. The northern end of French and Thompson’s streets are zoned commercial, and include the large, and visually intrusive Botanical Motel on their corner. To the south-west end of French Street sits the Grey Street Primary School. All other sides of the Gardens are zoned residential, except for the Martin Street / Thompson Street Corner where the Hamilton Magistrates’ Court sits. With the exception of the Botanical Motel, all Gardens frontages are visually sympathetic, being comprised of residential houses and grand historic buildings.



## 3 History

### 3.1 Aboriginal

Hamilton sits within the junction of three Aboriginal tribal lands. The Tijapwurong to the east, Gunditjmarra to the south and Bunganditj to the west.<sup>5</sup> In traditional aboriginal society the tribes were divided into individual land owning units known as clans which only came together as tribes at periodic gatherings.<sup>6</sup> Each clan spoke the same language and identified with a particular parcel of land. They were connected to other clans through intermarriage, trading, cultural and mutual interests and totems.<sup>7</sup>

The land around Hamilton was very fertile with an excellent variety and quantity of food. This meant the land could support a greater number of people and allowed local tribes to lead a more settled existence than in other areas of Victoria. During long periods in summer and winter they would camp by good fishing sites and permanent stone weirs and channels, which are still existent, these were constructed on the shores of lakes and swamps.<sup>8</sup> The area south of Hamilton near the Condah Swamps (or Tae Rak as traditionally named) supported a particularly large number of people.<sup>9</sup> At the southern end of the lake the Kerrup Jmara or "People of the Lake" engineered an extensive system of ponds, channels and traps.<sup>10</sup> Descriptions by early settlers indicated that the people lived in well built, stone huts "*capable of holding ten or twelve people*".<sup>11</sup>

With the settlement of the area the local Aboriginal population was decimated. As they were driven off their traditional lands by Europeans the local people responded by stealing sheep and other livestock and attacking shepherds – usually to steal food or sheep or revenge attacks against their women.<sup>12</sup> This led to a series of deadly clashes between 1840 and 1842 in which a large number of Aboriginals were killed. These clashes ceased in 1842 and by 1844 the local people were succumbing to other problems attached to European settlement – the spread of disease and collapse of their social structure.<sup>13</sup> Today 186 Southern Grampians Shire Residents are of Indigenous heritage, 1.1% of the Shire's population.

### 3.2 Botanic and Public Gardens

The European colonisation of Australia corresponded with a time of increased botanical and horticultural interest within the British Empire. Previously unknown species of plants were being collected from newly discovered portions of the globe, and Botanic Gardens were being established as adjuncts to educational institutions in England (at Oxford) and on the Continent (such as at Pisa and Padua)<sup>14</sup>. With the abundance of new species being introduced to horticulture, plant collection and display, especially of the new and unusual, became somewhat of a British national passion.

In the south of England this enthusiasm for plant collection centred around Kew<sup>15</sup>, encouraged by Royal patronage. By the time Australia was settled<sup>16</sup> Kew had become a scientific centre, spurred on by both economic and scientific pursuits. The influence of Kew became critical in the establishment of Botanic Gardens in Australia, and by the 1850s, major Botanic Gardens had been developed in Sydney, Hobart, Melbourne and Brisbane<sup>17</sup>.

In their original context, Botanic Gardens were scientific centres, where plants were displayed according to various botanical systems, rather than as objects of ornamentation. Herbariums for the collection of pressed specimens were attached, as were botanical libraries<sup>18</sup>. In the Australian context however, Botanic Gardens developed a greater emphasis as pleasure grounds and places of public use and enjoyment. This was exemplified by the development of the Royal Botanic Gardens

Melbourne, where Baron Ferdinand von Mueller's traditional scientific structure was remodelled by William Guilfoyle on picturesque principals, forming the basis of the Gardens we know today.

This approach to providing Gardens which were more than just scientific displays, was in itself likely to be a product of the times. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century public parks were widely established to provide relaxation and enjoyment to all city residents, a concept which was new at the time of European settlement in Australia. These green spaces were seen to have moral and health benefits, providing respite from the overcrowded, dirty and smelly cities, and allowing all classes of people to mix freely<sup>19</sup>.

### 3.3 Victoria's Regional Botanic Gardens

In the Australian context, the phenomenon of widespread regional Botanic Gardens is uniquely Victorian, where virtually every country town and city of any consequence developed its own 'Botanic Garden'<sup>20</sup>. These gardens were generally established at the initiative of residents, rather than as a result of any formal government policy or funding. The Gardens were generally established when local residents formed a committee and petitioned the government for a land grant. If suitable land was available, and the request was suitably justified, the government "was inclined to consent"<sup>21</sup>.

A number of factors are likely to have contributed to the widespread establishment of regional Botanic Gardens. The Victorian fervour for plants and open spaces as described above, the popularity of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens and the copy-cat effect as other regional towns developed Botanic Gardens are all possible contributors to the phenomenon. For the most part these new gardens were confined to regional Victoria, where they were seen as a status symbol for the town, and by the 1860s Botanic Gardens had been established at Koroit, Geelong, Ballarat, Kyneton, Daylesford and Port Fairy<sup>22</sup>. Of the 19<sup>th</sup> century gardens Williamstown (1860) and St Kilda (1858) alone established suburban Botanic Gardens.<sup>23</sup>

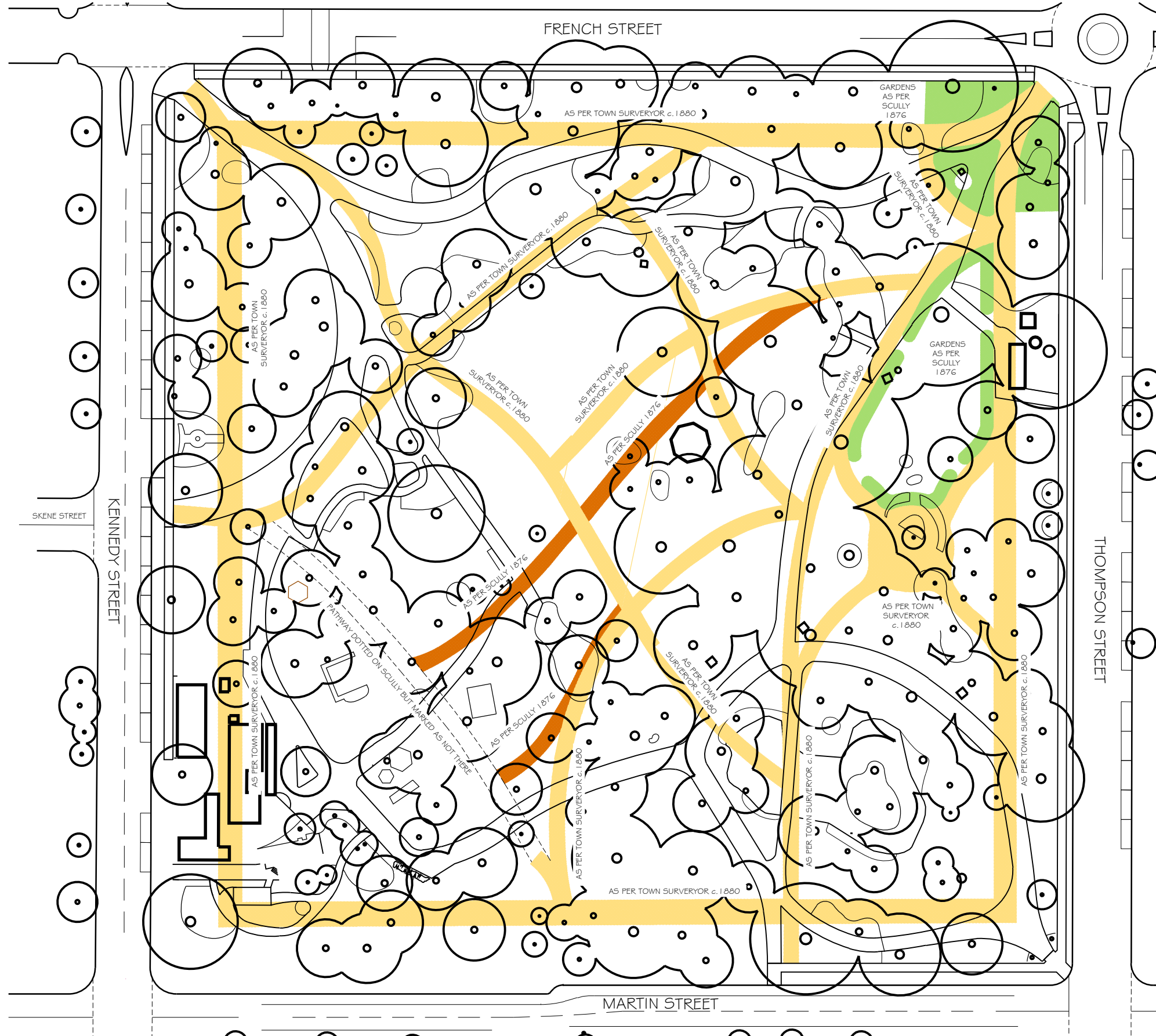
These Botanic Gardens were, for the most part, pleasure gardens, although in early times plants were carefully labelled, and the gardens had a role to play in trialling new species, especially through the work of von Mueller. Today many of the Botanic Gardens are almost indistinguishable from public pleasure gardens<sup>24</sup>, although they contain fine tree collections, albeit with a strong bias to Victorian era tastes.

### 3.4 Design of Hamilton Botanic Gardens - Ferguson and Guilfoyle

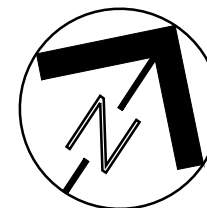
Hamilton Botanic Gardens was designed over two stages, with preliminary paths being laid out in 1870 by William Ferguson and a new design produced in 1881. It is this second stage of works which makes the Hamilton Botanic Gardens significant, as they represent a well-documented, early example of the work of one of Australia's greatest garden designers, William Guilfoyle<sup>25</sup>.

#### William Ferguson (c.1827-1887)<sup>26</sup>

William Ferguson was Inspector of State Forests and working at the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne when he was sent to Hamilton to "lay off the site of the recreation ground"<sup>27</sup>. His arrival followed repeated requests for someone from Melbourne to travel to the district to oversee the laying out of the Gardens. It would appear that Ferguson visited the site as part of a Western Districts Forest Inspection<sup>28</sup>. He stayed one week in June 1870 and laid out a network of crossing pathways designed for convenient crossing of the site. He also left directions and promised a consignment of trees and shrubs from Melbourne which arrived later that month.<sup>29</sup>



NOTE: c.1880 PLAN BY TOWN SURVEYOR CONSIDERED THE MOST ACCURATE VERSION OF FERGUSON'S 1870 LAYOUT. INFORMATION FROM 1876 SCULLY PLAN IS ONLY SHOWN WHERE IT DIFFERS MARKEDLY FROM 1880 VERSION.

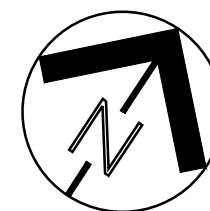
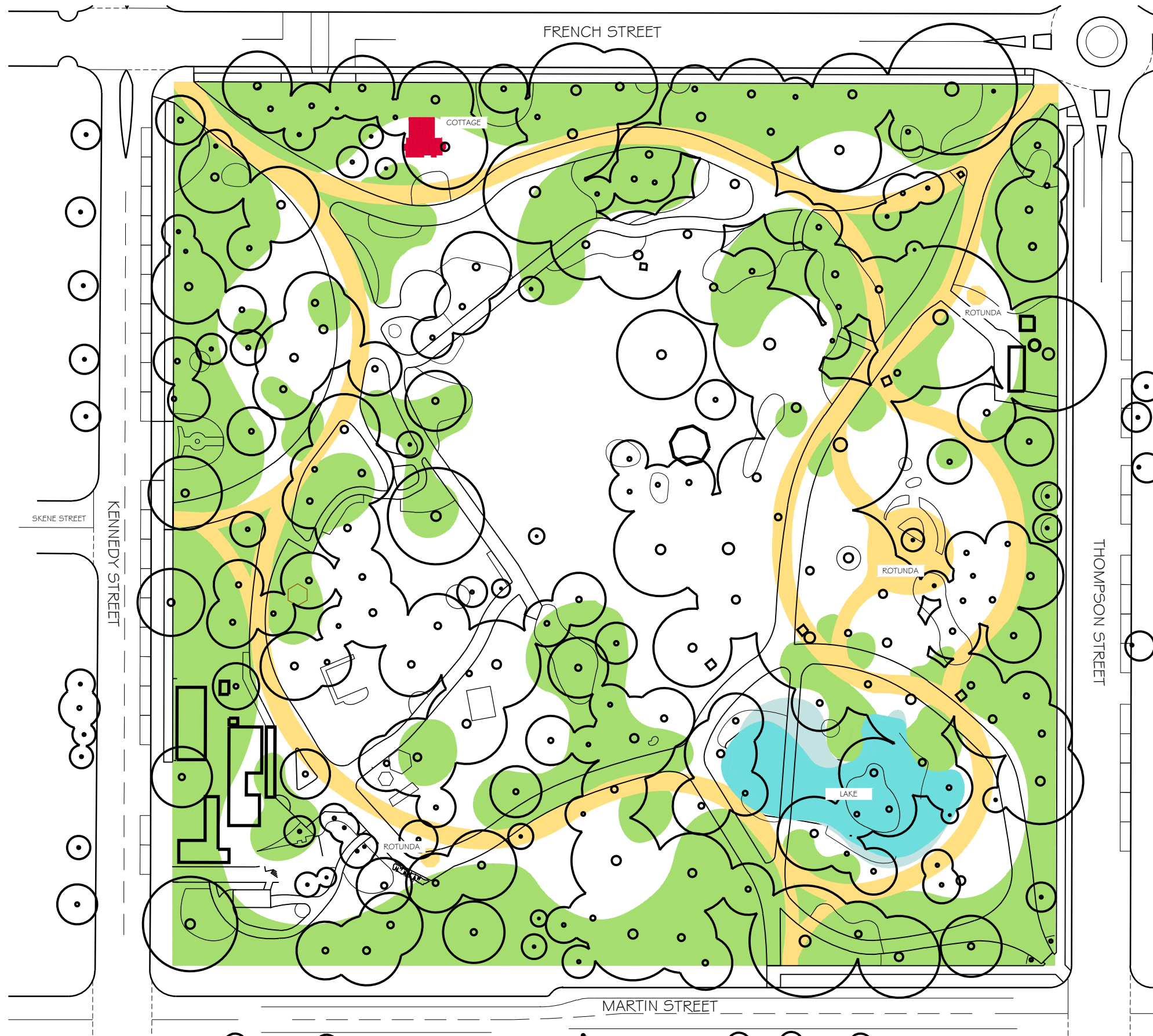


# HAMILTON BOTANIC GARDENS

EXISTING CONDITIONS PLAN OVERLAID WITH 1870 FERGUSON DESIGN

Scale 1:500 @ A1 / 1:1000 @ A3





# HAMILTON BOTANIC GARDENS

EXISTING CONDITIONS PLAN OVERLAID WITH 1881 GUILFOYLE DESIGN

Scale 1:500 @ A1 / 1:1000 @ A3



Hamilton Botanic Gardens appears to be the only known site laid out by William Ferguson, who was best known as a scientific nurseryman and arborist. His role at the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne was short lived, and was a result of public dissatisfaction over Ferdinand Mueller's austere design of the Gardens. Shortly before William Guilfoyle's appointment at Melbourne, Ferguson was dispatched to the State Forestry Nursery at Mount Macedon where he worked for the rest of his life, developing a highly successful state nursery.<sup>30</sup>

Two documents showing the Ferguson layout of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens still exist. A 1876 plan produced by a S. L. Scully and a c.1880 plan produced by the town surveyor and used as a base for William Guilfoyle's 1881 design. These two plans differ slightly, and as alterations in such a short time frame are unlikely, it is assumed that the Scully plan was not professionally surveyed, and therefore less accurate than the later drawing which is known to be by the Town Surveyor. While the Ferguson period of Garden's history is of interest, there are few physical remains of his involvement and it is work of William Guilfoyle which is considered to be of greater significance.

S.L. Scully's 1876 plan of the Botanic Gardens can be found at Appendix 3. Drawing 1, page 15 shows this layout overlaid with the 2015 existing conditions plan of the Gardens.

### William Guilfoyle (1840 – 1912)<sup>31</sup>

Hamilton Botanic Gardens are highly significant as an early example of the work of William Guilfoyle, typifying his design and planting styles then being laid out at the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne. William Guilfoyle was born in Chelsea, London and came from a prominent family of nurseryman. His father, Michael Guilfoyle was a prominent nurseryman at the Royal Exotic Nursery in London<sup>32</sup> and according to his son, travelled across the country remodelling parks and gardens.<sup>33</sup> In 1849 the entire family arrived in Sydney where they started a nursery and landscape business. William was the eldest of eleven surviving children, who also included the Melbourne horticulturalist John Guilfoyle.

By the time Guilfoyle was 22 he was a partner in his father's business. In 1868 he travelled across the south pacific for five months on HMS *Challenger*, collecting samples for the Sydney Botanic Gardens and his family nursery. This time abroad influenced his design style, and can especially be seen in the Volcano landscape he designed for the Melbourne Botanic Gardens.\* Guilfoyle's recordings of his journey and associated water colour sketches so impressed the then director of Melbourne Botanic Gardens, Ferdinand Mueller, that he sent them to London for publication and began mentoring the younger man.<sup>34</sup>

Muller had been director of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens since 1857 but was a controversial figure, his rigid scientific and austere style being unpopular, and in 1873 he was dismissed by Victoria's Commissioner of Crown Lands and replaced by the 33 year old Guilfoyle.

Over the following decades Guilfoyle extensively remodelled the Gardens, using Mueller's extensive plant collections he set out to create a more picturesque style with sweeping paths and careful arrangement of lawns and shrubberies to create a series of scenic vistas across the undulating site. Guilfoyle continued at Melbourne until 1909, four years beyond the normal retirement age of 65. During this time he designed gardens across Victoria, becoming widely sort after as a "brilliant,

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\* Note: It has previously been thought that the mound off Thompson Street at the Hamilton Botanic Gardens was designed by Guilfoyle as a 'volcano' and was a forerunner to his work at the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne. This however has been found to be incorrect, Guilfoyle's Volcano at Melbourne dating from 1876, before the Hamilton design. Furthermore, the mound at Hamilton is a naturally occurring feature incorporated from the design by William Ferguson with only minor modifications by Guilfoyle.

original, but practical landscape designer".<sup>35</sup> His design of Hamilton Botanic Gardens came early in this career, when Guilfoyle was 41 years old. Examples of his other work include:

- Trinity College Parkville (1876)
- Warrnambool Botanic Gardens (1877)
- Koroit Botanic Gardens (1880)
- Camperdown Botanic Gardens (1885)
- Parliament House Melbourne (1888)
- Melbourne Teachers Training College, Carlton (1892)
- Dalvui, Terang (1898) – Private Garden
- Mooleric, Birregurra (1903-10) – Private Garden
- Mawallok, Beaufort (1909) – Private Garden
- Colac Botanic Gardens (1910) – *note: these gardens have a similar rotunda and path configuration as that shown on his plans for Hamilton Botanic Gardens*

The plan produced by Guilfoyle in 1881 for Hamilton Botanic Gardens was never completely constructed. The plan produced by Guilfoyle in 1881 survives intact and is held by the Hamilton Art Gallery, together with all but one page of the accompanying descriptive letter and plant lists – allowing comparisons to be made between the existing Gardens and Guilfoyle’s intentions. The lake was installed, and a path network sympathetic to Guilfoyle’s design, but many of the garden beds were not added, and minor paths dating from an earlier period were never removed. Furthermore the addition of the animal enclosures and aviaries disrupted the design in the Kennedy / Martin Street corner of the Gardens. As recently as 1992 new portions of Guilfoyle’s original design have been constructed. This being said, the Gardens are still of significance as an early example of his work, typical in style and structure of his other designs.

Guilfoyle’s 1881 plan for the Botanic Gardens can be found at Appendix 4. Drawing 2, page 16 shows this layout overlaid with the 2015 existing conditions plan of the Gardens.

### 3.5 Hamilton Botanic Gardens

Extensive work has previously been undertaken on the history of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens, most notably by Nigel Lewis and Richard Aitken in 1993 and by the Friends of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens as an ongoing project. As these documents already provide a detailed history of the Gardens, this Master plan does not replicate this work, but summarises the history of the development of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens in the form of the below timeline. This time line draws heavily on the work already completed, especially by Lewis and Aitken. Key events are indicated in bold, including the dates, where known, for all extant features.



Figure 6: 'Bird's eye view' of Hamilton showing the Botanic Gardens, c.1886.

Source: Hamilton Historical Society / Friends of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens

Date	Event	Curators and superintendents
Pre-European settlement	Hamilton sits at the junction of land owned by three Aboriginal tribes - the Tijapwurong, Gunditjmara and Bunganditj.	None
1834	Henty brothers settle at Portland, the first permanent European settlement in Victoria <sup>36</sup>	None
1838	Thomas Mitchell's descriptions of the land around Hamilton are published – the first European accounts of the area	None
1850	Township of Hamilton (then known as Grange Burn) was surveyed	None
1851	Township of Hamilton gazetted	None
1853	<b>First plan showing reserve for “Reserve for Public Gardens” on the current site</b>	None
1859	Formation of Hamilton municipal Council	None
1861	Town Clerk requests the “Government Paddock” adjacent to the town be reserved as an alternative Botanic Gardens site as it is larger and with better access to water. The request was denied.	None
1861	Further request by Town Clerk for Government Paddock site. Request is again denied.	None
1869	Request for appointment of trustees for the botanic gardens reserve	None
1870	<b>Hamilton Botanic Gardens site is “temporarily reserved for public garden purposes”<sup>37</sup></b>	None
	First fence installed “a rough post and rail affair, bored for wires” <sup>38</sup>	None
	First reference to private subscriptions to fund the Gardens. <sup>39</sup>	None
	<b>William Ferguson spends a week laying out the gardens.</b>	None
1871	Call to properly form the paths laid out by Ferguson, indicating that they may never have been properly finished <sup>40</sup>	None
	Bandstand / Summer house constructed on the mound (demolished c.1924-30), which was described as “a high hill, principally composed of large boulders of honeycomb stone, about fifty feet high, in the shape of a sugar loaf situated in the botanical gardens”. <sup>41</sup> This hill was known as Mount Craig <sup>42</sup> , after the owner of the Grange Burn run the township was constructed on.	None
1876	<b>First existing conditions plan of the Gardens produced by S. L. Scully</b>	None
1878	First Gardener employed	Peter McKinnon (Gardener) James Bailie (Gardener)
1880	<b>Oak tree planted to commemorate the centenary of the establishment of Sunday Schools</b>	James Bailie
1881	<b>New design received from William Guilfoyle for the layout of the Gardens. Plan is progressively implemented over following decades.</b>	James Bailie
	<b>Gardener's cottage constructed near French Street gates</b>	James Bailie
1882	<b>Some walks laid out in accordance with the Guilfoyle plan.</b>	John G Wilson (Gardener)
1883	<b>Lake and fountain constructed</b>	John G Wilson
	Garden connected to reticulated water supply	John G Wilson
	Earliest reference to a rockery	John G Wilson

Date	Event	Curators and superintendents
1885	Earliest reference to zoological elements (goldfish)	Isaac Thomason (Gardener)
	Earliest reference to seats in the Gardens	Isaac Thomason
1886	<b>Birds eye view of the gardens produced by F. W. Niven and Co.</b>	Isaac Thomason
	Bulb house constructed (demolished)	Isaac Thomason
1888		J Upham (Gardener)
1889		H S James (Curator)
1880s- 90s	<b>Garden beds and shrubberies laid out. Many plants obtained from prominent nurserymen.</b>	H S James
1892	Greenhouse constructed (now demolished)	H S James
1893	<b>Cannon from H.M.V.S. Nelson placed at the Thompson Street entrance to the Gardens</b>	H S James
	<b>Thompson street gates installed (replacements for earlier gates)</b>	H S James
c.1893	First asphaltting of paths	H S James
1895	Gardener given permission to construct a Chrysanthemum House (now demolished)	H S James
1897	<b>Oak tree planted to commemorate the founding of the Hamilton Druid's lodge.</b>	H S James
	Pump installed in bore near Thompson Street (now demolished)	H S James
1901		Wilton Henry James (acting Gardener)
1902		H S James
1903	Fernery constructed near French Street entrance (later relocated, then demolished).	Randolph Hughan (Curator)
	Trellis taken from the "arch of welcome" for the Governor installed in the Gardens. One of these objects was in storage in 1993.	Randolph Hughan
1904	Idea of constructing an aviary first mooted.	Randolph Hughan
	Garden is hedged with Hawthorn (presumably removed with construction of ornamental fence in 1908)	Randolph Hughan
1905	New foot path constructed "from the entrance gate to the crown of the hill near the old rotunda" <sup>43</sup>	Randolph Hughan
1906	First aviary constructed being a cage for a pair of eagles. Other cages added following this time. (now demolished)	Randolph Hughan
1907	Garden plots for school children added presumably on the current work depot site (since demolished).	Randolph Hughan
1908	<b>Gardener's cottage relocated to present site</b>	Randolph Hughan
	<b>Australian Natives Association Fountain constructed</b>	Randolph Hughan
	First rustic bridge constructed across lake	Randolph Hughan
By 1908	By 1908 a stage had been constructed on the site later occupied by the sound shell (now demolished)	Randolph Hughan
1909	<b>Ornamental fence installed surrounding the Gardens</b>	Randolph Hughan
	<b>French Street Gates constructed</b>	Randolph Hughan
	<b>Kennedy Street side gate (opposite Skene Street) constructed.</b>	Randolph Hughan



Date	Event	Curators and superintendents
	Pagoda constructed to house stump marked my Major Mitchell which was relocated to the Gardens from garden at Brie Brie.	Randolph Hughan
	Earliest reference to Kangaroo enclosure	Randolph Hughan
<b>1910</b>	<b>Memorial tree planted in memory of King Edwards VII</b>	Randolph Hughan
<b>1918-21</b>	<b>Thomson memorial fountain constructed</b>	Randolph Hughan
<b>By 1921</b>	German trench Mortar and "Hun Gun" installed in Gardens (both since removed)	Randolph Hughan
<b>1920s</b>	Earliest reference to removal of over mature early plantings	Randolph Hughan
	Arch of whale bones constructed and subsequently moved many times. In storage in 1993.	Randolph Hughan
	Log cabin placed on small island in lake (since removed). The cabin featured in a procession during WW1	Randolph Hughan
<b>By 1928</b>	Shed with gas rings for use by visitors constructed in what later became the animal shelter (since demolished).	Randolph Hughan
<b>1929</b>	Cannon placed on stone plinth	Randolph Hughan
<b>1930</b>	Fernery possibly relocated to near the Court House entrance	Randolph Hughan
	Commemorative tree planted for the 150 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sunday Schools	Randolph Hughan
<b>By 1930</b>	Bandstand / Summer house on mound demolished c.1924-30	Randolph Hughan
<b>1933</b>	Bridge across lake rebuilt by labour relief workers	Randolph Hughan
<b>1934</b>	<b>Country Women's Association Glasshouse constructed</b>	Randolph Hughan
<b>1935</b>	Plan of Gardens shows buildings in area now covered by works depot and aviaries. According to Lewis and Aitken these are aviaries and animal enclosures.	Randolph Hughan
<b>1935-39</b>	<b>Hamilton is sewered and public toilets are constructed following several earlier facilities</b>	Randolph Hughan
<b>1937</b>	<b>Cannon relocated to make way for bust of George V</b>	Randolph Hughan
<b>c.1941</b>	Air raid trenches dug in the Botanic Gardens <sup>44</sup>	
<b>1945</b>		Bill Graham (Curator)
<b>1946</b>		Ray Middleton (Curator)
<b>1947</b>	Children's play equipment first installed	Ray Middleton
<b>c.1959-60</b>	Bridge across lake removed	Ray Middleton
	Fountain removed from lake	Ray Middleton
<b>By 1961</b>	L. E. Huf writes a history of the Botanic Gardens	Ray Middleton
	Fernery near Court House removed.	Ray Middleton
<b>1963</b>	<b>Commencement of construction of works depot and current aviaries</b>	Ray Middleton
<b>1967</b>	<b>B.C. Naylor gates constructed</b>	Ray Middleton
	Stage demolished	Ray Middleton
<b>1968</b>	<b>Wishing well constructed</b>	Ray Middleton
	Sound shell constructed on site of previous stage	Ray Middleton
	Concrete edging added to paths	Ray Middleton

Date	Event	Curators and superintendents
1979	Flight aviary constructed	John Harrison (Superintendent)
1981	Barbeque shelter constructed	John Harrison
1982		Eric Budgeon (Superintendent)
1984	Commencement of Rejuvenation of Provincial Botanic Gardens Program	Eric Budgeon
1984	Stump marked by Major Mitchell removed to Dunkeld Museum	Eric Budgeon
1986		Les Marshall (Superintendent)
1987	<b>Friends of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens formed</b>	Les Marshall
1988	<b>Bandstand relocated from Melville Oval (original construction date 1904)</b>	Les Marshall
1988	Commemorative tree planted and time capsule installed to mark Australia's bicentenary	Les Marshall
1989	Abutilon collection established	Les Marshall
	Stone plinth removed from cannon	Les Marshall
	William Guilfoyle's 1881 plan found under stage of Town Hall during renovations.	Les Marshall
1990	Garden's listed by the National Trust	Les Marshall
	Sound shell demolished	Les Marshall
1992	<b>Wisteria arch constructed as a replica of one at Adelaide Zoo</b>	Bruce McInnes (Superintendent)
	<b>New gate installed at court house entrance as further implementation of Guilfoyle's design</b>	Bruce McInnes
1993	<i>Hamilton Botanic Gardens Conservation Analysis</i> produced by Nigel Lewis and Richard Aitken Pty Ltd in association with France Gilfedder and Associates	Bruce McInnes
	William Guilfoyle's letter and notes found at the Hamilton Visitor's centre	Bruce McInnes
1994	<i>Hamilton Botanic Gardens Conservation Policy and Strategy for Implementation</i> produced by Francine Gilfedder and Associates in association with Nigel Lewis and Richard Aitken Pty Ltd	Bruce McInnes
1994	<b>Seat constructed around Weeping Elm</b>	Kerry Darling (Gardener)
1995	Use of curator's cottage granted to Friends of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens	
	Refurbishment of lake and reconstruction of bridge and fountain.	
1996	Commemorative Montezuma Pine planted by James Guilfoyle, grandson of William Guilfoyle.	
1996-97	Renovation of curator's cottage	

<sup>2</sup> Hansen Partnership, 2012, vol 1 pg 8

<sup>3</sup> Visit Southern Grampians, 16/02/15

<sup>4</sup> Visit Southern Grampians, 16/02/15

<sup>5</sup> Garden, 1984, pg 4

<sup>6</sup> Garden, 1984, pg 5

<sup>7</sup> Shire of Melton Reconciliation Plan 2010-2014

<sup>8</sup> Garden, 1984, pg 5

<sup>9</sup> Garden, 1984, pg 5

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- 10 www.gunditjmirring.com "Lake Condah Restoration Project"
- 11 Garden, 1984, pg 5 quoting William Thomas, 1844
- 12 Garden, 1984, pg 16
- 13 Garden, 1984, pg 22
- 14 Aitken and Looker, 2002, pg 98
- 15 Thacker, 1994, pg 233
- 16 Aitken and Looker, 2002, pg 521
- 17 Aitken and Looker, 2002, pg 98
- 18 Aitken and Looker, 2002, pg 98
- 19 Fitzroy Gardens HVic registration (H1834) and Aitken and Looker, 2002, pg 490
- 20 Watts, 1983, pg 54
- 21 Watts, 1983, pg 56-57
- 22 Watts, 1983, pg 54
- 23 Note: history reproduced from Laidlaw & Laidlaw Design, 2011, Kyneton Botanic Gardens Master Plan
- 24 Watts, 1983, pg 59
- 25 HVic, 2014, pg 2
- 26 Aitken and Looker, 2002, pg 211
- 27 Nigel Lewis Richard Aitken Pty Ltd, 1993, pg 6
- 28 Aitken and Looker, 2002, pg 212
- 29 Nigel Lewis Richard Aitken Pty Ltd, 1993, pg 6
- 30 Aitken and Looker, 2002, pg 212
- 31 Aitken and Looker, 2002, pg 280
- 32 Aitken and Looker, 2002, pg 279
- 33 Aitken and Looker, 2002, pg 280
- 34 Aitken and Looker, 2002, pg 281
- 35 Aitken and Looker, 2002, pg 282
- 36 Blainey, 2013 pg 20
- 37 VPRS 242 unit 13 doc 97025 (from Nigel Lewis Richard Aitken Pty Ltd, 1993)
- 38 Hamilton Spectator 16 Feb 1870 pg 2 (from Nigel Lewis Richard Aitken Pty Ltd, 1993)
- 39 Hamilton Spectator 16 Feb 1870 pg 2 (from Nigel Lewis Richard Aitken Pty Ltd, 1993)
- 40 Hamilton Spectator 3 June 1871 (from Nigel Lewis Richard Aitken Pty Ltd, 1993)
- 41 Hamilton Spectator, 25 November 1914 confirmed Garden, 1984, pg 40
- 42 Garden, 1984, pg 40
- 43 Borough of Hamilton, Ledger, 9 Oct 1905 (from Nigel Lewis Richard Aitken Pty Ltd, 1993)
- 44 Garden, 1984, pg 203



Figure 7: Hospital Sunday in the Hamilton Botanic Gardens 17 November 1910  
Source: Museum Victoria

## 4 Existing Conditions and Site Analysis

### 4.1 Environmental Conditions

#### Topography

Hamilton Botanic Gardens sits at the top of a hill in the centre of Hamilton, meaning its trees dominate the town's skyline. The general classification of the area is "Undulating Plains – Western District".<sup>45</sup>

The Gardens themselves are moderately sloping, falling 11m from the French/Kennedy Street Corner eastward to the Thompson/Martin Street Corner. The upper and lower corners of the site are both relatively flat – especially around the French Street gates and near the lake, while there is a 9m fall and a grade of approx. 9% across the central lawn. This makes the central section of the site difficult to traverse for people with special needs. To the east of the site, along Thompson Street sits a natural hill which rises 6.5m above street level. This hill was once known as Mount Craig and was described as being "a high hill, principally composed of large boulders of honeycomb stone, about fifty feet (15m) high, in the shape of a sugar loaf".<sup>46</sup> This area has been considerably altered to a sedate, flat topped hill with small garden beds to the top and a number of large trees on its embankments.

#### Climate

Hamilton has a typical mediterranean climate with hot, dry summers and cold, wet winters. Compared to Melbourne and other areas of Victoria it has less annual rainfall and more seasonal variation in when it occurs – being wetter in winter and dryer in summer than other areas. Temperate variation is less pronounced, with Hamilton having similar maximum temperatures to other parts of the state but lower minimum temperatures. Frosts are possible at all times of the year<sup>47</sup> but data on the precise number was unavailable. The area gets some sea breeze from Warrnambool to the south, which helps reduce the temperature.

From 1886 Hamilton had its own weather station in the township, but this was moved to the local airport in 1983. This means that distinct climate data is available for last 30 years of readings. Comparatively, the Hamilton Airport station records significantly less rainfall and has a slightly higher maximum and lower minimum temperature.

Table 1: Hamilton Airport Climate Data. 1983-2014. Station 090173

	March	June	Sept	December	Annual
Max temp	24.0	12.9	15.3	23.9	19.1
Min temp	10.2	5.0	5.8	9.4	7.6
Rain fall	34.9mm	67.0mm	66.4mm	45.2mm	614.7mm
3pm wind speed	21.1	20.6	23.1	22.6	21.8

Table 2: Hamilton Climate Data. 1886-1983. Station 090044

	March	June	Sept	December	Annual
Max temp	23.0	12.7	15.4	23.3	18.6
Min temp	10.6	4.5	6.1	10.1	8.0
Rain fall	43mm	71.8mm	72.5mm	44.8mm	686.5mm

### Micro-climate

The Hamilton Botanic Gardens is located on a hill in the centre of the Hamilton Township. This would make it susceptible to wind but would also provide some level of protection from extreme low temperatures. Due to the established tree canopy much of the site is at least partially shaded, with some areas, especially along Thompson Street, being heavily shaded. The Growing season in the Gardens lasts for eight to nine months, with the most favourable time being late spring.<sup>48</sup>

### Soils

According to the 1994 *Conservation Policy and Strategy for Implantation* the soils are consistently a sandy loam over a gravelly loam and a clay base. Testing undertaken at this time by the Turf Research and Advisory Institute showed the soil to have a pH of 5.7 and salt levels at 343ppm<sup>49</sup> which is within the ideal range. The general classification for the soils in the area is “with red and yellow duplex soils, imperfectly drained with a pH of 5.5.”<sup>50</sup>

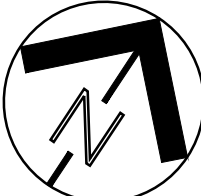
## 4.2 Site Description and Analysis

The Hamilton Botanic Gardens is in a prime location at the edge of the Hamilton CBD, surrounded by historic homes and civil buildings. As it sits at one of the highest points in Hamilton the tall trees dominate the City's landscape and meld with the spires and towers of other historic buildings. Its elevated location means the Gardens are both easy to locate and are an integral part of the Hamilton Landscape.

The Gardens' design generally follows the 1881 plan by William Guilfoyle (see section 3.4), with a meandering perimeter walk, historic trees and scattered garden beds. A lake, to Guilfoyle's design sits at the lowest point near the Martin and Thompson Street Corners, with the later addition of an ornamental bridge connecting the internal paths to the Hamilton Courthouse entrance on Martin Street. The remainder of the Martin Street frontage, and continuing around the Kennedy Street corner consists of poorly presented zoological exhibits and back of house management requirements. The remainder of the garden is dedicated to ornamental horticulture in a traditional Botanic Garden setting.



Figure 8: A Peacock, one of the last remaining zoological features



# HAMILTON BOTANIC GARDENS

EXISTING CONDITIONS PLAN

Scale 1:500 @ A1 / 1:1000 @ A3



LEGEND



MAJOR ENTRANCE



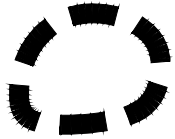
MINOR ENTRANCE



POOR VIEW



GOOD VIEW TO BAY



MAJOR AREAS TO BE ADDRESSED BY MASTER PLAN



PATHWAYS GENERALLY FOLLOWING 1881 GUILFOYLE DESIGN



PATHWAYS GENERALLY FOLLOWING 1870 FERGUSEN DESIGN



HAMILTON BOTANIC GARDENS

SITE ANALYSIS PLAN  
Scale 1:500 @ A1 / 1:1000 @ A3





The main entry to the Gardens is the Thompson Street entrance at the corner of Thompson and French Streets, closest to the Hamilton CBD. This entrance is marked by ornamental gates installed in 1893 and paid for by donations from the Australian Native Association and the general public - an example of the Garden's long history of philanthropic projects. Immediately inside and facing this entrance is a bust of George the VI sitting in a triangular lawn which was once home to the HMAS Nelson. This entrance is ornamental with a good collection of established trees. Site lines into and out of the Gardens are good and a small picnic area immediately to the left of the entrance is both quaint and decorative. The front entrance gates are cream in colour and in need of maintenance.



**Figure 9: George IV bust**



**Figure 10: Thompson Street Gates and historic fence**

Taking the path to the left, the wide perimeter walkway heads past the c.1935-39 toilet block. This block of sits comfortably in the landscape without requiring screening. Its location is also functional, being immediately accessible from the bus bay on Thompson Street. However large water tanks to the rear of the toilets are unsightly. It is understood that they were previously used to regulate water supply but may now no longer be required. The toilet block is in need of internal renovation to bring it up to current hygiene standards. Internal lighting is also required. The large Oak at the junction of the main path is listed by the National Trust and is reputedly the widest spreading English Oak in Victoria.



**Figure 11: Toilets and water tanks**



**Figure 12: picnic area inside Thompson Street gates**

The central focus of the Gardens is a large, open lawn flanked by mature trees. The upper slopes of the lawn have been terraced with stone walls, mixed plantings, walkways and two feature fountains. The lower lawns are dotted with trees and some small scale garden beds which lack context. The Melville Oval rotunda in the centre of the lawn provides a highly ornamental and appropriate focal point for the Gardens. This structure is visible throughout the Gardens, assisting with way finding and orientation and providing picturesque views from a range of vantage points. This structure is also used for concerts and events in the Gardens and it is ideally placed on the central lawns.



**Figure 13: Lawn, trees and rock walling**



**Figure 14: Rotunda and central lawn**

Below the Rotunda on the Thompson street frontage is the hill. This natural rise sits approximately 6.5m above the surrounding landscape and is all that is left of a 15m high, boulder strewn outcrop once known as Mount Craig. This area was levelled in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and for many decades featured a rotunda / band pavilion. It now sits as a mown lawn with a series of small bluestone lined garden beds. These garden beds are small, lack context and detract from the broader landscape. Providing all abilities access to the top of the hill would be challenging due to the incline.



**Figure 15: Garden beds to top of hill**



**Figure 16: View of hill from central lawn**

Beyond the hill and sitting in the lowest portion of the Gardens is the ornamental lake. This body of water was designed by William Guilfoyle and its current shape is very close to that on Guilfoyle's plan. The bridge however was a later addition not intended by Guilfoyle and sits on the alignment of a Ferguson era pathway. The bridge does not relate well to the lake and lacks foreground. The bridge has been demolished and rebuilt on a number of occasions (see section 3.5) and is again reaching the end of its life.



**Figure 17: Lake and bridge**

The lake includes two small islands, a fountain which is not operational and rough basalt edging. This edging was installed post the 1993 Conservation Analysis in order to replace the historically inappropriate concrete edge which had been installed in intervening years. During consultation it also emerged that the lake may be leaking and this needs to be investigated.

To the east of the lake sits the low key, but ornamental B.C. Naylor gates which were installed in 1967. These gates are made of wrought iron with a design of two peacocks as their main feature. The gates sit within biscuit coloured stone (Castlemaine slate or similar) pillars and low walls. These gates, while being a later addition are handsome and appropriately decorative. They were purchased for the gardens by Mrs E. V. Naylor as another philanthropic gesture. The peacock motif reflects the Gardens zoological facilities.

There is a distinct lack of planting detail around the Naylor gates and the perimeter path sits closer to them than intended by Guilfoyle. The adjacent 1968 wishing well (of the same stone as the Naylor Gates) sits on its own in the centre of the adjacent lawn.



**Figure 18: B.C. Naylor Entrance**



**Figure 19: Wishing Well**

The remainder of the Martin Street frontage is comprised of a vacant animal enclosure. This area once housed Emus and Wallabies and is a remnant of the time when zoological exhibits were considered a complimentary part of many Botanic Gardens. This space has been vacant since 2012 when the last Emus died. It now sits behind a cyclone wire fence and presents a somewhat dismal and neglected appearance. Within the enclosure a bluestone rill (possibly a previous extension of the lake) and established trees are remnants of its former inclusion in the general Botanic Gardens. This area has been earmarked for redevelopment, and the removal of the animals provides the ideal opportunity to extend the ornamental gardens back to their intended extent.



**Figure 20: Unsightly fence to animal enclosure**



**Figure 21: Bluestone rill and established trees in animal enclosure**

The corner of Martin and Kennedy Streets is enclosed on the streetward side and houses the former Curator's Cottage - now used by the Friends of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens. This cottage includes a small, domestic scale garden to the front enclosed by a cream coloured picket fence and a sensory

garden created by the Friends to its rear. The western side of the cottage along Kennedy Street abuts a large works depot and aviaries. This entire corner of the gardens is either off-limits to the public or of restricted access. The high paling fences to the rear and views into the works area detract from its amenity and sit in stark contrast to the rest of the Gardens.



Figure 22: Former Caretakers Cottage



Figure 23: Sensory garden and magnificent Oak to the rear of the Cottage

The picket fence and small garden to the front of the Cottage provides an appropriate setting for the building, which is one of the few historic caretaker's cottages to remain within a regional Botanic Garden. The Cottage has been painted a vivid green colour following historical investigation, however this shade is garish and the Friends wish to repaint in a more subtle hue.

The works area to the north of the cottage was once the Parks & Gardens depot but now services only the Hamilton Botanic Gardens. The collection of buildings includes a lunch / staff room, machinery sheds, poly and shade houses and takes up a larger footprint than is required. The interface of the works area visually intrudes on the ornamental Gardens as it is not appropriately screened.



Figure 24: Old aviaries, cottage and entrance to the work's depot

A series of small, domestic scale aviaries sit between the works area and the Gardens and public consultation clearly indicated that these should be removed and the birds rehoused. These aviaries are of a simple concrete bunker design and are now no longer appropriate in a public garden. Adjacent to these small aviaries is a large flight aviary constructed in 1979 and housing a variety of birds including Crimson Rosellas and Indian Ring Necks. This aviary is nearing the end of its useful

life and is only open to the public on weekdays – a concern raised during community consultation. The presence of the birds in the gardens is publically popular, and historically appropriate as Hamilton is one of only three Victorian botanic gardens to retain zoological features. The aviary was damaged by a falling tree during the production of the Master Plan with the loss of some birds. This damage is being repaired in the short term.



Figure 25: Small aviaries proposed for removal



Figure 26: 1970s flight aviary

To the Gardens side of the works area and aviaries sits the Botanic Garden’s main picnic area. This includes a small scale playground with basic equipment typical of that found in pocket parks, a drinking fountain, picnic tables and a BBQ in a hexagonal shelter. The 1930 Country Women’s Association Glasshouse is also in this area. These features are scattered across the lawn area and while they would benefit from a greater degree of design unity are not inappropriate. The location of the picnic area does not interfere with the ornamental nature of the rest of the Gardens and the playground is largely screened. This being said, play equipment is now usually avoided in Botanic Gardens. The main criticism which emerged during consultation is that this part of the Gardens is too far from the toilet facilities – especially for children and those with limited mobility.



Figure 27: Country Women’s Association Glasshouse

The 1930 Country Women’s Association Glasshouse is a small scale structure not open to the public but with good visibility from the outside. This sits somewhat unfortunately in the centre of the lawn and lacks context, however its small size makes it difficult to incorporate garden beds without losing the structure’s sense of scale.



Figure 28: Margaret Laidlaw Memorial



Figure 29: Kennedy Street Frontage from French Street

The remainder of the Kennedy Street frontage is open, with scattered trees and clumps of Spear Lilies (*Doryanthes excelsa*) but no real garden beds. The exception to this is the Margaret Laidlaw memorial installed in the 1940s. This small garden is domestic in scale with a concrete bench, urns and dwarf conifers. This garden is out of place in a public Botanic Garden and is more reminiscent of a memorial found in a cemetery.



Figure 30: French Street Gates

The Hamilton Botanic Garden's second main entrance is known as the French Street Entrance and sits at the corner of French and Kennedy Streets opposite the Grey Street Primary School. This entrance includes ornamental wrought iron gates installed in 1909 and looks directly onto the Thompson Fountain. This entrance is decorative, however the gates require maintenance and the entrance lacks planting detail.

The Thompson Street Fountain is a large, ornamental structure typical of 19<sup>th</sup> century design styles. This fountain is in working order but the ornamental detailing is in need of repair. The Fountain would benefit from increased landscape context. Guilfoyle originally intended a rose garden for the triangular lawn in front of the fountain, but this was not installed.

The final frontage is along French Street and is more enclosed than the Kennedy Street frontage, with large historic trees and some Garden Beds. This frontage also includes the historic wrought iron fence with timber posts which starts at the Skene Street entrance and continues along Martin and French Streets and for a distance of 1 chain along Thompson Street. The perimeter path along French Street is enclosed, and sits comfortably within the Garden, although it is visually separated from the main lawn in a number of places. The historic cannon from the HMAS Nelson now sits at

the junction of two pathways along this frontage. A small scale entrance off French Street half way down lacks path connections and is infrequently used.



**Figure 31: Thompson Fountain viewed from French Street entrance**

The centre of the Gardens is dominated by the central lawn as described above. At its upper end the 1908 Australian Natives Association (ANA) Fountain sits at the junction of two paths, and while historic is easily missed. This fountain is enclosed in a series of garden beds interspersed with paths and is no longer operable – the fountain structure having been replaced by planting. These surrounding gardens provide enclosure for the central lawn, separating it from the Kennedy Street frontage and include a number of arches of no known historic interest. Another larger wisteria arch, a copy of one found in Adelaide Zoo and installed in 1992 sits above them and straddles the perimeter path. Paths in this area lead to a dead-end in the native garden, the poorest quality part of the ornamental gardens.

### 4.3 Furniture and Infrastructure

#### Paths

Pathways within the Gardens are of two distinct types – the straight, narrower paths intended by Ferguson and the wide sweeping paths designed by Guilfoyle. A small number of the narrower paths are remnants of the 1870 Ferguson layout - although others appear to postdate Guilfoyle's involvement but mirror Ferguson's intent with no regard for Guilfoyle's design. These straight paths sit awkwardly in the landscape, as they appear to have been designed for practicality in traversing the site, rather than Guilfoyle's picturesque, sweeping style. In one case these paths finish abruptly in the poor quality native garden, forming an inappropriate dead-end.

Pathways in the garden are predominantly bitumen with red brick edging. These pathways are often very wide, disproportionately so and in poor condition with asphalt cracked in need of repair. This cracking is primarily due to tree roots and soil dryness, although it is also important that large vehicles are kept out of the gardens whenever possible. Guilfoyle initially intended the pathways to be 17 or 18 feet wide (5.1 – 5.4m). The red brick edging was installed by former curator Ray Middleton who also narrowed the paths from 24 feet back to the 18 feet intended by Guilfoyle. If paths were further reduced in width to 4m then they would be more pedestrian in scale, require less maintenance and still allow vehicle access. The red brick edge would also benefit from replacement with a cleaner finishing material such as timber or steel. This same material could be used on the garden beds to imitate the spade edge which is now too labour intensive to use.



Figure 32: French Street entrance showing pathway edging, signage and ornamental fence

Gravel paths are restricted to the area to the rear of the cottage and the French and Kennedy street frontages. Gravel would not be suitable for use across much of the Botanic Gardens due to the slope of the land.

### Garden bed edging

A variety of garden bed edging is used across the Gardens including

- Rustic bluestone spalls which appear to date from the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century
- Poor quality mortared bluestone spall retaining wall style edging near the ANA Fountain
- Bluestone pitchers, probably dating from the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century
- No edging where garden beds meld into lawn areas

These edging treatments are all appropriate with the exception being where there is no edge and in these cases the garden beds need to be formally defined.

### Mulch Circle Tree Rings

Tree rings have been used in a selected number of places presumably where it is difficult to establish grass under mature trees. These are usually unedged although timber has been used in one case (the Weeping Elm along Kennedy Street).

### Trees

Trees within the Botanic Gardens are an excellent mix of botanically diverse mature trees as befits an 19<sup>th</sup> century Botanic Garden. Trees are currently reactively assessed by an external arboricultural contract as problems arise. The Gardens are looking to implement a more proactive approach with annual inspections using a managed software program.

### Garden Beds

Garden beds are generally well placed, although more consideration could be given to how they frame views and define a sense of mass and void in the Gardens. Guilfoyle originally intended that the Gardens be entirely enclosed with thick, screening Garden beds. This did not take place, and only a fraction of the beds he recommended were ever installed. Many of the existing beds are planted with medium-large shrubs, and therefore lack the planting structure and diversity which comes with well-designed and layered planting in Botanic Gardens. Many of these garden beds are patchy due to competition with the tree canopy for light, water and nutrients.



**Picnic Facilities**



**Figure 33: BBQ Shelter and typical furnishings in the Gardens**

Picnic facilities are clustered around the Aviaries and playground with a limited number of tables on the central lawn and near the cannon. Bench seats dot the Gardens but rubbish bins are restricted to entrances and are all external to the Gardens. Furnishings are mostly of a consistent style. Picnic and park facilities include:

- A fixed timber and steel picnic table with bench seats and wheel chair accessibility at ends on a brick or concrete slab. This style of table is simple, consistent and appropriate.
- A timber and wrought iron bench seat either fixed on a concrete slab or moveable. The newer benches have been painted brown to match the tables, but the older moveable benches are often in poor condition. This style of seat is simple, consistent and appropriate.
- Simple, heritage green timber bench seats in poor condition near the native garden. These seats were built by sustenance workers in the 1930s<sup>51</sup> and should be retained and interpreted.
- A heritage green steel, wheel chair accessible drinking fountain near the BBQ and aviary
- Heritage green rubbish bins on the street side of the Gardens’ entrances and exits
- A picnic shelter with bluestone BBQ near the aviary. This shelter is of a simple design, and while not obtrusive lacks architectural interest.



**Figure 34: Timber seats near native garden built by sustenance workers**



**Figure 35: Wheelchair accessible drinking fountain**

### Play equipment

A small playground is currently provided near the picnic facilities. These are all aimed at young children and include a relatively new timber fort and springer, a small swing set and an older see-saw. The new equipment is in good condition, but is of a simple design and so of limited interest. Generally speaking the provision of play equipment is not compatible with a Botanic Gardens core function and can be better provided elsewhere.



Figure 36: New timber fort and springer



Figure 37: See-saw

### Irrigation

Water in the Gardens is sourced from the local reservoir, with a line running through the Gardens and servicing the Botanic Gardens and Melville Oval. This line is reserved for Council use only. This water source is very reliable, with restrictions during the drought limited to specified times for watering. There are currently no restrictions on water use.

Irrigation for the Gardens is comprised of pop-up sprinklers which run on a timer and cover 95% of the lawns and Garden beds on the site. \$21,000 has been spent in the last twelve months in upgrading this system with a new pump and repair of solenoids. The system was installed by a local plumber who also maintains it. This repair work means the irrigation system is up to date and completely adequate for Gardens use.

### Toilets

The condition of the current toilets is discussed above on pages iv and 29.

### Signage

Signage in the Hamilton Botanic Gardens is limited and of various styles. A number of interpretative plaques discussing the Garden's history and William Guilfoyle's involvement are present along the Thompson Street perimeter path and are appropriately low key. However these signs need to be regularly cleaned so they are clearly visible.

A large entrance sign and map is located just inside the Thompson Street gates and includes a history of the Botanic Gardens and list of the National Trust listed trees. This sign is overgrown by the surrounding shrubs and is showing signs of age.

An old entrance sign at the French Street Gates and Skene Street Gates outlining the rules of the Gardens is a simple and tactful way of describing the rules governing the use of the Gardens.



Figure 38: Good example of interpretative signage in Gardens

All garden entrances contain standard council signs prohibiting the consumption of Alcohol in the gardens. These signs are visually intrusive due to their size and prominent location.

A large number of the trees and shrubs in the Botanic Gardens have been labelled. These labels are sympathetic and of a consistent style.



Figure 39: Examples of various poor or inconsistent signage

From left, overgrown entrance sign at Thompson Street, prominent sign banning alcohol at French Street side entrance, old sign at French Street entrance.

### Lighting

Lighting in the gardens is limited to one traditional street lamp near the Thompson Street entrance and toilets and one upright to the Bunya Pine on the central lawn. Both lights are appropriate but require maintenance.

### Monuments

The Hamilton Botanic Gardens contain four bluestone monuments marking historic trees. These are all in good condition and should be retained in their current locations. They are a unique way of reflecting the role commemorative planting has played in the development of the Botanic Gardens.

### Parking

“On street” parallel parking around the Gardens is plentiful, with marked bays on both sides of Thompson and French Streets and one side of Kennedy Street. Unmarked parking is available to the other side of Kennedy Street and both sides of Martin Street. Bus parking is available near the

toilets on Thompson Street. Care will need to be taken that designated bus parking and disabled car parks are provided near the new community Garden.

Footpaths accessing this parking are available in all but Martin Street and behind the Cottage and Works Depot. These paths should be continued around all sides of the Garden.

#### 4.4 Management Structure and Staffing

Hamilton Botanic Gardens currently employs one head gardener and one and both positions are under the supervision of the *Team Leader – Works*. This number of gardeners is currently considered to be appropriate, although additional staff will be needed once the community precinct is constructed. During consultation concerns were raised about the title of the head gardener, with a request made to restore the previous job title of “superintendent” or “curator” in a hope of ensuring the roll maintains and attracts horticulturalists of a high professional standing. Consideration needs to be given to ensuring that Gardens staff continue to be appropriately qualified and experienced. The presence of aviary birds requires staff have appropriate animal husbandry skills.

#### 4.5 Use of the Site

The Hamilton Botanic Gardens is largely used as a place of passive recreation, although a number of organised activities do take place in the Gardens. These are sympathetic to its historical and social status although concern was raised about the number and type of events and the impact they have on the fabric of the Gardens. Events currently held in the Gardens include:

- Sunday Music in the Gardens (concert) once a month in summer
- Carols by Candlelight
- Australia day ceremonies are held in the Rotunda and on the central lawn
- Weddings and wedding photography
- Private, small scale parties held in the park
- A farmers market has been held in the past as an annual event
- Longest lunch and other fundraising events have been held but not as an annually

Currently all events require the completion of a booking form and the payment of a \$145 fee plus a refundable \$300 Damage Deposit.



Figure 40: School Band Practice in the Gardens

#### 4.6 Demographics

##### Introduction

For the purposes of this Master Plan the demographic data is based on the Southern Grampians Shire Council as a whole. The city of Hamilton makes up approximately 60% of the Shire’s population and

acts as important regional centre. Therefore the statistics for the Shire as a whole are appropriate for assessing the catchment area for the day to day users of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens.

Demographic data was taken from the profile.id website for the Southern Grampians Shire Council and reflect statistics for the year 2011. The exception to this is for long term population data, which is based on estimates for the year 2013 and taken from the Southern Grampians Shire Council Economic Scorecard.

### Age and Population

- The **Southern Grampians Shire Council** had a population of **16,145** people in 2013, **declining by 227** people from the previous year.
- Long term the **population** of the shire has **decreased**, with a loss of **2,115 residents** over a **20 year period**. This population loss was **steady** for most of the **2000s**, but has increased again over the past five years with a loss of 724 residents in this period.
- The **median age** of residents of the Shire is **44**, three years **older** than the **regional Victorian average** and seven years older than the state average.
- **Couples with children** make up **26%** of the population, similar to the rest of rural Victoria but **below the State average** of 32%
- The majority of households live on larger or rural blocks with only **6%** of the population in **medium to high density housing**.

### Economics and Welfare

- The Shire's **SEIFA** index of disadvantage rating is **994**, **above** the **regional Victoria** rating of 978 but below the state level of 1010. The higher this score the less disadvantage in the region.
- **Median weekly household income** is **\$908**, 4% below the regional Victorian average and **26% below the state average**.
- However **housing costs are lower**, with only **27%** of households have a **mortgage**, compared to the state average of 34%. Median **weekly rent** is just over **half the state average**.
- **Unemployment** is also **low**, sitting at **3.8%** compared to 5.2% for regional Victoria and 5.4% for the state.
- **5.8%** of residents require help on a day to day basis due to **disability**. This is very similar to the rate for regional Victoria but **above the State rate of 4.8%**

### Ethnicity

- Only **2%** of residents are from **non-English speaking** backgrounds compared to 20% for the state population
- **7.3%** of the population was **born overseas** compared to 10.6% for rural Victoria and 26.2% for the state population

### Education

- **12%** of the population have a **Bachelor or Higher degree** compared to 13% for regional Victoria and 21% for the State
- **Vocational training** is **higher** with **20%** of the population having a qualification, similar to the rest of regional Victoria but above the State rate of 16%

- 
- <sup>45</sup> DSE, Biodiversity Interactive Map 3.2, 16/02/15  
<sup>46</sup> Hamilton Spectator, 25 November 1914 (from Nigel Lewis Richard Aitken Pty Ltd, 1993)  
<sup>47</sup> Francine Gilfedder & Associates, 1994, pg 7  
<sup>48</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>49</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>50</sup> DSE, Biodiversity Interactive Map 3.2, 16/02/15  
<sup>51</sup> Francine Gilfedder, 1994 pg 45

## 5 Statutory Context

### 5.1 Planning Controls and Local Government Policies

The Hamilton Botanic Gardens are governed by very few planning controls under the Southern Grampians Shire Council Planning Scheme. These include:

#### Public Park and Recreation Zoning

The Botanic Gardens is zoned Public Park and Recreation with no schedules to the zoning. As all works will be carried out “by or on behalf of the land manager” and no prohibited works are proposed then this zoning should have no impact on the implementation of this Master Plan.

#### Heritage Overlay H0268

This Heritage Overlay is out of date as it fails to reflect the Garden’s listing on the State Heritage Register. As such it should be updated when the opportunity arises. The overlay’s citation also lists “W Ferguson” as the designer and this should be corrected to state “William Guilfoyle”. As the State Heritage Register overrides local heritage controls (and is more stringent) then this local listing should not impact on the management of the Gardens.

#### Southern Grampians Shire Council Policies

The management and development of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens is potentially impacted by a number of Southern Grampians Council policies and strategies, and any works undertaken as part of the implementation of this Master Plan should be in accordance with these documents.

### 5.2 State Government Controls

#### Victorian Heritage Register

The Hamilton Botanic Gardens are listed on the Victorian Heritage Register as H2185. This registration takes precedence over the local Heritage Overlays (as described above), as no permit is required under a Heritage Overlay for a place on the Victorian Heritage Register. The State Heritage Registration for the site covers the entire site and requires that a permit be obtained for all works. Of particular relevance to this Master Plan is the specific registration of the existing path system and the Flight Aviary, with a permit being required to alter these elements. A full copy of the registration is provided at Appendix 5 (page 60) with a summary incorporated into Appendix 1 (page 46) which contains the general information on cultural significance.

#### Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity

No part of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens has been designated as an area of *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity*. The Southern Grampians Shire Council should contact Aboriginal Affairs Victoria to determine whether any places or objects have been registered under the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register and Information System (ACHRIS)*. It is considered highly unlikely that the Gardens appear on ACHRIS due to the disturbed nature of the site and its presence in the centre of Hamilton, but this should be done as a matter of due diligence.

### 5.3 National Trust

The Hamilton Botanic Gardens is registered by the National Trust as G13112. Ten trees also appear on its Significant Tree Register as detailed in Appendix 1 (page 46). While National Trust listing

provides no statutory protection or financial support, it does carry weight with the public and increases the profile of the Gardens.

## 5.4 Additional Requirements

All works undertaken as part of the implementation of Hamilton Botanic Gardens Master Plan should be undertaken in accordance with relevant local, State and Federal government laws and to the satisfaction of relevant government bodies. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Equal opportunity provisions including the disability discrimination act
- Laws relating to the protection of natural resources
- VicRoads requirements
- WorkSafe provisions
- Building Code of Australia
- Relevant Australian Standards



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## Appendix 1: Elements of Cultural Significance

The following details the information provided by the 1993 *Hamilton Botanic Gardens Conservation Analysis* on the relative significance of various elements and the Gardens as a whole. This summary was produced in order to guide the development of the Master Plan, but does not cover all information provided in the original document which should be referred to for further detail.

### Analysis of Cultural Significance

#### Historic significance

##### *For its retention of complementary overlays of development*

Referring to the graph of expenditure on the Hamilton Botanic Gardens (1870-1939) it can be seen that expenditure on the gardens was consistently maintained over an extremely long time (and has continued to the present, although not graphed). There is a dramatic rise in expenditure coinciding with implementation of the Guilfoyle Scheme (1880s) and this had previously only been matched by the initial flurry of activity in erecting the fence and initial planting (1870-71). There are occasional peaks, such as the erection of the Thompson Street (northern) gates (1893) but there are almost no drops in expenditure. The expenditure of the 1870s and 80s was consolidated and maintained, with successive generations adding to the rich overlay of historical significance. There have been no dramatic declines, as many other provincial botanic gardens have suffered, and this is a characteristic Hamilton shares with say Warrnambool Botanic Gardens, but distinguishes it from say Camperdown or Kyneton. This is due in large measure to the stability of management from three successive curators - James, Hughan and Middleton who between them controlled the gardens for 90 years (1889-1979).

Several of the following points draw out the historical significance of individual periods of the history of the gardens.

##### *As one of the earliest provincial botanic garden sites in Australia*

The current ten acre site maintains the original reservation of 1853 (surveyed in 1850-51). This makes the site one of the earliest provincial botanic garden sites in Victoria (and indeed Australia). Earlier botanic garden sites were at Sydney (1816), Hobart (1818), Perth (1831) and Melbourne (1846). The 1853 date of reservation places the Hamilton gardens with the three pre-gold rush botanic garden sites at Melbourne (1846), Geelong (1850) and Portland (1850) as the earliest botanic gardens reserved in the colony. It should be noted that the majority of early provincial botanic gardens in Victoria were located in townships developed as a result of gold discoveries e.g. White Hills (1854), Malmsbury (1855), Castlemaine (1854) and Ballarat (1856-58).

##### *For surviving plantings of the 1870s*

Some of Ferguson and Mueller's plantings of 1870 survive. These are thought to be *Sequoiadendron giganteum*, *Pinus radiata* (introduced to Victoria in 1857), *P. nigra* var. *maritima*, *P. sabiniana*, *Cupressus macrocarpa* and possibly *Araucaria bidwillii* and *Pinus canariensis*. They are characteristic of the species used in Victoria throughout the mid-late nineteenth century and represent the distribution function of Botanic Gardens nursery and the State Nursery at Mount Macedon. Ferguson's input is critical as he had recently been appointed Inspector of State Forests and also replaced the ousted Ferdinand von Mueller as Curator of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens. Mueller was involved in supplying plants to Hamilton and his work in this field is without parallel in Australia. The plantings and remnant layout (fragmentary as it is) of 1870 at Hamilton Botanic Gardens constitute the only known example of Ferguson's work to survive in part or whole.

*As a work of William Guilfoyle*

The layout incorporates many of Guilfoyle's features from his 1881 plan although in the absence of his report many detailed aspects of his scheme (especially planting) are unknown. The path layout and some beds broadly follow his plan, assuming a certain latitude in translating the plan to the ground. The Hamilton design incorporates many of his characteristic design elements - use of water, broad sweeping paths, expansive lawns, and mixture of specimen trees and irregular clumps of shrubberies. Many of the plants are also species favoured by him e.g. Cordyline, Palms and Doryanthes. With Warrnambool Botanic Gardens, Hamilton is his finest and most intact public garden outside the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne.

*For surviving Edwardian and post First World War planting and structures*

Of the Edwardian and post First World War period, the fence, gates and Thomson Memorial Fountain survive. Planting from this period includes the palms *Butia capitata* and *Washingtonia robusta*. There was an increased interest in gardens during the Edwardian period and this is represented by the substantial perimeter fence, gates and fountain.

*Surviving structures and works*

The garden retains several important early structures and works. These include Cottage, Cannon, Thomson Street (northern) gates. Fence. French Street (western) gates and Skene Street gates, Thomson Memorial Fountain, commemorative obelisk, George V bust and relocated bandstand.

*As a example of an Australian provincial botanic garden*

As previously mentioned, the Hamilton Botanic Gardens was landscaped to an overall plan, has been consistently funded, well maintained and has matured into a fine example of a landscaped botanic garden. It shares these qualities with several other comparable gardens, most notably the botanic gardens at Warrnambool, Williamstown and Albury. Individual aspects which contribute to the significance of Hamilton are detailed elsewhere in this section.

*As an Australian example of the Gardenesque*

Guilfoyle's scheme at Hamilton was infused by Picturesque sensibilities but his general planting (and indeed that of Ferguson) placed strong emphasis on individual specimen trees and their botanical significance, a hallmark of the Gardenesque. This was overlaid by beds of clumped planting, designed both for overall visual effect and to display the botanical and horticultural characteristics of the plants (e.g. the New Zealand bed and Tulip bed).

*For its collection of documentary evidence*

There is a wealth of documentary evidence for the Hamilton Botanic Gardens. The recent rediscovery of the Guilfoyle plan has been a major boost to our understanding of the history of the garden. It is a rare example of a plan of a nineteenth century garden and, even rarer, as an example of Guilfoyle's plans. The council committee minute books are a rich source held by few comparable councils and the large number of early illustrations is relatively rare for such a garden. The work in the garden since 1985 has focused on the high cultural significance of the garden and such interest should be heightened by the assembling of this rich array of documentary material.

*For its commemorative plantings*

The Hamilton Botanic Gardens has a tradition of commemorative plantings and these contribute to the historical significance of the site (see Section 4.3 for a list of such plantings).

### *For its retention of an early zoological section*

The zoological section at Hamilton is one of few public gardens and one of even fewer provincial botanic gardens to retain a small zoological section. The manner in which the exhibits and forms of housing have altered over time signal shifts in public attitudes to zoos and naive fauna.

### **Aesthetic/visual significance**

The Hamilton Botanic Gardens displays aesthetic significance of a high order resulting from a skilful combination of its various landscape attributes. Accordingly the individual facets of aesthetic significance are outlined separately.

#### *Link with natural features*

This includes links with the original land form, especially the sloping site and the lake (possibly on the site of a lagoon or swamp).

#### *Structure of landscape forms*

The Hamilton Botanic Gardens is a complex designed landscape. It has many separate yet interrelated components. This is especially true of the disposition and layout of paths, lawns, beds, clumped planting, specimen trees and lakes.

- *paths*: the serpentine forms serve to separate and link the various parts of the Gardens and often provide an edge to contrasting elements
- *lawns*: the one main lawn at Hamilton whose broad sweep is skilfully punctuated with specimen planting and enclosed by densely planted beds. There are controlled vistas into adjacent areas and to the urban development beyond.
- *beds and clumped planting*: as with the main lawn, the layout of beds creates a major part of the landscape character; some remnants of Guilfoyle's bed layout survives
- *specimen trees*: many serve to punctuate open lawns while others are located in beds.
- *views from and vistas within gardens*: external vistas are extremely important in the Hamilton Botanic Gardens especially given the high level of intactness of surrounding urban development. Many of the buildings were constructed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and these complement the character of the gardens. There are also many important vistas within the gardens, especially across the main lawn, across the lake, looking to the mound, and looking to and from the main gates.
- *character of other structures and works*: rockeries form a unifying element in the Gardens. The relocated bandstand, cottage, Thomson Memorial Fountain, fences and gates are arguably the main structures that contribute to the aesthetic significance of the gardens.

#### *Colour*

Colour is introduced into the gardens in a variety of ways. There is firstly the background of light green lawns and generally dark background foliage. This is variable dependent on the season and atmospheric conditions. At a short distance, variety created by different trees in juxtaposition creates a richer effect and this is magnified as the viewer comes closer to planes where the effect of flowers, variegated foliage and bark is perceived. Coloured highlights are also provided by the flower beds. There are few discordant elements and most structures are painted to blend rather than contrast with the plants.

#### *Foliage*

Considerable aesthetic significance is derived from plane foliage. There is great contrast in size, colours and form; this is complemented by textual elements such as bark and fruits.

#### *Size and habit of plants*

Generally there is a consistent scale to many beds. This is punctuated by a number of individual trees, in particular conifers. Palms and bold foliaged plants (such as cordylines) also serve to punctuate the Gardens and provide a major landscape element.

#### *Contrast between seasons*

The large percentage of deciduous trees in the Hamilton Botanic gardens ensures contrast between seasons. This aspect gives the gardens considerable aesthetic significance.

#### *Link with urban form of Hamilton*

The Hamilton Botanic Gardens is surrounded by some of the most Significant residential development in the city and is part of the early town plan. This provides an important historical and architectural context for the gardens and the surrounding suburban development. The gardens also form a strong link with surrounding civic sites such as the school, court house and the church. Hamilton Botanic Gardens is a landmark in the urban landscape and glimpses of mature trees are especially prominent when approaching Hamilton from the east. The 'spires' of the conifers and the spires of local churches stand out above the predominantly low scale development of Hamilton and form a complementary relationship.

#### **Social significance**

The Hamilton Botanic Gardens has high social significance as the site has always been a prominent part of Hamilton history, due largely to its central location within the town. Its clear links with employment of a local workforce and its important role in community recreation also ensure that the site is a strong part of the local community. The graph of expenditure on the gardens (1870-1939) clearly demonstrates the popular appeal of the gardens in the local consciousness and its translation, through the elected council, to the expenditure. During much of the life of the Gardens, dressing up and promenading has been popular and this reached new height after Edwardian-era improvements. Concerts have also been a popular feature of the gardens during the twentieth century. Photographs of the gardens throughout its history emphasise the use of the gardens by people. The formation of the Friends of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens has also given a focus for social significance of the Gardens. The tradition of planting commemorative trees is also an enduring link with the local community.

The social significance of such a site can only be judged by the present community; the views of previous generations fall into the category of historical significance. On the limited consultation possible in the present study, the social significance of Hamilton Botanic Gardens to the local community appears to be very high. It is recommended, however, that the present study be made available to community groups (such as the Friends of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens) and individuals to ensure that current social attitudes can be discerned.

#### **Scientific significance**

The Hamilton Botanic Gardens has scientific significance through a number of attributes. The plant collection is well maintained much of it accurately labelled and this represents a bank of material upon which present and future generations may wish to draw. The collection of abutilons held under the aegis of the Ornamental Plant Collections Association is a very important component of this significance. A plant collection such as that held by the Hamilton Botanic Gardens requires expert care but is a rich resource for the community, now and in the future. The garden also contains a number of rare and unusual plants including nine trees on the National Trusts Register of Significant Trees.

### Statement of cultural significance

Hamilton Botanic Gardens, surveyed in 1850-51, set aside as a public garden in 1853, first planted by William Ferguson and Ferdinand Mueller in 1870 and then developed from 1881 according to a design of William Guilfoyle and consistently maintained at a high standard to the present is of cultural significance at a state level:

- as one of the most intact examples in Australia of a nineteenth century provincial botanic garden, a garden type best exemplified by the collection of such gardens created in colonial Victoria. Typical characteristics of provincial botanic gardens found at Hamilton include perimeter plantings of conifers, plantings of specimen trees, shrubberies, areas of intensive horticultural interest, a lake and a location in proximity to a township developed during the nineteenth century,
- as an early example of William Guilfoyle's design, exemplifying his ideas about planting which were being actively implemented in his sweeping redevelopment of Mueller's design of Melbourne's botanic gardens;
- for its collection of plants, characteristic of late nineteenth an early twentieth century Victorian gardens as well as representative of more specialised plant groups befitting the scientific role of a botanic garden;
- for its retention of important garden structures, most notably the cottage, Thomson Memorial Fountain, decorative fence and entrance gates;
- for its considerable aesthetic appeal, derived largely from links with natural features, the structure of landscape forms, colour, foliage, size and habit of plants, contrast between seasons and links with the urban form of Hamilton;
- for the survival of considerable documentary evidence relating to the history of the garden, including a rare Guilfoyle plan and report; this material has the potential to guide the future management of the gardens and revealing the importance of the site to the public;
- for the manner in which the garden and surrounding streetscapes combine to produce a significant late nineteenth and early twentieth century precinct, with views into the gardens and vistas to intact building stock looking from the gardens;
- socially, especially to a local audience, as a focal point for civic pride and as a site used continuously for recreation for almost a century and a half.
- historically, as one the earliest botanic gardens sites set aside in Victoria, and amongst the earliest provincial botanic gardens set aside in Australia; scientifically, as a collection of diverse and accurately named plants, especially those of botanical and horticultural importance;
- for its retention of zoological elements, which illustrate the nineteenth century fashion for menageries and changing attitudes to naive fauna.

*Further comparative work (beyond the scope of this study) may reveal the site to be of national cultural significance.*

### Assessment of Cultural Significance of Individual Elements

The following is a condensing of information provided in the sections entitled "Assessment of Cultural Significance" into a summarised table. Elements listed as being of significance by Heritage Victoria are also noted. This table uses the following ranking system to denote cultural significance as outlined on page 2 of the *Conservation Analysis*:

#### **A: of high cultural significance**

*"This ranking denotes items of cultural significance on a regional, state wide or even national level. The main criteria have been period of development, intactness or integrity, rarity or outstanding aesthetic qualities."*

**B: of cultural significance**

*“This ranking denotes items of cultural significance. These items all contribute to the significance of the property although are of minor merit as individual items. Similar criteria to the A ranking have been adopted, although B ranked items are likely to date from later periods..., be of lesser intactness or not possess such outstanding aesthetic qualities or rarity.”*

**N: of no appreciable cultural significance or too recent to adequately assess**

*“...used where items have no appreciable significance but their siting or presence does not jeopardise the significance of the surrounds.”*

**I: intrusive or an alteration which has seriously jeopardised the cultural significance of an area or component**

*“Such a ranking has been applied to elements which downgrade the cultural significance of a component area of the site as a whole.”*

A (High Significance)	B (Significance)	N (None)	I (Intrusive)
<b>Pathways</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Surviving sections of path layout from Fergusen and Guilfoyle plans (Hvic as per Diagram 2185)</li> <li>Main entrances at Thompson (Hvic), French (Hvic) and Skene Streets</li> <li>Surviving sections of gravel path surfaces (note only section remaining is along French Street)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Path layout which follows the intent of the Guilfoyle plan (Hvic as per Diagram 2185)</li> <li>Path at west end of lake</li> <li>Naylor gates (Hvic)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asphalt surfaces of paths</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of bridge and approach paths (n.b. since reinstated)</li> </ul>
<b>Trees and General Plantings</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Surviving plantings from Ferguson and curators up to and including James<sup>iv</sup></li> <li>Guilfoyle’s planting intentions<sup>v</sup></li> <li>Tradition of commemorative plantings</li> <li>Early commemorative trees</li> <li>Documentary records of early plantings</li> <li>Trees on the national trust register of significant trees</li> <li>Plantings which contribute to the integrity of the Guilfoyle Scheme</li> <li>Sub-tropical plantings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Surviving plantings or Hughhan and Middleton</li> <li>Recent commemorative trees</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of fernery, conservatory and other special plant environments</li> </ul>

<sup>iv</sup> Refer to section 4.3 for greater detail

<sup>v</sup> Refer to section 4.3 for greater detail

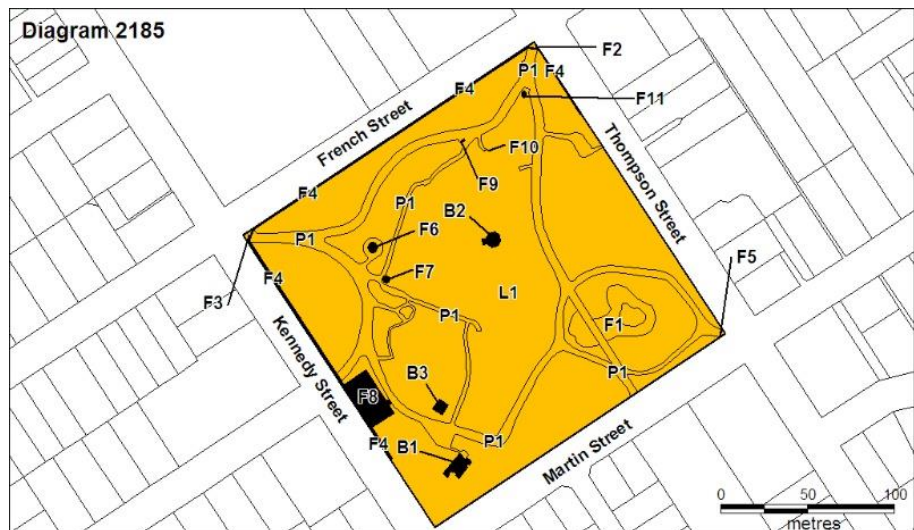
A (High Significance)	B (Significance)	N (None)	I (Intrusive)
<b>Beds and Shrubberies</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beds which conform to their current location or original planting on Guilfoyle's Plan</li> <li>Early tufa edging and cut turf edges to beds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other early beds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recently created beds, such as the native bed and grey foliage bed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bluestone pitcher edging</li> </ul>
<b>Lawns</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintenance of Guilfoyle's concept by the current ratio of lawn to beds</li> <li>Maintenance of finely mowed turf with cut edges</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current mix of grass species</li> </ul>	
<b>Use of Water</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Lake (Hvic)</i></li> <li><i>Thomson Memorial Fountain (Hvic)</i></li> <li><i>Remnants of ANA Fountain (Hvic)</i></li> <li>Water reticulation and continuing water supply to gardens</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Edge treatment of lake at time of writing (n.b. since corrected)</li> <li>Loss of lake fountain and bridge (n.b. bridge reinstated)</li> </ul>
<b>Zoological Section</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zoological exhibits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>ANA Flight Aviary (Hvic)</i></li> <li>Kangaroo Yards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bird Cages near cottage</li> </ul>	
<b>Buildings and Structures</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1880 Commemorative obelisk (Hvic)</i></li> <li><i>Cottage (Hvic)</i></li> <li><i>Cannon (Hvic)</i></li> <li><i>Thompson Street (northern) gates (Hvic)</i></li> <li><i>Fence (Hvic)</i></li> <li><i>French Street (western) gates (Hvic)</i></li> <li>Skene Street Gates</li> <li><i>Thomson Memorial Fountain (Hvic)</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seats</li> <li>Pump</li> <li><i>ANA Fountain<sup>vi</sup> (Hvic)</i></li> <li>Wale bones</li> <li><i>Country Women's Association Glasshouse (Hvic)</i></li> <li><i>B.C. Naylor (eastern) gates (Hvic)</i></li> <li>Wishing well</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Toilets</li> <li>Children's Playground</li> <li>Works Depot</li> <li>Buildings</li> <li>Bird Cages</li> <li>BBQ Shelter</li> <li>Wisteria Arch</li> <li>Courthouse Gate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collins Street Lights</li> <li>Rose Arbor</li> <li>Loss of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lake Fountain</li> <li>- Greenhouse</li> <li>- Fernery</li> <li>- Bridge (reinstated)</li> <li>- Mitchell's Stump</li> <li>- Pagoda</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>vi</sup> Note, this is in contradiction to assessment made under "use of water" which rates the ANA Fountain as "A"



A (High Significance)	B (Significance)	N (None)	I (Intrusive)
<b>Buildings and Structures cont.</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>George V bust (Hvic)</i></li> <li>• <i>Bandstand (Hvic)</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Flight Aviary (Hvic)</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recent signs replicating earlier ones</li> <li>• 150<sup>th</sup> plaque</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	
<b>Context</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationship between early residential buildings, institutional buildings and the gardens</li> <li>• Link between Hamilton Botanic Gardens and other public parks and gardens Hamilton, especially Grange Burn</li> <li>• Low scale of surrounding buildings</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scale of Botanical Motel</li> </ul>

Additionally, a “rare iron lattice arch” and “some traditional seats” are listed by Heritage Victoria as being of significance but no further detail is given and they are not listed on Diagram 2185 (below)



**List of Commemorative Plantings and Trees Registered by the National Trust**

**Commemorative Plantings (note, only extant specimens listed)**

This list of commemorative plantings has been compiled from information provided in the Conservation Management Documents. Locations refer to a plan system which accompanied the Francine Gilfedder report but was not sited as part of this Master Plan. This list needs to be thoroughly checked and updated by the Council and/or Friends of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens. Locations should also be accurately identified.

Date	Species	Reason	Location	Significance*
2 July 1880	<i>Quercus robur</i> x <i>canariensis</i> (Hybrid Oak)	Centenary of Founding of Sunday Schools	C26	A

Date	Species	Reason	Location	Significance*
3 August 1897	<i>Quercus robur</i> (English Oak)	Founding of the Dundas Lodge of the United Ancient Order of Druids in Hamilton	D88	A
2 June 1910	<i>Quercus robur</i> x <i>canariensis</i> (Hybrid Oak)	Commemorating "the world's peacemaker" King Edward VII	C30	A
February/April 1923	<i>Corymbia calophylla</i> (Blood Wood)	By Sir William Irvine and the Boy Scouts Association of Hamilton	C44	A
26 March 1927	<i>Corymbia calophylla</i> (Blood Wood)	Dame Nellie Melba. Shovel and plaque held by the Hamilton Museum	C43	A
2 July 1930	<i>Quercus canariensis</i> (Algerian Oak)	150 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of Founding of Sunday Schools	D129	A
10 March 1937	Two <i>Corymbia ficifolia</i>	Old Hamiltonian Association, Major Mitchell Centenary Celebrations		B
11 December 1947	<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>	Lady Baden Powell	H3	B
August 1948	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>	Miss N Pedrina, Hamilton Guide Captain, 19 years service	C23	B
1940s	Ornamental conifers	"In loving memory of Margaret Laidlaw, late of Kilora" (died 1932-wife of Thomas Laidlaw)		B
26 February 1954	<i>Acer negundo</i> 'Aureo-marginatum' (Variegated Box Elder)	Commemorating the visit to Hamilton of Queen Elizabeth II	H11	B
1950s	<i>Lagunaria patersonii</i> (Norfolk Island Hibiscus)	Cr. Woodbridge during Soil Conservation Week		N
1959	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> 'Aurea' (Golden Ash)	Red Cross Centenary	A43	B
25 April 1965	<i>Pinus butia</i>	Lone Pine planted in jubilee year "in memory of departed comrades". From the original Lone Pine	H1	A
24 September 1965	<i>Magnolia soulangiana</i> x (Saucer Magonolia)	To commemorate the Tent Centenary	IC49	B
1980	<i>Larix decidua</i> (European Larch)	Centenary of Salvation Army in Australia	F12	N

Date	Species	Reason	Location	Significance*
19 June 1982	<i>Alnus jorullensis</i> (Evergreen Alder)	Charter of the Quota Club of Hamilton Victoria	J13	N
14 March 1988	<i>Quercus palustris</i> (Pin Oak)	Bicentenary of European Settlement in Australia	C42	N
14 March 1988	<i>Fraxinus velutina?</i> 'Penguivii' (Velvet Ash)	Bicentenary of European Settlement in Australia	K2	N

\*Significance is based on a 2014 review of the assessments made by Richard Aitken.

#### National Trust Significant Tree Register and Heritage Victoria Listed Trees

Species	Reason	Location	Significance
<i>Chamaecyparis funebris</i> (Funeral Cypress)	National Trust and Heritage Victoria	At southern end of hill C25	Outstanding size (Scientific) Outstanding species (Scientific) Landscape (Social) <i>Note: largest and has the best form of the known specimens in Victoria</i>
<i>Gymnocladus dioica</i> (Kentucky Coffee Tree) two trees	National Trust and Heritage Victoria	Along French Street side of Thompson Gates AA4 and AA5	Rare (Scientific) Landscape (Social) <i>Note: Only known examples in Victoria</i>
<i>Quercus agrifolia</i> (Californian Live Oak) two trees	National Trust and Heritage Victoria	Beside playground H8	Rare (Scientific) Outstanding species (Scientific) Landscape (Social) <i>Note: Only examples apart from Kyneton Botanic Gardens and Government House</i>
<i>Quercus leucotrichophora</i> (Himalayan Oak)	National Trust	Thompson Street to east of Mound C37	Rare (Scientific) Landscape (Social)
<i>Quercus leucotrichophora</i> (Himalayan Oak)	Heritage Victoria	?	Rare (Scientific) <i>Note: Additional specimen</i>
<i>Quercus robur</i> (English Oak)	National Trust and Heritage Victoria	Beside path near toilets C2	Outstanding size (Scientific) Outstanding species (Scientific) Landscape (Social) <i>Note: Largest known English Oak in Victoria for canopy spread and circumference</i>
<i>Pinus nigra</i> var. <i>corsicana</i> (Corsican Pine)	National Trust and Heritage Victoria	C35	Outstanding species (Scientific) Landscape (Social) <i>Note: Best example of species in Victoria</i>
<i>Pinus sabiniana</i> (Digger Pine)	National Trust and Heritage Victoria	Just below small rotunda at high point in Gardens H10	Outstanding size (Scientific) Landscape (Social) Park/Garden/Town (Historic)
<i>Pinus sabiniana</i>	Heritage Victoria	?	<i>Note: Additional specimen</i>

(Digger Pine)

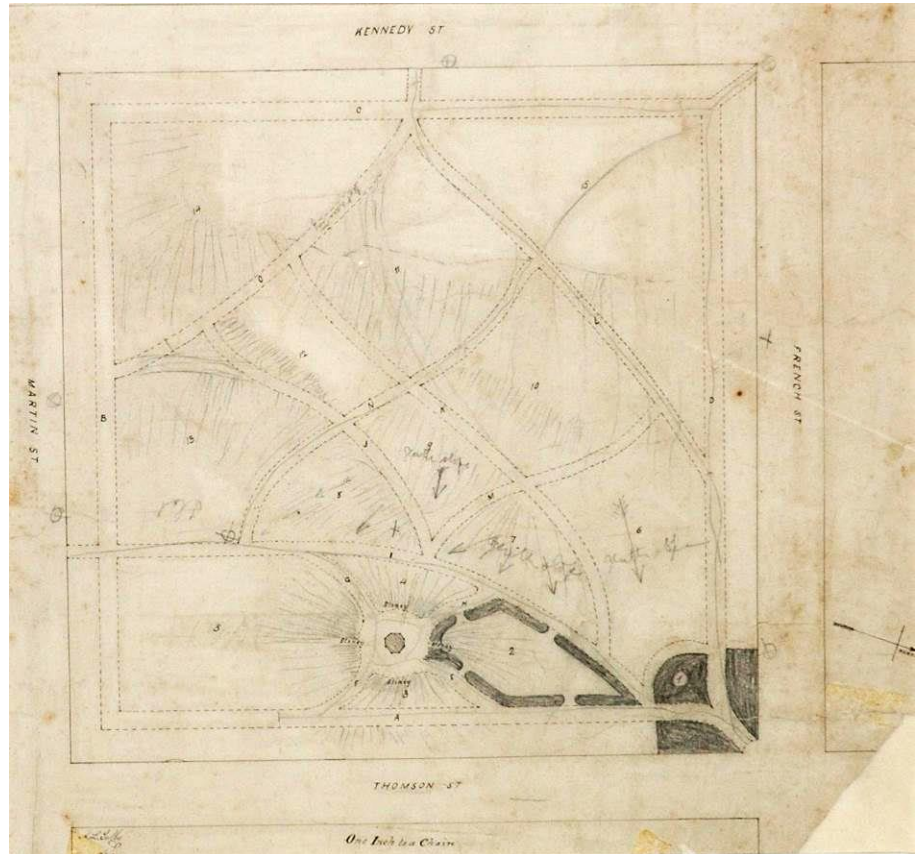
## Appendix 2: 1853 Plan of the Township of Hamilton

Excerpt of plan showing the “Reserve for Public Gardens” in blue at centre of plan. Full title, “Plan of the township of Hamilton, situate on the Grange Burn [cartographic material] : in the counties of Dundas and Normanby” Henry Wade, surveyor ; A.M. Ross, Draftsman, 1853. Source, State Library of Victoria



### Appendix 3: 1876 Plan Showing Path Layout

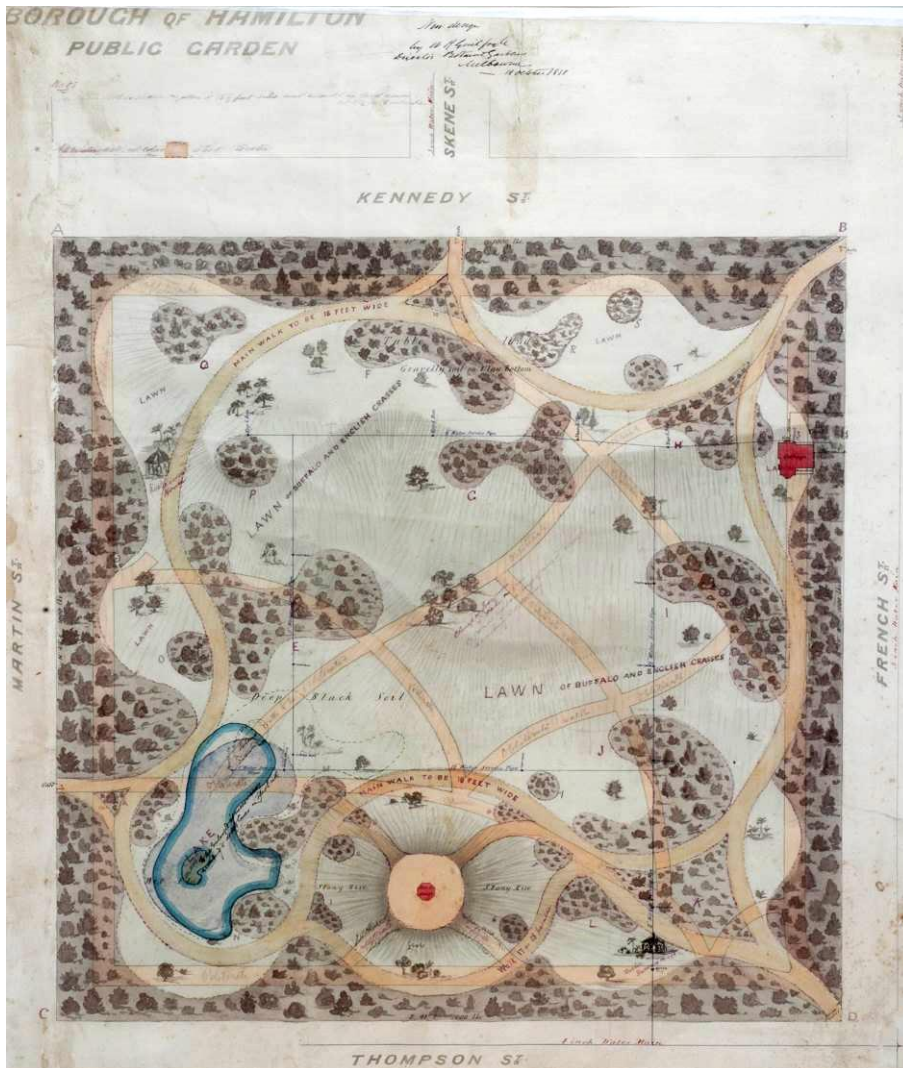
Excerpt of plan dated 17 June 1876 and signed S. L. Scully. The plan appears to show the existing conditions of the site including Ferguson's path layout. It should be noted that this layout varies slightly to the existing conditions shown on the following 1881 plan by William Guilfoyle. Source, Hamilton Art Gallery.



## Appendix 4: 1881 Guilfoyle Plan and Letter

The following plan was produced in 1881 by William Guilfoyle and accompanied by a letter (reproduced below) and plant list.

Guilfoyle's plan for the Gardens was produced by drawing over a c.1880 survey plan showing "the existing walks of pathways, and plantations, drawn to scale by your Town Surveyor" (accompanying letter by William Guilfoyle). The existing paths shown in this plan differ slightly in layout to the 1876 Scully plan. The professionalism of this new survey plan and the reference to its production by the Town Surveyor would indicate that this drawing is a more accurate representation of the pre-Guilfoyle layout of the Gardens than the Scully drawing. Source, Hamilton Art Gallery.



Botanic Gardens  
Melbourne  
18 October 1881

William Smith Esq  
Town Clerk

Sir,

*I have the honour to forward by post the plan of your Hamilton Public Garden, together with some descriptive notes which I promised rather more than a year ago to Mr John McKellar of Strathkellar, and beg that you will be good enough to forward the same to him as soon as possible. I feel that I ought to write an apology to Mr McKellar for having delayed so long in fulfilling my promise, but I have no doubt he will excuse me, knowing as he does that my time is more than fully occupied with the many duties of his department, and therefore I can only devote the occasional half hour to the plan in the evenings.*

*As the plan shows the existing walks of pathways, and plantations, drawn to scale by your Town Surveyor, an intelligent gardener would not have much difficulty in carrying out my design, as he has the old lines to measure from. Of course, as is always the case with landscape designs, a well educated eye will be necessary in laying down the curves of the various graphs on the sward, as well as the turns of the walks. A few inches, or even a foot or two here and there, deviating from the actual plan, is often admissible in measure off on the ground. A design of this kind often appears pretty enough on paper, but is seldom if ever correct if carried out exactly according to plan. The services of a skilful gardener will therefore be necessary.*

*You will observe that I have done away with the marginal straight walk and the numerous half curved pathways which intersect each other in various parts of the grounds, and have substituted one good bold sweeping walk 17 or 18 feet wide. These are furcated (branching, forked) lines from three of the entrance gates, which I thought necessary, to give variety to the scenery (see notes under headings H & K, and numbers 9 & 10). A lake is shown in the low lying wet flat, and as stated in appendix, it can be made much larger if necessary. The soil to be excavated might well be utilised on the grassy hill or "tableland" as there is said to be a clayey bottom. I dare say there are many other spots besides, where the soil would be useful.*

*The rustic summerhouses are roughly shown, and I would suggest that these be built on the same principal as those in the Melbourne Botanic Gardens. They are my own design, and I should be most happy to send a plan one of these days, if your Mayor and Councillors would care to have it. The walls are substantially built in rustic panels of gum and wattle, and the roof is thatch. The floor is composed of blocks of wood inserted perpendicularly in clay.*

*A thatched roof is always picturesque in garden scenery, and especially when surrounded by tropical leafage such as might be gained by combination of such trees and shrubs as *Wigandia*, *Aralia papyrifera*, *Ricinus* (word cut off) and *Brachychiton acerifolium* – plants which I believe I have forgotten (sic) to mention in my notes, but I am sure would thrive in Hamilton.*

*I wish that I had time to write more fully on the laying out of the garden but perhaps these few remarks will suffice just now as I am very busy. My advice is to trench and drain well and do not bury any good surface soil. Keep it on top, and break up a clayey subsoil. The trees already planted can be blended into new groups and plantations, and I would suggest that the first portion of the work be attempted if my plan is approved, should be the marginal plantation and the main walk.*

*I have the honour to be  
Sir  
Yours obediently  
William R. Guilfoyle*

---

This letter was followed by five pages of hand written plant lists, the first of which is missing. A transcription of these lists are included as Appendix 4 of Francine Gilfedder & Associates' 1994 *Conservation Policy and Strategy for Implementation*.

## Appendix 5: Heritage Victoria Registration



Victorian Heritage Database Report  
**HAMILTON BOTANIC GARDENS**



**Location:**

KENNEDY STREET and MARTIN STREET and FRENCH STREET and THOMPSON STREET HAMILTON,  
SOUTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

**Heritage Status / Level of Significance:**

Registered

**Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number: H2185**

**Listing Authority: VHR**

**Heritage Overlay Number: HO114**

**Statement of Significance:**

What is significant?

The Hamilton Botanic Gardens are one of the earliest regional botanic gardens in Victoria. Hamilton was first

surveyed in 1850 with land set aside for a public garden in 1853, and was gazetted in 1870. The undulating site maintains the original reservation of 10 acres (4 hectares) and is located one block south of the commercial centre of Hamilton. The first plantings were undertaken by William Ferguson in 1870, and from 1881 developed in accordance with a plan by William Guilfoyle, which survives along with the accompanying letter.

The ground gently slopes from the north and west to the lowest point in the east where a lake was constructed by late 1883. Lake restoration work in 1995 included the construction of the fourth bridge on this site with the first known reference to a bridge being in 1908. The site is enclosed by a decorative timber post and iron fence with elaborate gates funded by the community being erected by 1893 at the northern corner main entrance at the intersection of Thompson and French Streets, and later in 1907-09 at Kennedy Street. The Gardens have an encircling path with shrubberies and trees planted around the perimeter. A network of curved asphalt and gravel paths divide the centre of the garden, defining large sweeping lawns dotted with mature specimen trees and irregular shrubberies. These include a mature collection of oaks, conifers and elms as well as a number of rare specimens.

Important buildings and structures are the cottage, erected in 1877 and relocated in 1908 as both a residence for the curator and an ornamental attraction, the cannon from HMVS Nelson first placed in the garden in 1893 displaying the fashion for ordnance as war trophies in public gardens, the Thompson Memorial Fountain constructed c.1921, a bandstand, initially constructed in 1904 and relocated from nearby Melville Oval in 1998, the Australian Natives' Association (ANA) Fountain built in 1909, the Kennedy Street (western) Gates opened in 1909, and the Glass house donated by the County Women's Association (CWA) in 1934, and a King George V memorial bust 1937, the Peacock (eastern) Gates erected in 1965, a rare iron lattice arch and some traditional garden seats.

Zoological elements have been a feature of the Gardens since 1885 and illustrate the nineteenth century fashion for menageries and acclimatisation with the first flight aviary dating back to 1904. The Gardens retain a large flight aviary, a smaller aviary and an animal enclosure.

How is it significant?

The Hamilton Botanic Gardens are of historical, scientific (botanical) and aesthetic significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Hamilton Botanic Gardens, established in 1853, are historically significant as one of the earliest provincial botanic gardens, being the fourth oldest in Victoria. Botanic Gardens had been established in Melbourne in 1846, and Portland and Geelong in 1851. The Hamilton Botanic Gardens have a special association with the work of William Guilfoyle as an early example of his design exemplifying his ideas about planting, which were being actively implemented in his sweeping redevelopment of Mueller's design of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens from 1873 to 1909 and at Warrnambool from 1877. Guilfoyle is regarded as one of Australia's greatest garden designers. The rare 1881 plan and accompanying letter are held in the collection of the Hamilton Art Gallery.

The Hamilton Botanic Gardens are of scientific (botanical) significance for the collection of plants characteristic of nineteenth and early twentieth century Victorian gardens and representative of more specialised plant groups befitting the scientific role of botanic gardens. These include the State's only known *Gymnocladus dioicus*, (Kentucky Coffee Tree), two rare *Quercus leucotrichophora* (Himalayan Oaks), and the largest known *Chamaecyparis funebris* (Funeral Cypress). Other significant trees include a very large *Quercus robur* (English Oak), an outstanding *Pinus nigra* var. *corsicana* (Corsican Pine), two rare *Quercus agrifolia* (Californian Live Oak) and two *Pinus sabiniana* (Digger Pine). The scientific importance of the Gardens continues to be developed with the National Collection of *Abutilon* for the Ornamental Plant Collections Association of Australia being held there since 1986. It is also one of only two botanic gardens, the other being White Hills Botanic Gardens, which still retains zoological elements demonstrating the nineteenth century tradition of animal and

plant acclimatisation.

The Hamilton Botanic Gardens are of aesthetic significance as one of the most intact examples in Victoria of a nineteenth century regional botanic garden, characterised by curved paths, sweeping lawns, perimeter plantings of conifers, specimen trees, shrubberies, areas of intensive horticultural interest and a lake. It retains its important garden structures and buildings, most notably the Thomson Memorial Fountain, ANA Fountain, decorative fence and entrance gates, cannon, George V memorial bust, iron lattice arch, seats, cottage and a relocated bandstand. The Gardens and surrounding streetscape combine to produce a significant late nineteenth century and early twentieth century precinct which includes important contributory views from, and vistas within, the Gardens. The 'spires' of conifers in the Gardens and the spires of local churches pierce the skyline and make a significant contribution to the Hamilton landscape.

Heritage Study / Consultant	
Construction Date Range	
Architect / Designer	
Municipality	SOUTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE
Other names	
Hermes number	1871
Property number	

*This place/object may also be State heritage listed. Check the Victorian Heritage Database. For further details, contact the local Council or go to Planning Schemes Online*