

Heritage Citation



McCaskie Park (Landscaped Precinct 1)

Key details

Also known as	E.E. McCaskie Oval
Addresses	At 137 Kelvin Grove Road, Kelvin Grove, Queensland 4059
Type of place	Park, Tree/s
Period	Federation 1890-1914
Lot plan	L556_SP133445
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 July 2002 Date of Citation — February 2001
People/associations	E. E. McCaskie (Association)

Criterion for listing

(A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (E) Aesthetic; (G) Social; (H) Historical association

McCaskie Park is significant as a Council park which was gazetted in 1891 and provides evidence of the provision of recreational facilities in the area for over a century. It has been used for a variety of sporting and recreational purposes.

McCaskie Park is one of several areas included in the Kelvin Grove precinct of road reserves and adjacent parklands containing fig tree plantings which are important to the Brisbane community for their streetscape value and for the particular aesthetic value of their extensive crowns and convoluted trunks. McCaskie Park is significant for the rare species of Ficus trees that it contains and for the 2 large figs moved to the rear of the park in 1996 after lobbying from the local community when the trees were under threat in their original position on Kelvin Grove Road.

History

In the 1880s, Kelvin Grove Road marked the boundary between two Local Authority Areas: Ithaca Shire Council and Booroodabin Divisional Board. During 1897 –1901, the tram line was extended along this road which has been a major arterial route northwards at least since the discovery of the goldfields in Gympie in the 1860s.

From the remnants of planting left along this section of Kelvin Grove Road, it would seem that a concerted effort to extensively plant fig trees along this street was carried out sometime in the 1880s to 1890s.

McCaskie Park, which abuts Kelvin Grove Road, was gazetted as a park reserve in 1891. The park was extensively developed as an amateur cycling track and in 1950 was officially renamed the E.E. McCaskie Oval after the father of amateur cycling in Queensland. Eddie McCaskie was official timekeeper for the Hamilton Wheelers Club for many years. In the early 1960s, the velodrome was filled and the level of the park raised.

In 1963, Harry Oakman, the first Director of Parks for the Brisbane City Council designed a planting plan for the park which included 19 different species of ficus. Not all the species mentioned in Oakman's plan can now be found in the park. It is possible that some were either not planted or were later removed. Some rare species of ficus in Oakman's plan can be found in the park, for example, *Ficus roxburghii*.

Over the decades of the 20th century, McCaskie Park has provided a facility for other sports including women's basketball in the late 1950s, and tennis. In 1972, the Brisbane City Council gave approval for the park to be used by Ashtons' Circus for two weeks in January at a rental of \$50 per day, as Victoria Park, the usual circus venue, was unavailable. The park was also used by circuses on other occasions.

In 1996, 2 large fig trees were removed from Kelvin Grove Road a short distance to the north to allow the road to be widened. To the relief of concerned members of the local community who valued the trees, they were replanted successfully in McCaskie Park.

Today, the park provides a pleasant green space for local residents and includes a toilet block, children's play equipment and signage which includes historical photos and details of the history of the park researched by the Queensland Women's Historical Society.

Description

Reserve 562 for recreation is located directly opposite Marshall Park, on the intersection of Kelvin Grove Road and Blamey Street. After the park was cleared of sporting facilities it was opened up as a grassed parkland, surrounded by shady trees. Old and recently planted fig trees are a feature of this park, especially along the Kelvin Grove Road boundary, where weeping fig trees (*FICUS BENJAMINA*) have been planted to match those in Marshall Park opposite. These trees were only 3metres high in January 1995, but are already growing extremely rapidly. Most of the older and rarer fig trees are located at the rear and sides of the park.

Statement of significance

Relevant assessment criteria

This is a place of local heritage significance and meets one or more of the local heritage criteria under the Heritage planning scheme policy of the *Brisbane City Plan 2014*. It is significant because:

Historical

CRITERION A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the city's or local area's history

as a park acquired by Council in 1891, it provides evidence of the development of public recreation in the Kelvin Grove area.

Rarity

CRITERION B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage

as it contains rare and old examples of the *Ficus* species.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

for the aesthetic value provided by the mature fig trees and the park as a green space.

Social

CRITERION G

The place has a strong or special association with the life or work of a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons

as the park, and the trees, are valued by the local community.

Historical association

CRITERION H

The place has a special association with the life or work of a particular person, group or organization of importance in the city's or local area's history

as the park has a special association with E. E. McCaskie, a well known member of the cycling community.

References

1. Australian Heritage Commissions report on the Kelvin Grove Road Landscaped Precinct, Kelvin Grove Queensland, file no. 100011
2. Brisbane City Council Environment and Parks. Parks history file. McCaskie Park. File No. 0175
3. Queensland Women's Historical Association. History included in signage in McCaskie Park

Copyright Brisbane City Council

Note: This citation has been prepared on the basis of evidence available at the time including an external examination of the building. The statement of significance is a summary of the most culturally important aspects of the property based on the available evidence, and may be re-assessed if further information becomes available. The purpose of this citation is to provide an informed evaluation for heritage registration and information. This does not negate the necessity for a thorough conservation study by a qualified practitioner, before any action is taken which may affect its heritage significance.

Citation prepared by — Brisbane City Council (page revised September 2020)



Dedicated to a better Brisbane