

HOSPITAL HILL Urban Conservation Area 1 (LEVEL

Southern Grampians Shire

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

The Hospital Hill area is of local significance for the collection of important buildings, including several landmarks, and for Bree Park. The spire of St Mary's rivals the spires of Church Hill. Like Church Hill, this area is another important residential part of Hamilton. It includes the home of Reg Ansett, a modest Californian bungalow at 12 Learmonth Street, and reflects his relatively humble beginnings. The Hamilton Hospital includes a wide range of purpose built buildings from different periods, the most dominant of which is the multi storey Princess Margaret Nurses Home. It is the tallest building in Hamilton.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Southern Grampians - City of Hamilton Conservation Study, Timothy Hubbard with Carlotta Kellaway & Michael Looker (plus Francis Punch), 1991;
Hermes Number	24246
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## Physical Description 1

The other hill in Hamilton, this area focuses on the Hamilton Hospital at its crest and on the Catholic Church, the Uniting Church and the Masonic Temple where it joins the Melville Oval area. The area is roughly triangular. Its main axis is Lonsdale Street. The area includes Bree Park. The western boundary is Alexandra Parade and the eastern boundary is the railway line.

Generally the quality of the housing stock is less than that of Church Hill but still good with some very good individual buildings, the best typically being on the brow of the hill. The Federation house at 138 Lonsdale Street is the most distinctive in the area and its tower acts as a landmark. The fully planted garden consists of a range of mature woody shrubs. The garden at St Mary's Convent at 23 Dinwoodie Street is typical of the post Second World War Period with a special formality which reflects the building's style. There was little of special interest in the other private gardens of Hospital Hill, the gardens being typical of their period and true to the style of the houses. No notable trees were identified in private gardens. There is an avenue of *Picea abies*, Norway Spruce, in Dinwoodie Street near Sedgewick Street which is an unusual species to find in Hamilton let alone to find it used as a street tree.

The most important trees in the Hospital Hill area are in two avenues adjacent to the Uniting Church complex. The *Washingtonia robusta*, Mexican or Washington Palms, are already included on the Significant Trees Register. They must be seen in association with the palms in Melville Oval and in the garden at 6 Dryden Street. The unusual avenue of interplanted *Ulmus X hollandica*, Dutch Elms and *Eucalyptus citriodora*, Lemon Scented Gums, create a strong sense of axis along Lonsdale Street and link the Melville Oval area with the Hamilton Hospital.

Bree Park differs from other reserves in Hamilton in being largely planted with natives. The most dominant native species is *Eucalyptus ficifolia*, Red Flowering Gum planted in an avenue from one corner to the other. The most important single native is the *Acacia elata*, Cedar Wattle, a tree of large proportions but in poor condition. Other native trees noted were *Eucalyptus botryoides*, Bangalay Gum, *Grevillea robusta*, Silky Oak and *Acacia baileyana*, Cootamundra Wattle. The park had been substantially planted with *Acacia baileyana*, Cootamundra Wattle, but these were taken out due to poor health in the 1940s. The most dominant exotic species is *Pinus radiata*, Monterey Pine which is in an avenue near the Hamilton Hospital. Other exotic trees noted were *Quercus robur*, English Oak, *Cupressus macrocarpa*, Monterey Cypress, and *Acer pseudoplatanus*, Sycamore.

While there are patterns in the planting, no overall design can be determined. The character of the park is open and informal. The grass is rough, in contrast to the manicured lawns of the Botanic Gardens, but in poor condition. The paths are gravel and are also in poor condition. A simple, traditional post and rail fence delineates the boundaries. Play equipment, possibly for the use of people visiting the hospital, is located on the Foster Street side.

Cox Street requires special mention for its very low streetscape amenity. It suffers from the same blight as Lonsdale Street, being on the major through route for traffic. There is no planting and the quality of the building stock, apart from a few houses, is poor. This must create a bad impression on people passing through Hamilton.

Generally views are not generated in the same way as those generated by the street grid in the Church Hill area. There are some dramatic views out of the Hospital Hill area especially towards the Grampians. The view over Hamilton Lake is less dramatic and is compromised by the railway line. The worst view is along Foster Street towards the railway line which is terminated by a large industrial building with oversized lettering.

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*