

- ii traditional paving and guttering continue to be used including the absence of footpaths in some streets,
- iii a strict policy of minimal signage be followed,
- iv no non-residential uses should be allowed to compromise the essentially residential character of the area,
- v wherever possible the intrusion of powerlines should be minimised if they cannot be removed,
- vi the views out of the area should be enhanced by appropriate planting.

5.3 Conservation Areas (Natural)

5.3.1 UC2 Area G Grange Burn

Description

The Grange Burn meanders around the town in a large arc from the north-east to the west after turning south and then north. It is never more than a small stream although it has now been dammed and forms Lake Hamilton. The banks vary from open and flat floodplains to quite steep cliffs especially at the southern end of the original township. The Grange Burn area has two characters; the one which is more natural or informal and the other which has been laid out to some design. The latter are reserves which are for deliberate recreation purposes and include Lake Hamilton, the Apex Park, Kennedy Park and Victoria Park. The rest of the creek seems to be left more or less to fend for itself.

It is not possible to say within the scope of this study how much of the existing vegetation along the Grange Burn is remnant and indeed likewise throughout Hamilton. However, there are considerable sections which are overgrown with thickets of elm suckers and other weeds. The formal reserves have quite elaborate plantings. These have now deteriorated but not irretrievably. The relationship between Victoria Park and the Botanic Gardens deserves to be explored in detail.

The most important formal area along the Grange Burn is Victoria Park. High ground on the Martin Street side

falls away to the floodplain by the creek. The cliff still shows the scar of the early quarry. The park is edged on the Martin Street side with avenue plantings of alternating *Ulmus X hollandica*, Dutch Elm and *Quercus robur*, English Oak. A path from the top of the hill traverses the Park diagonally down the cliff face. It is planted with *Crataegus laevigata*, English Hawthorn and *Fraxinus excelsior*, English Ash. Other trees include: *Ulmus X hollandica*, Dutch Elm; *Quercus robur*, English Oak; *Acer platinoides*, Norway Maple; *Brachychiton acerifolius*, Illawarra Flame Tree; *Fraxinus excelsior* 'Pendula'; and what must be remnant vegetation in *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*, River Red Gum. The most notable exotic is the impressive *Ulmus X hollandica* 'Vegeta', Huntingdon Elm at the base of the slope. The Park is in a run-down condition and considerable sensitive tree work is required. The park has also been used to store Council equipment, mostly abandoned, and for the grazing of sheep to keep down the grass.

History

The original reason for the settlement at Hamilton, the Grange Burn has played a key role throughout the City's history. It was discovered and named by Major Mitchell who passed through the region in 1836 and probably camped on its banks. (305) The Grange Inn overlooked the creek where it was easiest to cross from the west. It watered the out stations of the two main squatting runs in the district. It was the water supply for the Police Camp, the first stable European settlement in the area.

The town used the Grange Burn for its drinking water sometimes with dire consequences. Illness and particularly the outbreak of epidemics was always a frightening possibility. The banks of the Grange Burn were used in the 1870s for the disposal of night soil and other nuisances. A pit on the banks was filled with "several dead horses in varying stages of decay". (306) The story of the town's water supply is a long one. Finally about 1900 it was brought in from the Grampians and the pressure was taken off the Grange Burn.

The vacant land along the banks has enjoyed many other uses but mostly it was used for passive recreation. The creek was important in its further reaches for

305 Garden, p 7-9.

306 Ibid, p 113.

agriculture during the nineteenth century. (307) There seems no evidence of market gardening along the banks close to the town. In 1906 land which had been used as a quarry and a temporary tip was finally reserved as an Ornamental Tree Reserve, to be a "beauty spot" according to Frank Hammond, the Town Clerk and Engineer. (308) Kennedy Oval was reserved at about the same time.

The creek has been dammed at different times. Lake Hamilton, the largest, is now a major element in the City and is a centre for both passive and active recreation. A small park has been developed near the Ballarat Road by Apex with playing facilities and includes the ubiquitous steam engine. For much of its length the Grange Burn still meanders placidly around the town.

Statement of Significance

The Grange Burn is of regional significance for its historical associations and for its landscape value. The creek has played a key role throughout the district's history and has seen some of its most important events. Parts have been beautified and Victoria park has special significance for its design and planting. It is also of significance as a repository and nursery for a full range of remnant vegetation and this is important for other areas in Hamilton.

Recommendations

To conserve and enhance the special character of the St Ronan's area it is recommended that:

- i that Victoria Park be restored,
- ii that further, more detailed study be done to identify remnant vegetation and important exotic plantings,
- iii that there should always be a balance between and probably a mixture of native and exotic species,

307 Ibid, p 109.

308 Correspondence in 'Victoria Park' Reserve File held at State Offices, Hamilton.

- iv that the Grange Burn be fostered as a repository and nursery for the regeneration of remnant vegetation along the creek and throughout Hamilton,
- v that no development should occur which compromises the landscape value of the Grange Burn area, views to and from it and its use for passive recreation.

5.4 Other Areas of Landscape Interest

There are other areas within the city which deserve to be monitored for their landscape interest if not significance. Several of these were considered as possible Conservation Areas (Natural) but, for the time being, are not recommended.

First of these is the cemetery. There can be no doubting its historical associations and there is architectural interest in some of the graves. The absence of any landscaping whatsoever is a remarkable characteristic. It would be a positive step to introduce planting to improve the cemetery's appearance. The planting should be traditional in its selection of species, formal in its design and easy to maintain for obvious practical reasons. A good guide to sombre, dark leaved and weeping species and how to them plant is the *Beechworth Cemetery: A Landscape Study*, by R D Spencer, J Dyke and W Warboys of the Royal Botanic Gardens.

Alexandra Parade is another area which could be considered as a Conservation Area at a later stage. The full potential of this broad street seems to have been compromised in the past but not so much that it could not be rehabilitated. Strong avenue planting of exotics to reinforce and continue the present scheme would be appropriate. Patterson Park should be similarly treated.