
NAME: 'Olive Grove', Gemmel Tassie Reserve, Lot 6 Valley View Drive, MCLAREN VALE

CURRENT USE: Olive grove
FORMER USE: Olive grove
DATE(S) OF CONSTRUCTION: C.1904 (early 20th century)

LOCATION: Lot 6 Valley View Drive, MCLAREN VALE
LAND DESCRIPTION: CT 5834/992, Section 145, Hundred of Willunga

OWNER: City of Onkaparinga

RECOMMENDATION: Local Heritage Place



Olive Grove, Gemmel Tassie Reserve, Lot 6 Valley View Drive, McLaren Vale (GGA, 2021)

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DESCRIPTION:

C.1904 avenue double planting of olive trees stretching south-west from Main Road on Lot 6 Valley View Drive, McLaren Vale; formerly comprising the driveway of McLaren Vale's 'Sylvan Park' estate. Original 'Sylvan Park' estate steel gate located at western end of driveway, adjoining original entrance site to 49 Abbott Avenue, McLaren Vale. Site now includes c.2015 park benches and artwork by Gerry McMahon, along with extensive paving, etc.

It is recommended that the 'Olive Grove', Gemmel Tassie Reserve, Lot 6 Valley View Drive, McLaren Vale be included on the South Australian Heritage Register as a Local Heritage place.

A delineation of significant historic fabric is provided in the Extent of Listing.

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE:

'Olive Grove', Gemmel Tassie Reserve, Lot 6 Valley View Drive, McLaren Vale is of local heritage significance as an attractive example of avenue plantings dating from the early 20th century and associated with the Pridmore family's 'Sylvan Park' estate. A significant local landmark for much of the 20th century, this attractive avenue of olive trees provides an excellent visual reminder of the history of Gemmel Tassie Reserve. The avenue is associated with Cyril Eustace Pridmore, responsible for planting the trees and with the Pridmore family who resided at 'Sylvan Park' for most of the 20th century.

RELEVANT CRITERIA (As defined in Section 67(1) of the PDI Act 2016):

a) it displays historical, economic or social themes that are of importance to the local area; being an early ornamental avenue associated with the Pridmore family's 'Sylvan Park' estate, prominent local citizens and significant McLaren Vale vintners. The avenue of olive trees was historically a significant local landmark for much of the 20th century.

e) it is associated with a notable local personality or event; being strongly associated with McLaren Vale vintner Cyril Eustace Pridmore and the Pridmore family of 'Sylvan Park'; C. E. Pridmore is attributed as having planted the olive avenue in the early 20th century. The Pridmore family owned 'Sylvan Park' for most of the 20th century.

f) it is a notable landmark in the area; the double row of olive trees lining the 'Sylvan Park' driveway were a notable and attractive landmark in the sparsely-developed McLaren Vale township for much of the 20th century. The grove remains an attractive feature of Gemmel Tassie Reserve and a visual reminder of the site's history as a large estate.

RELEVANT HISTORIC THEMES:

Theme 2: Regional Life in the Southern Vales

2.8 Significant local trees and plantings

BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

The heritage values of 'Olive Grove', Gemmel Tassie Reserve, Lot 6 Valley View Drive, McLaren Vale do not appear to have been identified or assessed as part of any previous heritage survey.

The National Trust of South Australia provides a historical description of row of olive trees formerly associated with the 'Sylvan Park' estate, now heavily subdivided:

GEMMEL TASSIE RESERVE MEMORIAL GARDEN, MCLAREN VALE

This reserve is on land once part of Sylvan Park, the original home of two early settlers, William Colton and Cyril Pridmore. William built the heritage-listed homestead (now the unlisted 49 Abbott Avenue, McLaren Vale) and Cyril later planted the long and impressive olive tree avenue. Both features survive in 2018 and are associated with the Gemmel Tassie Reserve.

The reserve was created as an affectionate memorial to a local GP, Dr Gemmel Tassie, whose family still live in McLaren Vale. The reserve became a de facto celebratory place for the local RSL and was much upgraded from a weed paddock in June 2003, in time for a formal dedication service of the Long Tan Cross, held on 17 August 2003.

The National Trust of SA's biograph also noted that:

Sylvan Park contains the only known formal landscape feature of an avenue of olive trees, used ornamentally. (https://trusttrees.org.au/tree/SA/Mclaren_Vale/Park_Street, accessed 16/2/2022)

Current research has largely supported historical findings. While the Colton family's original certificate of title (likely predating the 1858 Torrens Title system) was not identified, records identifying that William Colton's son Thomas Colton constructed 'Sylvan Park' in 1858. A 1983 newspaper article identifies that the 1858 residence was constructed of stone quarried from the site with an original roof of Willunga slate. The earliest Lands Title certificate associated with the property identifies that Cyril Eustace Pridmore of McLaren Vale, vigneron acquired the property in February 1904. C. E. Pridmore, a notable local winemaker, is recorded as having substantially renovated and extended the 1858 residence. While no further documentation relating to the olive trees has been identified, their size and apparent age is suggestive planting in the early 20th century and were most likely planted by C. E. Pridmore after 1904.

The avenue of olive trees lining the entrance of 'Sylvan Park' comprised a significant local landmark for much of the 20th century, as is evidenced by aerial photography dating to the 1930s (see Historical Images). 'Sylvan Park' was owned by members of the Pridmore family until the late 20th century; Lands Title records indicate an association until 1973 while the 1983 newspaper article identifies Pridmore family members residing at the property at this time.

Originally comprising the entirety of Section 145 and a portion of Section 146, allotments lining Main Road and Tatchilla Road were slowly subdivided during the mid-20th century. The site of Lot 6, now part of Gemmel Tassie Reserve, was acquired by the District Council of Willunga in 1982. Lot 6 is now the property of the City of Onkaparinga.

Cyril Eustace Pridmore, owner of 'The Wattle' vineyard and cellars by 1900, was a substantial and influential figure in the commercial 'shift' from agricultural to viticultural production that occurred in the McLaren Vale district in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Born into a wealthy family based in Coventry, England, both C. E. Pridmore and his brother Horace Vernon Pridmore studied horticulture in California before emigrating to South Australia in the 1880s. H. V. Pridmore was also President of the South Australian Vinegrowers' Association for a number of years in the early 20th century. The Pridmore's nearby 'The Wattles' vineyard and cellar was documented as being instrumental in processing very large grape harvests in the late 1890s/early 1900s, aiding in establishing the McLaren Vale district as an important centre for viticulture at this time. Cyril

Eustace Pridmore was also responsible for the construction of the surviving c.1901 cellar building at 20 Penfolds Drive, McLaren Vale.

The National Trust's claim of 'Olive Grove', Gemmel Tassie Reserve being 'the only known formal landscape feature of an avenue of olive trees' has been disproven; other examples of ornamental olive tree plantings in South Australia include an avenue of olive trees at 6 Howard Street, Angaston (Contributory, HID 16908) among others.

EXTENT OF LISTING:

The form of all olive trees currently sited and contributing to the double avenue of olive trees at Lot 6 Valley View Road, McLaren Vale; formerly comprising the 'Sylvan Park' estate driveway. The surviving original steel gate is of significance and is included in the listing, though the associated timber posts are not included in the listing.

All later additions, including all landscaping, paving and c.2015 park benches and artwork by Gerry McMahon, are not included in the listing.

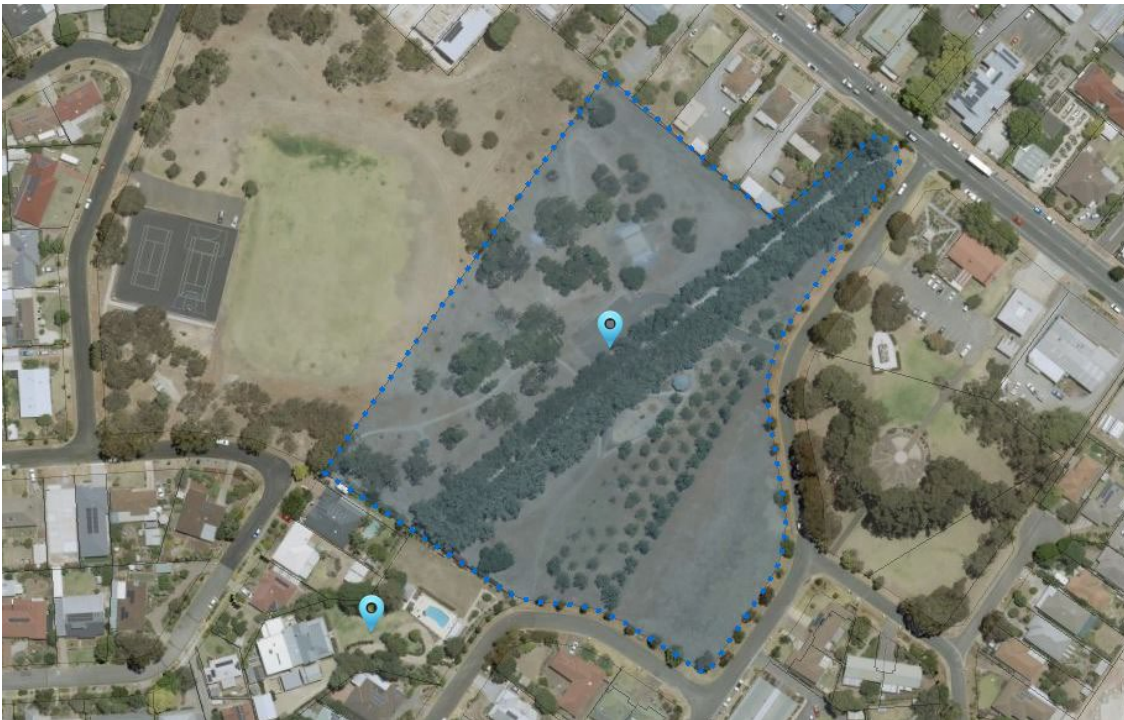
REFERENCES:

CT 715/116; 824/7; 1719/96; 1904/165; 2629/193; 3072/63; 3444/109; 3757/191; 3878/67; 4000/187; 4031/397; 4138/80; 4190/200; 4290/138; 4315/566; 4358/515; etc.

https://trusttrees.org.au/tree/SA/Mclaren_Vale/Park_Street, accessed 16/2/2022.

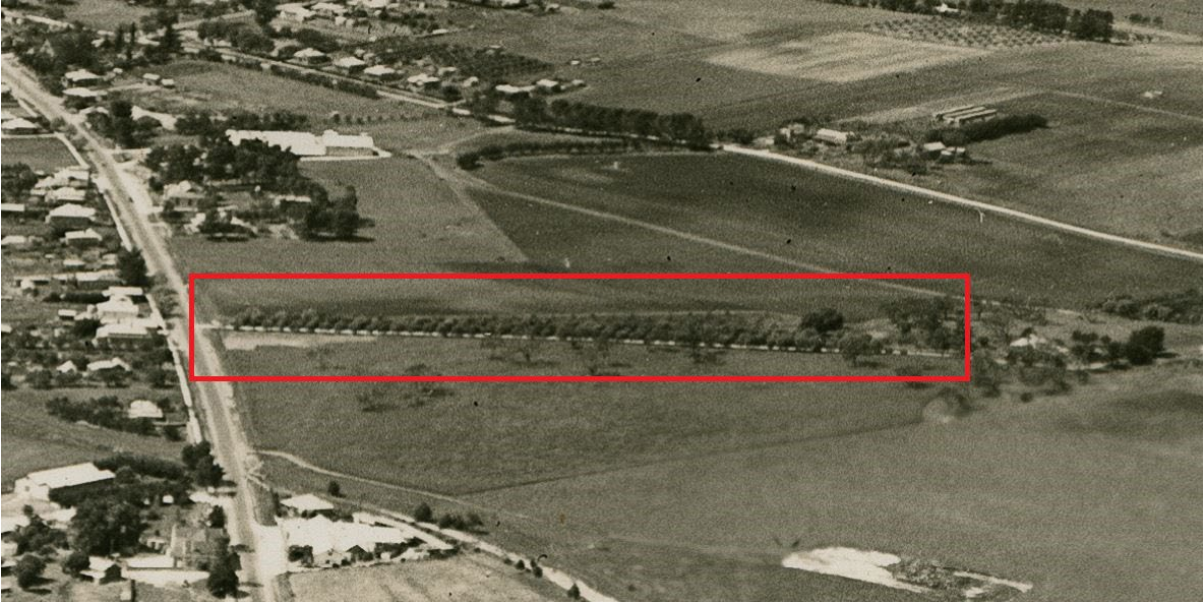
Historic Auction, Victor Harbour Times, Wed 17 Aug 1983, p.35.

SITE MAPPING:



Site of 'Olive Grove', Gemmel Tassie Reserve, Lot 6 Valley View Drive, McLaren Vale, highlighted in blue. Nearby 'Sylvan Park' dwelling shown by blue indicator to immediate south-west (Planning SA SAPPa)

HISTORICAL IMAGES:



C.1937 photograph of McLaren Vale township looking south; 'Sylvan Park' olive tree avenue shown within red rectangle (SLSA B 7239)

OTHER IMAGES:



Double row of olive trees, looking south-west (GGA, 2021)



c.2015 park benches and artwork by Gerry McMahon to centre of former driveway, looking north-east (GGA, 2021)



Former entrance gate to 'Sylvan Park' estate, looking south-west (GGA, 2021)



Double row of olive trees, looking south (GGA, 2021)