Address	Elm trees (Ulmus sp) south side of Bridge Street West (between the Monash Bridge and Arundel Street Benalla)		
Heritage Overlay	Proposed for Inclusion in the Benalla Schedule to the Heritage Overlay		
Heritage Overlay Map			
Designer/s	Benalla Shire Council	**Dates**	c19th century
Significance	Local	**Builder/s**	
Heritage Overlay Map	The extent of the overlay to include the significant avenue of elm trees (ulmus sp) only.	**Survey Date**	March 2024



Avenue of elm trees (Ulmus sp) Bridge Street West Benalla

The following Statement of Significance has been prepared according to the provisions of the Planning Practice Note 01: Applying the Heritage Overlay, (2018)

Assessment against criteria

The following analysis is based on Victorian Government Planning Practice Note 1: Applying the Heritage Overlay (August 2018).

Criterion A: Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history (historical significance).

Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history (rarity).

Criterion C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to understanding our cultural or natural history (research potential).

Criterion D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).

Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).

Criterion F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period (technical significance).

Criterion G: Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions (social significance).

Criterion H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history (associative significance).

Place Citation HOXX Elm trees south side of Bridge Street West (between the Monash Bridge and Arundel Street)

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

The avenue of thirty-one Elm trees (Ulmus sp) on the south side of Bridge Street West (between the Monash Bridge and Arundel Street Benalla).

It has largely retained its intactness and integrity.

How is it Significant?

The avenue of Elm trees (Ulmus sp) on the south side of Bridge Street West (between the Monash Bridge and Arundel Street Benalla) is of historical and aesthetic cultural heritage significance to the Benalla Rural City.

Why is it Significant?

The avenue of Elm trees (Ulmus sp) on the south side of Bridge Street West (between the Monash Bridge and Arundel Street Benalla) is of historical significance as it provides evidence of early civic improvements that occurred in Benalla as it became more established during the late nineteenth century. (Criterion A)

The avenue of Elm trees (Ulmus sp) on the south side of Bridge Street West (between the Monash Bridge and Arundel Street Benalla) is of aesthetic significance for the landmark qualities of this fine and mature avenue of Elm trees. (Criterion E)

Additional Controls

External paint controls apply	No
Internal alteration controls apply	No
Tree controls apply The thirty-one mature elm trees (ulmus sp) to the south side of Bridge Street West	Yes
Outbuildings or fences not exempt under Clause 43.01-4	No
Included on the Victorian Heritage Register under the Heritage Act 2017	No
Prohibited uses permitted	No
Aboriginal heritage place	No
Solar energy system controls apply	No

Relevant Historic Themes as identified in the *Benalla Rural City Gaps Heritage Study: Thematic History* Prepared by Dr Robyn Ballinger

6. Building towns, cities and the garden state

6.1 Making regional centres

Place Citation HOXX Elm trees south side of Bridge Street West (between the Monash Bridge and Arundel Street)

Physical Description

The south side of Bridge Street West between the Monash Bridge and Arundel street is lined with a mature elm trees (ulmus sp). These trees are fine examples of the species and they provide a landmark feature within an area that is notable for its landscaped gardens, river and expansive showgrounds.

Comparative Analysis

Elm trees were once a consistent planting within the established areas of early Benalla. There are number of streets which contain sections of the original plantings and these include: Benalla Street between Smythe and Nixon Streets and Benalla Street between Carrier and Mair Street, Smythe Street between Benalla and Mackellar Streets and Arundel Street between Bridge Street West and Maude Streets. While these streets have retained a number of trees they do not have the integrity and/or the intactness of the Bridge Street West plantings. The association of this avenue on Bridge Street West with the Botanical Gardens is also an important feature of these plantings.

Place History

The establishment of the Shire of Benalla in 1869 saw many town improvements. This included the construction of footpaths and other street works. By 1874 the roadways began to be gravelled and in 1875 footpaths were beginning to be laid. The footpaths were formed on either side of the streets and were 12 feet (3.66m) wide. The streets were 99 feet wide (30.18m). Intersections were marked with posts and timber drains were installed with a number constructed from brick. Once the streets were formed it was possible to plant trees. The desire for street trees was influenced by the plantings in other towns and the success of private local avenues. In 1870 Thomas Nixon (Surveyor) planted seeds of English and South American trees around his property in Arundel Street. He had obtained the seeds on a recent trip to Ireland. Of note were the *Phytolacca dioca* or omba tree. [1]

George Wilson, editor of the *Benalla Standard,* noted that during 1869 – 81 the Shire '*council supplied a few private persons with trees to plant in front of their dwellings*'.[2]

Apart from Nixon's trees there were plane trees (*platanus* sp) around private property which stretched along Arundel Street between Market and Garden Streets. In addition, there was probably a double-sided avenue of plane trees in Benson Street between Market and Garden Streets.

On 26 May 1882, Council ordered 500 ornamental trees from the government nursery at Macedon. A tree planting committee was formed and planting commenced on 3 July 1882 along Bridge Street (between the bridge and Carrier Street, along Carrier Street and Nunn Streets and Arundel Street between the railway line and Market Street.[3] By July 1882 200 trees had to be replaced. It was recommended that 100 Chichester elms should be ordered as replacement trees. The program was not entirely successful and in

[1] *City of Benalla Conservation Study*, Vol 2, p 24
[2] *City of Benalla Conservation Study*, Vol 2, p 24
[3] *City of Benalla Conservation Study*, Vol 2, p 24
[3] *City of Benalla Conservation Study*, Vol 2, p 24
[3] *City of Benalla Conservation Study*, Vol 2, p 24

1888 Council appointed the curator of the Recreation Reserve to be responsible for all trees and streets and Reserves. [4]

It is likely that the planting of the elm trees in Bridge Street West occurred c1880s/1890s as it was during this period that Council started to develop the Recreation Reserve (now the Benalla Botanical Gardens) and constructed pathways and planted trees. This area was a low lying area and improvements to this area in association with the establishment of the Botanical Gardens and the Showgrounds would have seen urban improvements such as improved roads and street tree plantings.

[4] *City of Benalla Conservation Study*, Vol 2, p 26