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HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

OAKS ESTATE, ACT

for ACT Environment & Sustainable Development Directorate

by PHILIP **LEESON** ARCHITECTS PTY LTD

Final Report, 4th September 2013

Cover image • Masonry structure and mature landscaping located at Robertson House on blocks 11 & 12 Section 7 Oaks Estate, **2013** • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Table of Contents

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	5
2 INTRODUCTION	8
2.1 PROJECT BRIEF.....	8
2.2 STUDY BOUNDARY AND HERITAGE STATUS.....	8
2.3 METHODOLOGY	10
2.4 LIMITATIONS.....	10
2.5 CONVENTIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS	11
2.6 AUTHORSHIP.....	11
2.7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	11
3 HISTORICAL ASSESSMENT	12
3.1 HISTORICAL CONTEXT	12
3.1.1 Geography and pre-European landscape	12
3.1.2 European rural estates, 1820 – 1877	13
3.1.3 Industry and subdivision, 1877 – 1901	22
3.1.4 Federal Territory and Canberra, 1901 – 1920s	27
3.1.5 Surplus to Canberra, 1930s – 1960s	39
3.1.6 Freehold land resumed, 1970s	52
3.1.7 The 1980s to the present	52
3.2 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS.....	54
3.2.1 Brief History of Tharwa Village	54
3.2.2 Brief History of Hall Village.....	54
3.2.3 Comparative Analysis	55
4 PHYSICAL ASSESSMENT.....	57
4.1 INTRODUCTION	57
4.2 THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT	57
4.2.1 Places of individual heritage significance.....	57
4.2.2 Places of potential individual heritage significance.....	69
4.2.3 Places examined and dismissed as having individual significance.....	71
4.2.4 Places contributing to the early 20 th Century urban village character.....	72
4.2.5 Non residential places	78
4.2.6 Light Industrial Area	79
4.2.7 Gillespie Park	81
4.2.8 Chinese Market Garden	82
4.2.9 Water Tanks	82
4.2.10 Non-contributory places.....	82
4.3 THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT	85
4.3.1 The River Corridor.....	85
4.3.2 Elm Grove	88
4.3.3 Street Plantings.....	89
4.3.4 Individual Block Plantings.....	89
4.3.5 Significant vistas	89
4.4 SOCIAL VALUES ASSESSMENT	91
4.4.1 Introduction	91
4.4.2 Community consultation	91
4.4.3 Consultation findings.....	92
5 ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE.....	93
5.1 ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA	93
5.2 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE.....	100
5.3 SIGNIFICANT FEATURES.....	100
6 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	102

6.1	PRECINCT LISTING	102
6.2	DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES	107
6.3	ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHER JURISDICTIONS	108
6.4	FURTHER RESEARCH	108
7	BIBLIOGRAPHY	109
8	APPENDICES	116
8.1	APPENDIX A – NATIONAL TRUST DRAFT CITATION, OAKS ESTATE.....	117
8.2	APPENDIX B – NGH HERITAGE, ASSESSMENT OF 9 HAZEL STREET	118
8.3	APPENDIX C - DETAILED PHYSICAL ASSESSMENT, OAKS ESTATE.....	119

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project brief

This heritage assessment has been prepared by Philip Leeson Architects Pty. Ltd. for the ACT Government Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate (ESDD) to inform development of a Master Plan for Oaks Estate. The study area is based on the area presently nominated for listing on the ACT Heritage Places Register.

This heritage assessment should be read in conjunction with the Indigenous Heritage Study and Cultural Landscape Assessment prepared by Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd.

Heritage status

Places in Oaks Estate are nominated or listed on three heritage registers as follows:

- Oaks Estate, *The Oaks*, and Robertson House are nominated for listing on the ACT Heritage Places Register.
- Oaks Estate and *The Oaks* are listed by the National Trust (ACT Chapter).
- The Oaks and the Slab Hut at 7 George St are listed on the Register of the National Estate.

Heritage assessment

Following historical, physical and social values assessment, detailed heritage assessment found significance under five of the ACT heritage significance criteria set out in the ACT Heritage Act 2004, Section 10 as follows:

(b) it exhibits outstanding design or aesthetic qualities valued by the community or a cultural group

(c) it is important as evidence of a distinctive way of life, taste, tradition, religion, land use, custom, process, design or function that is no longer practiced, is in danger of being lost or is of exceptional interest

(e) it is significant to the ACT because of its importance as part of local Aboriginal tradition.

(f) it is a rare or unique example of its kind, or is rare or unique in its comparative intactness

(h) it has strong or special associations with a person, group, event, development or cultural phase in local or national history

(j) it has provided, or is likely to provide, information that will contribute significantly to a wider understanding of the natural or cultural history of the ACT because of its use or potential use as a research site or object, teaching site or object, type locality or benchmark site

Statement of significance

Oaks Estate is a highly intact early twentieth century urban village in a picturesque rural setting with a unique history, which illustrates several themes in the development of NSW and the ACT. Cut off from Queanbeyan following the declaration of the ACT, it was not considered part of the development of the federal capital city of Canberra and retreated to the status of a village. Consequently many of its urban village attributes remain intact.

Oaks Estate is situated within the Molonglo River corridor, a resource rich area that once supported considerable hunter-gatherer Aboriginal occupation. The junction of the Queanbeyan and Molonglo rivers was a camping location with a reliable source of food, and a landmark on Aboriginal routes of travel through the region. A large 1882 gathering of Aboriginal people from throughout NSW, held at the junction of the two rivers, is said to have been the last Aboriginal corroboree in the Canberra Region.

Oaks Estate possesses considerable aesthetic qualities that are valued by the local community. These are manifest in both natural and built elements. It is a quiet village in a remarkably intact late nineteenth century rural landscape at the confluence of two rivers, yet is only a few minutes drive from Queanbeyan or the suburbs of Canberra.

Much of the evidence of its story remains intact; places of individual significance such as The Oaks and Robertson House, places of potential individual significance many of which are part of the history of the development of other parts of early Canberra, for example relocated workers housing, and most notably those place which contribute to its character as an urban village, modest buildings of pleasant architectural character, set in a mature landscape with indicators of a semi-rural, self-sufficient lifestyle and community cohesion.

Oaks Estate is important as evidence of several ways of life and land uses that are no longer practiced and are of exceptional interest, including; early pastoral holdings, early European settlement, the development of industry associated with the river and the railway, the rise of business entrepreneurs in the burgeoning town of Queanbeyan and importantly for ACT history a place which developed outside the strict Canberra bureaucracy and fostered a make do, self sufficient lifestyle within a tight knit community.

Oaks Estate has the potential to provide information on the cultural history of the ACT, particularly for its significance as a place that developed as a forgotten corner of Canberra, not forming part of the grand vision for the development of the city. A place which attracted people who by temperament, circumstance or both found it amenable to live there because of its relative lack of municipal regulation but at the same time fought as a community for basic services. A place which provided cheap, flexible housing for workers many of whom who helped to build early Canberra.

Significant features

The following features are intrinsic to the heritage significance of Oaks Estate:

- The Oaks and its associated blocks including mature plantings, fence lines and outbuildings;
- Robertson House and its associated blocks including mature plantings, fence lines and outbuildings;
- the river corridor from the railway bridge to Oaks Estate Rd including native and exotic plantings;
- the Aboriginal connection to the resources of the Molonglo River corridor;
- the junction of the Molonglo and Queanbeyan rivers as the location of the last recorded Aboriginal corroboree in the Canberra Region;
- corroboree A large 1882 gathering of Aboriginal people from throughout NSW, held at the junction of the two rivers, is said to have been the last Aboriginal corroboree in the Canberra Region. Aboriginal corroboree in the Canberra Region

- views along the river corridor in both directions to the north and east up to the immediate top of the river bank, to the south across the river flats and beyond to Oaks Estate, and a longer view to the east beyond the river confluence;
- the view from the riverside path to the railway bridge and beyond to the cemetery;
- the surviving evidence of the river crossing at the bottom of River Street including the natural topographical section through the river, both embankments, and the gentle slope and shallow water which made a natural crossing point;
- the dirt embankment and trackway remaining on the north side of the Molonglo River more or less evident up to its junction with Oaks Estate Road;
- the use of the river flats for agricultural purposes;
- the historic connection between Yass (Pialligo) Road and the Railway Station across the Molonglo River and up River Street;
- the historic Oaks Estate subdivision, including blocks and street layout;
- buildings and places of potential individual significance (which may require further research); and
- buildings, places and elements (fences, landscaping) which contribute to the early 20th century suburban village character, including individual dwellings and community facilities such as the bus shelter, the fire hose shed, the community hall and water tanks.

Recommendations

- Oaks Estate should be listed on the ACT Heritage Register as a precinct.
- The proposed precinct boundary is illustrated in Section 6.2;
- The Oaks and Robertson House should be listed as places of individual significance within the precinct listing;
- places of potential individual significance should be identified;
- places which contribute to the urban village character should be identified;
- there should be consultation with Queanbeyan City Council and the NSW Rail Authority regarding integration of policies and development guidelines for heritage areas adjacent to Oaks Estate in NSW, i.e the railway corridor, including the station, siding and former goods yards;
- a Conservation Management Plan should be prepared which guides future development in order to conserve the significant features of Oaks Estate; and
- further detailed studies should be undertaken to determine the following:
 - a detailed assessment of the additional items of potential individual significance identified in this report
 - any places of natural significance within Oaks Estate, e.g. rock formations along the river corridor

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Project brief

The ACT Government Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate (ESDD) have engaged Philip Leeson Architects to prepare a Heritage Assessment for Oaks Estate, taking in all the sites presently nominated for heritage listing. In parallel with the Heritage Assessment Philip Leeson Architects have also been engaged to provide heritage advice in the development of a Master Plan being prepared by Design Partnership.

The Background to the Oaks Estate Master Plan states that it is designed to set out the vision and principles to guide development and land uses into the future. ESDD are required to conduct Heritage Assessments to inform the master plan, and the work being undertaken by Philip Leeson Architects is to be complemented by an Indigenous Heritage Study and Cultural Landscape Assessment by Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd.

2.2 Study boundary and heritage status

The study boundary for this heritage assessment is the area presently nominated for ACT heritage listing, as demonstrated in the plan overleaf. This differs slightly from the recommended boundary for the Oaks Estate Heritage Precinct which is illustrated in Section 6.2.

The following places in Oaks Estate are currently of nominated status on the ACT Heritage Places Register:

<i>The Oaks</i>	Section 2 Block 16 & 19
<i>River Street</i>	Section 6 Blocks 17, 18 & 19 Section 8 Blocks 1-5, 7 & 9
<i>9 Hazel Street</i>	Section 7 Blocks 11 & 12
<i>William Street</i>	Section 11 Block 20 Section 12 Block 21
<i>Oaks Estate Hall</i>	Section 15 Block 4 (part)
<i>Market Garden</i>	Section 13 Block 5 (part)
<i>Hazelbrook Industrial Estate</i>	Section 14 blocks 1, 3, 4 & 5 Section 13 Blocks 5 & 6
<i>Oaks Estate Village Precinct</i>	Section 2 Blocks 16 & 19-22 Section 3 Blocks 2, 3, 13-16 & 25 Section 5 Blocks 1-7 Section 6 Blocks 1-6 & 17-27 Section 7 Blocks 1-6 & 9-13 Section 8 Blocks 1-13 & 21-33 Section 10 Blocks 1-5 Section 11 Blocks 1, 4-15, 20, 23-32, 37 & 38 Section 12 Blocks 20-25 Section 13 Blocks 3-6 Section 14 Blocks 1, 3-5 Section 15 Blocks 1, 2, 4 & 5

<i>Florence Street</i>	Section 5 Blocks 1-3 Section 13 Blocks 3, 5 & 6
<i>George Street</i>	Section 8 Blocks 24-26 Section 11 Blocks 1,4 & 38
<i>Chinese Market Garden</i>	Section 14 Block 1 (part of 2)
<i>Easement</i>	Old water supply tanks on road verge between McEwan Avenue and William Street at intersection of Railway Street

Figure 1 • (overleaf) Study boundary nominated in the project brief, **2013 •** Source: ESDD.

Oaks Estate: Nominated places on the ACT Heritage Places Register



2.3 Methodology

The project methodology is consistent with the Burra Charter Process for sequence of investigations, decisions and actions as follows:

A. IDENTIFY PLACE AND ASSOCIATIONS

- The place was identified in the project brief
- Early in the process it was recognised that the study boundary may be limited. Provision has been made to reassess the definition of the place if necessary.

B. GATHER AND RECORD INFORMATION ABOUT THE PLACE SUFFICIENT TO UNDERSTAND SIGNIFICANCE

- Readily available documentary evidence of European heritage at Oaks Estate has been gathered from a series of earlier studies.
- A desktop review of this documentary evidence has been used to prepare a history of the settlement in the context of the ACT.
- A streetscape based physical assessment of the nominated places in Oaks Estate has been undertaken to determine the extent of their physical significance, and to identify any previously unrecognised potential for heritage significance.

C. ASSESS SIGNIFICANCE

- The documentary and physical evidence for each of the nominated and identified places of potential significance has been assessed against ACT and HERCON criteria to determine heritage significance. These assessments will form the basis of draft provisional registrations and/or statements of reasons for ACT heritage listing purposes.

D. PREPARE A STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

- Statements of significance will be prepared for places recommended for ACT heritage listing.

E. IDENTIFY OBLIGATIONS ARISING FROM SIGNIFICANCE

- Obligations arising from the significance of Oaks Estate will be recorded as recommendations and advice to the master plan project team.

2.4 Limitations

Limitations to this Heritage Assessment include:

- the heritage assessment has been undertaken in parallel with development of the master plan for Oaks Estate;
- historical research was limited to published histories. No additional primary research has been carried out;
- social values assessment relied upon information collected by ESDD for the purposes of the Oaks Estate Master Plan. Community consultation was not part of the project scope;
- cultural landscape assessment relied upon findings of the report by Navin Officer Pty. Ltd.;
- indigenous heritage assessment relied upon findings of the report by Navin Officer Pty. Ltd.;
- physical assessment has typically been restricted to aspects of private property visible from the public domain; and
- environmental assessment did not form part of the project scope.

2.5 Conventions and abbreviations

Maps and plans have generally been oriented to show north to the top of the page, for consistency and for the purpose of comparison. Where this has not been possible, note has been made on the orientation of north points.

ACT	Australian Capital Territory
ESDD	Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate
FCAC	Federal Capital Advisory Committee (1921-1924)
FCC	Federal Capital Commission (1925-1930)
FCT	Federal Capital Territory
NCDC	National Capital Development Commission (1958-1989)
NCPDC	National Capital Planning and Development Committee (1938-1957)
OEPA	Oaks Estate Progress Association

2.6 Authorship

This assessment has been prepared by David Hobbes and Alanna King of Philip Leeson Architects Pty. Ltd.

2.7 Acknowledgements

The authors wish to thank Dr Karen Williams, Oaks Estate resident and Historian for leading us on a comprehensive walking tour of Oaks Estate and its environs and sharing her detailed knowledge of its history and ecology.

3 HISTORICAL ASSESSMENT

3.1 Historical context

3.1.1 Geography and pre-European landscape

The geography of Oaks Estate is both distinctive as a terrain and self-contained within the wider landscape. Oaks Estate is elevated above the junction of the Molonglo and Queanbeyan rivers, essentially in a crook created by the two rivers. The terrain, relatively level at the south, slopes down to river flats at the southern bank of the Molonglo River, and drops away more dramatically at the western bank of the Queanbeyan River. The highest point in Oaks Estate is 20m above the riverbank, and would once have been a wonderful position from which to survey the wider landscape.

The bounding by the Queanbeyan and Molonglo rivers gives Oaks Estate a sense of being a distinct locale. There are two shallow natural crossing points from Oaks Estate, directly to the north across the Molonglo River, and to the east north-east across the Queanbeyan River, with considerably deeper pools at the north-east, where the two rivers meet, and at the east, on the Queanbeyan River. At the northern bank of the Molonglo River there is a deep crease in the land known as an ephemeral drainage line¹, which contributes to the Molonglo River from the north. Both rivers are characterised by deep holes with shallow areas between them, which turn into a chain of ponds during periods of dry weather.

Evidence of aboriginal occupation in the ACT generally shows the importance of sites with proximity to major permanent creeks, wetlands and nearby valley floors², and the Molonglo River corridor was an important resource zone that attracted considerable hunter-gatherer occupation. Although there is relatively little documentary evidence of the nature of indigenous inhabitation of the Canberra region, accounts of traditional ways of life in places comparable to Oaks Estate are of successful hunting and gathering, an eventful social life, and inter-group contacts.³ More particularly, the Aboriginal Cultural Assessment of Oaks Estate concludes that the confluence of the Queanbeyan and Molonglo rivers would have been a resource rich area prior to European settlement – with likely importance as a travel route and a camping location with a reliable source of water and food.⁴

Williams claims that *Quinbean* is a local Aboriginal word for the meeting of the two rivers, and this site at the confluence of the Queanbeyan and Molonglo rivers had provided for a long history of sheltered camping and corroboree grounds prior to European settlement.⁵ It was some of these same geographical features that attracted future generations of European settlement to Oaks Estate. Refer to Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment by Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd for further information on Aboriginal heritage.

¹ Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd, Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment, 2013.

² Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd, Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment, 2013; Flood 1980, Access Archaeology 1990, Heffernan and Klaver 1995, Kuskie 1992a, 1992b

³ Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd, Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment, 2013; Flood 1980 and Huys 1993

⁴ Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd, Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment, 2013.

⁵ Williams, Karen. "The Oaks, the Queanbeyan Railway Station and the Robertsons' house: Cornerstones in a changing landscape." National Trust of Australia (ACT) Heritage in Trust, May 2012.

3.1.2 European rural estates, 1820 – 1877

The first documented European exploration through the Canberra region was an expedition in search of the Murrumbidgee River, led by Charles Throsby in 1820. Throsby recorded the presence of Lake George and continued through the north of today's ACT as far as the Yass River before retracing his steps⁶. Another expedition later the same year climbed Black Mountain, and saw the Molonglo River winding across the Limestone Plains, before retreating⁷. The first recorded European exploration through the Queanbeyan area was in 1822, when a small expedition led by William Kearns crossed the Molonglo Plains in 1822 and reached the Queanbeyan River⁸. These initial explorations were quickly followed by grants for pastoral settlements in the Canberra / Queanbeyan region during the 1820s.

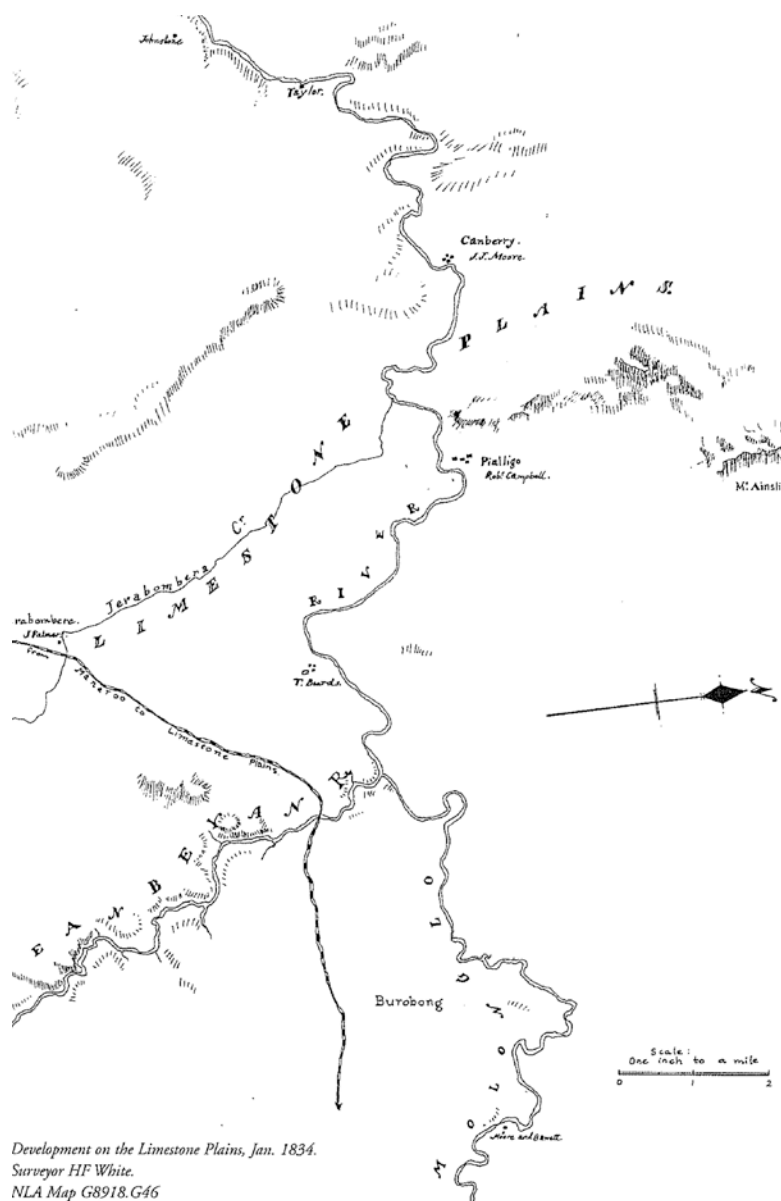


Figure 2 • Location of Timothy Beard's huts for Queenbeeann Station, downstream from the junction of the Molonglo and Queanbeyan rivers, **1834**. • Source: No Man's Land, NLA Map G8918.G46.

⁶ Gillespie, Lyall L. *Ginninderra: Forerunner to Canberra. A History of the Ginninderra District*. Canberra: The Wizard Canberra Local History Series, 1992, 5.

⁷ Gillespie, 1992, 6.

⁸ Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd, *European Cultural Landscape Assessment*, 2013; Lea-Scarlett, 1968, 5-6.

An 1834 map shows the location at which pardoned convict Timothy Beard had established huts and grazing cattle in the mid 1820s, just over two kilometres west of the junction of Molonglo and Queanbeyan rivers⁹. Beard named the station Queenbeeann, but did not formalize ownership of the land by establishing a Crown lease. A census of the area in 1828 records three men working for Timothy Beard at Queenbeeann, and their dates of arrival as convicts, ranging from 1817 to 1820.

The first land grant on the Limestone Plains was to Joshua John Moore, who referred in a letter of 1826 to land he had owned for upwards of three years¹⁰. Moore was an Officer of the Supreme Court of NSW, and established his employees at a station settlement on land at present day Acton. Survey records dating from 1832 show a grant to Joshua John Moore of 1000 acres at Acton, stretching northward of the Molonglo River¹¹.

Robert Campbell was a Sydney merchant who followed Moore as the second landowner on the Limestone Plains when in 1825 he was granted land, cash and sheep as compensation for the loss of a ship 17 years before¹². His employee, James Ainslie, selected the sheep from Government flocks in Bathurst, driving them overland in 1825 in search of prime land. An aboriginal woman led Ainslie to Pialligo, and Ainslie selected 4000 acres stretching north of the Molonglo River on Campbell's behalf¹³. Campbell was later to become a significant landowner, expanding the estate north and south of the Molonglo River from its base at Pialligo.

John Palmer, purser of the *Sirius* with the first fleet, Commissary-General of the colony of NSW by 1791¹⁴, and also Robert Campbell's brother in law, followed suit shortly afterwards. In 1827 Palmer's representative selected 2000 acres of land¹⁵ on the south side of the Molonglo River, about halfway between Queenbeeann and Campbell's property at Pialligo¹⁶, in exchange for property at Portland Head. The 1828 census records that a station with a staff of seven people had been established on the property by 1828¹⁷. John Palmer's property was known as Jerrabomberra, and expanded to the south-east.

⁹ Williams, Karen. *Oaks Estate. No Man's Land*. Canberra: Karen Williams, 1997; Rex Cross, *Bygone Queanbeyan* revisited, 1985.

¹⁰ Gillespie, 1992, 6.

¹¹ Hoddle, Robert, 1832-1911. *Survey of Limestone Plains District*. Sydney, Department of Lands.

¹² Gillespie, 1992, 6.

¹³ Gillespie, 1992, 6.

¹⁴ Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd; Lea-Scarlett 1968.

¹⁵ Gillespie, 1992, 6.

¹⁶ Hoddle, Robert, 1832-1911. *Survey of Limestone Plains District*. Sydney, Department of Lands.

¹⁷ Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd; Gillespie, 1991.

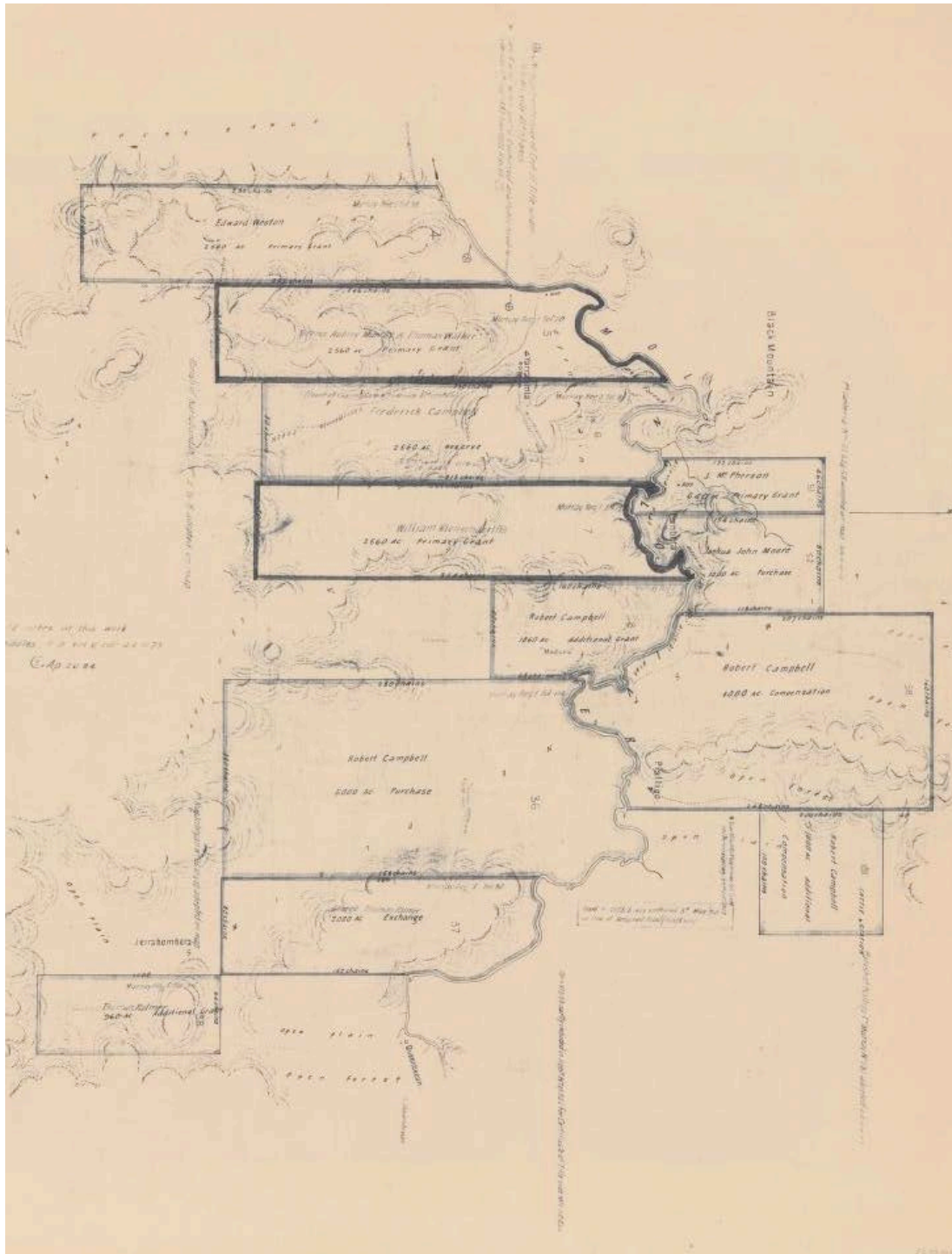


Figure 3 • Survey of Limestone Plains district by Robert Hoddle (part, rotated with north at the right margin). Note that Queenbeeann is recorded at the eastern extent of the Molonglo River on this map (top of A4 page), with Palmer's land the next recorded to the west, **1832**, added to until 1911 • Source: National Library of Australia digitised as nla.map-vn110420-sd-cd

Robert Dixon surveyed the Molonglo and Murrumbidgee rivers across the Yass Plains in 1829 in preparation for the proclamation of the County of Murray, and the official opening of the area to occupation. An 1835 survey by Hoddle of the Oaks Estate region shows the road from the Limestone Plains to Queanbeyan sweeping through to the south of the Molonglo River to meet the road running between Lake George and Michelago. It also shows the location of the station on the Cooma to Sydney railway line, and a road tracking north from the station, through present day Oaks Estate across the Molonglo River, to the Canberra to Yass Road. Just 15 years after Europeans first sighted the Molonglo River, the area that was to become Oaks Estate had a new and significant regional layer of road and rail intersections.

The original landowners on the Limestone Plains expanded their initial estates, and generational change in the Campbell and Palmer families in the 1830s led to the creation of thriving communities in the district during this period. Economic events including a financial crisis and a gold rush also left their mark.

Robert Campbell's third son, Charles Campbell, managed the Campbell estate from its epicenter at Pialligo from 1835¹⁸. Charles Campbell established a village character of shepherds, ploughmen and dairy hands by providing his workers and their families with houses, and plots of two acres per family.¹⁹ Campbell participated in the government's assisted migration scheme, introducing Scottish migrants through sponsorship, and financed the construction of St. John the Baptist Church of England and a schoolhouse on the western side of the Yass Road (now Anzac Parade).²⁰ By the mid to late 1830s, Robert Campbell's sheep were being grazed on the north and south banks of the Molonglo River, and an 1843 map published in Baker's Australian county atlas shows that Campbell owned a significant portion of the land in the area.

There were two houses provided by Campbell in the vicinity of Oaks Estate - the Honeysuckle, located at the northern bank of the Molonglo River directly opposite Queenbeeaaan²¹, and The Oaks, in its present day location on the southern bank of the Molonglo River. Campbell purchased the land surrounding *The Oaks* in 1837²², and had a stone house built sometime in 1837 or 1838 for relatives who were expected from England.²³ The family did not arrive, and from 1838 the dwelling was operating as Elmsall Inn. This use, expanding in 1839 to include a shop built of timber slabs and roofed with sheets of bark,²⁴ reflects the significant junction at which The Oaks was positioned. There was also a burial ground associated with and nearby to The Oaks, a practice consistent with similar places of the same era, and used from the mid 1830s until 1846, with one further addition in 1863.²⁵

¹⁸ Williams, 1997, 4.

¹⁹ Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd; Gillespie, 1991 and Pender & Quiddington, 1987.

²⁰ Williams, 1997, 3.

²¹ Williams, 1997, 3.

²² Williams, 1997, 5.

²³ Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd, 2013; NCPA, 1990, 34 & Williams, 1997.

²⁴ Williams, 1997, 12; Sheedy, Bert and Cross, Rex. *Queanbeyan Pioneers – First Study*. Queanbeyan: Queanbeyan Books and Prints, 1983.

²⁵ Williams, 1997, 12. Note that a register of burials at The Oaks burial ground is contained in *Queanbeyan Pioneer Cemeteries*. TBC: Queanbeyan City Council in conjunction with Queanbeyan and District Historical Society, 1982.

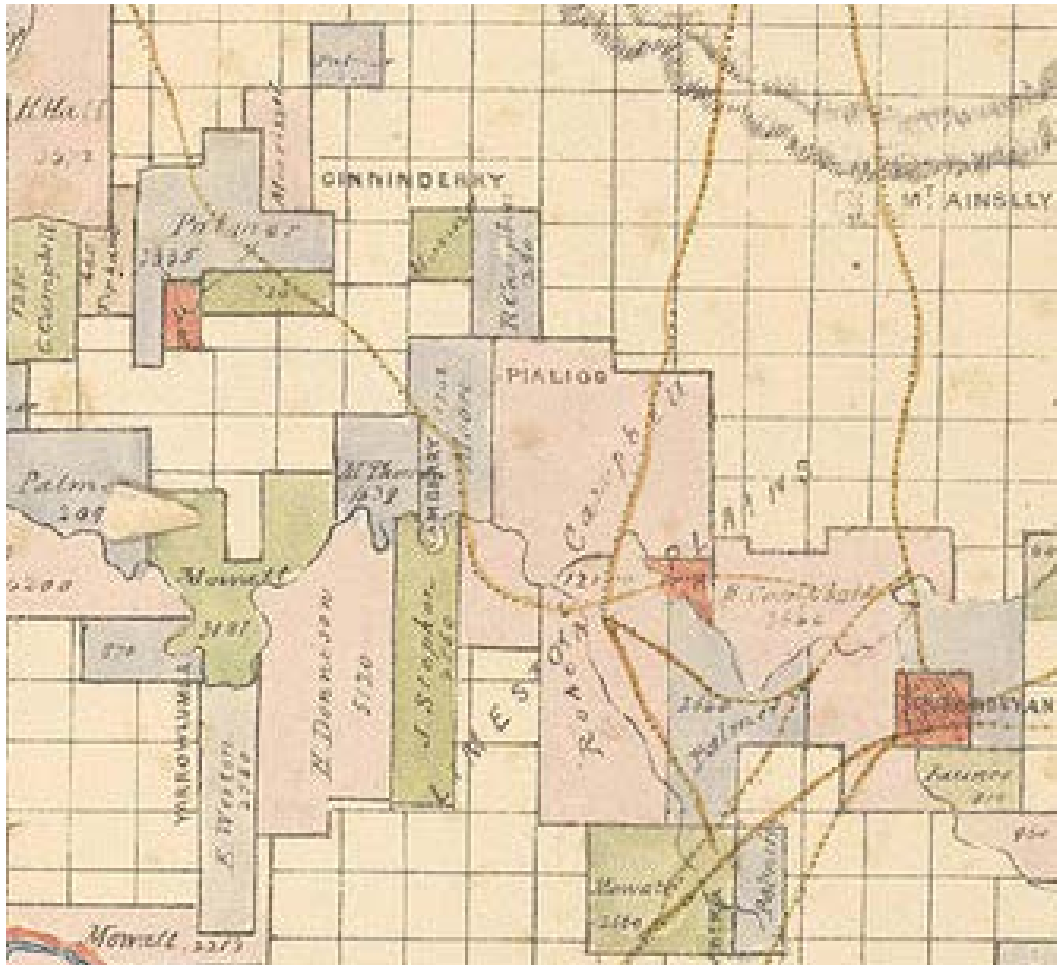


Figure 5 • Detail of map published in Baker's Australian County Atlas showing the extent of properties, the importance of the Molonglo River as a line of division, and the main paths of travel through the Limestone Plains, 1843 • Source: NLA: MAP Raa8_Part14

John Palmer died in 1833, and Jerrabomberra Estate was left to his son George Palmer (of Ginninderra Estate), although managed by George's brother Pemberton Palmer.

When Charles Campbell acquired 100 acres of Robert Campbell's estate in 1840, the land was described as being bounded on the east by the Village Reserve and Queanbeyan River, on the north by the Molonglo River and on the south and west by survey lines.²⁶ This was the site of the future Oaks Estate. The term 'Village Reserve' described the township of Queanbeyan, which had been gazetted in 1838²⁷, reflecting the population increase experienced in the County of Murray during this time. The proportion of women had increased, and the proportion of convicts had decreased, reflecting the communities being established by local landowners. Where the 1833 population had been just 510, by 1841 the population was 2,111, with free women representing one quarter of the population, and convicts representing one third of the population²⁸.

There are very few references to the indigenous people living in the Canberra region from the time of European settlement, and the impression generally is of rapid

²⁶ Williams, 1997, 5; title information

²⁷ Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd, *European Cultural Landscape Assessment*, 2013; Queanbeyan City Council

²⁸ Navin Officer, *European Cultural Landscape Assessment*, 2013; population figures for the County of Murray

depopulation and a desperate disintegration of a traditional way of life.²⁹ However, in 1862 a large group of aboriginal people camped opposite The Oaks on the Molonglo and Queanbeyan rivers.³⁰ Aboriginal people had reportedly travelled from the South Coast, the lower Lachlan and Murrumbidgee Rivers, Yass, the Bland Plains and Braidwood, and stayed for eight to ten days. This gathering is said to have been the 'last Aboriginal corroboree' in the Canberra Region.³¹ A camping site described as an Aboriginal 'fringe-camp' was, however, located near to The Oaks, and in use until 1889³².

External events also had an impact on the development of the Limestone Plains during this period. In 1843, a major financial crisis impacted across the Colony of NSW. The sale of livestock became highly unprofitable, as the overseas market for wool slumped, and the market for mutton was flooded. When Henry O'Brien of Yass developed the practice of boiling down, the industrial uses of sheep diversified, and prices per head recovered slightly.³³ Boiling down was a process whereby sheep carcasses were boiled in large cauldrons to extract tallow (fat for soap and candle making), and to yield fertilizer. It was typically combined with wool scouring works, a process by which lanolin is extracted from wool through washing. The alluvial gold rush commenced in the 1850s, causing significant fluxes in population as gold fields were discovered and abandoned.³⁴ Gold was discovered six miles from Queanbeyan in 1852, at Bungendore in 1855, and at Kiandra in the Snowy River region in 1859, bringing many outsiders through the region. Cobb & Co. commenced a daily coach between Picton and Goulburn, and a tri-weekly coach between Goulburn and Queanbeyan to carry the increased traffic of prospectors.³⁵ A survey of 1866 indicates the hint of a future Cooma to Sydney railway line between Queanbeyan and the Molonglo River.

²⁹ Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd, *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment*, 2013; Officer, 1989

³⁰ Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd, *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment*, 2013; Gale, 1927, 64 and *The Golden Age*, 5.4.1862.

³¹ Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd, *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment*, 2013; Gale 1927, 64-65.

³² Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd, *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment*, 2013; Walker 1988, 4-5.

³³ Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd, *European Cultural Landscape Assessment*, 2013

³⁴ Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd, *European Cultural Landscape Assessment*, 2013

³⁵ Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd, *European Cultural Landscape Assessment*, 2013; Field, 1985, 250-254 and Queanbeyan City Council, 1938

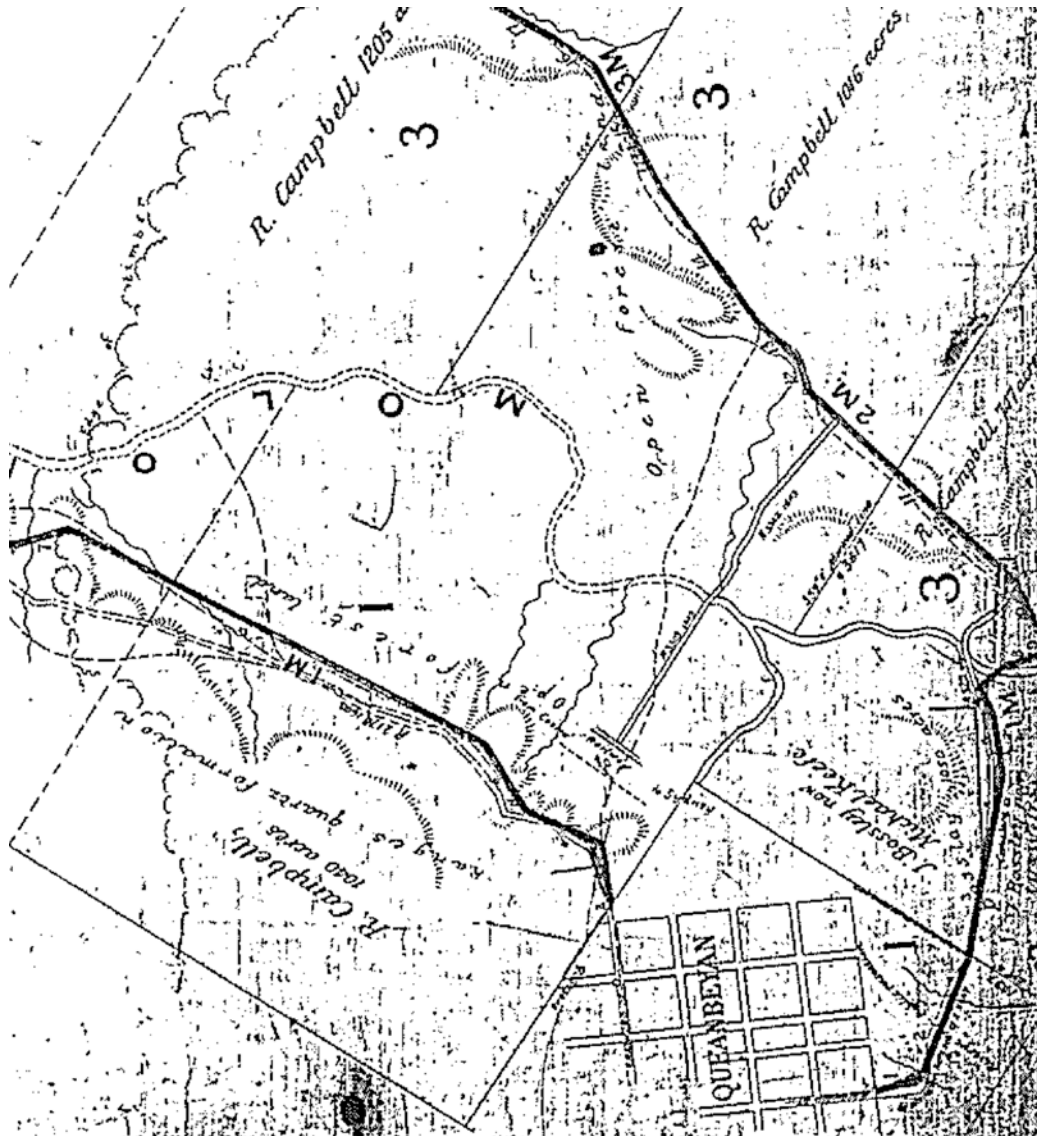


Figure 6 • JB Houghton's survey captured the various Molonglo River crossing points and the site for the future railway station, 1866 • Source: No Man's Land, NLA Map G8971.G4.

The road between Canberra and Yass to the north of the Molonglo River was surveyed and confirmed as the main road between Queanbeyan and Yass in 1866.³⁶ However, it appears from the same survey that there was a shortcut from the Canberra-Yass road, across the Campbell properties and the Molonglo River, to Queanbeyan. It takes a slightly different route from the direct road marked between the future railway station and the Canberra to Yass road across the Campbell properties (of which modern day River Street is part). In the mid 1860s the electric telegraph was extended to Queanbeyan and in 1869 the steam railway was opened to Goulburn, with extensions to Tarago completed in 1884, to Bungendore in 1885, and to Queanbeyan in 1886.³⁷

The large estates survived these events and continued to grow and thrive with the benefit of increased population and infrastructure. From about 1846, the Campbell properties went by the name of Duntroon Estate,³⁸ and in the 1850s, the Duntroon

³⁶ Williams, 1997, 8.

³⁷ Williams, 1997, 18.

³⁸ Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd, ; DHA, 1996.

cattle and horse stock had a reputation as the best south of Sydney.³⁹ George Campbell, Charles' younger brother, came to Duntroon in 1855, and expanded the Duntroon Estate by purchasing land north and west of the original holdings. George and his wife Marianne were important and generous social figures in the district,⁴⁰ building upon the strong Campbell reputation, and improving the Estate with new buildings and plantings. *The Oaks* was both home to various doctors and their families, and a general medical practice through the 1860s and 70s⁴¹. In 1877 Charles Campbell sold the 100 acres of land he had purchased in 1840, along with the house, *The Oaks*, to a farmer and grazier of Tarago named John Bull.⁴² It was this act more than any other before it that drew the boundary and began the history of Oaks Estate.

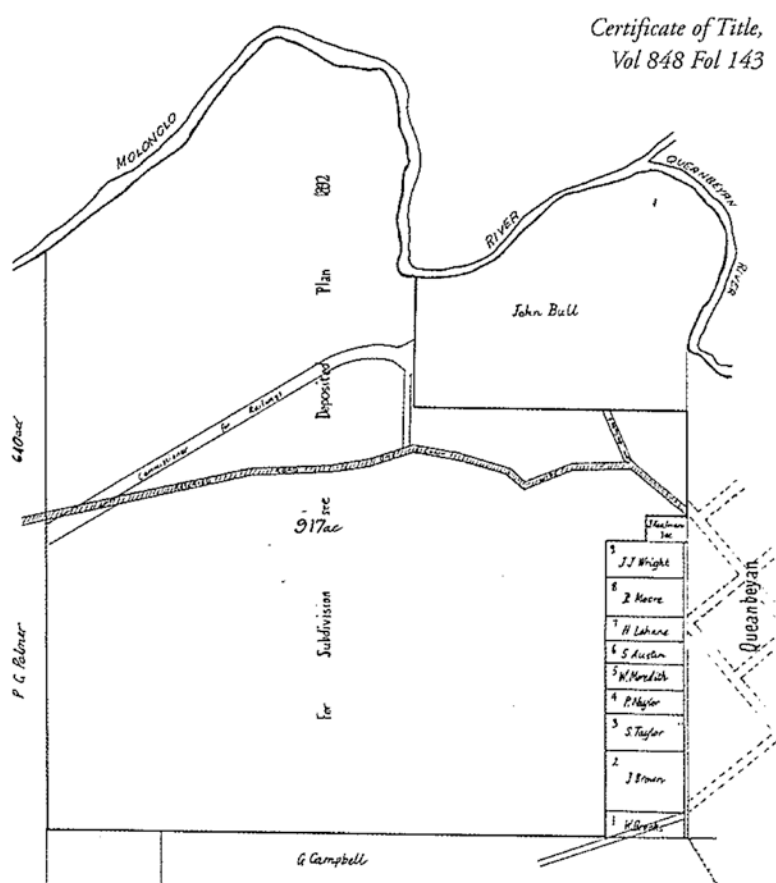


Figure 7 • Certificate of title showing the 100 acre parcel of land south of the Molonglo River that was apportioned to Charles Campbell in 1840 and sold to John Bull in 1877, c.1877-1885 • Source: No Man's Land, NSW Land Titles Office.

Jerrabomberra Estate had suffered under the management of Pemberton Palmer, whose spending led to multiple bankruptcies and the lease by auction of the Jerrabomberra Estate in 1867.⁴³ In 1871, Pemberton Palmer began to subdivide and sell leases of 30 – 100 acres of Jerrabomberra Estate. By the time Pemberton Palmer died in 1885, the leases had been acquired by Frederick Warwick, John Bull, J.J. Wright, and James Pike⁴⁴.

³⁹ Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd; Shumack, 1977, 27.

⁴⁰ Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd; Shumack, 1977

⁴¹ Williams, 1997, 12-13; Sheedy and Cross

⁴² Williams, 1997, 5; Sheedy, P B and Percy, E A, *Maneroo to Monero*. Queanbeyan: Queanbeyan City Council, 1995, 74; and NSW Land Titles information.

⁴³ Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd; Shumack, 1967, 28.

⁴⁴ Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd; Gillespie, 1991.

3.1.3 Industry and subdivision, 1877 – 1901

During the 1870s and 80s, there was a significant shift in the use of the land surrounding The Oaks. Where the landscape had previously been dominated by grazing, the growth of Queanbeyan business interest saw the establishment of industry and residential subdivision, and the railway extending through to the south of The Oaks, with Queanbeyan Station on the doorstep.

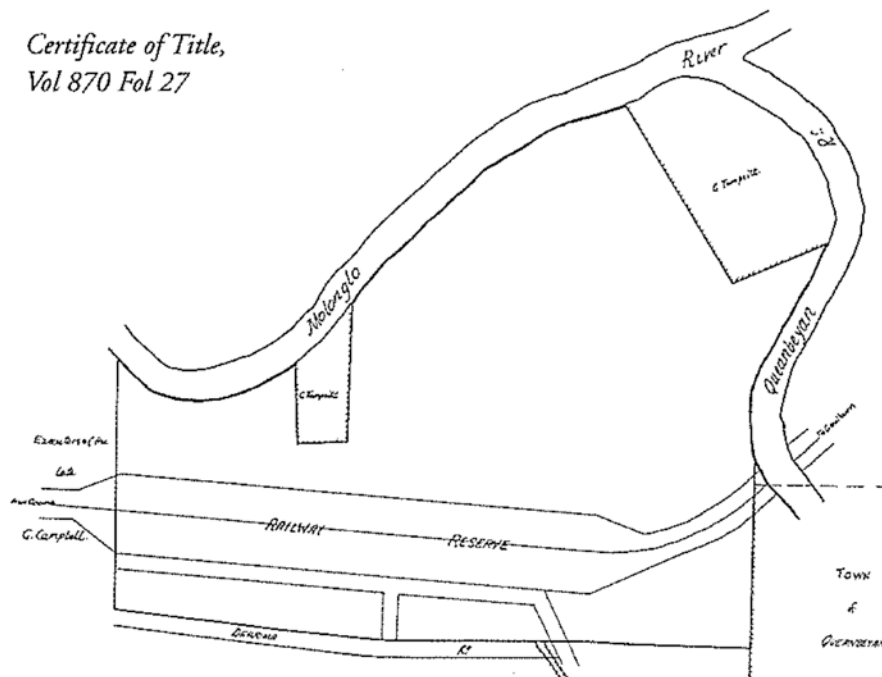


Figure 8 • Certificate of title showing how John Bull subdivided and sold the 100 acre parcel of land south of the Molonglo River, c.1885 • Source: No Man's Land, NSW Land Titles Office.

John Bull established wool washing works and a fellmongery (preparing animal skins for tanning) associated with *The Oaks* in around 1877⁴⁵. The business had various names and iterations over almost 20 years. In 1885 John Bull sold a portion of the 100-acre property south of the Molonglo River including *The Oaks*, to a Queanbeyan storekeeper named George Tompsitt, along with rights of way. The balance of the property was sold to William Price, a Sydney merchant operating a store from Queanbeyan.⁴⁶ An 1885 article referred to the Hazelbrook wool-scouring works, tannery and wholesale produce warehouses, formerly known as *The Oaks Wool-Scouring and Fellmongery Establishment*, and describes the location and extent of this industry,

...the Hazelbrook wool-scouring works, tannery and wholesale produce warehouses, formerly known as The Oaks Wool-Scouring and Fellmongery Establishment, are situated on one of the most picturesque parts of the Queanbeyan River, within a few hundred yards of the proposed site for the Queanbeyan railway station, and forms quite a small township, covering about thirteen acres of land. On the bank of the river is a large substantial iron building, in which is a 12 h.p. horizontal engine and a 20 h.p. Cornish boiler, driving a 6 inch centrifugal pump, a large chaff cutter and circular saw. In the same building, but partitioned off, the wool-scouring is carried on; adjoining is the pressroom, where the wool is put into bales and weighed after scouring, ready for market. In close proximity are the sweat-houses, pulling sheds, soak pits, drying greens, etc. We then come to the tannery and fellmongery,

⁴⁵ Williams, 1997, 13; Lea-Scarlett, 1968

⁴⁶ Williams, 1997, 14; Lea-Scarlett, 1968

curriers, beamsmen, and bark sheds, close to which is the bark-mill for grinding the bark used for tanning. Proceeding up the hill, we pass the workmen's huts and cottages, and arriving at the top, reach another large building, used for storing produce, sheepskins, wools, etc. In the wool-scouring works, all wool is washed by hand in boxes of perforated zinc, supplied with a constant stream of water by means of a centrifugal pump. This turns out the wool a beautiful colour, without the use of soap. The works can turn out, per week, ready for market, 70 bales of scoured wool and fellmonger 2500 sheepskins. About 14 men are employed, and in the warehouses there is a storage room for from 1200 to 1500 bales. There are two drying greens of half an acre each. The tannery includes 23 tan and 14 lime pits in which from 70 to 80 hides and 150 to 200 dozen basils are put per week, employing six men. The produce business employs four men. There are also three wagons and teams, and two drays employed in fetching and delivering wool, etc. during the season.⁴⁷

John Bull, George Tomsitt and William Price were prominent and entrepreneurial Queanbeyan businessmen, and saw opportunity in what would become Oaks Estate. The three men were represented by various entity names including John Bull and Co. and William Price & Co.⁴⁸ John Bull was elected alderman in Queanbeyan's first Council elections in 1885, and became mayor in 1888⁴⁹. George Tomsitt was managing director of Hazelbrook. An arrangement was made between William Price, John Bull and the Commissioner of Railways in 1885, for William Price to be paid for land appropriated for railway purposes⁵⁰. The following year, a corridor was resumed through the southern part of William Price's property and The Oaks, separating what was to become Oaks Estate, from Queanbeyan. The north-south road connecting the site for the Queanbeyan Station with the main Yass - Queanbeyan road across the Molonglo River (of which modern day River Street is part), was also surveyed in 1886 as a parish road. Oaks Estate quickly became a well-resourced and well-serviced business opportunity.

The first subdivision of 300 building allotments bounded by the Queanbeyan and Molonglo rivers, and by the new railway line, was registered in 1887,⁵¹ the same year in which the Queanbeyan railway station was opened⁵². The pattern of streets set out for The Oaks Subdivision at that time is largely as they remain today, with few and minor modifications. Although an auction was held, sale of the blocks was slow – starting with blocks along the river on William Street, and a scattering on River, George and Hazel streets. Typically owners came from Queanbeyan, and the first houses appeared as early as 1888, although building generally progressed slowly.⁵³ To give an idea of the social landscape at that time, The Oaks was being operated by Mathew McAlister as a hotel in 1886 and 1887⁵⁴, and sometime in the 1880s or 1890s, a Chinese Market Garden was established on the river flats near the intersection of the north-south road carrying traffic to the station.⁵⁵ An 1891 flood, which washed away a house owned by the Robertson family at the bottom of George Street, and John Bull's tannery works on Nimrod Road, was likely to have been a strong reminder of the risks associated with developing riverfront property.⁵⁶

⁴⁷ Williams, 1997; Town and Country Journal, 19 September, 1885

⁴⁸ Williams, 1997, 23; Goulburn Evening Penny Post, 15 September 1889, which mentions William Price of Bull and Co., Sydney. Also Queanbeyan rates books note that rates of 1891 on land owned by William Price, Sydney, were paid by John Bull and Co.

⁴⁹ Williams, 1997, 16.

⁵⁰ Williams, 1997, 16; NSW Land Titles Office indenture Registered No 555 Book 315

⁵¹ Williams, 1997, 19; Queanbeyan Age article of 15 December 1877 describing Dalhenty and Company public auction at the Temperance Hall, Queanbeyan

⁵² Williams. 1997, 18-19.

⁵³ Williams, 1997, 20.

⁵⁴ Williams, 1997, 16.

⁵⁵ Williams, 1997, 30 & 46

⁵⁶ Williams, 1997, 20.

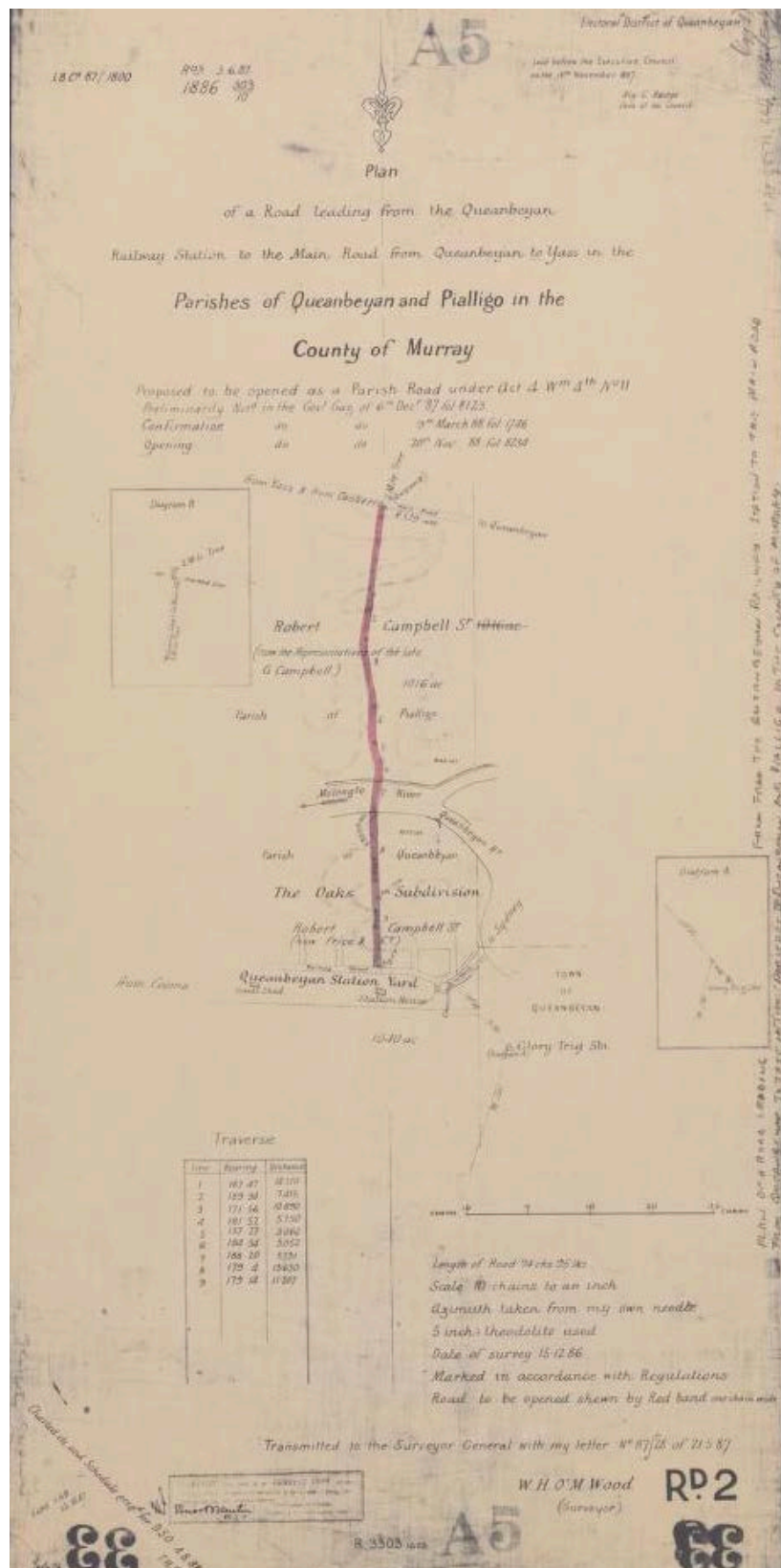


Figure 9 • Plan of the road leading from the Queanbeyan Railway Station to the main road from Queanbeyan to Yass in the Parishes of Queanbeyan and Pialligo in the County of Murray: proposal to be opened as a Parish Road under Act 4 Wm. 4th No. 11. Note that modern day River Street forms part of this road. Prepared by New South Wales Department of Lands, 1886 • Source: National Library of Australia digitised as nla.map-vn4560577-2-e-cd

Industry and land speculation continued through the 1890s, although there were some changes in the initial business arrangement between Tomsitt, Bull and Price, when Tomsitt was killed in a shooting accident in 1892⁵⁷. Tomsitt had been Managing Director of the Queanbeyan Wool and Manufacturing Company, which operated the Hazelbrook wool-works from 1889⁵⁸. Tomsitt had also expanded the property on which The Oaks stood in 1890, when he acquired the blocks immediately to the south and west of the two-acre block on which The Oaks stood⁵⁹. Following the 1892 death of George Tomsitt, however, The Oaks was sold to George Lesmond, while the blocks acquired in 1890 were transferred to two other owners⁶⁰.

There was a second major subdivision and land sale in 1892, to wind up the Tomsitt, Bull, Price partnership. The 200 allotments consisted of all unsold land around the railway station, goods sheds, trucking yards and wool-works. Major selling points described in the advertisement for sale included: an expected influx of population associated with the Local Government Bill; the arterial roads from agricultural districts of Ginninderra, Canberra and Majura; and the railway station.⁶¹ The Queanbeyan Wool and Manufacturing Company of Hazelbrook purchased a number of blocks during this land sale, mainly along the river flats stretching from Hazelbrook to The Oaks.⁶² Other blocks that sold were on the highest ground, and those closest to and along the length of the railway line. The steeply sloped land was not popular, given the difficulty in building development.

Oaks Estate property owners during the 1890s were a mix of Queanbeyan business people, and young families moving to Oaks Estate following increased employment opportunities associated with the railway line. Many were descendants of the pioneering families of the Limestone Plains⁶³. Development was still a mix of industry, farming and residential activity, with farming now focused mainly to the west of residential blocks, in the Mountain Road area. Only a few more houses were added to Oaks Estate in the following decade.⁶⁴

Typically, industrial developments in Oaks Estate were supplemented with housing for key workers. For example, the Queanbeyan Roller Flour Mill Company, of which Tomsitt had been director, built a mill near the railway sometime in the early 1890s. A miller's house was added to the mill property sometime in 1895/6.⁶⁵ The land in Oaks Estate had been chosen for the mill because it was close to the railway line and inexpensive to buy.⁶⁶ Advertisements in the *Queanbeyan Age* for its sale in 1895 and 1896, however, and a notice of a meeting of shareholders in 1896 reporting a unanimous vote to go into liquidation, indicated a difficult time for the company.⁶⁷ Various shares in the Queanbeyan Co-Operative Roller Flour Mill changed hands in the period 1897-1915, during which time the mill was mortgaged to the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney⁶⁸. There was also a cottage associated with the railway. A Station Master's cottage and goods shed were initially constructed south of the railway line. Later housing was also located on the southern side of the railway line on railway land, with the exception of a gatekeeper's house, which was located on the

⁵⁷ Williams, 1997, 13 ; the *Queanbeyan Age*, 10 February 1892.

⁵⁸ Williams, 1997, 14.

⁵⁹ Williams, 1997, 13.

⁶⁰ Williams, 1997, 13.

⁶¹ Williams, 1997, 23 ; the *Queanbeyan Age*, 23 December 1891

⁶² Williams, 1997, 23.

⁶³ Williams, 1997, 24.

⁶⁴ Williams, 1997, 24.

⁶⁵ Williams, 1997, 22.

⁶⁶ Williams, 1997, 22 ; the *Goulburn Evening Penny Post*, 11 February 1890

⁶⁷ Williams, 1997, 22 ; the *Queanbeyan Age*, 27 February 1895, 8 August 1896, 23 September 1896 & 19 October 1896.

⁶⁸ Williams, 1997, 22.

northern side of the station near the intersection of Oaks Estate Road and Railway Street.⁶⁹

In 1901, all Oaks Estate lots remaining unsold from earlier subdivision plans were transferred to John Bull. Bull, effectively the creator of the Oaks Subdivision, died the same year, and the property was transferred to his daughters Clara and Florence Bull.⁷⁰ Housing development in Oaks Estate at this time was relatively static, and industry also waned. The Hazelbrook complex had been mostly demolished by the early 1900s⁷¹, and conveyance documents associated with Hazelbrook in 1925 describe, 'twelve acres one rood of land commenced at a peg on the left bank of the Queanbeyan River near the tan pits and drying ground and being the north east corner of lot 13 section L on a plan deposited in the Land Titles Office, Sydney, DP no. 2207'.⁷² Note that one rood is a unit of measurement and represents a quarter of an acre.

Oaks Estate, essentially by now a suburb of Queanbeyan, had changed faster than much of the surrounding landscape. Honeysuckle, the house on the northern bank of the Molonglo River downstream from Oaks Estate, that Charles Campbell had provided his workers in the 1830s, continued as a family farm until the 1920s. Indeed, the same family worked the farm between 1888 and 1913.⁷³ Bull's 1880s subdivision in the Mountain Road area had been marginally successful; with river frontage blocks being sold quickly and farm type houses built.⁷⁴ John E.R. Campbell of Duntroon, and Frederick Campbell of Yarralumla purchased the remaining unsold rural land in the vicinity of Mountain Road in 1906/7.⁷⁵ The vision for Oaks Estate as a productive and profitable place, and much of the capital investment accompanying it, died along with Bull, Tomsitt and Price, marking the end of an era at the turn of the century.

⁶⁹ Williams, 1997, 17.

⁷⁰ Williams, 1997, 25.

⁷¹ Williams, 1997, 24.

⁷² Williams, 1997, 14.

⁷³ Williams, 1997, 4-5.

⁷⁴ Williams, 1997, 19.

⁷⁵ Williams, 1997.

3.1.4 Federal Territory and Canberra, 1901 – 1920s

As the colonies federated, and discussion on the topic of a new Australian capital began in earnest, nobody in Oaks Estate could possibly have imagined the weight that these decisions would carry for the future of Oaks Estate. The proposed Territory in 1900 excluded Oaks Estate. By 1909, however, the boundaries of the Territory had been more strategically considered, and the location of the railway line included Oaks Estate, but excluded the rest of Queanbeyan. When the legislated borders adopted the railway line as their eastern boundary, Oaks Estate was severed permanently from Queanbeyan.

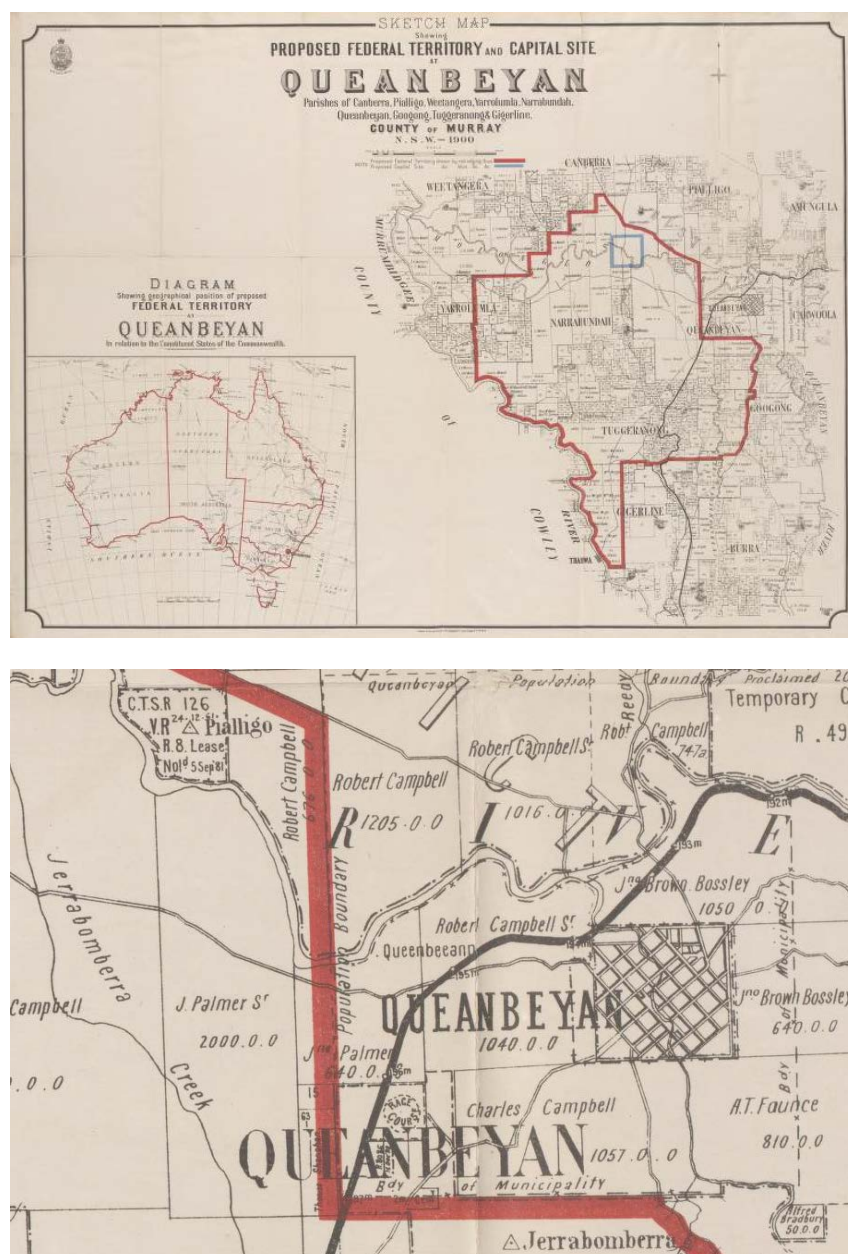


Figure 10 • a Sketch map showing proposed Federal Territory and capital site at Queanbeyan. This drawing describes just one of the many territories considered in the Report of the Commissioner of Seat of Government of the Commonwealth, Royal Commission on Sites for the Seat of Government of the Commonwealth • **b** Detail of the drawing. Note that the railway line was not proposed to form part of the border, and while the territory was titled Queanbeyan, the town of Queanbeyan was excluded from the Territory. The proposed territory border follows the road to Yass, the municipal boundary, and a river, 1900 • Source: National Library of Australia digitised as nla.map-vn2022797-sd-cd

The Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act 1901 federated the colonies, and determined that a Seat of Government of the Commonwealth was to be selected within the State of NSW and not less than 100 miles from Sydney. The *Seat of Government Act 1908* nominated the Canberra-Yass region as the site of the Federal Capital, with details of territory and governance further resolved in the *Seat of Government Surrender Act 1909* and the *Seat of Government Acceptance Act 1909*. The eastern boundary for the Territory adopted in 1909 follows the Goulburn-Cooma railway line, and therefore divided Oaks Estate in the ACT from Queanbeyan in NSW. Maps of the proposed Territory as late as 1909, however, demonstrate that the severance of Oaks Estate from Queanbeyan could have been less severe, with the proposal of a supplementary territory for control by the Commonwealth.

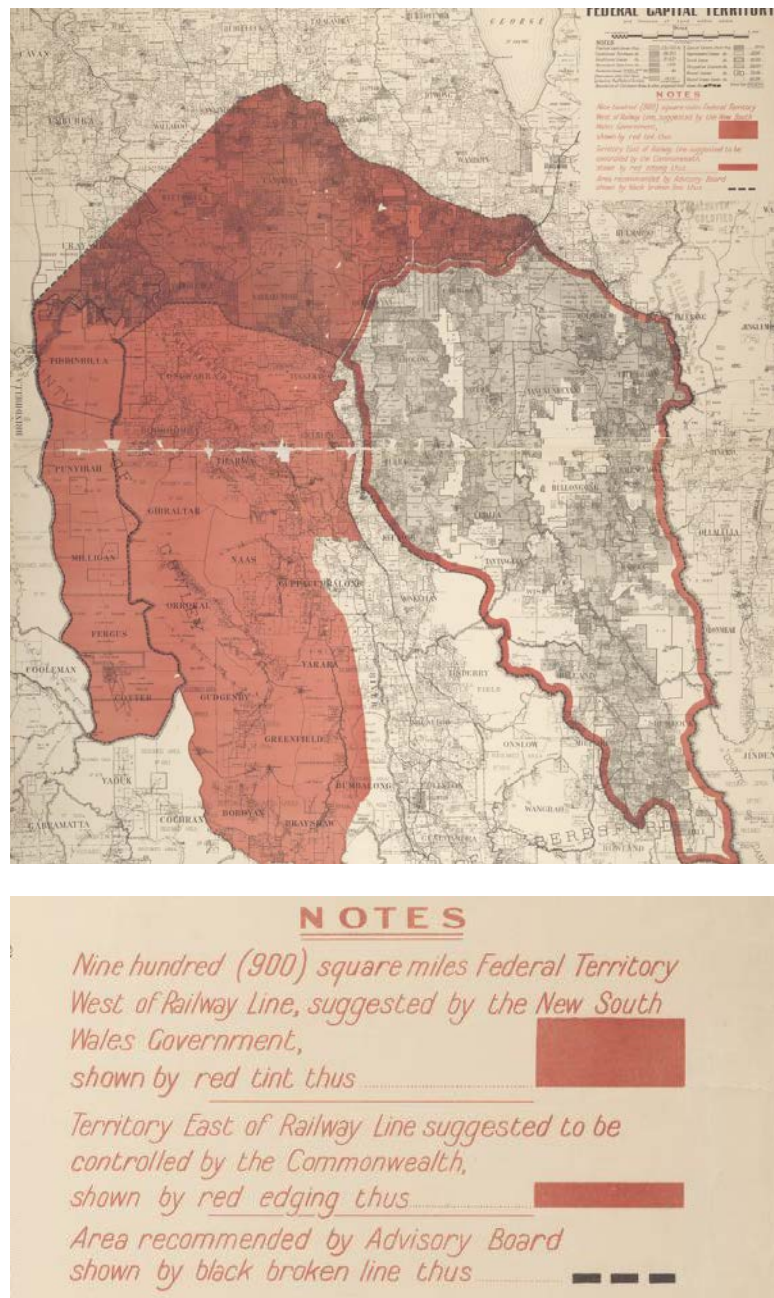
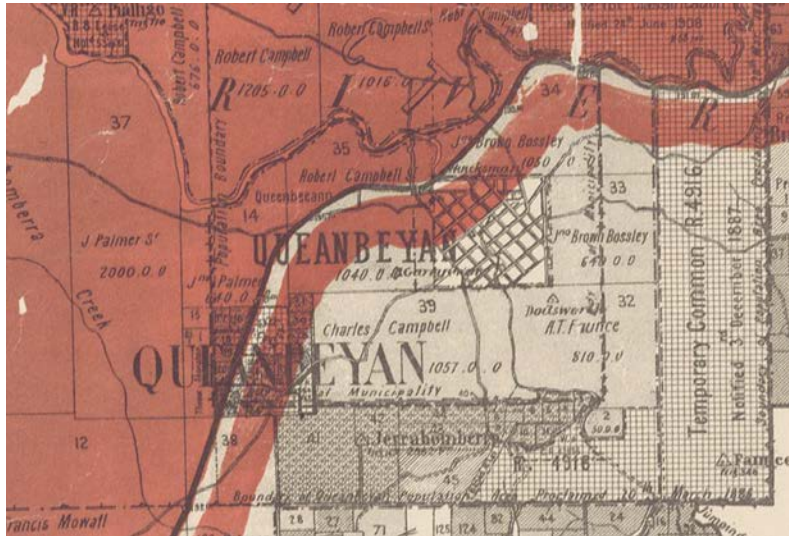


Figure 11 • a Map showing proposed Federal Capital Territory and tenures of land within same. Prepared by New South Wales Department of Lands and signed by Charles Scrivener • **b** Details of legend. Note the red edged area recommended for control by the Commonwealth. This would have taken in Queanbeyan and both sides of the railway along the length of border shared by the two territories, **1909** • Source: National Library of Australia digitised as nla.map-gmod83-sd-cd



c Detail of Queanbeyan area showing ownership. Curiously, the Oaks Subdivision is not indicated independently of Robert Campbell Sr.'s broader ownership of the area between the Molonglo River and the railway line.

The first land acquisitions for the Federal Capital were made in 1911.⁷⁶ The acquisition program was limited to land within the area surveyed for the city or any other special predetermined future purpose,⁷⁷ and so Oaks Estate was excluded. When the owners of the Queanbeyan Roller Flour Mill made an application to the Federal Government to have their land acquired by the Government in 1913, they were informed that the Mill was not required in connection with the establishment of Canberra.⁷⁸ Freehold land acquired by the Commonwealth Government became leasehold pending determination of their use in conjunction with the capital, and land closest to the centre of the planned city was leased for the shortest terms.⁷⁹ The population of the Territory in 1911 was 1714,⁸⁰ and many pioneering families whose land was acquired and converted to short-term leases, took stock of their futures.⁸¹ There are examples of individuals and families of the Limestone Plains relocating to Oaks Estate at this time⁸².

Survey maps from this period show that the main thoroughfare through Oaks Estate at this time was north-south. Traffic flowed from the Yass-Queanbeyan road (now Pialligo Avenue) at the north, across the Molonglo River ford at the bottom of River Street, past the Chinese Market Gardens⁸³ and up River Street before crossing the bridge into Crawford Street in Queanbeyan. Railway Street was also significant, although all the roads in Oaks Estate were dirt roads, and the character of the landscape was still relatively open, with few blocks fenced and developed. Oral history records show that sheep and cattle were common on the River and Railway Street routes.⁸⁴

⁷⁶ Gillespie, 1992, p. 175

⁷⁷ Williams, 1997, 25 ; Brennan, 28-34

⁷⁸ Williams, 1997, 31 ; letter from Department of Home Affairs to Mr J C Harris (agent for Mr Thomas Coleman), Australian Archives (ACT): Series A202/1 Item 13/5034

⁷⁹ Williams, 1997, 26.

⁸⁰ Fitzgerald, Alan. *Canberra and the new parliament house*. Sydney: Landsdowne Press, 1983, 22.

⁸¹ Gillespie, 1992, 175 ; the *Queanbeyan Age*, 20 May 1921, 9 June 1922, 30 January & 23 February 1923.

⁸² Williams, 1997, 26 gives Thomas Kinlyside as an example.

⁸³ Williams, 1997, 30 ; conversation with Alma De Smet on the topic of the 'Chinamen's gardens', at which travellers stopped to buy vegetables

⁸⁴ Williams, 1997, 31 ; oral history including taped interviews with Oaks Estate residents with first hand knowledge.

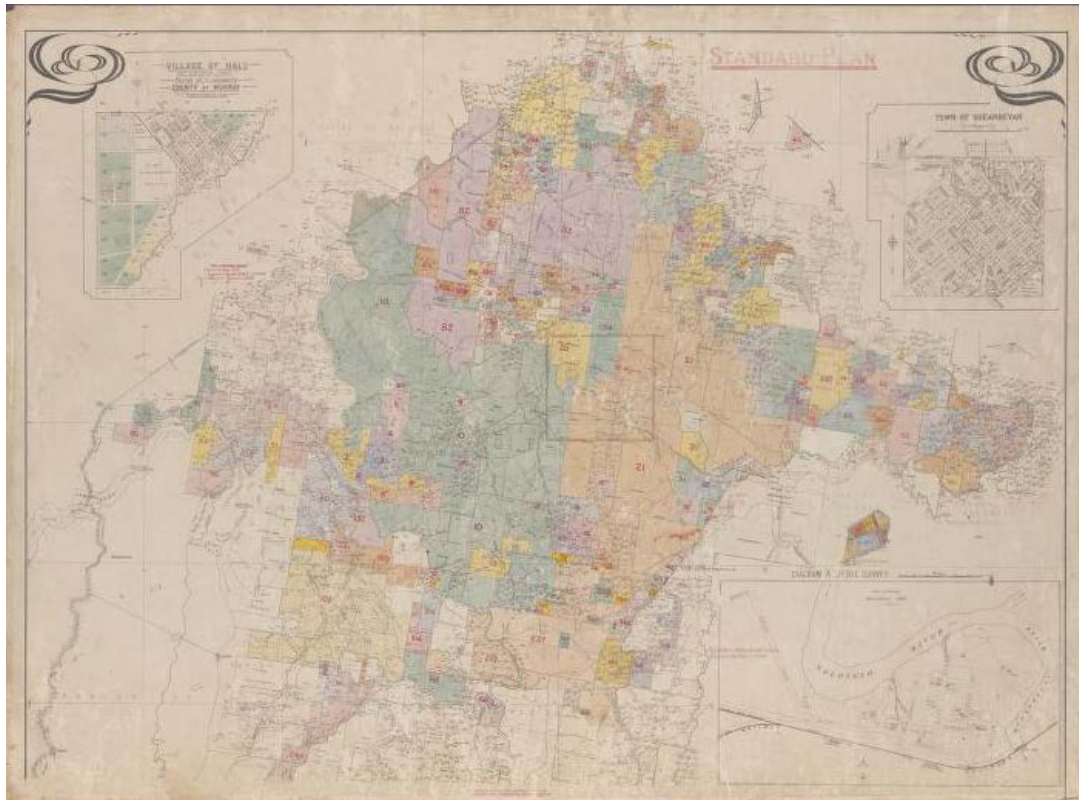
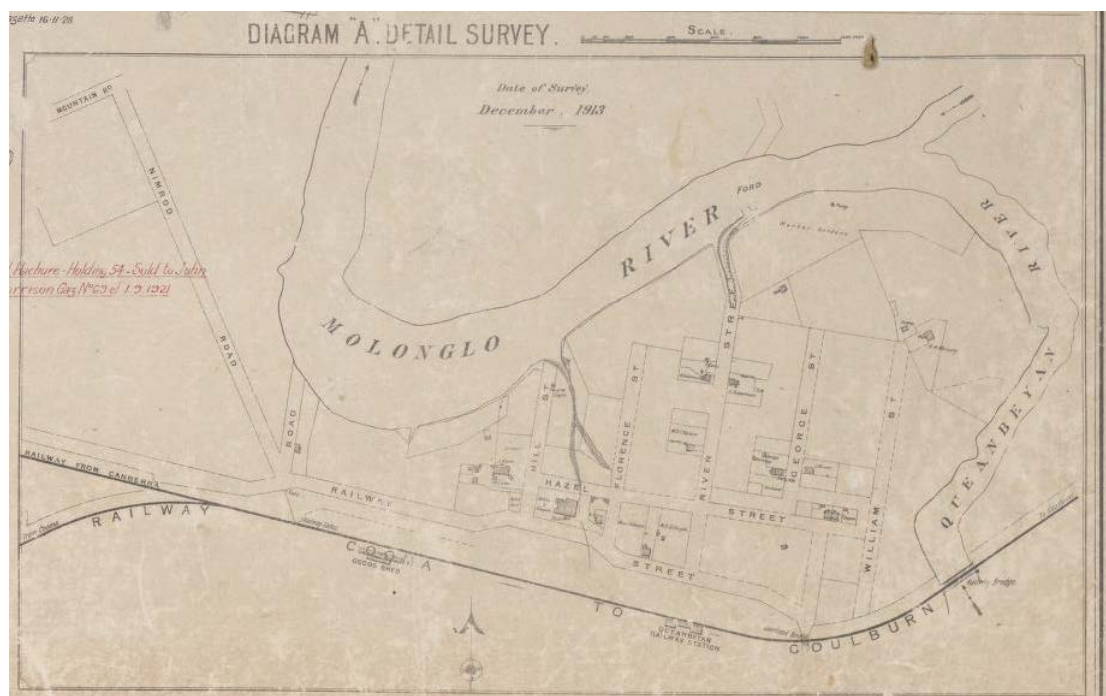


FIGURE 12 • a Australian Capital Territory cadastral index map. Prepared by the Department of the Interior. Manuscript index information, **1921-1943**. Overprinted on Commonwealth of Australia map of the Federal Territory counties of Cowley & Murray, prepared by the Department of Home Affairs, Land & Surveys Branch, **1915** • Source: National Library of Australia digitised as nla.map-rm2476-sd-cd



b This inset of Oaks Estate is one of three detailed inset localities on cadastral index map. The others are Hall and Queanbeyan. The text reads 'Date of Survey December **1913**'. Oaks Estate is not identified anywhere by this name, while Hall and Queanbeyan are identified as 'Village of Hall' and 'Town of Queanbeyan'.



c Detail of cadastral index map showing, but not naming, Oaks Estate.

Oaks Estate was relatively sparsely developed in 1913, with around a dozen houses of mixed materials.⁸⁵ The supply of building materials was limited, as were the funds to purchase them. The more substantial houses were constructed with brick, pise, stone and weatherboard, while others utilized tins, sawn timber, bush poles, packing cases and iron.⁸⁶ Some of the most informal houses were constructed by members of the Robertson family, according to materials and funds available at the time.⁸⁷

The outbreak of WWI in 1914 paused land acquisition, given the need to reduce expenditure, and in 1921 Oaks Estate landowners were being refused upon offering to sell their land to the Federal Government. There was considerable uncertainty around leases, ownership and the risk of acquisition in Oaks Estate into the 1920s.⁸⁸

The Oaks was home to John and Emma Knox from about 1905, and John managed the Roller Flour Mill until 1915. The house, with its now relatively established landscape, was accessible off Hazel Street until the natural drainage course draining to the Molonglo through the section of Hazel street between Hill Street and Florence Street flooded in the 1920s, and this part of Hazel Street was closed. There were two large pine trees located in the middle of Hill Street outside The Oaks, where horses were tied. Hill Street acted more as driveway and access to the river used in conjunction with *The Oaks*, than as a municipal roadway.⁸⁹

A military survey map (Figure 13) prepared during WWI gives a highly detailed perspective of the actual development of Oaks Estate at this time. While the cadastral index map of 1913 nominated roadways at William, George, River, Florence and Hill streets, the 1914 survey indicates that little more than River and Hill streets existed at that time. Railway Street is pronounced, and Florence Street existed only as far as Hazel Street.

⁸⁵ Williams, 1997, 33 ; NSW Titles Office, Deposited Plan 2207.

⁸⁶ Williams, 1997, 24 & 33.

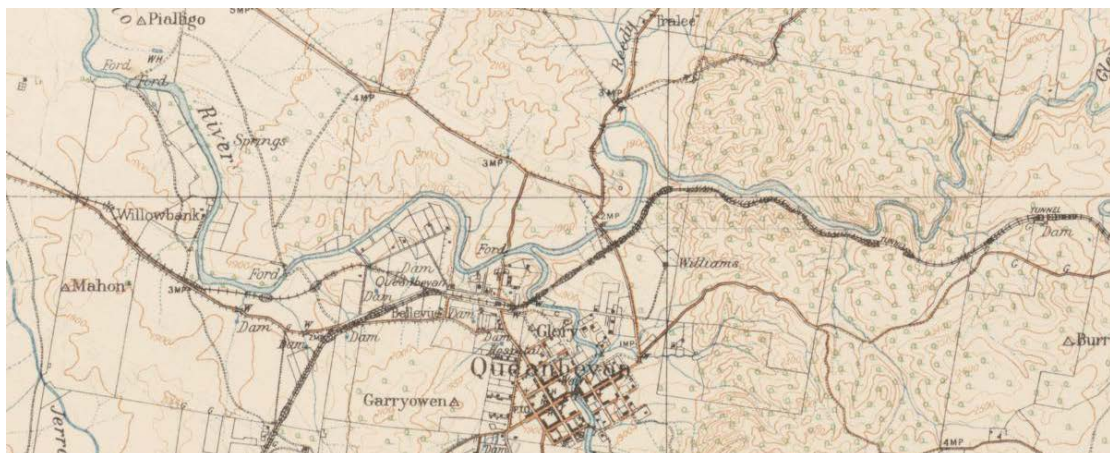
⁸⁷ Williams, 1997, 33 ; conversation with Tom Robertson

⁸⁸ Williams, 1997, 27 ; Australian Archives (ACT): Series A566/1 Item B1.

⁸⁹ Williams, 1997, 31



Figure 13 • a Military survey of Australia, Canberra Federal Territory & N.S.W. Australia. Prepared by Great Britain War Office. Note the prominence of River Street and the record of the Ford at the Molonglo River. The settlement is not named Oaks Estate, and is relatively undeveloped. There is one road recorded west of River Street, but none recorded east of River Street. There is a road recorded in the location of Railway Street, and part of Hazel Street is inferred by lines that might have been fence lines, 1914 • Source: National Library of Australia digitised as nla.map-gmod75-sd-cd



b Note the route to the Queanbeyan railway station from the main road along the north side of the Molonglo River. Note also the darkest line recording the Territory boundary – also the railway line.

The Queanbeyan Roller Flour Mill was located on the block bounded by Florence, Hill, Railway and Hazel streets, and attracted grain from Hall, Majura and Gundaroo. The mill's steam pump produced power from the creek.⁹⁰ Flour production at Oaks Estate faced strong competition from mills in Goulburn and Sydney, however, and following attempts to sell the business, the Mill closed in 1919⁹¹. The machinery was relocated to Crago's Mill in Newtown, Sydney⁹².

⁹⁰ Williams, 1997, 32 ; conversation with Tom Robertson.

⁹¹ Williams, 1997, 32 ; Shumack 1967

⁹² Williams, 1997, 32 ; Cross, Rex. *Bygone Queanbeyan Revised Edition*. Queanbeyan: Queanbeyan Publishing Company, 1985, 174.

There were two flood events during the 1920s - in 1922 and 1925, the latter a significant event. The flood waters destroyed the Chinese Gardens at the bottom of River Street, covered buildings, washed away structures, trees and furniture, and rose almost to block 10, section 8 at 28 River Street.⁹³ Oral history recalls the Molonglo River rising up River Street and connecting back into the Queanbeyan River, making an island of Hazelbrook.⁹⁴ Flood or storm waters also reportedly swelled the largest of the creeks between Florence and Hill streets, leading to the closure of The Oaks end of Hazel Street. The timber arches of the railway bridge over the Queanbeyan River were damaged by debris caught in the flood waters, and all timber arches were later replace with a horizontal steel truss.⁹⁵

The employment opportunities offered by the development of Canberra became apparent when construction of the Provisional Parliament House started in 1923. *The Seat of Government (Administration) Act 1924* provided that the Federal Capital Commission be appointed to assume responsibility for the administration and construction of the Federal Capital, and in 1925 there were just 88 permanent brick houses built in Canberra, where the population had grown to 2900.⁹⁶ Various accounts of oral history recall transport to Canberra by bus from Queanbeyan, via push bike, horse and cart, and between 1925 and the Depression, a worker's train operating between Queanbeyan and the Kingston Power House.⁹⁷

Almost half the population of Canberra was employed by the Commonwealth in building and construction, although there was a severe shortage of housing for the workforce needed to realise the construction projects then underway. Eastlake, Westridge and Molonglo tent settlements filled the gap, housing construction workers, and by 1926 the population of the Territory had grown to almost 5000.⁹⁸ This was largely attributed to an increase in the number of construction workers. Many Oaks Estate residents worked as labourers on Canberra projects, and there was an influx of labour to the region as the construction of Canberra began with the establishment of water, sewage and electricity systems, followed by early Commonwealth projects, hostels and workers settlements. A further 646 public servants were transferred to Canberra in 1927, and 223 in 1929.⁹⁹ In 1928, there were around 500 public servants living as tenants in Canberra housing accommodation provided by the government, putting significant pressure on construction resources.¹⁰⁰

A large proportion of the blocks in Oaks Estate changed hands during the late 1920s and early 1930s, and a number of new houses were built during this period. Some investors purchased multiple blocks of land in Oaks Estate during this time. For example George Dovers, Wollongong Surveyor and assistant to Charles Scrivener in the preliminary survey of the Territory, purchased 11 acres in 1927; Sydney John Ryan, a Queanbeyan Dentist living in Forrest, bought four blocks of land; Edna May Bourne of Rozelle; and Edward (Ned) Duncan Robertson, a second generation Oaks Estate resident¹⁰¹. While employment opportunities for residents were focused squarely on Canberra, Oaks Estate had a footing in the social and service aspects of Queanbeyan. Groceries and mail were delivered from Queanbeyan, the children of Oaks Estate were schooled in Queanbeyan, and residents were generally involved in

⁹³ Williams, 1997, 46

⁹⁴ Williams, 1997, 46 ; Fred Borman as recalled by Ollie Borman and Phil Wood

⁹⁵ Williams, 1997, 46 ; Jack Charlton. See also State Rail Archives photographs, 1927.

⁹⁶ Williams, 1997, 38 ; Brennan, Frank. *Canberra in Crisis*. Canberra: Dalton Publishing Company, 1971, 87.

⁹⁷ Williams, 1997, 39-40 ; conversation with Tom Robertson, and letter from W P Bluett to the Hon. Austin Chapman dated 27 July 1923

⁹⁸ Williams, 1997, 38 ; Brennan, 1971, 102.

⁹⁹ Williams, 1997, 38 ; Brennan, 1971, 102.

¹⁰⁰ Williams, 1997, 37 ; Brennan, 1971, 122.

¹⁰¹ Williams, ; land title transfers

Queanbeyan community organisations such as football and cricket clubs, competition cycling, churches, charities and the Queanbeyan Municipal Band¹⁰².

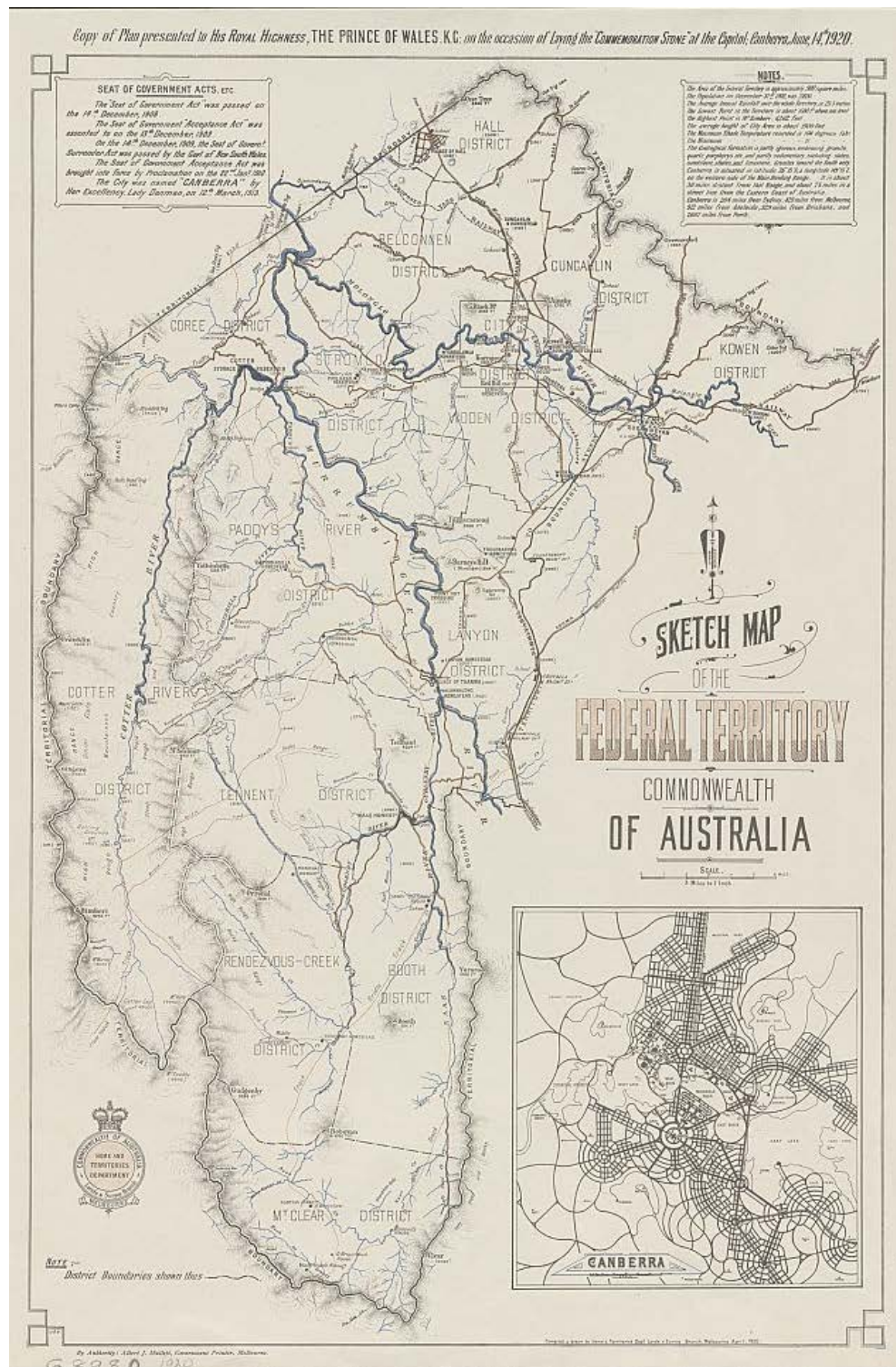
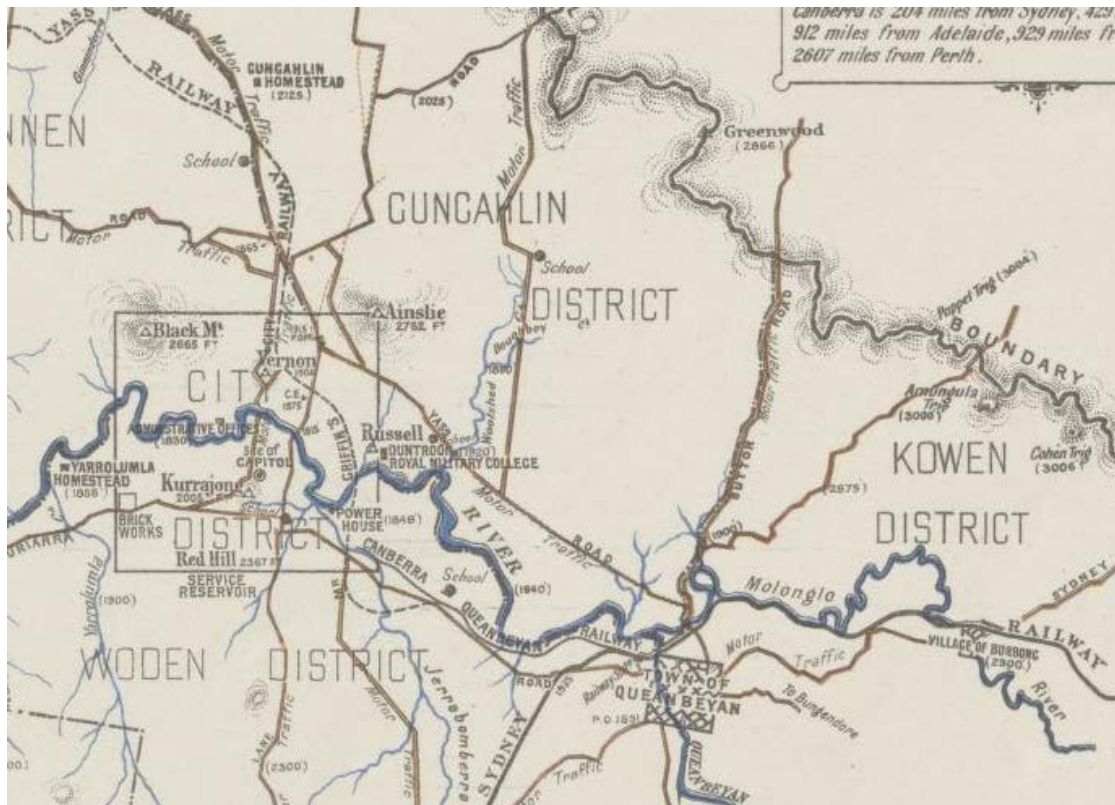


Figure 14 • a Map of the Federal Territory showing district boundaries, roads suitable for motor traffic, railway, location of Canberra city district. Prepared by the Department of Home and Territories, Land and Surveys Branch, 1920 • Source: National Library of Australia digitised as nla.map-gmod107-v

¹⁰² Williams, p.49 ; oral history



b Detail of the drawing showing the Canberra Queanbeyan railway, the Town of Queanbeyan and its proximity to the City District although on the NSW side of the railway line, and east-west roads running to the north and to the south of the Molonglo River.

After about 1927, the Commonwealth Government gave priority employment to construction workers enrolled on the electoral roll for the Territory for the Seat of Government.¹⁰³ However, housing in Canberra was still in short supply, and many construction workers were housed in tents or temporary accommodation. Furthermore, building within Canberra was highly regulated, while building in Oaks Estate was not. This made Oaks Estate, which also still had freehold land tenure, an attractive place for Canberra construction workers to live.

The part-industrial character of Oaks Estate continued through this period, fuelled by opportunities in the construction of Canberra, and yet somewhat exempt from Canberra land use restrictions. T W Robins and Son, a shopfitter and joiner, set up business from block 1 section 7, now 12 Railway Street in Oaks Estate, around 1926/7. The business held government contracts and employed employees and apprentices, including Oaks Estate residents, for just over a decade.¹⁰⁴ Ned Robertson had a saw bench and wood supply business operating from blocks 11-13, section 8, now 30-34 River Street, throughout the 1920s, 30s and 40s. It is possible that the business was operating before this, as oral history records that Ned Robertson supplied the Queanbeyan Roller Flour Mill and other customers with wood prior to 1920.¹⁰⁵

The Vacuum Oil Company submitted an application to the Federal Capital Commission (FCC) in 1926 to establish a depot on the site of the former Queanbeyan Roller Flour Mill (blocks 2 & 3, section D, now part of block 25 section 3 along Railway Street).¹⁰⁶ The application was cause for concern and discussion about present and

¹⁰³ Williams, 1997, 39.

¹⁰⁴ Williams, 1997, 38 & 100 & 104.

¹⁰⁵ Williams, 1997, 104.

¹⁰⁶ Williams, 1997, 103 ; Australian Archives (ACT): Series A 6273/1 Item L27/57.

future planning and building controls for Oaks Estate. A letter from the Lands Office to the Commissioner of the FCC states that,

the land being private property and the firm complying with the legal aspect, the Commission has no power at present to prevent the establishment of this depot. To prevent it, the only course would be to acquire the land.

The letter goes on to outline the unusual situation at Oaks Estate thus,

The Territory boundary originally cut a corner off the Municipality of Queanbeyan, of which this block forms part, and since then it appears that no action has been taken whatever to control building. The Commonwealth have attended to the streets, cut the noxious weeds on the roads, and have arranged with the Municipality of Queanbeyan for the disposal of night-soil, but other than that, the owners have been free to dispose of the land as they wished, and to erect buildings thereon as they thought fit.¹⁰⁷

The FCC granted permission for the Vacuum Oil Company buildings by 1927, unable to resolve the complex planning issue on the basis of a single application for development.

In spite of this, Oaks Estate offered a good lifestyle in many respects. Oral history records popular swimming spots on the Queanbeyan River under the railway bridge, and at the junction of the Queanbeyan and Molonglo rivers at Oaks Estate. These are the deeper parts of the rivers surrounding Oaks Estate, and are interspersed with very shallow crossings, making for relatively safe swimming holes. The gently sloping banks adjacent were popular for picnicing.¹⁰⁸ An article in the Queanbeyan Age records a near drowning near the River Street crossing on New Years Day 1928.¹⁰⁹

People moving to Oaks Estate during this period increased the agitation for water, electricity and garbage services, which were being developed in the new suburbs of Canberra, but not in Oaks Estate. During 1926 a group of Oaks Estate residents made representations to the Federal Capital Commission.¹¹⁰ In an internal memo of December 1926, the Federal Capital Commission stated its intention to have Oaks Estate transferred back to NSW, excised from the Territory, noting that preparation of the necessary survey information to enable transfer of the area was nearing completion. The reasons given were the proximity and association of Oaks Estate with the town of Queanbeyan.¹¹¹ However, this proved to be far more complex than imagined when the FCC first made the proposal, the boundaries of the Territory being a constitutional issue. By 1927 the Attorney-General's Department was investigating the constitutional difficulty of handing Oaks Estate back to NSW, and a Royal Commission was appointed to consider amendments to the Commonwealth Constitution. An amendment to the Commonwealth Constitution was apparently necessary to avoid the matter being referred to the electors of NSW.¹¹² This began a long running battle over the provision of services to Oaks Estate, and the rationale from diverting the funds from delivering Canberra as it had been designed.

¹⁰⁷ Williams, 1997, 103-104 ; Memorandum to the Commissioner, Federal Capital Commission, from Lands Officer, J E Brackenreg.

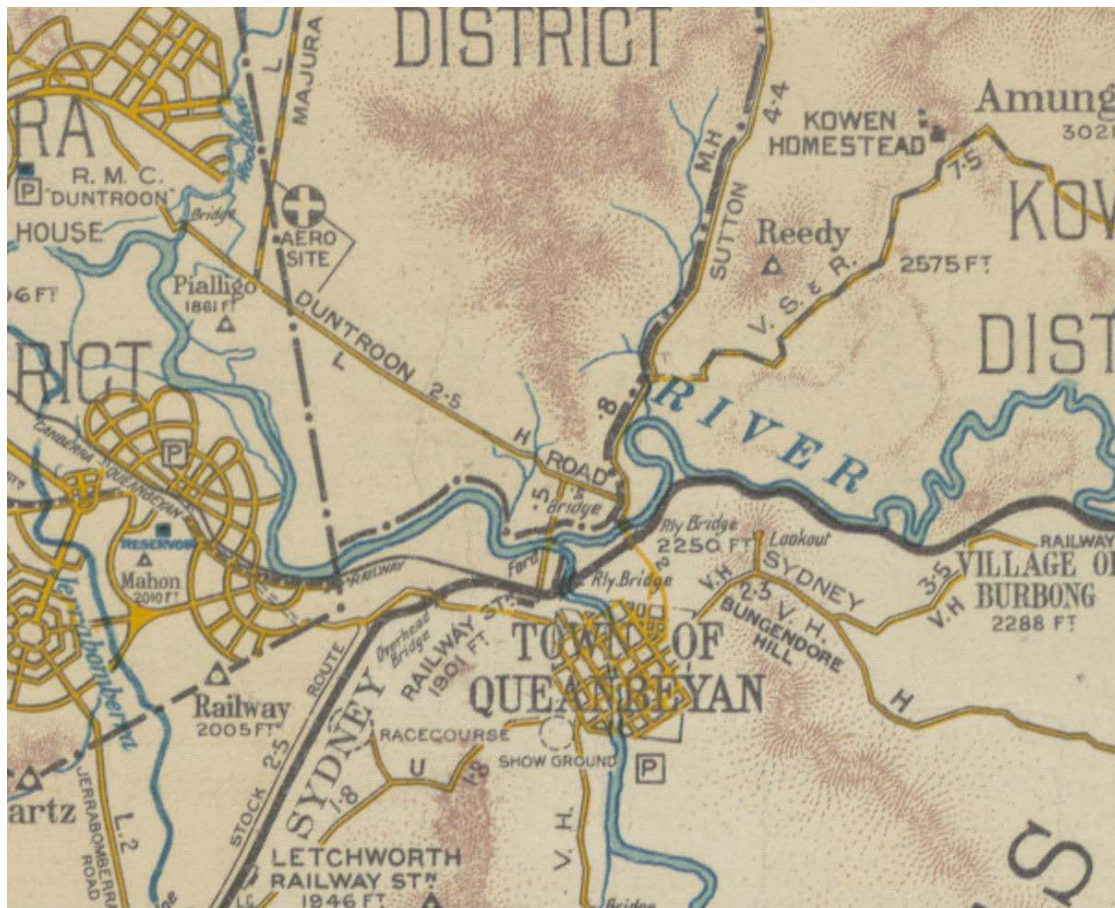
¹⁰⁸ Williams, 1997, 48 ; oral history.

¹⁰⁹ Williams, 1997, 49 ; Queanbeyan Age, 3 January 1928.

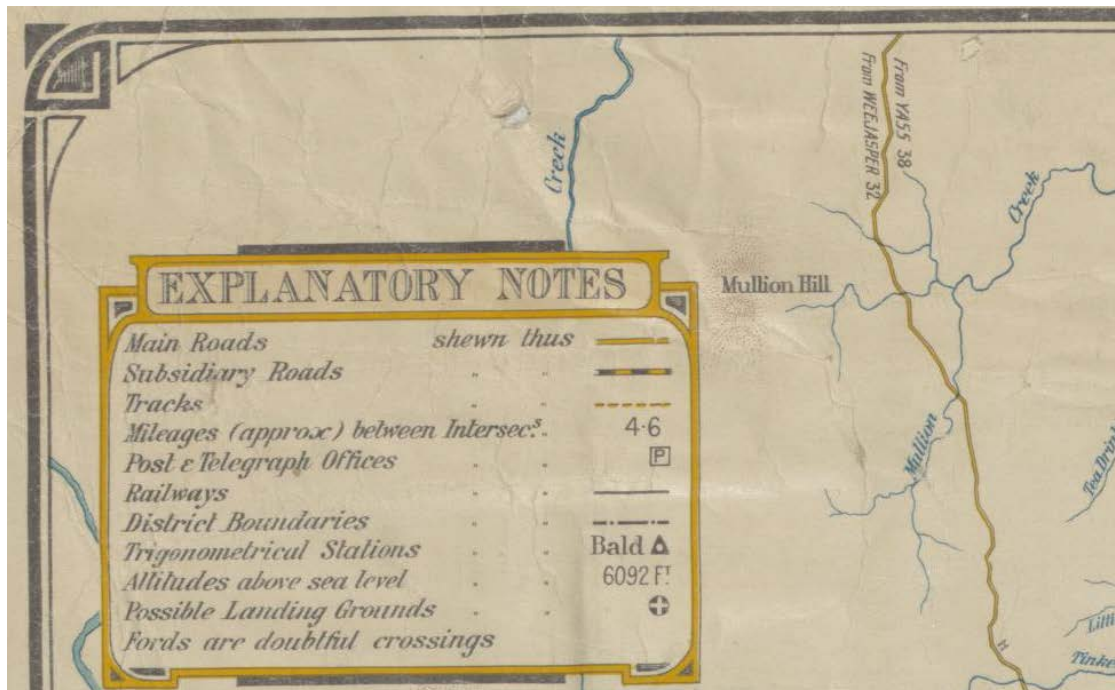
¹¹⁰ Williams, 1997, 50 ; letter from Oaks Estate Progress Association dated 1926.

¹¹¹ Williams, 1997, 50 ; Australian Archives (ACT): Series A431/1 Item 59/905.

¹¹² Williams, 1997, 51 ; October 1927 memo from C S Daley, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A 570/1 Item L & S27/815.



b The road leading north-south across the Molonglo River is shown in yellow as a main road, not in yellow and grey dash as a subsidiary road. The ford on the Molonglo River, the railway bridge and Railway Street are all noted, although Oaks Estate is not named or indicated in any way as a settlement.



c Map legend showing yellow for main roads and yellow and grey dash as a subsidiary road. Note the final line of text, fords are doubtful crossings.

3.1.5 Surplus to Canberra, 1930s – 1960s

The initial relationship established between Oaks Estate and Canberra at the inception of the capital continued relatively unchanged well into the twentieth century. Where the Commonwealth had been charged with the development of a new city, various administrative bodies found themselves saddled with a rudimentary outer suburb of Queanbeyan. Oaks Estate filled an immediate need for accommodation to house construction workers, who in turn were grateful for the opportunity of work in the Territory, but Commonwealth expenditure on developing Oaks Estate, so disconnected from the central purpose of developing Canberra, seemed quite unjustified. The development of Oaks Estate lagged well behind its neighbours, and residential development took on a rudimentary character, illustrating both opportunity and uncertainty. The scales were, on many an occasion, poised to tip towards the abolition of Oaks Estate, and yet the place endured.

Oaks Estate offered a flexible and inexpensive lifestyle, particularly attractive to new residents during the depression years of the 1930s. The land, housing and rent at Oaks Estate was more affordable and less regulated than in Canberra, and as Territory residents, people living in Oaks Estate were eligible for work in Canberra. In 1933, many Oaks Estate residents were unemployed, or employed on relief work. The government work available during this time was road construction, trench digging and weed control or lawn mowing, and only in short contracts of a week or two at a time. Relief work was paid in vouchers for food and clothing rather than in cash. People were able in some instances to supplement any available work in Canberra with agricultural work such as droving.¹¹³

Houses continued to be built simply, with economy of materials, and added to as the need arose. Concrete bricks were manufactured in Oaks Estate from the available sand, and used in the construction of some houses.¹¹⁴ Oral history records the use of second hand and off-cut materials from Canberra and Queanbeyan, kitchens and laundries initially housed in separate sheds, and added to the back of the house under a skillion roof at a later stage. During the Depression, some garden sheds were converted to additional housing to accommodate borders or relatives, and it was common for sons to sleep each night on the verandah of the main house. Verandahs were enclosed with curtains or walls as sleep-outs to accommodate large families.¹¹⁵

The Oaks Estate community was certainly enterprising. Most gardens had vegetable beds, fruit trees and chickens. Some households kept a milking cow, pigs or goats.¹¹⁶ The making of jams and pickles, soap and candles were commonplace, and as Oaks Estate remained without a piped water supply until 1938, or electricity until 1940, residents used kerosene lamps and carted buckets of water for bathing, washing and gardening.¹¹⁷ The surrounding landscape offered other opportunities for the community. Many young boys from Oaks Estate were engaged trapping rabbits in the surrounding paddocks, selling them in Oaks Estate and in Queanbeyan. Fish such as murray cod, perch and trout were plentiful in the Molonglo and Queanbeyan rivers around Oaks Estate, and were readily caught for food until a washaway at the Captain's Flat mines poisoned the Molonglo in the late 1930s.¹¹⁸

Some market gardens in Oaks Estate operated on a commercial scale. Oral history records that the Chinese market gardeners who had kept the garden on the river flats at the foot of River Street since the 1890s, left Oaks Estate around 1937.¹¹⁹ A local

¹¹³ Williams, 1997, 40-42.

¹¹⁴ Williams, 1997, 89.

¹¹⁵ Williams, 1997, 89 ; Ted Rickman

¹¹⁶ Williams, 1997, 84-85 & 92.

¹¹⁷ Williams, 1997, 92 & 43 ; Mavis Hickey

¹¹⁸ Williams, 1997, 42 & 92.

¹¹⁹ Williams, 1997, 107.

family, the Clothiers, who also owned Hazelbrook and ran a dairy on other parts of Hazelbrook, kept a vegetable garden on the same land to the east and west of River Street after 1937. The Clothier family operated a dairy from Hazelbrook, on block 40, section H (now part of the Molonglo River flats at the foot of George Street opposite section 8) from the latter half of the 1930s until the 1950s. Cows were grazed at Hazelbrook and on the eastern bank of the Queanbeyan River, and initially milked by hand. The dairy modernised once water and electricity became available. Williams claims that the concrete floor of the dairy can still be seen beneath the large pine trees at the bottom of George Street.¹²⁰ The land to the west of River Street, between River and Florence streets, was sold in about 1939 to Tanas Varelas and Evlogi Staneff, whose families kept fruit and vegetable gardens for market, delivering initially by horse and cart. The Varelas daughter and her husband, the Tsakalos family, kept the farm until about 1982, also running goats, chickens and ducks.¹²¹

A significant battle for services at Oaks Estate began with the Commonwealth in the 1930s. Documentary evidence illustrates the difficulty that those charged with development of the Federal Capital faced with respect to Oaks Estate, as well as the difficulties faced by residents coping without Canberra's services.¹²² The Oaks Estate Progress Association, formed about this time, was the mouthpiece for community agitation, and regularly wrote to the Commonwealth government on the subject, prompting much internal correspondence and discussion. The Director-General of Health recommended in correspondence with the Assistant Secretary (Civic Branch) of the Federal Capital Commission in August 1932 that for public health reasons mains water should be supplied to all houses in Oaks Estate.¹²³ However, the Assistant Secretary of the Department of the Interior Property and Survey Branch argued in correspondence with the Secretary of the Department in October 1932, that it would be extremely unwise to spend money developing or improving Oaks Estate. The reasons he gave were that Oaks Estate was part of the town of Queanbeyan and located at the extreme fringe of the Commonwealth Territory, as distinct from Hall, which is located wholly within the Territory.¹²⁴

The option of acquisition was explored in 1932.¹²⁵ The Lands Officer advised the Assistant Secretary of the Department of the Interior, in December 1932, that there were 42 owners holding 64 acres of land.¹²⁶ The Secretary of the Department requested in December 1932 that the Commonwealth Crown Solicitor have a search made as to the present ownership of the allotments.¹²⁷ In June 1933, the Assistant Secretary of Property and Survey Branch of the Department of the Interior advised the Secretary that freehold properties in Oaks Estate should be considered for acquisition, 'with a view to the abolition of the settlement'. It was recommended that a firm of valuers be engaged to assess the values of the various holdings.¹²⁸

In August 1933, the Assistant Secretary of the Property and Survey Branch of the Department of the Interior minuted the conclusion of a lengthy discussion with the

¹²⁰ Williams, 1997, 107-108

¹²¹ Williams, 1997, 107

¹²² Williams, 1997, 51-78

¹²³ Williams, 1997, 54 ; memorandum from J H L Cumpston, Director General of Health, 3 August 1932, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A 431/1 Item 59/905

¹²⁴ Williams, 1997, 54-55, ; letter from A Percival, Assistant Secretary, Department of the Interior Property and Survey Branch, to the Secretary of the Department, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A880/1 Item TL540.

¹²⁵ Williams, 1997, 56.

¹²⁶ Williams, 1997, 56 ; correspondence from the Department of the Interior Lands Officer to A. Percival, Assistant Secretary of the Department of the Interior, 6 December 1932, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A880/1 Item TL540.

¹²⁷ Williams, 1997, 56 ; correspondence from A. Percival for the Secretary of the Property and Survey Branch of the Department of the Interior, to the Commonwealth Crown Solicitor, 14 December 1932, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A880/1 Item TL540.

¹²⁸ Williams, 1997, 57, ; Minute by A. Percival, Assistant Secretary, to the Secretary of Property and Survey Branch of the Department of the Interior, 14 June 1933.

Secretary, that no expenditure was to be made on Oaks Estate. This was to say that no improvements were to be made, but neither was valuation for acquisition. With accommodation still in short supply, and residents of Oaks Estate eligible for employment in Canberra, it was concluded that the settlement would be left undisturbed 'for the present time'.¹²⁹

The Oaks Estate Progress Association continued over the summer of 1933/34 to lobby for improved water supply, and the Department of the Interior was willing and able to supply no more than three taps off an extended water supply pipe.¹³⁰ A cadastral map of 1933-49 (Figure 17) showed still very limited development in Oaks Estate, and it is relatively easy to imagine why the Department of the Interior thought abolition of the settlement a viable and sensible option. Wagons, sheep and cattle were a frequent sight in Oaks Estate, herded up River Street or across Railway Street, on the way to the railway yards for loading and freight. The River Street route between the railway station and the Molonglo River and beyond remained significant.¹³¹ During the uncertain years of the Depression, the railway and other transportation routes also brought travellers, and oral history records up to 30 men competing for a place to sleep under the railway bridge - the western arch being the most sheltered from the weather.¹³²



Figure 16 • a Detail of Australian Capital Territory cadastral map. Prepared by the Department of the Interior, 1933-49 • Source: National Library of Australia digitised as nla.map-rm2661-2-sd-cd

¹²⁹ Williams, 1997, 58 ; Minute by A. Percival, Assistant Secretary, to the Secretary of the Property and Survey Branch of the Department of the Interior, 29 August 1933.

¹³⁰ Williams, 1997, 59, ; letter from George Daniel, President of the Oaks Estate Progress Association to Mr J A Perkins, Minister for the Interior, 9 November 1933 and response to George Daniel from Mr Gourgaud of the Department of the Interior, 15 January 1934, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A292/T1 Item C22693.

¹³¹ Williams, 1997, 45-46

¹³² Williams, 1997, 42



b Detail 2. Oaks Estate was named, and the outline of some blocks and streets were becoming legible in the development. Railway Street, part of the length of Hazel Street, and perhaps Florence and Hill streets were identifiable. Very little of the registered subdivision plan was actually built.

Civic Administrator Charles Daley wrote to the Director General of Works on the matter of water supply to Oaks Estate in July 1937 and stated that Oaks Estate 'is an embarrassment to the Territory... and it should never have been partitioned from Queanbeyan.'¹³³ This could not be helped, however, and there were few options available other than acquisition for the purposes of abolition, or neglect, or getting on with the task of servicing and developing Oaks Estate. Oaks Estate residents were becoming increasingly impatient, and in July 1937, the Oaks Estate Progress Association presented the Governor General with a petition for water supply to Oaks Estate.¹³⁴ The petition was duly circulated to the Prime Minister's Department and to the Department of the Interior.¹³⁵ In September 1937, a fire destroyed the Oaks Estate factory of shop fitter and joiner T W Robins.¹³⁶ The prospect of uncontrolled fire was a source of very real concern to Oaks Estate residents, especially as Oaks Estate was wholly reliant upon lamps and candles for lighting.

Daley remained unsympathetic. He wrote in October 1937 to the Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department on the subject of the Oaks Estate Progress Association petition for water supply, giving the full background to the Department's position. He pointed out that the supply of water to Oaks Estate was no different to other villages in the Territory, Hall and Tharwa, which were without reticulated water supply, relying

¹³³ Williams, 1997, 61 : Correspondence from Charles Daley, Civic Administrator, to the Director-General of Works, 21 July 1937, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A292/T1 Item C22693.

¹³⁴ Williams, 1997, 61; letter from William Bradley Snr, Secretary of the Oaks Estate Progress Association, to Captain Bracegirdle RAN, Military and Official Secretary to the Governor General, 22 July 1937, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A292/T1 Item C22693.

¹³⁵ Williams, 1997, 63.

¹³⁶ Williams, 1997, 100

as do 'hundreds of other places situated throughout the Commonwealth, upon storage in rainwater tanks.' He described the proposal to surrender Oaks Estate to NSW, and the Constitutional difficulties posed. His position was that until Oaks Estate could be severed from the Territory through constitutional amendment or acquired and depopulated, rainwater tanks were the logical water supply solution.¹³⁷ A February 1938 letter from C S Daley to the Secretary of the Department of the Interior regarding Oaks Estate set out a proposal to acquire all freehold land in Oaks Estate, demolish all structures over a period of five years, and 'incorporate the estate in the ordinary rural area of the Territory.'¹³⁸

In the 1930s, the streets of Oaks Estate were no more than dirt tracks, with River Street the only exception. An October 1937 report to Works and Services Branch by a Roads and Bridges Engineer describes Oaks Estate in terms of tracks, comfortable to drive on, with the exception of the main road connecting the Yass-Queanbeyan Road to Oaks Estate via Molonglo Ford (modern day River Street), described as 'a road that has been properly made'. He notes that if the settlement is to be abolished, proper streets would be useless, and 'a definition of policy is essential before a rational decision can be made, as to whether proper streets, should be constructed'. The main road is described thus, 'the main street is, so far as the Administration is concerned, a country road connecting the Yass-Queanbeyan Road, and as such, it is of a sufficiently high standard, as is justified by the traffic it has to carry; particularly as through traffic is discouraged on the road, because the ford over the Molonglo is unsafe, and notices are in existence to that effect, so that only a few who know the vagaries of the ford, will use it'.¹³⁹

The tide for Oaks Estate turned when the new Minister of the Department of the Interior stated in a February 1938 letter to the Secretary of the Department of the Interior, an unpreparedness to either amend the constitution to surrender Oaks Estate to NSW, or to acquire Oaks Estate and demolish dwellings. He asked what practical proposals could be advanced to meet the situation.¹⁴⁰ The Oaks Estate Progress Association outlined a list of urgent services needs to the Minister of the Interior in March 1938. These included first and foremost an adequate water supply, then the elimination of an open drain from the railway urinals, the forming of and attention to roads, lighting, and sewerage.¹⁴¹ It is clear from this correspondence that the Minister was to visit Oaks Estate for an inspection together with members of the Oaks Estate Progress Association.

Records of commitments made by the Minister of the Interior at an inspection made in March 1938 with the Oaks Estate Progress Association, include the provision of water supply and construction of roads, to commence as soon as possible. The Minister also agreed to have a balance sheet prepared, setting out the financial position for the provision of electric lighting and sewerage services at Oaks Estate.¹⁴² The meeting between the Minister and the Oaks Estate Progress Association made the pages of the Canberra Times.¹⁴³ The resident ratepayers of Oaks Estate agreed at

¹³⁷ Williams, 1997, 63-64 ; Memorandum to the Secretary, The Prime Minister's Department, Canberra FCT, from C S Daley for the Secretary, Civic Branch, Department of the Interior, FCT, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A292/T1 Item C22693.

¹³⁸ Williams, 1997, 67 ; Correspondence from C S Daley to The Secretary of the Department of the Interior, 10 February 1938, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A292/T1 Item C22693.

¹³⁹ Williams, 1997, 66 ; report by L Thornton, Engineer Roads and Bridges, 28 October 1937, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A292/T1 Item C22693.

¹⁴⁰ Williams, 1997, 67 ; Correspondence from the Minister of the Interior, J McEwan, to the Secretary of the Department of the Interior, 12 February 1938, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A292/T1 Item C22693.

¹⁴¹ Williams, 1997, 68 ; Correspondence from S Gillespie, Secretary of the Oaks Estate Progress Association, to J McEwan, Minister of the Interior, 3 March 1938, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A292/T1 Item C22693.

¹⁴² Williams, 1997, 69 ; Notes of Minister McEwan's visit to the Oaks Estate, 7 March 1938, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A292/T1 Item C22693.

¹⁴³ Williams, 1997, 69 ; Australian Archives (ACT): Series A880/1 Item TL540.

an Oaks Estate Progress Association meeting of March 1938 to contribute to the cost of water supply to Oaks Estate.¹⁴⁴ The proposed balance sheet setting out the cost of sewerage services had not been received at this time.

In May 1938, a letter and application form for water supply connection was sent to Oaks Estate residents on behalf of the Secretary of the Department of the Interior. The letter stated the Minister's proposal for a water service for fire protection purposes and domestic use, and set out the proposed charges. It described 'the laying of street mains direct from the Commonwealth source of supply, from which the owners will be required to provide their own reticulation into the properties', and 'suitable hydrants in the streets for fire protection purposes'. The letter concluded requesting residents sign and return the form stating their acceptance of the terms, stating that unless a substantial proportion of residents intimate their disapproval of the proposal, the Department intends 'to proceed with the work and strike the necessary rate'.¹⁴⁵ A press release of June 1938 recorded the Minister for the Interior's decision to install a water supply and undertake road works at Oaks Estate, and Mr McEwan's statement that as a Country Party Minister, he had to respect one of the main planks of his Party's platform - the extension of amenities to isolated areas.¹⁴⁶ A completion report by Roads and Bridges Engineer of the Works and Services Branch of the Department of the Interior indicated that water supply service connection to Oaks Estate was completed on 14 December 1938.¹⁴⁷

With the issue of a water supply resolved, and a new policy on Oaks Estate struck, electricity supply followed relatively quickly, but not without complications. In October 1938, C S Daley wrote on behalf of the Secretary of the Department of the Interior to the Oaks Estate Progress Association on the matter of electricity supply. It requested a guarantee of a minimum annual expenditure on electricity, to cover the cost of installing the service.¹⁴⁸ An August 1939 memorandum from C S Daley to the Director-General of Works stated that the Minister considered electricity should be made available to Oaks Estate, and had directed that action be taken to arrange for supply either direct from the Commonwealth source, or through the Queanbeyan Municipality. The Minister had requested urgent resolution.¹⁴⁹

The commitment to Oaks Estate was a relatively expensive undertaking, for what was still a very small population, and yet the new course for the development of Oaks Estate remained fixed. A September 1939 letter from the Department of Works and Local Government in Sydney, to the Director General of the Department of Public Works in Canberra, stated that under the existing law, the Queanbeyan Municipal Council was not able to reticulate electricity to Oaks Estate as it was located within the Australian Capital Territory.¹⁵⁰ A memorandum from the Chief Electrical Engineer, Works and Railways, to the Director General of Works in November 1939, on the subject of extension of the Electricity supply from Harman W/T Naval Station to Oaks

¹⁴⁴ Williams, 1997, 70 ; Correspondence from S Gillespie, Secretary of the Oaks Estate Progress Association, to J A Carrodus, Secretary of the Department of the Interior, Canberra, 14 March 1938, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A292/T1 Item C22693.

¹⁴⁵ Williams, 1997, 70 ; Correspondence from H R Waterman on behalf of the Secretary of the Department of the Interior, Canberra FCT, 12 May 1938, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A292/T1 Item C22693.

¹⁴⁶ Williams, 1997, 71 ; Press Release issued by R Rowe, Secretary to Minister McEwan, 18 June 1938, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A292/T1 Item C22693.

¹⁴⁷ Williams, 1997, 73 ; Completion report by L Thorton, Engineer Roads and Bridges, Works and Services Branch, Department of Interior, 14 December 1938, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A292/T1 Item C22693.

¹⁴⁸ Williams, 1997, 72 ; Correspondence from C S Daley for the Secretary of the Department of the Interior, to Mr G L Daniel, President of the Oaks Estate Progress Association, 20 October 1938, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A292/T1 Item C22693.

¹⁴⁹ Williams, 1997, 75 ; Memorandum from C S Daley, Assistant Secretary (Civic Administration), to the Director General of Works, 7 August 1939

¹⁵⁰ Williams, 1997, 75 ; Letter from Department of Works and Local Government, Bridge and Philip Streets, Sydney, to the Director General, Department of Public Works, Canberra, 19 September 1939, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A292/T1 Item C18679.

Estate, set out the cost and expected consumption of electricity in Oaks Estate. It was concluded that, financial 'loss will be considerable'.¹⁵¹ A December 1939 letter from the Acting Director General of the Department of the Interior set out the proposal approved by the Minister for the Interior, Senator Foll, to extend the electricity mains from Harman to the residences of Oaks Estate, with supply to be provided at the same conditions as the rest of Canberra.¹⁵²

The Oaks Estate Progress Association was informed in January 1940 that the electricity supply to Oaks Estate was in hand,¹⁵³ and work was completed on 10 September 1940.¹⁵⁴ These fundamental services, along with the continuation of a semi-rural lifestyle and accessibility to work opportunities in Canberra, positioned Oaks Estate well for the years of WWII, when families lost their men to enlistment in the services. Cows, chickens, horses, fruit orchards and vegetable gardens were all still familiar sights in Oaks Estate, but women also found work in the offices of Canberra, or with the railways - shiftwork in the bar and refreshment rooms of Queanbeyan Station.¹⁵⁵ The only change to the Oaks Estate landscape was the temporary closure of the Vacuum Oil Company's depot with petrol heavily rationed during WWII.¹⁵⁶

The Australian Army's 11th Garrison Battalion company headquarters was stationed at The Oaks during WWII¹⁵⁷, and the presence of servicemen in the region was noticeable from Oaks Estate. The 11th Garrison Battalion were charged with internal security, and were stationed in various locations in Australia throughout the war. Oral history records Navy servicemen at Harman, the Air Force at Fairbairn, 'white Dutchmen' at the Hotel Queanbeyan, and the 'Dutch-Javanese' at Fairbairn. Servicemen were also billeted at the Queanbeyan Showground before being posted to other locations, and for a time there were many American servicemen in the area. With Oaks Estate on the main route between RMC Duntroon, Fairbairn Air Force base and Queanbeyan, servicemen on their way to or from the Queanbeyan Hotel could often be seen on River Street. During the war, dances were popular with the armed forces stationed in the area, and many young Oaks Estate women were warned by their parents to stay away from servicemen.¹⁵⁸ Notwithstanding this, Oaks Estate residents attended dances, socials and picture theatres in Queanbeyan, and continued membership of the Queanbeyan Municipal Band during the war.¹⁵⁹ Oaks Estate was a tale of two towns.

Following WWII, returned servicemen to Oaks Estate picked up where they had left off, with the added benefit of a population boom in Canberra. In 1948, the transfer of the key Commonwealth Government administrative departments from Melbourne to the National Capital, which had been placed on hold during the war years, restarted with plans to move over 7,000 public servants in the following ten years. This increased pressure for suitable housing in Canberra and the housing construction program could not keep up with demand.¹⁶⁰ In the 1940s and 1950s, the waiting lists for

¹⁵¹ Williams, 1997, 76, ; Memorandum to the Director General of Works from H P Moss Chief Electrical Engineer, Works and Railways, 30 November 1939, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A292/T1 Item C18679.

¹⁵² Williams, 1997, 77, ; summary of Correspondence from M W Mehaffey, Acting Director General of the Department of the Interior, approved by Minister for the Interior, Senator Foll, 8 December 1939, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A292/T1 Item C18679.

¹⁵³ Williams, 1997, 77, ; Correspondence from C A Hoy, Director General of the Department of the Interior, to G Daniel, President of the Oaks Estate Progress Association, 19 January 1940, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A292/T1 Item C18679.

¹⁵⁴ Williams, 1997, 78

¹⁵⁵ Williams, 1997, 85 ; Conversation with Val Wade (nee Martin) and Reg Martin.

¹⁵⁶ Williams, 1997, 156

¹⁵⁷ Williams, 1997, 83

¹⁵⁸ Williams, 1997, 86 ; Conversation with Irene Ramsay (nee Rostron).

¹⁵⁹ Williams, 1997, 86

¹⁶⁰ Wright, 2000, 28; Gibbney, Jim. Canberra: 1913-1953. Canberra: AGPS, 1988, 251; Report of the Senate Select Committee on the Development of Canberra, 1955, 15, ACT Heritage Library.

housing increased by thousands, with waiting times as much as several years.¹⁶¹ There was a national shortage of building materials and labour to construct new houses, and in Canberra, these conditions were exacerbated by the lack of a well developed private building industry. Another factor was the limited supply of permanent accommodation for tradesmen and construction workers, who were generally housed in temporary camps and hostels.¹⁶² As had been the case before the war, residents of Oaks Estate were well positioned in this regard.

Returned Oaks Estate servicemen resumed work in trades, or found work labouring, driving or in sales. Government departments employed workers in forestry, fencing, road maintenance and the like, and Oaks Estate women were employed as cooks, waitresses, dress-makers, shop assistants etc.¹⁶³ Into the 1950s, as Canberra's economy diversified, so did the occupations of Oaks Estate residents. Oral history records describe some of the occupations of Oaks Estate residents as printer, panel beater, fitter, drafting assistant, shopkeeper, motor mechanic, wood merchant, cleaners, railway porter, butcher, storeman and carrier, as well as an increase in government clerical workers during this period.¹⁶⁴ The oil and fuel depot reopened, and a new generation of industry developed in Oaks Estate. Small backyard industries such as sawmilling were being developed, perhaps with influence from Mediterranean and Eastern European migrants, keen to establish home business and industry. The question of light industry was a source of social tension, and a complaint was made to the Advisory Council in 1945 of 'about six foreigners running high speed circular saws in their back-yards, working Saturdays and Sundays, and the local residents getting no peace. Something should be done about it.'¹⁶⁵

Enterprising examples of Oaks Estate industry included Vic Sicagio, who operated a sawmill in the 1940s making flooring boards, roof battens and cherry cases, with the cherry cases transported on the train to Young for packing¹⁶⁶; Evlogi Staneff, who made concrete bricks and wash troughs from the sand of Florence Street until the early 1950s¹⁶⁷; Thurling Transport, which began when Ray Thurling started carting timber in about 1945 and grew to 11 railway trucks of goods a day carrying flour, timber, steel and other construction materials¹⁶⁸; Arminio Leono Marchiori and his son John, who operated a terazzo works producing items such as toilet partitions, door thresholds and stair treads¹⁶⁹; the Hopkins Brothers, who owned sawmill machinery and ran a relatively large operation between 1950 and 1953¹⁷⁰; and a concrete brick and tile works operating between the 1950s and 1970s.¹⁷¹ The proximity to Canberra, but also to the Queanbeyan Railway station, fuelled these industries.

When compared to Canberra, the Oaks Estate built environment continued to develop in a lightweight, handmade and informal vein. However, there were also instances of recycled materials and prefabrication in the delivery of Canberra housing in this period, where despite the emphasis on producing quality housing in the emerging National Capital, in practice a much more pragmatic approach had to be adopted. Limited government finance and ongoing shortages of both labour and building materials led to an increasing use of recycled and prefabricated

¹⁶¹ Wright, 2000, 25-42.

¹⁶² Wright, 2000, 27-28; Grieg, Alastair. *The accommodation of growth: Canberra's 'growing pains' 1945-1955*, Urban Research Program Working Paper #53, Research School of Social Science, ANU, July 1996, 13-15, 18.

¹⁶³ Williams, 1997, 87

¹⁶⁴ Williams, 1997, 87

¹⁶⁵ Williams, 1997, 102 ; Minutes of the Advisory Council, 26 November 1945.

¹⁶⁶ Williams, 1997, 104-105

¹⁶⁷ Williams, 1997, 106 ; Conversation with Tom Robertson

¹⁶⁸ Williams, 1997, 105 ; Conversation with Ray Thurling

¹⁶⁹ Williams, 1997, 106 ; Conversation with John Marchiori

¹⁷⁰ Williams, 1997, 104

¹⁷¹ Williams, 1997, 106

materials in the construction of hostels and houses in Canberra. Alternatives to the more traditional bricks, such as cement, were sometimes used in building new Canberra housing¹⁷². Temporary housing solutions were being employed to house workers in Canberra during the 1950s. Single white-collar workers were frequently being housed in demountable barracks,¹⁷³ and for labourers and tradesmen, it was single men's barracks until such housing as the Narrabundah 'prefabs', specifically designed for married tradesmen, became available.¹⁷⁴ This form of housing was providing accommodation for mostly single young men coming to Canberra from elsewhere in Australia and from overseas to work on the city's construction sites. By the early 1950s there were 2500 men living in 7 hostels, many of which were unheated and unlined with common ablution blocks and mess halls. These hostels were intended to be temporary structures – in 1948 the National Capital Planning and Development Committee (NCPDC) noted that proposed hostels for Turner and Reid, 'would be removed within a reasonable period of time in view of the fact that both areas would undoubtedly be required for permanent development after a few years'.

The idea of temporary settlements associated with the construction of Canberra was considered a necessity, and their eventual removal in many cases a given. There is some evidence to suggest that Canberra administrators still considered Oaks Estate in this category – not more than a temporary settlement, filling a gap in the need for housing. Nonetheless, some small service concessions continued to be made in Oaks Estate, although always in response to multiple and tireless requests from the Oaks Estate Progress Association. Examples included fire fighting equipment, a bus service, preschool and baby health services. Fire fighting equipment and a second hand fire hose were ordered for Oaks Estate in November 1941, and it was agreed that the shed built to house the fire cart in June 1942 could be built on private property facing Hazel Street.¹⁷⁵ A local auxiliary fire squad was organised and trained in the care and use of the equipment, owing to the travel time required for the Canberra Fire Brigade to arrive at Oaks Estate, with the idea that any fire could be kept in check by residents until the brigade arrived.¹⁷⁶

The Oaks Estate Progress Association began making representations to Canberra for a bus service to Oaks Estate in 1942,¹⁷⁷ and a letter from the Oaks Estate Progress Association to the Department of the Interior indicates that the need for a bus service had finally been met by 1953. The Department of the Interior instructed the Department of Works to design and estimate the cost of a bus shelter shed to be located on the north side of Hazel Street, 80 feet east of the intersection with River Street. However, it was 1955 before the Department of the Interior advised that a suitable quotation had been received for the construction of the bus shelter.¹⁷⁸ Minutes of the Advisory Council in 1954 recorded that at this time Oaks Estate was still without a sewerage service, roads were without kerbing or guttering, and there were no footpaths¹⁷⁹. The Oaks Estate Progress Association continued to make representations as to the future of Oaks Estate, what developments might be planned for it, whether it was to become part of the City, and whether it was to be developed with housing¹⁸⁰, and the Advisory Council continued to discuss the

¹⁷² Wright, 2000, 37, 39.

¹⁷³ Gibbney, 1988, 233-235.

¹⁷⁴ Gibbney, 1988, 237.

¹⁷⁵ Williams, 1997, 101 ; Australian Archives (ACT): Series A 431/1 item 53/170

¹⁷⁶ Williams, 1997, 101 ; Conversation with Irene Ramsay (nee Ronstron)

¹⁷⁷ Williams, 1997, 108 ; Correspondence between C E F Roach (Transport Officer) to Assistant Secretary (Canberra Services Branch) of the Department of the Interior, Australian Archives (ACT): Series A 431/1 Item 53/1343.

¹⁷⁸ Williams, ; correspondence to Oaks Estate Progress Association 20 April 1955

¹⁷⁹ Williams, 1997, ; Minutes of the Advisory Council meeting 20 September 1954

¹⁸⁰ Williams, 1997, ; Minutes of the Advisory Council meeting 20 September 1954

justification of expending funds on developing land so far from the centre of the planned city of Canberra.

The responsibility for developing the National Capital in the immediate post-war period was shared between the Commonwealth Department of Interior and the Department of Works and Housing. The NCPDC, established in 1939, operated as an advisor on departmental plans for Canberra.¹⁸¹ This became an awkward three-way relationship as these bodies attempted to meet the ever-increasing demand for housing public servants and workers in Canberra, also responding to ministerial decisions, and changing budgetary allocations for various projects.¹⁸² The NCPDC was set up to advise the Minister of the Interior to safeguard the Griffin Plan and to maintain high aesthetic and architectural standards worthy of a National Capital. Its members represented a cross section of the community including local politicians, business leaders, architects and public servants.

An article in the Canberra Times in 1950 demonstrated that the future of Oaks Estate was in no way assured. It reported that following an inspection of Oaks Estate, the NCPDC had discussed whether Oaks Estate had a future 'as a planned community, or whether it must be liquidated quickly'.¹⁸³ Minutes of the Advisory Council meeting demonstrated that the visitors had been particularly unimpressed with the uncontrolled construction in Oaks Estate, describing Oaks Estate as 'a hopeless place'.¹⁸⁴ Minutes of the Advisory Council's April 1950 meeting record further discussion about Oaks Estate, with many of the same conversations had occurred 20 years prior. These included the need for a long term policy on the settlement; its geographic attachment to Queanbeyan; the constitutional impossibility of handing the land back to NSW; whether the expense of servicing the area would be justified; and whether the expense of resuming freehold land could be justified. New points of discussion included ways of controlling urban design, land use and construction in Oaks Estate. The Advisory Council moved to recommend that the Minister of the Interior take steps to 'apply appropriate controls as provided in the Ordinances of the Territory to the Oaks Estate', and in particular: a) that the lands contained therein which are subject to the resumption be acquired by the Commonwealth; and b) that the area be planned according to the best available town planning practice.¹⁸⁵

By the 1950s, Oaks Estate was an odd collection of handmade and transported buildings, standing in stark contrast to the orderly permanent development of uniform houses in Canberra. A fibro lined weatherboard building was delivered to Oaks Estate from the Eastlake Hostel for use as a Community Hall by 1953. Oaks Estate oral history records show that the building had been a dormitory, and Oaks Estate residents removed internal walls to achieve an open plan hall.¹⁸⁶ There were a number of other individual buildings transported to Oaks Estate from temporary groupings in Canberra such as the Second School of Technical Training in Kingston, the Molonglo Settlement, and Acton. The house at 11 River Street stands as an example of one of 15 workmen's cottages designed by H M Rolland for the Department of Works and Railways, Works Branch, Canberra, and built at Acton between 1924 and 1926. A particularly odd example, which disturbed even Oaks Estate residents, was a dilapidated Nissan hut, transported from Kingston in 1957 and established on McEwan Avenue near the corner of Railway Street.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸¹ NCPDC minutes 69th meeting 8 July 1948, 1-3; Report of the Senate Select Committee 1955, 24-25.

¹⁸² Philip Leeson Architects, 2012, 26

¹⁸³ Williams, 1997, The Canberra Times, 28 March 1950

¹⁸⁴ Williams, 1997, Minutes of Advisory Council Meeting of 27 March 1950

¹⁸⁵ Williams, 1997, Minutes of the Advisory Council Meeting of 17 April 1950

¹⁸⁶ Williams, 1997, 112

¹⁸⁷ Williams, 1997, 133

Not all property owners had a shared vision for the development of Oaks Estate. While some relished the opportunity offered by a relatively unregulated outpost of Canberra, a 1957 letter from the Oaks Estate Progress Association to the ACT Advisory Council describes the blind eye that had been turned to development at Oaks Estate, and the frustration of some residents. The letter reads,

For some years, and for obvious reasons, our little Settlement has been used by self-seeking opportunists to serve their own ends. Two of these reasons are: Oaks Estate is freehold; government departments have been shockingly lax in enforcing laws and regulations regarding building, etc. ... temporary dwellings have been used by the owner for a short period, then rented for a high figure. A little tactful firmness by departments, in the beginning, would have prevented this. Oaks Estate people are decent, law abiding Australians. Generally speaking we do not mind being ordered to do some things and forbidden to do others. We do strongly object, however, when outsiders come here (as many have done) and contemptuously ignore all regulations, etc., apparently with departmental blessing.¹⁸⁸

Evidence of the extent and effect of temporary dwellings in Oaks Estate is contained in a further letter from A J Harris to the Minister for the Interior, probably in 1957. The letter reads,

In our rapidly expanding City of modern design in the layout of suburbs and housing it is most irregular to find that one outlying suburb, Oaks Estate, has an alarming number of temporary dwellings. Over 16% of the total dwellings in Oaks Estate are of a temporary nature some of which are being enlarged, presumably without any thoughts to design or regularity, and are becoming unsightly structures which are greatly reducing values of homes in the area... Would it be possible to obtain information regarding plans or permits for these temporary dwellings being submitted to the Department concerned? It is thought that quite a few have been erected without plans being submitted, one at least has grown from a butterbox like structure made of short lengths of hard timber. It has had added a room in brick, a small glassing in verandah, and a brick bathroom and laundry at rear. It is understood that the owner has applied for a government house in Canberra, and there is talk in the neighbourhood of letting this misshapen structure in the future at a high rental... Along with other progressive citizens of Oaks Estate, I believe the time has come when an end must be put to the continuance of the practice of allowing temporary dwellings to be erected in Oaks Estate and a firm stand taken against owners of such dwellings who are making a racket of letting them at most unreasonable rentals. In Oaks Estate many are, like myself, proud of our homes and therefore do not want to have them surrounded by unsightly buildings. ...should building regulations be enforced we would have a much better class of building going up around us and the percentage of temporary dwellings would be greatly reduced.¹⁸⁹

Minutes of the Advisory Council in 1957 speculated that there were somewhere between 50 and 60 houses in Oaks Estate, and detailed familiar discussion of how the substantial expenditure on a sewerage service could be justified.¹⁹⁰ The same conversation was recorded amongst new Council members as to why Oaks Estate is part of the Territory, and whether it could be returned to NSW. By this time, the presence of Oaks Estate in the Federal Territory had continued to baffle

¹⁸⁸ Williams, 1997 ; correspondence from A J Harris, Secretary of the Oaks Estate Progress Association, to Jim Pead, representation of ACT Progress and Welfare Council (ACT Advisory Council), 14 October 1957

¹⁸⁹ Williams, 1997, ; letter from A J Harris to the Minister for the Interior, probably in 1957

¹⁹⁰ Williams, ; Minutes of the Advisory Council meeting 24 June 1957

administrators, and in turn incite the same proposed solutions, for thirty years. Oaks Estate was an outer suburb of Queanbeyan, and yet isolated by jurisdiction from Queanbeyan as it was by distance, design and circumstance, from Canberra. A 1957 letter from the Oaks Estate Progress Association to the ACT Advisory Council describes the unusual situation for policing the settlement perched on the NSW border,

*Your Police Department is doubtless well aware of the somewhat unusual situation of Oaks Estate, as regards Police supervision. Queanbeyan Police have no jurisdiction here, although Canberra Police are invariably helpful and cooperative, they are a long distance away... Needless to say, this position is well known, particularly to those desirous of breaking laws and regulations. Canberra Police have more than once broken up gangs of hoodlums from elsewhere, who have congregated here for the purpose of damaging both private and public property, and generally making a nuisance of themselves in the neighbourhood.*¹⁹¹

Lacking any executive power, the Advisory Committee found its views were increasingly ignored and decisions made without reference to it. In 1955 a Senate Select Committee recommended the establishment of a single Commission to plan, develop and construct the National Capital with adequate finance and a co-ordinated plan. This led to the establishment of the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC) in 1958. This marked a new era of development for the ACT.

The 1960s was a period of unprecedented growth in Canberra, and the population of the Capital doubled over the decade.¹⁹² In 1965, the population reached 86,700 and by 1972 it was 155,000.¹⁹³ This rapid increase was fuelled by the intensification of the public service transfer program, expansion of existing departments based in Canberra, and the increased post-war birth rate across the nation. The NCDC directed a construction program that completed important national building projects such as the construction of Lake Burley Griffin and expanding the Canberra suburbs north and south.¹⁹⁴ During the 1960s, the involvement of private enterprise in the building of Canberra's rapidly expanding housing suburbs had increased markedly, so much so that by 1972, private investment exceeded that of the Commonwealth Government.¹⁹⁵ By 1971, as a percentage of all Canberra dwellings, government houses had reduced from 80% in 1958, to 31%.¹⁹⁶ From the 1960s, the balance between the public and private housing sectors in Canberra began to look more like the rest of Australia.¹⁹⁷

This period saw enormous change in Canberra, as the capital grew into a city. The Territory's relationship with Oaks Estate remained consistently tentative, leaving Oaks Estate in an unusually undeveloped state. Incredibly, as the spectacular Lake Burley Griffin took shape, the Oaks Estate Progress Association was still writing to the Minister of the Interior requesting sewerage, drainage, kerbs and gutters in 1966.¹⁹⁸ In a sudden turn of events, sometime between 1966 and 1972 the roads in Oaks Estate

¹⁹¹ Williams, ; correspondence from A J Harris, Secretary of the Oaks Estate Progress Association, to Sergeant L W Powley, Canberra Police Department Licensing Inspector 14 October 1957

¹⁹² NCDC, Fourth Annual Report 1960-61, 6; Wright, 2000, 61.

¹⁹³ Sparke, Eric. Canberra 1954-1980, Canberra AGPS, 1988, 104; 188.

¹⁹⁴ Sparke, 1988, 103.

¹⁹⁵ NCDC, Fifteenth Annual Report 1971-2, p.15.

¹⁹⁶ Paul, Lisa. The role and evolution of Canberra's public housing sector. unpublished seminar paper provided by ACT Department of Housing, Disability and Community Services, 1987, 4: and see NCDC Seventh Annual Report 1963-64.

¹⁹⁷ Beer, 1988, 85

¹⁹⁸ Williams, 1997, ; correspondence from Bede Tongs, President of Oaks Estate Progress Association, to Minister of the Interior, 12 May 1966

were sealed, kerbed and guttered, and street lighting and sewerage services were installed¹⁹⁹. Change was on the horizon.

¹⁹⁹ Williams, 1997; Canberra Times, 17 January 1972

3.1.6 Freehold land resumed, 1970s

In the early 1970s, the relationship between Canberra and the outlying settlements in the Territory changed, as the decision was made to resume all freehold land. 17% of the Territory was still freehold land at this time, including most of the blocks in the villages of Tharwa, Hall and Oaks Estate, and this anomaly became critical in the 1960s expansion period.²⁰⁰ A land use plan was drawn up by the NCDC and the Department of the Interior for the whole of the Territory which provided the basis for the acquisition of the remaining freehold land, which was announced on 9 December 1970.²⁰¹

In 1972, the new Whitlam Labor Government made radical changes in departments and portfolios which had a direct impact on the management of Canberra. The NCDC came under the new Department of Urban and Regional Development (DURD), with Minister Tom Uren. Here, its focus became broader than the building of Canberra. The Department of Interior, 'after 40 years of paternalistic rule over Canberra' was abolished and its Canberra functions brought under the Department of Capital Territory.²⁰²

Compulsory public service transfers were largely completed in 1973. This combined with an economic downturn saw fewer people migrating to Canberra. However, pressure on Canberra's housing supply remained. A 1973 article in the Canberra Times recorded that landowners had 'been served notice that their land will be compulsorily acquired by the Department of the Capital Territory within 28 days.' The article also records that landowners in Hall and Tharwa were served with the same notice, and that there was little information with the notice as to the conditions – i.e. 'what leases they would be offered or what they would have to pay for them.'²⁰³ Typically owners were compensated with the offer of a 99 year lease on the land, although there were some instances of life leases being offered.²⁰⁴

Department of Interior Lands Branch files indicate that the process of arranging acquisitions, leaseback to the original freeholders, and compensation was lengthy, and further compounded by ongoing government investigation into its whys and wherefores. Some owners did not wish to retain ownership under leasehold, and chose instead to accept cash compensation.²⁰⁵ The Department of the Capital Territory (DCT) purchased 83 existing flats in Oaks Estate in the early 1970s at a cost of \$1.216 million²⁰⁶. These were Carla Court, Dover Court, Elmsall Court and the flats at 32 River Street.

Acquisition of Oaks Estate land was gazetted in the Australian Government Gazette No 6, dated 15 January 1974.²⁰⁷

3.1.7 The 1980s to the present

In recent years as older residents died or moved on new waves of residents have moved into Oaks Estate. Most have come attracted to the urban village character and the opportunities of a semi-rural, partly self sufficient lifestyle coupled with the strong sense of community.

²⁰⁰ Philip Leeson Architects, 2012, ; Sparke, 1988, 195-6.

²⁰¹ Philip Leeson Architects, 2012, ; Sparke, 1988, 196.

²⁰² Sparke, 1988, 206

²⁰³ Williams, 1997, ; The Canberra Times, 28 October 1973

²⁰⁴ Williams, 1997, 141

²⁰⁵ Philip Leeson Architects, 2012, ; Wright, 2000, 76

²⁰⁶ Philip Leeson Architects, 2012, ; Wright, 2000, 76

²⁰⁷ Williams, 1997, 141

Such residents differ somewhat from the occupants of the ACT Housing properties who now primarily suffer social and economic disadvantage. Nonetheless anecdotal evidence suggests there is still a 'live and let live' attitude amongst most residents.

In the last 20 years much of the surviving light industry has moved on to more modern, economical premises in purpose built estates. The majority of these buildings are vacant or underutilised. This together with a new generation seeking affordable housing close to both Queanbeyan and Canberra has added to the impetus for a modern master plan to formally guide future development.

3.2 Comparative analysis

Oaks Estate can be compared to the ACT rural villages of Hall and Tharwa. This section provides a brief history of the development of Tharwa and Hall and then compares the three places.

3.2.1 Brief History of Tharwa Village

The Tharwa area, on the banks of the Murrumbidgee River shows signs of prehistoric occupation and as a river crossing point to the high country. European explorers reached the area by the early 1820s and by the late 1820s the land was being used for grazing with Wright establishing the Lanyon and Cuppacumbalong properties on either side of the river. By the 1850s all of the valleys to the west had been settled. Tharwa township developed close to two river crossing points, the first immediately below the present Tharwa Bridge and the second upstream beside Cuppacumbalong. The village became a service centre close to these points.

Land was resumed for Tharwa Village between 1847 and 1852 and it was the first village to be proclaimed in what would later become the Capital Territory, although it was not gazetted until 1892. At that time other unofficial villages in the future Territory included Canberry (near Acton), Gininnderra (Hall area), Yarralumla (present Government House area) and Duntroon. In 1856 Wright sold to DeSalis who developed Cuppacumbalong into a thriving concern - producing fine wool and breeding draught horses. The village also briefly served as a supply point for would be gold prospectors lying on the route from Queanbeyan across the Murrumbidgee and through the mountains to the short lived Kiandra Goldfields (1859-61) Throughout the later 19th century Tharwa continued to serve the need of surrounding rural communities and was the gateway to the high country pastoral leases, benefitting from being a stock holding point at the crossing near the present day Tharwa Bridge. The construction of Tuggeranong Siding in 1887, an offshoot of the Queanbeyan to Cooma railway, improved transport links to the area, as did the opening of the Tharwa Bridge in 1895. The gazetting of the town in 1992 included the subdivision of larger lots along the riverbanks envisaged grand public buildings, but these never eventuated.

The 1908 Seat of Government Act brought Tharwa into the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). After that its population fell despite the sale of several residential blocks in the early 1930s. Extensive local lobbying saw power connected in 1948 and water in 1955 but it remained a sleepy backwater. The Commonwealth acquisition of leases in the late 1960s saw the few remaining graziers leave the district. Sealing the fate of Tharwa as a rural service centre. Since 1975 the Commonwealth has leased Cuppacumbalong for commercial and residential purposes, which meant to ally with tourism in the area. In recent years this has proven economically unviable. Today Tharwa village, focused on the village store and community hall, serves as a tourist gateway to Namadgi National Park and the Snowy Mountains beyond, and to Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve.

3.2.2 Brief History of Hall Village

George Thomas Palmer Senior, a nephew of Robert Campbell, established a settlement at 'Gingininderra' in about 1826 in the charge of overseer Duncan McFarlane. Palmer himself made only occasional visits, but his son, George Junior took up residence in about 1845.

The settlement was initially known as Palmerville, but as it grew into a village it was named Ginninderra. Growth was hindered because the few buildings were located on large private landholdings. Following the 1861 Land Act, which made smaller holdings available, the village spread along the Yass to Queanbeyan Road.

*'By the late 1800s Ginninderra had the features of village, including two churches - St Pauls Church of England and St Francis Roman Catholic, two schools – Mulligans Flat and Ginninderra, a post and telegraph office, a police station, a blacksmiths shop, a general store, a Farmer's Union hall, a hotel – The Cricketers Arms, a boot maker, a nurseryman, various cottages and two homesteads – Deasland and Nine Elms, two woolsheds, a cemetery, a showground and a famous cricket club.'*²⁰⁸

Two events led to the decline of Ginninderra village. Firstly, the 'unofficial' development of the village had occurred at such a pace that by the 1880s the Government decided that an official village site should be surveyed and future development more strictly controlled. The chosen site was on Hall's Creek approximately two miles to the northwest. To avoid naming confusion the new village was named Hall. Thereafter most new residential and commercial development took place at the new site. Secondly, the 1908 decision to acquire freehold land for the FCT led to much of the Ginninderra area being acquired by the Commonwealth between 1913 and 1917. Many residents chose to move rather than lease land they had previously owned.

Hall village was surveyed in 1881 and gazetted in 1882 and named after Henry Hall, an early landholder in the vicinity. Straddling the Yass to Queanbeyan Road the village adopted a classic grid layout with rear lanes for nightsoil collection typical of 19th century towns and somewhat grand for a village. Lots of up to 20 acres were sold for rural and residential use in four separate subdivisions between 1886 and 1902. The first store and post office date from 1888 and the nearby Cricketers Arms Hotel operated from 1864 to 1918.

By 1901 the Hall Village had become a thriving rural service centre and included a blacksmith, butcher, coachbuilder, hotel, dairy and saddler. The area retained a healthy population into the Twentieth Century which supported the construction of the Catholic Church in 1910 and Public School in 1911. From 1908 the village fell just within the FCT but still serviced a large part of NSW just across the border. In 1954 the main road was renamed the Barton Highway which became a major traffic artery between the rapidly growing city of Canberra and the Hume Highway linking Sydney and Melbourne. The last blocks were converted to leasehold in 1971. In 1980 the Barton Highway was diverted to the south and became a dual carriageway. The original highway reverted to a loop road through the village, making it a peaceful semi rural place. In recent decades this quality has attracted Canberra workers in search of a semi rural lifestyle. Hall village is now largely a dormitory suburb of Canberra with high house prices but retaining its rural charm.

3.2.3 Comparative Analysis

Each of the settlements Tharwa, Hall and Oaks Estate predate the Federal Capital era. Lying on the periphery of the Capital Territory these lands were not immediately acquired by the Commonwealth and were not transferred to leasehold until much later. As a result they avoided being subsumed into the Canberra urban area and remained rural or semi rural villages.

All three settlements have their origins in the early days of occupation of the Limestone Plains, when pioneers first squatted on land identified as good for grazing, later establishing official grazing leases.

The early Oaks Estate and Tharwa settlements developed at significant intersections of rivers and tracks whose pattern of use and movement through the landscape had been established long before European settlement. These patterns were reinforced

²⁰⁸ National Trust Register of Significant Places, 1999

by European settlement. The Murrumbidgee at Tharwa and the confluence of the Molonglo and Queanbeyan rivers at Oaks Estate had easy fording points in these locations which facilitated movement of goods and livestock. The rivers also provided water for irrigation and for various other activities such as fellmongering (tanning) and woolscouring.

By contrast, Hall was established by the NSW colonial government as a way of imposing an order on settlement in response to the unregulated ad hoc development of the earlier Ginninderra settlement further to the east. Nevertheless, Ginninderra itself had developed at significant intersections. The location and subdivision of Hall Village comes much later, with much deliberation and was much more the case of an 'instant town' being developed to serve long established needs.

Oaks Estate differs from Tharwa and Hall in that the first European settlement there gave impetus to the development of Queanbeyan, proclaimed in 1838. Until cut loose from the town by its inclusion in the FCT in 1908, Oaks Estate developed as a part of Queanbeyan, not as a small rural village. Indeed for a time it became the unofficial northern gateway to Queanbeyan as people chose to take a turn off the Yass – Queanbeyan Road heading south over the river and up present day River Street to the Railway Station.

A fundamental determinant of its development history was the coming of the railway. Years before it came to pass shrewd businessmen bought up the land along proposed rail corridor and subsequently sold it to the NSW Commissioner for Railways at a tidy profit. The Oaks Estate land tucked between the railway line and the river offered great potential for agricultural, industrial and residential use. Sophisticated business interests further progressed development when larger holdings were subdivided to improve financial returns on the land. Sale of land along the railway line and rivers, used for mixed industrial and agricultural purposes respectively proved more successful than that of the smaller residential blocks on the steeper land between.

Development of Tharwa and Hall proceeded on a much smaller scale, not as part of a large town on a major rail line but as smaller villages serving relatively sparsely populated rural districts. In particular industrial activity did not expand beyond cottage businesses such as blacksmithing and coach building as opposed to far larger enterprises carried out at Oaks Estate – wool scouring, tanning, flour milling and the various activities associated with the railway line.

The histories of the three settlements only converge after the 1908 Seat of Government Act which saw each captured just inside the new Territory border on the periphery of the future city of Canberra. With this came the prospect of compulsory acquisition of land by the Commonwealth who would offer it back as leasehold. Many landholders from each of these districts sold up rather than lease back their own land. Others held on in a state of uncertainty. In all cases populations dwindled and businesses closed. As it turned out widespread Commonwealth acquisition was not completed until the early 1970s by which time these villages had been in limbo for over 60 years.

After 1908, Oaks Estate took a different turn. Although bureaucratically cut off from the town of Queanbeyan, it nonetheless remained geographically connected. Furthermore, it was far closer to the centre of Canberra than either Hall or Tharwa.

4 PHYSICAL ASSESSMENT

4.1 Introduction

In February 2013 Philip Leeson Architects made an assessment of the buildings in Oaks Estate. This consisted of a visual inspection, made from the public domain, a brief description of the building and a photograph. This formed the basis of a written inventory. This was enhanced with title information and oral history records compiled by Karen Williams to present a cohesive but concise history of the development of the built environment. The full Inventory can be found in Appendix (A).

In March 2013 David Hobbes and Alanna King toured Oaks Estate with Dr Karen Williams, Historian, Oaks Estate resident and president of the Oaks Estate Progress Association. The group walked the river corridor from the railway bridge to *The Oaks*, discussing the history, environment and geology of the area. They then walked most streets in the Estate, corroborating the findings with Karen on the history of individual buildings.

4.2 The Built Environment

The built environment of Oaks Estate can be divided into several categories of place:

4.2.1 Places of individual heritage significance

- The Oaks Blocks 16 & 19 / Section 2
- Robertson House Blocks 11 & 12 / Section 7

The Oaks

History

In 1837, part of the south bank of the Molonglo River was granted to Robert Campbell under the title of Portion 35, Parish of Queanbeyan. This area became an extension of the Duntroon Estate. It has been speculated that the substantial stone dwelling built on this land prior to 1838 was intended for relatives of Robert Campbell who were expected but never arrived from England. The house was single story with stone exterior walls, brick and stone interior walls and attic rooms.

Between 1838 and 1941 the building was licensed as the Elmsall Inn. By 1839 the inn had expanded to include a shop built of timber slabs and roofed with sheets of bark, suggesting a viable volume of traffic through the area. A burial ground was established nearby and used from the mid 1830s until 1846, with one further addition in 1863. The modern day location of this cemetery was discovered in 1991 when tradespeople digging a storm water trench in the driveway of number 9 Florence Street unearthed a human skeleton. The Australian Federal Police confirmed with radiocarbon dating that the bones dated to 1825-1881. A 100-acre part of Robert Campbell's grant was conveyed to Charles Campbell in 1840. The land was described as bounded on the east by the village reserve and Queanbeyan River, on the north by the Molonglo River and on the south and west by survey lines.

The Oaks was a family home through the 1860s and into the 1870s. In 1877 Charles Campbell sold the 100 acres of land he purchased in 1840, along with the house that had operated as the Elmsall Inn, to a farmer and grazier of Tarago named John Bull. In the 1870s and early 1880s, four doctors occupied The Oaks, and a series of births and deaths are registered to this address during this time.

In 1885 John Bull sold a portion of the 100-acre property south of the Molonglo River including The Oaks, its outbuildings and associated land, to a Queanbeyan storekeeper and businessman named George Tomsitt, along with rights of way. The

documentation referred to The Oaks 'messuage', as well as The Oaks Wool-washing Establishment.

Mathew McAlister lived at The Oaks in 1886 and 1887. He ran the property as a hotel, and capitalised on trade brought by the railway and rail goods yard.

In 1888 George Tomsitt became foundation director of Queanbeyan Wool and Manufacturing Company, and in 1889 became the mayor of Queanbeyan. He enlarged the property surrounding The Oaks in 1890 when he acquired the blocks immediately over the southern and western boundaries of the two-acre block on which The Oaks stood.

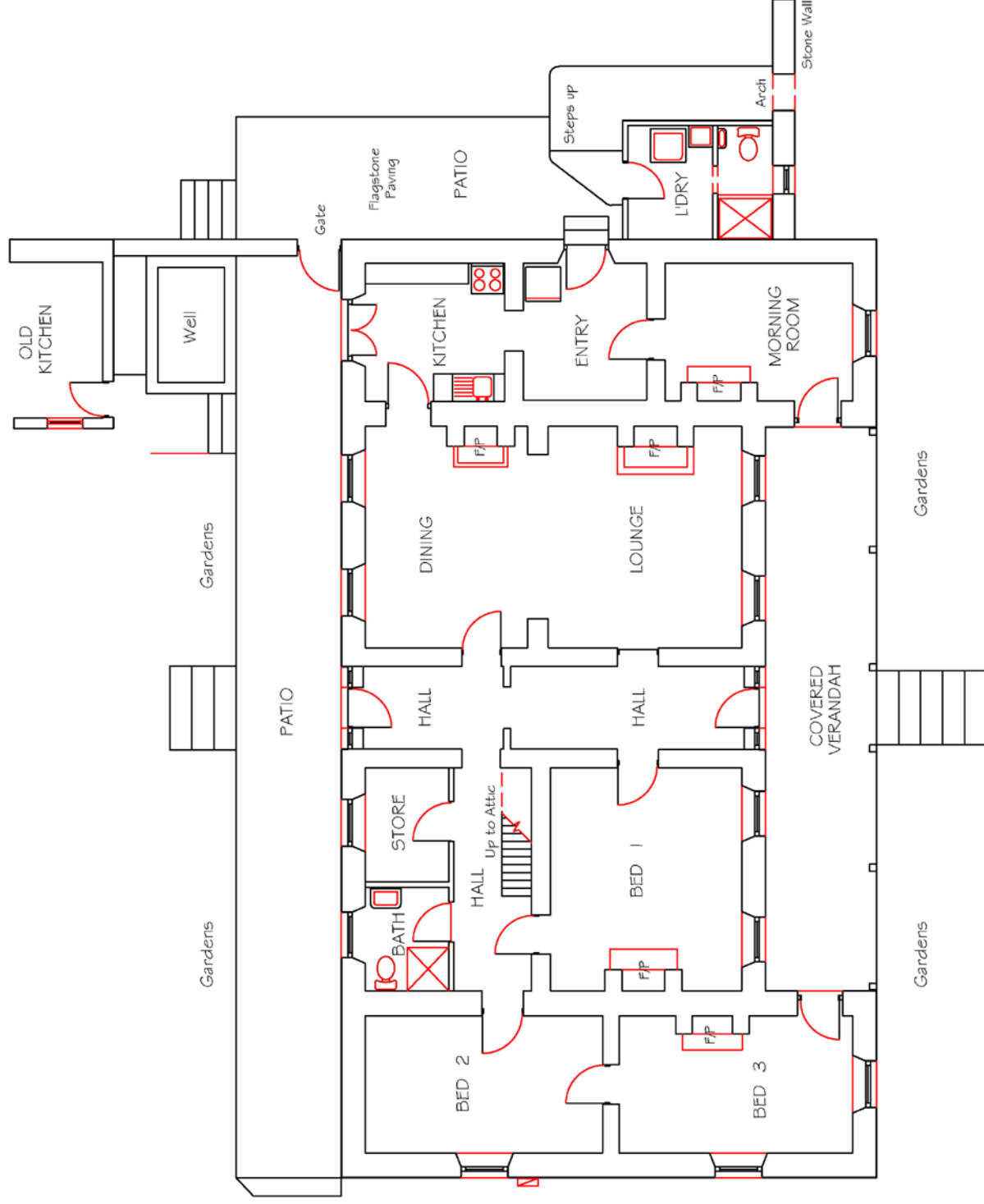
When George Tomsitt was killed in a shooting accident in 1892 The Oaks was sold to George Lesmond and the blocks acquired by George Tomsitt in 1890 were transferred to two other owners. Lesmond and his wife renamed the property Willow Bank and maintained it until 1905 when it was sold and renamed Bannockburn. The owner was a Queanbeyan Council member, miller, part owner and manager of the Queanbeyan Roller Flour Mill, and his wife. Community oral history records show that the two kept the house and gardens in splendid condition until she died in 1919. The property first transferred to family, before being sold in 1921 to the Eddison family.

The Eddison family had rented the house before purchasing the property. Its name reverted to The Oaks. It was used as a base for farming work and part of the house was rented out to the Martin family during this time. The Martin family ran a small dairy and sold operated a milk delivery from The Oaks during the 1920s. Eddison was granted a returned serviceman's farm block at Woden, where the family moved in 1928.

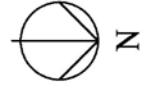
The Oaks was rented out to various families between 1928 and WWII. During WWII The Oaks was used as company headquarters for the Garrison Battalion, and the commanding officer lived in the house. After WWII, and until the Eddison family sold the property in 1952, The Oaks was rented again to various families. The property sold twice during 1952 - the second time to Professor Jaeger, Dean of the Research School of Physical Studies at ANU and his wife. They occupied The Oaks until 1972 and carried out substantial renovations. In 1972 the property was bought by the Hewitt family who lived there until 2010 before it passed to their daughter Jane and her husband Jim Cottee.

Figure 17 • (overleaf) Floor plan of The Oaks, 2013 • Source:



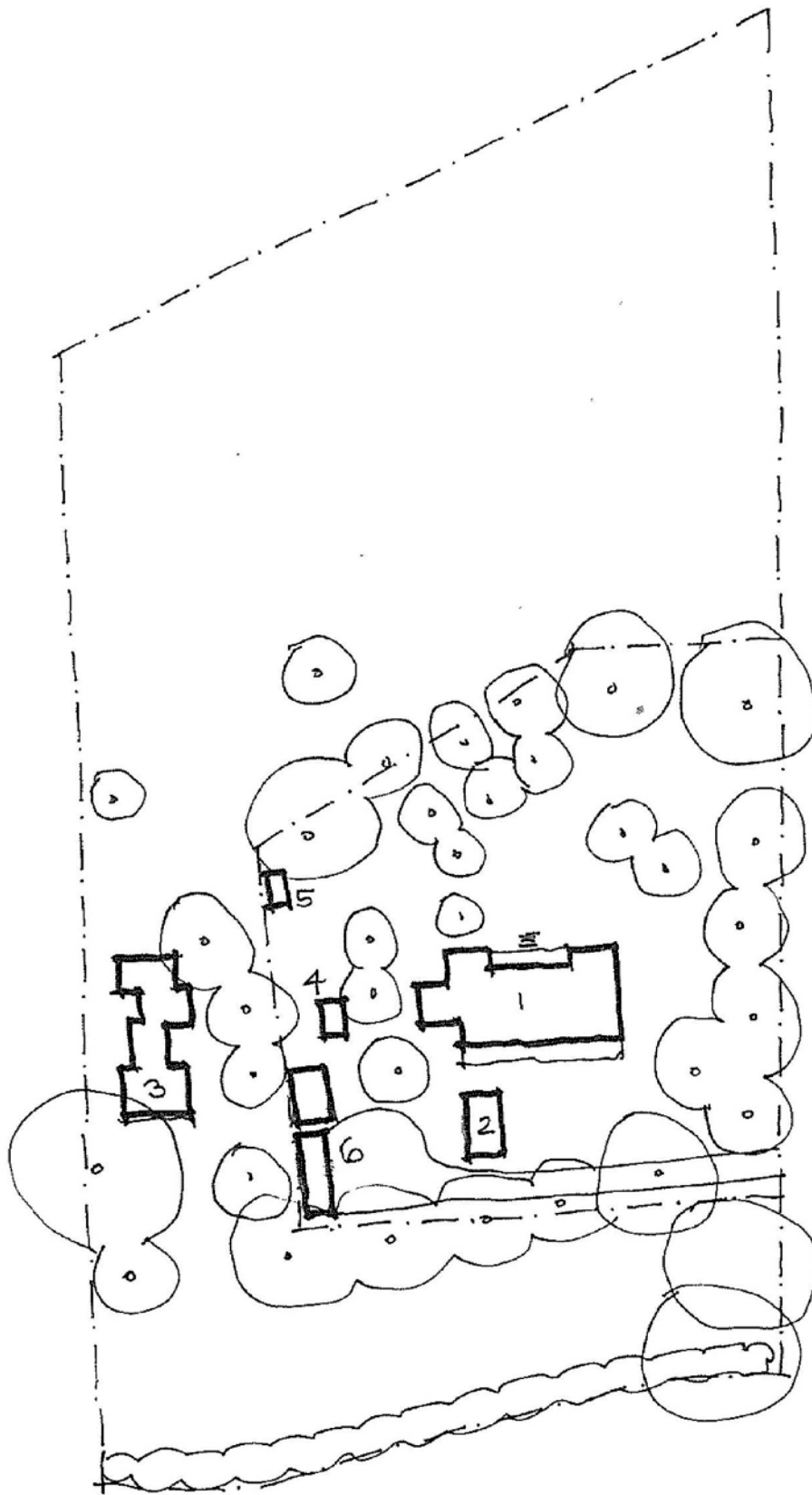


THE OAKS
FLOOR PLAN 1:100
 FLOOR AREA = 219.0 m²
 = 23.5 Squares



0 1 2 3 4 5m
 SCALE 1:100

Figure 18 • (overleaf) Site plan of The Oaks, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects



THE OAKS - INDICATIVE SITE PLAN (not to scale)



- 1 - Main house
- 2 - Kitchen
- 3 - Shed
- 4 - Privy
- 5 - Chicken run
- 6 - Garage



Boundary



Hedge



Tree

Physical Description

The Oaks is an excellent example of a simple, symmetrical Georgian house, designed around a central hallway. In its time it would have been one of the most substantial buildings in the region. Facing north at the top of the rise over the Molonglo River it has commanding view across the river and rural land to distant ridgelines.



Figures 19 & 20 • North elevation (L) and south elevation (R) of The Oaks, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

The building consists of eight principle rooms on the ground floor with several small attic rooms under the roofline. The roof is generally hipped with a small gable at each end of the north elevation.

The external walls are constructed in 0.5m thick rough coursed stone, thought to be local to the area. The small gable walls are brick, rendered and coursed to mimic stone. Internal walls are thinner and of a combination of stone and brick.

Approximately half of the original timber multi – light double hung windows remain; the rest have been replaced with double hung sashes without glazing bars. The front and rear doors are 6 panelled timber with sidelights.

The internal finish consists of lime plaster with simple Georgian trims, hardwood floors and cedar joinery. Ceilings are lathe and plaster ceilings with fairly simple cornice and roses.

The attic rooms are accessed by a steep (non original) stair leading from a rear room, latterly partitioned to form a hall. The upper rooms comprise lathe and plaster partitions and linings, with three small dormers to the south and two to the north roof slope.

Roof timbers are hardwood with battens spaced to suit timber shingles. Cladding is nineteenth century short length corrugated galvanised iron. No shingles are visible where interior linings have fallen away.

Changes include the alteration of secondary rooms for use as a kitchen and bathrooms. The house has been re-wired. The building is in remarkably good condition and appears to retain much of its original fabric. It is currently used as a comfortable dwelling.

There is a small attached brick room under a skillion roof on the west side which contains a laundry, shower and wc.

Adjacent to the main building is the original kitchen. This is in remarkably intact original condition. It consists of one large room, c. 5 x 8m with brick exterior walls, originally a dirt floor (later brick paved), timber double hung windows, planked timber doors, hardwood roof timbers, corrugated galvanized iron sheeting over original hardwood shingles, which remain partly intact below.



Figures 21 & 22 • Kitchen building (L) and original roof shingles (R) at The Oaks, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

There is a brick fireplace and chimney at the south end, with a cast iron range added adjacent in the later nineteenth century. The kitchen retains a vast amount of historic cooking equipment & utensils

The property contains several further outbuildings, including

Timber Shed

A large timber shed dates from c. 1900. It is in a fair to poor condition with a dirt floor, a sawn timber structure, timber weatherboard / timber slat cladding and a corrugated galvanized iron roof. This building contains a vast array of historic horse drawn vehicles and accessories (sulkies, drays, carts etc.)



Figures 23 & 24 • Timber shed (L) and Interior of timber shed (R) at The Oaks, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Brick Privy

This structure appears to date from the late nineteenth century. It has an earth floor, brick walls and a corrugated galvanized iron roof. It originally had back to back earth closets. It is now used for storage. It is in a fair condition.



Figure 25 • Privy at The Oaks, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Chicken Run

This is a typical structure of its type, consisting of 2 timber enclosures and a run fenced with chicken wire. It is in poor condition.



Figure 26 • Chicken Run at The Oaks, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Slab Garage

This structure was built using reclaimed hardwood slabs on timber base plates fixed to a rough concrete slab. It has a sawn timber roof structure sheeted with corrugated galvanised iron. It contains the remains of the previous owner's model railway.



Figure 27 • Reclaimed slab garage (L) and bush pole construction from inside (R) at The Oaks, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

It is recommended that a detailed Conservation Management Plan be prepared for The Oaks to guide its management and future development.

Robertson House

A separate Heritage Assessment was made of Robertson House by NGH Heritage in 2009. The full report is attached as Appendix B. It was found to have individual heritage values as well as contributing to the overall character of the Oaks Estate Precinct.

The house occupies two adjoining blocks. It contains a timber framed house, 2 outbuildings and a chicken shed. The block also contains several large conifers, a number of smaller garden trees and shrubs, remnant timber and wire fences and gates. Construction commenced on the main building in c. 1912/13. It is a unique example of vernacular construction that utilizes a range of building materials and construction systems.

The house presents a 'double front' with a verandah facing Railway Street. It contains 6 rooms. The original building contained two rooms under a gable roof with two further rooms behind under a skillion roof. Subsequently a kitchen and further bedroom were added. The building is predominantly timber framed with timber floors, weatherboard wall cladding and a corrugated galvanized iron roof. The later bedroom added in the 1920s is rendered brickwork. There are various linings, including flattened kerosene cans, tongue and groove timber boards, asbestos cement and masonite.



Figure 28 • General view of Robertson House from Hazel Street, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

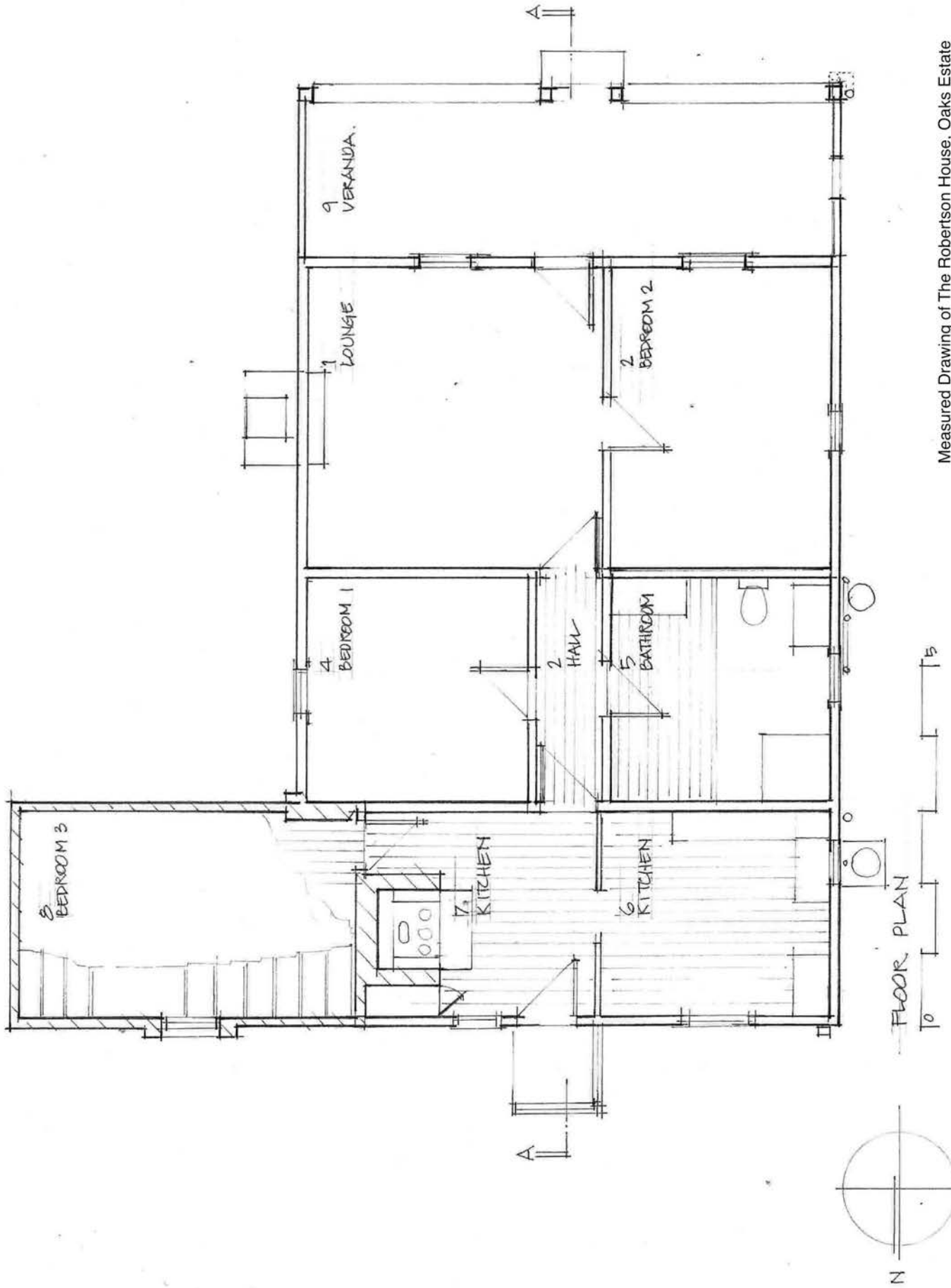


Figures 29 & 30 • Chicken shed (L) and garage (R) at Robertson House, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

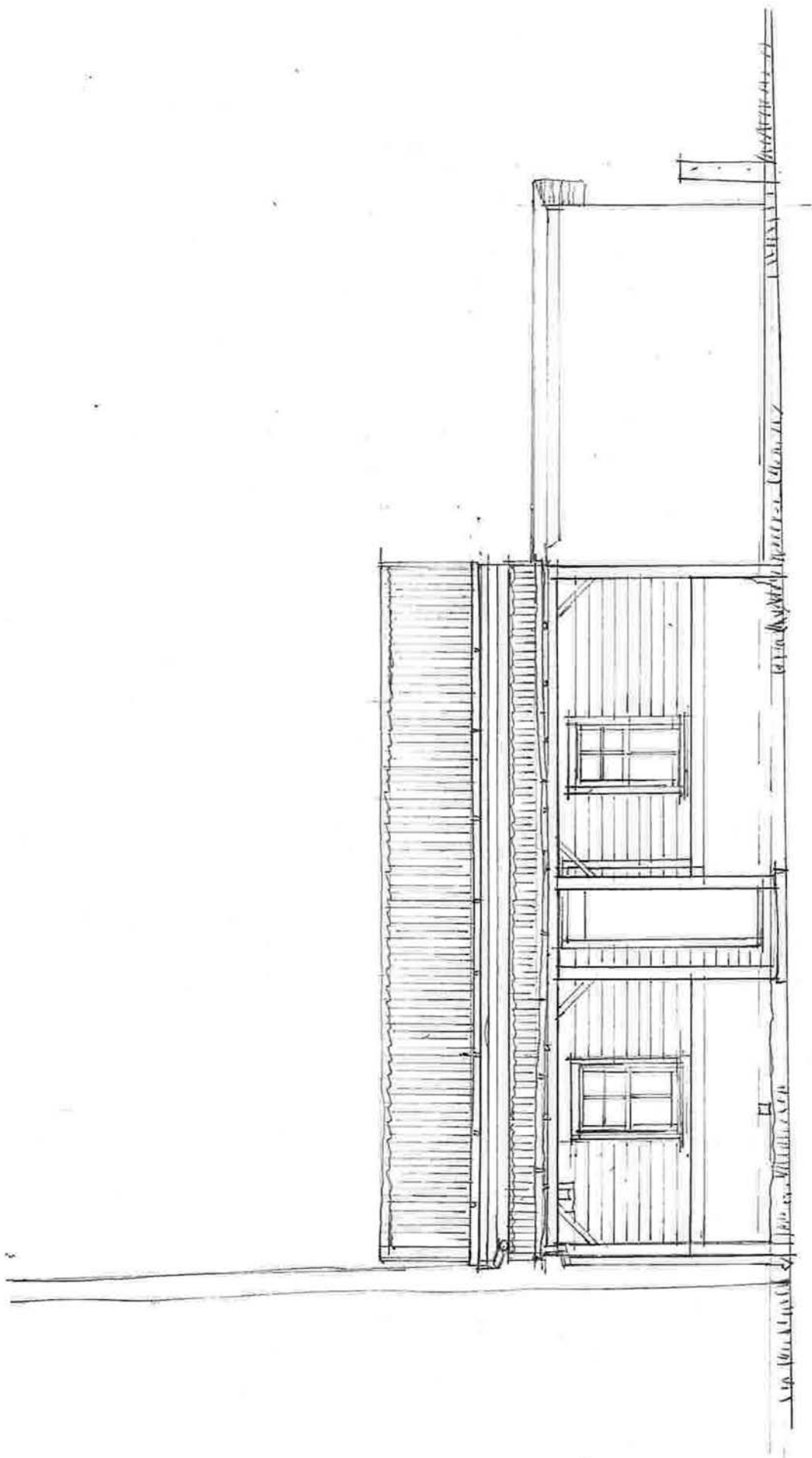
The garage has a bush pole structure with corrugated galvanized iron roof sheeting and flattened kerosene tin cladding. It has an attached, 'lean to' toilet with bush pole framing, a corrugated galvanised iron roof and an earth floor. A chicken shed to the south of the block consisted of plastered masonry walls and a tiled roof.

The structures were previously in very poor repair. The property is managed by TAMS. Following Condition, Feasibility Study and Scope of Works Reports prepared by Philip Leeson Architects in 2009 the structures were stabilised and repaired. They are now safe, tidy and weatherproof but not necessarily habitable.

Figure 31 • (overleaf) Floor plan of Robertson House, **2010** • Source: Philip Leeson Architects



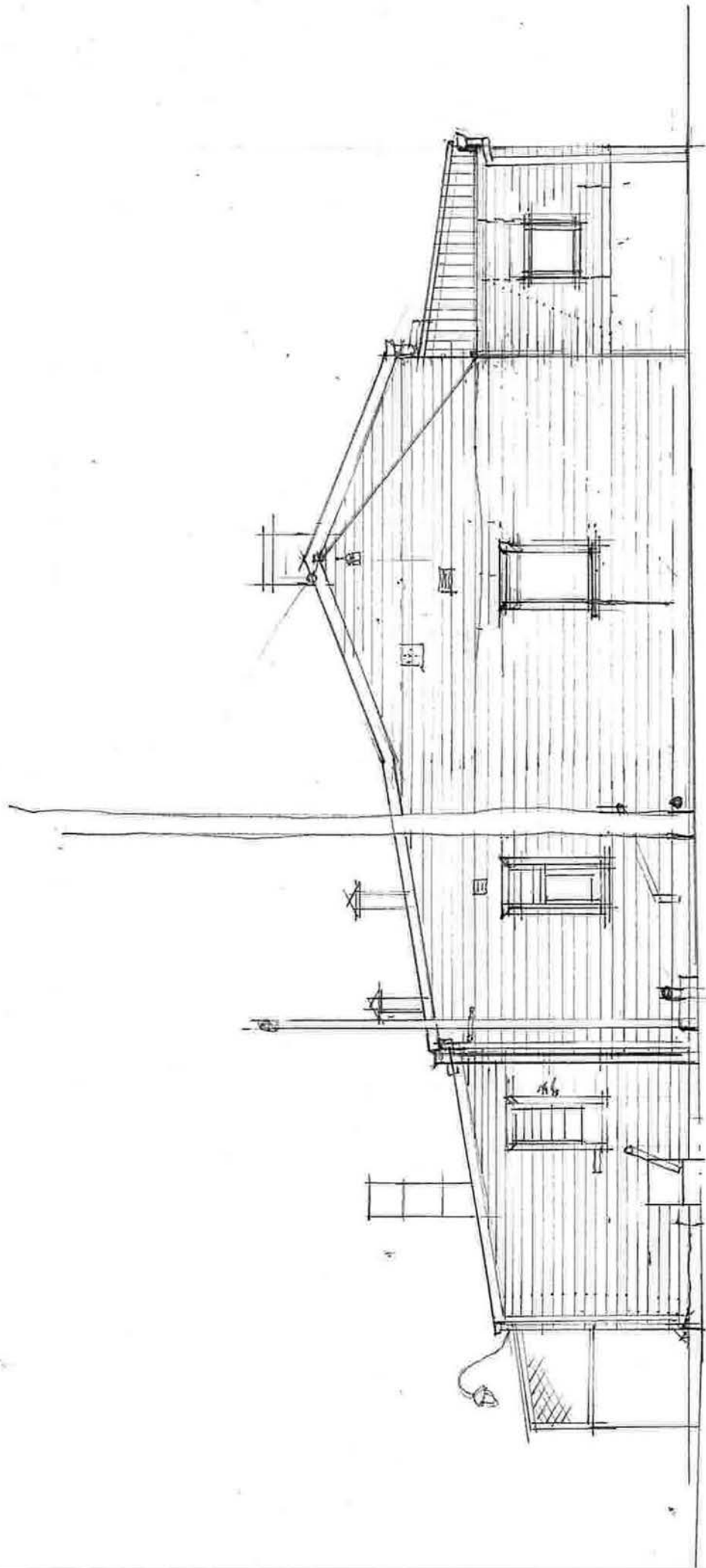
Figures 32-34 • (overleaf) South, west and north elevations of Robertson House, **2007** • Source: Philip Leeson Architects



SOUTH ELEVATION

10 15

Measured drawing of the Robertson House, Oaks Estate
Philip Leeson Architects, 10/10/2007



WEST ELEVATION



Measured drawing of the Robertson House, Oaks Estate
Philip Leeson Architects, 10/10/2007

4.2.2 Places of potential individual heritage significance

Block [REDACTED] / Section 3

The original burial ground relating to the Elmsall Inn (The Oaks) lies under the concrete driveway of the existing house. Remains were unearthed and dated in 1991.



Figure 35 • Block [REDACTED], section 3, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Block [REDACTED] / Section 6

A former worker's cubicle, possibly from Westlake or the Molonglo settlement is said to have been incorporated into rear of a later house.



Figure 36 • Block [REDACTED] section 6, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Block [REDACTED] / Section 6

Weatherboard house said to have been relocated in two parts from Acton. Designed by HM Rolland, similar to houses in Westlake & The Causeway.



Figure 37 • Block [REDACTED], section 6, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Block [REDACTED] Section 8

1926 Hudson Ready Cut Cottage in good condition. Was originally one of two; the second on block 21 section 8 was destroyed by fire and replaced by a modern building.



Figure 38 • Block [REDACTED] section 8, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Block [REDACTED] / Section 8

'Weowna' - One of the earliest houses in Oaks Estate, thought to have been built for Ned Robertson in c.1890s, front wing added c. 1906



Figure 39 • Block [REDACTED] section 8, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Block [REDACTED] / Section 8

Early slab hut located behind later 1930s cottage.



Figure 40 • Block [REDACTED], section 8, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

It is recommended that detailed individual heritage studies be undertaken to establish the exact history, condition and heritage values that these buildings may have. Notwithstanding this, most are considered to be 'contributing' places and are also in the following list.

4.2.3 Places examined and dismissed as having individual significance

Block [REDACTED] Section 6

A relocated house thought to be from Kingston, originally housed air force personnel, later construction workers. Highly modified. Heritage values highly diminished.



Figure 41 • Block [REDACTED], section 6, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Block [REDACTED] / Section 6

Relocated house, possibly a 'Narrabundah Prefab'. Original form evident but has been bricked veneered. Heritage values highly diminished.



Figure 42 • Block [redacted], section 6, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Block [redacted] / Section 11

Relocated house, possibly a relocated Molonglo cottage. Roof replaced after a storm with a flat roof. Heritage values highly diminished.



Figure 43 • Block [redacted], section 11, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

4.2.4 Places contributing to the early 20th Century urban village character

Block [redacted] / Section 3

Weatherboard cottage, c. 1950s, chain wire fence and gates, mature cypress pine



Figure 44 • Block [redacted], section 3, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Block [REDACTED] / Section 6

Double fronted weatherboard cottage, c. 1920s, decorative steel gates, 1930s Art Deco style brick fence



Figure 45 • Block [REDACTED], section 6, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Block [REDACTED] Section 6

1930s timber cottage



Figure 46 • Block [REDACTED], section 6, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Block [REDACTED] / Section 6

Weatherboard house said to have been relocated in two parts from Acton. Designed by HM Rolland, similar to houses in Westlake & The Causeway.



Figure 47 • Block [REDACTED], section 6, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Block [REDACTED] Section 6

Built c. 1943 by Tom Robertson with concrete blocks made from local river gravel.



Figure 48 • Block [REDACTED], section 6, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Block [REDACTED] / Section 6

1920s weatherboard cottage with high quality sympathetic additions



Figure 49 • Block [REDACTED], section 6, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Block [REDACTED] / Section 8

Hudson Ready Cut Cottage, built c. 1926

In good condition. Was originally one of two; the second on block 21 section 8 was destroyed by fire and replaced by a modern building.



Figure 50 • Block [REDACTED] section 8, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Blocks [REDACTED] / Section 8

Four identical weatherboard houses developed by a Queanbeyan dentist c. 1924



Figure 51 • Blocks [REDACTED] section 8, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Block [REDACTED] / Section 8

Late 1920s concrete block cottage built for Ned Robertson



Figure 52 • Block [REDACTED] section 8, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Block [REDACTED] / Section 8

Weatherboard cottage, two storey section at rear



Figure 53 • Block [REDACTED] section 8, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Block [REDACTED] / Section 8

'Weowna' - One of the earliest houses in Oaks Estate, thought to have been built for Ned Robertson in c.1890s, front wing added c. 1906



Figure 54 • Block [redacted] section 8, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Block [redacted] / Section 8

1930s double fronted weatherboard & brick cottage. Slab hut at rear.



Figure 55 • Block [redacted] section 8, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Block [redacted] / Section 8

Early brick house c.1889 with later sympathetic additions



Figure 56 • Block [redacted] section 8, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Block [redacted] / Section 8

Brick house, simple California Bungalow Style



Figure 57 • Block [REDACTED], section 8, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Blocks [REDACTED] Section 11

Pair of early brick semi detached cottages, c. 1889

Block [REDACTED] / Section 11

1920s double fronted weatherboard cottage



Figure 58 • Block [REDACTED] section 11, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Block [REDACTED] / part Section 11

Double fronted weatherboard cottage



Figure 59 • Block [REDACTED], section 11, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

The elements which illustrate the urban village character include:

- low scale, predominantly single storey buildings within a mature landscaped setting;
- a hierarchy of buildings on a block – typically a main dwelling and then smaller ancillary structures to the side and rear, including carports, garages, sheds and sometimes second dwellings;
- buildings often display a variety of styles and materials – evidence of changes made over time with materials readily at hand;
- a variety of building materials including painted, rendered or face brick, weatherboard or fibrous cement walls, mostly timber doors and windows, and corrugated iron or terracotta tiled roofs;
- a variety of building setbacks;
- formal street verge plantings including a different tree species in each street;
- driveways and car accommodation are unobtrusive in the street scape – generally to the side or rear of the main dwelling; and
- front and side fences in a variety of materials and styles, including brick, wire and timber.

4.2.5 Non residential places

Non-residential places which contribute to the urban village character include:

Fire Hose Shed - Part Block 21 / Section 8

Built in c. 1942 to house fire fighting equipment which would allow local residents to keep any fire in check until the Canberra brigade could arrive.



Figure 60 • Fire hose shed, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

The structure is c. 1.8 x 3m and has a timber frame, asbestos cement and batten external cladding, skillion roof with corrugated iron sheets, pair of planked timber doors. Original lettering on the doors is evident but not decipherable. It is in a fair condition and would benefit from repair and conservation. The eastern wall cladding has been replaced with unsympathetic fibre cement planks with a wood grain look, and a colorbond deck door. It is currently used as a shed by the owners of the block on which it stands.

Bus Shelter - Hazel Street

Built in c. 1955. A standard Canberra 'double' model of the 1950s. Destroyed by vandals in the 1990s it was rebuilt following the original plans. The original concrete slab remains with new timber framing, vertical timber board and batten cladding, vertical timber tongue & groove lining, exposed rafters, fibre cement ceiling and a corrugated colorbond skillion roof. It is painted in the original colours including lemon yellow walls and aqua trim. It is in fair condition with some rot in timbers closest to the ground.



Figure 61 • Bus shelter, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Community Hall - Block 4 / Section 15

Said to be a Canberra Workers Hostel building relocated and modified by Oaks Estate residents in 1953. Originally clad in timber weatherboards and a corrugated asbestos roof, the building has been substantially upgraded over the years. The original form remains, but much of the original fabric has been replaced. It is in good condition.



Figure 62 • Community hall, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

4.2.6 Light Industrial Area

Sections 3, 7 & 10 have historically been used primarily for light industrial and commercial purposes. Section 3 was occupied by the Roller Flour Mill from c.1890 - 1919 and from 1926 until recent years as a fuel depot - initially operated by the Vacuum Oil Company. The land is still being remediated.

Section 7 is shown as one block on the 1913 survey. No buildings are shown. Today Robertson House occupies Blocks 11 & 12 in the centre of Section 7.

Blocks 1,2 and 3, now vacant, were developed in the 1920s with modest dwellings. They were also used for light industrial and agricultural purposes.

Blocks 4, 5 and 6 were utilized for light industrial activities between the 1940s and 1960s, including brickworks, lime burner, terrazzo works and cement works.

Block 4 is now occupied by a large 1980s two storey industrial building with frontages to both Hazel and Railway Streets. Blocks 5 and 6 are vacant.



Figure 63 • Block 4, section 7, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

On McEwan Avenue Block 9 is vacant. Block 10 contains a 1920s cottage, Block 13 contains a single storey workshop and carpark and Block 14 a small brick shopfront.



Figures 64 & 65 • Block 13 (L) and block 14 (R), section 7, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Section 10 retains the greatest number of light industrial buildings. Block 1 contains a two storey 1980s industrial shed (now vacant) with an unfinished addition to the front. Blocks 2 contain a group of four single storey metal clad workshops used for small cottage industries. Block 3 contains a two storey workshop building, Block 4 contains a World War II era Nissen Hut with 1960s brick end walls, now used as a liquor store. Block 5 contains a 1920s timber cottage with a 1960s concrete block motel style units at the rear.



Figures 66 & 67 • Block 1 (L) and block 2 (R), section 10, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.



Figures 68 & 69 • Block 3 (L) and block 4 (R), section 10, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.



Figures 70 & 71 • Block 5, section 10, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

None of the existing buildings have individual heritage significance, however the historic use of these blocks for light industrial purposes is significant. Many of these blocks were seen as less attractive for residential use and were slow to sell. When eventually developed they usually contained modest dwellings with small workshops. As cottage industries grew many were re-developed with larger scale industrial buildings.

4.2.7 Gillespie Park

This park covering blocks 5, 6 & 7/section 5 was developed by the ACT Government in the 1990s, with additional works in c. 2010. It has no intrinsic heritage significance as

a park but is valued by the community. It serves as the location for interpretation of the adjacent Gillespie property (now demolished) and as open space helps to maintain the vista up River Street to the Railway Station.



Figures 72 & 73 • Gillespie Park, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

4.2.8 Chinese Market Garden

The Chinese Market Gardens occupied the western part of Section 14, at the bottom of River Street. Taking advantage of the rich soil in the alluvial river flats and the transport links up River Street to the Yass Road. The original gardens date from c. the early 1890s and there has been some form of cultivation on that site ever since. It is currently occupied by commercial flower gardens.

4.2.9 Water Tanks

There are two water tanks located between Block 5, Section 10 and the Railway Reserve. One is a round concrete tank formed and poured in situ on the ground, the other a steel tank supported on a steel frame which allows for gravity feed. These were constructed in the late 1930s when the water supply was provided to Oaks Estate. They are part of the story of the battle for recognition of Oaks Estate by the territory and the provision of municipal services.



Figure 74 • Water tanks, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

4.2.10 Non-contributory places

William Street

Blocks on William Street were generally not developed until after World War II. Most of the west side of the street comprises 1940s and 50s brick and tile houses. These are mostly larger and of better quality than the other houses in Oaks Estate. Together with

the Eucalypt street trees this area is similar to other contemporary Canberra suburbs such as Deakin. This area does not contribute to the urban village character of Oaks Estate.



Figures 75 & 76 • 1950s houses in William Street, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

1970s & 80s Buildings

Elsewhere in Oaks Estate are 1970s & 80s brick veneer dwellings most of which date from the leasehold period after 1974. They are unremarkable suburban houses, similar to those built in other Canberra suburbs which date from this time. Most are built on previously undeveloped blocks, a few are redevelopments. These blocks tend to be on the lower slopes of each street, towards the river.



Figures 77 & 78 • 1970s and 1980s houses, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Residential Units & Government Housing

There are 5 unit blocks, 3 in George, 2 in River Street. These are generally two storey brick walk up flats of 1 or 2 bedrooms, some with basement garages. They are architecturally undistinguished. All were built in the early 1970s as private speculative developments during the last years of freehold title. Following the conversion to leasehold, the building owners saw less value in this investment. Four of the five blocks were purchased by the Commonwealth for use as ACT public housing. The fifth block is in private ownership.

Property name	Owner	Block and Section
Hayley Court	Government Housing	Blocks 21 & 22 / Section 6
Unnamed	Privately Owned	Blocks 11,12,13 / Section 8
Dover Court	Government Housing	Blocks 6 & 7 / Section 11
Elmsall Court	Government Housing	Blocks 8 & 9 / Section 11
Carla Court	Government Housing	Blocks 10 & 11 / Section 11

Each of these developments is built across two or three original residential blocks. The resulting building forms are overscaled when compared with the generally single

storey freestanding houses adjacent. These developments do not contribute to the urban village character of Oaks Estate.



Figures 79 & 80 • Carla Court (L) and Hayley Court (R), 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

4.3 The Natural Environment

There are several categories of landscapes within Oaks Estate including the river corridor, remnant nineteenth century European plantings, street plantings and plantings on individual blocks.

4.3.1 The River Corridor

The following describes a walk of the river corridor:

A dirt track descends from the top of William Street beside the railway bridge. The first views are to the south east along the Queanbeyan River past the Queanbeyan Cemetery to the distant ridgeline.



Figures 81 & 82 • View southeast past Queanbeyan Cemetery (L) and evidence of past floods (R), 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

A nineteenth century European landscape unfolds along the river banks with Poplars, Pines and Elms. There is a rural landscape on the opposite bank with views out to the forested eastern ridgeline.

At this sharp bend in the river one is immediately aware of its propensity to flood, with tide lines, evidence of scouring and debris all around. From this location there is little visible to suggest modern occupation, simply the rough track, the river, pasture, trees and distant forested hills. The recent weed eradication program is evident and small acacias have been planted in place of willows.



Figures 83 & 84 • Natural rock strata (L) and remains of early fences (R), 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

Walking northwards one sees the natural rock strata in the rocky bluff running east off William Street. Here also is evidence of early settlement; mature pines and the remnants of old stock fences.

Further on the corridor broadens as it rounds the base of Hazelbrook. Disturbed ground here is due to recent terracing attempts, rather than historical workings. To the west are glimpses of buildings towards the lower end of William Street, to the east stone cobbles indicate a shallow spot in the river.



Figures 85 & 86 • Pastoral views (L) and river cobbles (R), 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.



Figures 87 & 88 • View across Hazelbrook Estate (L) and track heading north (R), 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

As the track veers to the northwest the river corridor again narrows. The views are directed up the northern bank to the near contour to lightly wooded grazing land. The only sign of modern development are overhead power lines. Here the view is contained within a bowl. There are no longer views to distant ridges.



Figures 89 & 90 • Views to the northeast are contained within the near ridges, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

At the river confluence the track swings west and the view opens back up to capture the distant ridge. Passing an old flying fox the track opens out to a grassy park area at the old river crossing. Here cars on Oaks Estate Road are clearly visible.



Figures 91 & 92 • Flying fox (L) and historic northern road cutting (R), 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.



Figures 93 & 94 • River confluence (L) and grassed reserve at river ford (R), 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

The approximate location of the old river ford is clearly seen where stone cobbles indicate the river shallows. The original road embankment can be seen on the northern side.

Looking west along the river the view opens up to the European landscape in the vicinity of The Oaks.



Figures 95 & 96 • River crossing (L) and view west from crossing (R), 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

A concrete road and gate lead the way back to the bottom of River Street. On rising up from the river there are views east and west across the undeveloped river flats. A flower farm is to the east. Looking northward from the cul de sac at the bottom of River Street thick vegetation blocks any sense of the historical link across the river and up the northern bank.



Figures 97 & 98 • View west across river flats (L) and view east to flower garden (R), 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.



Figure 99 • River Street cul de sac, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

4.3.2 Elm Grove

Just to the north of The Oaks block, close to the river, is a grove of Elms which have a distinctive woodland character. These appear to be over 100 years old and likely relate to the earlier pastoral era which pre-dates the Oaks Estate subdivision.



Figure 100 • Elm Grove, 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

4.3.3 Street Plantings

Each street verge has been deliberately planted with a single uniform species. These plantings generally appear to be c. 40 years old, perhaps coinciding with the conversion of Oaks Estate to leasehold land, and its inclusion in Territory Municipal programs.

Street	Planting	Species
Railway Street	Eucalyptus sp. (both sides)	
Hill Street	Eucalyptus sp. (both sides)	
Florence Street	Elm sp. (west side)	Prunus sp. (east side)
Hazel Street	Unknown deciduous (north side)	Prunus sp. (south side)
River Street	Prunus sp. (both sides)	
George Street	Eucalyptus sp. (west side)	Quercus sp. (east side)
William Street	Eucalyptus sp. (both sides)	
McEwan Avenue	Quercus sp. (both sides)	

4.3.4 Individual Block Plantings

The housing blocks in Oaks Estate are distinguished by the variety of mature plantings which dominate the houses and provide a treed environment. Dominant species include Pines and Cypressess, often planted in rows as wind breaks, Oaks and Elms. They are characteristic of early twentieth century exotic landscape plantings and contribute to the rural village character of Oaks Estate.

4.3.5 Significant vistas

The view of the Railway Station which is slowly revealed when walking up River Street is a historically significant vista. It is reminder of the historic road link from the Yass/Queanbeyan Road, across the river ford and up to the station. Consequently the view down River Street to the ford is also significant. This is currently obscured by overgrown planting and should be restored.



Figures 101 & 102 • View south to Queanbeyan Railway Station (L) and view north towards river ford (R), 2013 • Source: Philip Leeson Architects.

4.4 Social Values Assessment

4.4.1 Introduction

This social values assessment is based on public engagement undertaken by the ACT Government in 2012 to inform the development of a master plan for Oaks Estate. The key document is *Oaks Estate Master Plan Public Engagement outcomes 1*, published by the ACT Government Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate in September 2012. The full report is included as an appendix to this Heritage Assessment, and the key findings are summarised below.

4.4.2 Community consultation

Approximately 100 members of the community participated in meetings, workshops, surveys and individual conversations held as part of the community consultation. Stakeholders included residents, lessees, community groups and ACT Government agencies. The primary purpose of the consultation was to inform the direction of a master plan. However, some of the data collected is informative when considering how the community values Oaks Estate.

A public vision workshop with 46 members of the Oaks Estate community on 14 March 2012 identified the following list of attributes as valuable to the stakeholders present:

- the historically grown, close-knit and unique community that maintains strong bonds with the historic places and spaces that surround it;
- the rural character and historic feel that the river corridor, rural outlooks and railway corridor bring to Oaks Estate;
- the livability and amenity of Oaks Estate as a quiet and peaceful place; and
- the unique character of Oaks Estate and its community;

A public design workshop undertaken with 40 attendees brainstormed Oaks Estate characteristics, and came up with the following list:

- an ad hoc urban village;
- the historic values of key cornerstones (The Oaks, the river ford, Robertson House, the community hall and Queanbeyan Railway Station);
- parks and walking trails that are active spaces but also protect visual amenity;
- rural vistas to the north across the Molonglo River and to the east across Queanbeyan River;
- the traffic thoroughfare between Canberra and Queanbeyan;
- a strong and diverse community; and
- a strong creative and artistic vibe.



Figure 103 • What people value about living in Oaks Estate, 2012 • Source: Oaks Estate Master Plan Public Engagement Outcomes 1, ACT Government Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate

A concept plan survey was distributed to every household and posted onto the ESDD website. Responses were received from 26 households. The report on these responses summarises why people chose to live in Oaks Estate as follows:

Affordable houses on big blocks and in a rural setting close to Queanbeyan and Canberra have been the major attractors for people to move to Oaks Estate. Other most valued attributes were the history, character, and small village-feel of the area. Its quietness, environment and the river is what people see as unique qualities. It is also a place where families have lived for generations and community bonds are strong.

4.4.3 Consultation findings

Attendance at the master plan workshops and responses to surveys indicate that its local community values Oaks Estate. It appears as though the consultation process did not necessarily attract interest or contributions from the wider Canberra community, apart from the targeted stakeholder groups such as the National Trust, and various ACT Government Directorates. The ACT Government web platform Time To Talk provided the greater Canberra community the opportunity to engage with the process.

Typically it was the built and natural character and setting of the place that people referred to in describing their connection to Oaks Estate. Elements specifically mentioned were the rural vistas to the north across the Molonglo River and to the east across the Queanbeyan River, access to walking trails and parks, the ad hoc urban village character of Oaks Estate, the railway corridor and Queanbeyan railway station, *The Oaks*, Robertson House, the Community Hall, the Molonglo River ford, as well as the traffic thoroughfare between Canberra and Queanbeyan.

People also identified values in their cultural connections to Oaks Estate, describing this as an historic sense of a close knit and unique community maintaining strong connection to place, a strong creative and artistic vibe, the unique character of the Oaks Estate community, and the sense of a strong and diverse community. The representation of subtle variations in each of these strong connections is telling of the diversity of the Oaks Estate community.

5 ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

5.1 Assessment against criteria

This section uses information from the history, physical assessment and social values assessment of Oaks Estate to assess its heritage significance against the criteria set out in the ACT Heritage Act 2004, Section 10. On the understanding that the ACT may at some stage move to the HERCON model criteria, these have been equated for ease of transition.

ACT <i>(a) it demonstrates a high degree of technical or creative achievement (or both), by showing qualities of innovation, discovery, invention or an exceptionally fine level of application of existing techniques or approaches</i>
HERCON <i>(F) Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period</i>

The built fabric of Oaks Estate includes the late nineteenth century subdivision pattern with a wide variety of mostly modest dwellings and some light industrial structures overlaid on the former pastoral holdings. The individual elements are typical of their types and not highly remarkable in terms of technical or creative achievement, innovation, discovery or invention.

The Oaks is a good example of a simple Georgian building demonstrating the typical elements of its type. However it is not considered to be an exceptionally fine example of its type.

There is some small degree of innovation demonstrated in the built fabric of several of the dwellings as examples of making do with limited resources in a place with few, if any, building regulations – most evident in Robertson House. However in examining Oaks Estate as a whole this is not considered strong enough to meet the threshold of this criterion.

Oaks Estate is not considered to meet the threshold for this criterion.

ACT <i>(b) it exhibits outstanding design or aesthetic qualities valued by the community or a cultural group</i>
HERCON <i>(E) Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics</i>

Oaks Estate includes a variety of designed elements together with both natural and modified landscape elements. All of these elements have considerable aesthetic qualities.

Significant built elements include:

- The Oaks - an attractive example of a Georgian influenced early Australian colonial homestead in a picturesque landscape setting above the Molonglo river.
- Robertson House - a picturesque example of vernacular building in an early twentieth century landscaped setting.
- The Oaks Subdivision, dating from the late nineteenth century, contains a range of more modest dwellings, the earliest dating from c.1890. The best examples of these are in River Street and George Street. Together with the

generous garden settings with mature plantings, fences, gates and verge street plantings they present a highly attractive early twentieth century urban village streetscape.

Significant landscape elements include;

- the river corridors of the Queanbeyan and Molonglo rivers from the railway bridge to the east, around to The Oaks on the west with its native and exotic planting;
- the remains of the river ford and the original road embankment up to Pialligo Rd;
- the Elm grove between The Oaks and the river; and
- the alluvial river flats including the former Chinese Market Gardens.

Significant views include:

- views from River street up to the railway station and down to the river;
- views along the river corridor in both directions generally up to the top of the immediate embankments; and
- the longer view to the east from the river ford to the distant ridgeline.

The ACT Heritage Council advises that recent legal judgments have led to a degree of uncertainty as to whether a local community such as the residents of Oaks Estate can be considered a 'community' for the purposes of this criterion.

There is little evidence of the importance of Oaks Estate to the broader Canberra community.

It is clear from the community consultation process that the local community values all of these elements for their aesthetic qualities. Taken collectively they present a picturesque urban village set in a rural landscape at a river confluence which has remained remarkably unchanged since the nineteenth century.

Oaks estate is considered to meet the threshold for this criterion.

ACT

(c) it is important as evidence of a distinctive way of life, taste, tradition, religion, land use, custom, process, design or function that is no longer practiced, is in danger of being lost or is of exceptional interest

HERCON

(A) Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history

Oaks Estate is important as evidence of several ways of life and land uses that are no longer practiced, are in danger of being lost and are of exceptional interest. These include;

- the evidence of early pastoral holdings seen in the remnant grazing land to the north and east of the river corridor;
- the evidence of early European settlement illustrated by The Oaks – a substantial building serving variously as homestead, hotel, dwelling, military accommodation, hospital according to the demand of each era;

- the development of industry associated with the river and the railway, evidenced by the remnants of the market gardens on the fertile river flats and related industry which continues today in the form of nursery wholesaling and which has escaped development due to its propensity to flood;
- the Oaks Subdivision evidenced by the road layout reflects the business interests of enterprising Queanbeyan businessmen, seeking to capitalise on the financial opportunities provided by the railway and river;
- the Oaks Subdivision, developed largely after the incorporation of Oaks Estate into the ACT provides much evidence of the way of life of its inhabitants outside the formal regulatory and planned environment of Canberra. Examples include the surviving modest dwellings, built and modified over time often with ad hoc materials, the range of outbuildings and plantings which demonstrate a degree of self sufficiency;
- Robertson House is an example of vernacular construction in the ACT using the rudimentary building materials available. The group of buildings and their setting are highly intact, in good condition and illustrate a way of life that no longer exists; and
- the fire hose shed, bus shelter and community hall illustrate the story of the Oaks Estate community's fight for recognition by the Canberra bureaucracy in the first half of the twentieth century and the strength of community solidarity.

Oaks Estate is considered to meet the threshold for this criterion.

ACT <i>(d) it is highly valued by the community or a cultural group for reasons of strong or special religious, spiritual, cultural, educational or social associations</i>
HERCON <i>(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</i>

There is strong evidence that Oaks Estate is valued by the local community, i.e Oaks Estate residents. This was borne out in the community consultation process. Values include:

- the built and natural character and setting of the place. Elements specifically mentioned were the rural vistas to the north across the Molonglo River and to the east across the Queanbeyan River, access to walking trails and parks, the ad hoc urban village character of Oaks Estate, the railway corridor and Queanbeyan railway station, The Oaks, Robertson House, the Community Hall, the Molonglo River ford, as well as the traffic thoroughfare between Canberra and Queanbeyan. These appear to be aesthetic values which are assessed under Criterion (b) above.
- an historic sense of close knit and unique community maintaining strong connection to place, a strong creative and artistic vibe, the unique character of the Oaks Estate community, and the sense of a strong and diverse community exemplified by the Oaks Estate Progress Association which has lobbied for Oaks Estate since the early 1930s.

The status of The Oaks Estate community as a 'community' as defined under this criterion is unclear. Even if valid as a community these values are typical of many communities. The relevant value under this criterion is 'strong or special...social

association'. This would require further investigation, particularly with respect to the values held by longstanding residents and their descendants.

There is little evidence of the importance of Oaks Estate to the broader Canberra community.

There is insufficient evidence to assess whether Oaks Estate meets the threshold for this criterion at this time. The ACT Heritage Council advises that recent legal judgements suggest that value to the local (i.e Oaks Estate) community rather than the broader ACT Community may not be sufficient for Oaks Estate to meet this criterion.

ACT <i>(e) it is significant to the ACT because of its importance as part of local Aboriginal tradition.</i>
HERCON <i>(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</i>

Oaks Estate is located within the Molonglo River corridor, an important Aboriginal resource that attracted considerable hunter-gatherer occupation prior to European settlement.

Navin Officer Heritage Consultants recorded surface assemblages of stone artefacts to the north of the Molonglo River in the Oaks Estate study area in 2013, and one instance of co-located Aboriginal and European artefacts with the potential to suggest a contact site. The last recorded regionally significant Aboriginal gathering on the northern bank of the Molonglo River at Oaks Estate occurred 40 years after European settlement in the ACT, and the area continued to be used by Aboriginal people for camping until 1889. Thousands of stone artefacts have been recovered from sand bodies adjacent to the Molonglo River at Pialligo since the early 1970s as a result of concentrated archaeological work. Numerous artefact occurrences have also been recorded in the area surrounding Oaks Estate, the largest at the former Canberra Abattoir site yielding 2592 stone artefacts.

Oaks Estate, located at the confluence of the Queanbeyan and Molonglo rivers, is a particularly resource rich area within the Molonglo river corridor. It would have been an Aboriginal travel route and a camping location with a reliable source of food. European urbanisation and farming has disturbed the archaeological record, and scattered evidence in the Oaks Estate study area. However, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that Oaks Estate is important as part of traditional Aboriginal occupation of the Molonglo River corridor.²⁰⁹

Oaks Estate is considered to meet the threshold for this criterion.

ACT <i>(f) it is a rare or unique example of its kind, or is rare or unique in its comparative intactness</i>
HERCON <i>(B) Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history</i>

²⁰⁹ Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd, Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment, 2013.

Oaks Estate is a unique example of its kind and is rare in its comparative intactness.

It is a highly intact early twentieth century urban village in a picturesque rural setting with a unique history that illustrates many themes in the development of NSW and the ACT. It differs markedly from the ACT rural villages of Tharwa and Hall in that it developed as part of the town of Queanbeyan and was a thriving place of industry, agriculture and residential settlement. Its retreat to a village was brought about solely by Oaks Estate having been cut off from Queanbeyan following the declaration of the ACT, but not considered part of the development of the federal capital city of Canberra. The fact that it remained a backwater has limited development and meant that many of its urban village attributes remain intact.

Oaks Estate is a quiet village in a remarkably intact late nineteenth century rural landscape at the confluence of two rivers, yet is only a few minutes drive from Queanbeyan or the suburbs of Canberra.

Much of the evidence of its story remains intact; places of individual significance such as The Oaks and Robertson House, places of potential individual significance many of which are part of the history of the development of other parts of early Canberra, for example relocated workers housing, and most notably those place which contribute to its character as an urban village, modest buildings of pleasant architectural character, set in a mature landscape with indicators of a semi-rural, self-sufficient lifestyle and community cohesion.

Oaks Estate is considered to meet the threshold for this criterion.

ACT <i>(g) it is a notable example of a kind of place or object and demonstrates the main characteristics of that kind</i>
HERCON <i>(D) Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments.</i>

Oaks Estate demonstrates some characteristics of an early twentieth century suburban subdivision on the edge of rural land and some characteristics of the kind of light industrial land use that developed along railway corridors at that time. However, it is not considered to be a notable example of either of these attributes. Many of its attributes are unique in the ACT. It is considered more appropriate to analyse these qualities against Criterion (f) above.

Oaks Estate is not considered to meet the threshold for this criterion.

ACT <i>(h) it has strong or special associations with a person, group, event, development or cultural phase in local or national history</i>
HERCON <i>(A) Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history; and</i> <i>(H) Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history.</i>

Oaks Estate has strong associations with a number of development phases in the history of NSW and the ACT, including:

- a landmark in the early exploration of southern NSW, being on a traditional Aboriginal pathways at a river confluence;

- the settlement of southern NSW for grazing and pastoral development and the ascendancy of major landholders such as the Campbell and Palmer families;
- a place at the intersection of transport routes – river / road / rail, which encouraged settlement, agriculture and industry and facilitated trade;
- the development of the railway, which further encouraged trade and settlement;
- the creation of the Capital Territory and the decision to include Oaks Estate within the new Territory's border, severing it administratively from Queanbeyan;
- the early twentieth century history of Oaks Estate as a forgotten corner of Canberra which did not form part of the grand vision for the development of the city;
- a place which attracted people who by temperament, circumstance or both found it amenable to live there because of its relative lack of municipal regulation but at the same time fought as a community for basic services; and
- a place which provided cheap, flexible housing for workers who helped to build early Canberra. A step up from the workers camps at Westlake, Molonglo and The Causeway but not as formal as the 'official' worker's housing at Ainslie, Kingston or Yarralumla

Oaks Estate is considered to meet the threshold for this criterion.

ACT

(i) it is significant for understanding the evolution of natural landscapes, including significant geological features, landforms biota or natural processes

HERCON

(A) Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history

This study has not addressed these attributes. There is some anecdotal evidence that there may be notable geological formations visible along the river banks. It is recommended that this be investigated in a further study.

ACT

(j) it has provided, or is likely to provide, information that will contribute significantly to a wider understanding of the natural or cultural history of the ACT because of its use or potential use as a research site or object, teaching site or object, type locality or benchmark site

HERCON

(C) Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history

Oaks Estate has the potential to provide information on the cultural history of the ACT, particularly for its significance as a place that developed as a forgotten corner of Canberra, which did not form part of the grand vision for the development of the city.

Oaks Estate is a place that attracted people who by temperament, circumstance or both found it amenable to live there because of its relative lack of municipal regulation but at the same time fought as a community for basic services.

Oaks Estate is a place that provided cheap, flexible housing for workers who helped to build early Canberra. It was a step up from the workers camps at Westlake,

Molonglo and The Causeway but not as formal as the 'official' worker's housing at Ainslie, Kingston or Yarralumla.

Oaks Estate is considered to meet the threshold for this criterion.

ACT <i>(k) for a place - it exhibits unusual richness, diversity or significant transitions of flora, fauna or natural landscapes and their elements.</i>
HERCON <i>(A) Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history</i>

This criterion is not considered to be applicable. These attributes have not been assessed in this study.

ACT <i>(l) for a place - it is a significant ecological community, habitat or locality for any of the following:</i> <i>(i) the life cycle of native species</i> <i>(ii) rare, threatened or uncommon species</i> <i>(iii) species at the limits of their natural range</i> <i>(iv) distinct occurrences of species.</i>
HERCON <i>(A) Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history</i>

This criterion is not considered to be applicable. These attributes have not been assessed in this study.

5.2 Statement of significance

Oaks Estate is a highly intact early twentieth century urban village in a picturesque rural setting with a unique history, which illustrates several themes in the development of NSW and the ACT. Cut off from Queanbeyan following the declaration of the ACT, it was not considered part of the development of the federal capital city of Canberra and retreated to the status of a village. Consequently many of its urban village attributes remain intact.

Oaks Estate is situated within the Molonglo River corridor, a resource rich area that once supported considerable hunter-gatherer Aboriginal occupation. The junction of the Queanbeyan and Molonglo rivers was a camping location with a reliable source of food, and a landmark on Aboriginal routes of travel through the region. A large 1882 gathering of Aboriginal people from throughout NSW, held at the junction of the two rivers, is said to have been the last Aboriginal corroboree in the Canberra Region.

Oaks Estate possesses considerable aesthetic qualities that are valued by the local community. These are manifest in both natural and built elements. It is a quiet village in a remarkably intact late nineteenth century rural landscape at the confluence of two rivers, yet is only a few minutes drive from Queanbeyan or the suburbs of Canberra.

Much of the evidence of its story remains intact; places of individual significance such as The Oaks and Robertson House, places of potential individual significance many of which are part of the history of the development of other parts of early Canberra, for example relocated workers housing, and most notably those place which contribute to its character as an urban village, modest buildings of pleasant architectural character, set in a mature landscape with indicators of a semi-rural, self-sufficient lifestyle and community cohesion.

Oaks Estate is important as evidence of several ways of life and land uses that are no longer practiced and are of exceptional interest, including; early pastoral holdings, early European settlement, the development of industry associated with the river and the railway, the rise of business entrepreneurs in the burgeoning town of Queanbeyan and importantly for ACT history a place which developed outside the strict Canberra bureaucracy and fostered a make do, self sufficient lifestyle within a tight knit community.

Oaks Estate has the potential to provide information on the cultural history of the ACT, particularly for its significance as a place that developed as a forgotten corner of Canberra, not forming part of the grand vision for the development of the city. A place which attracted people who by temperament, circumstance or both found it amenable to live there because of its relative lack of municipal regulation but at the same time fought as a community for basic services. A place which provided cheap, flexible housing for workers many of whom who helped to build early Canberra.

5.3 Significant features

The following features are intrinsic to the heritage significance of Oaks Estate:

- The Oaks and its associated blocks including mature plantings, fence lines and outbuildings;
- Robertson House and its associated blocks including mature plantings, fence lines and outbuildings;

- the river corridor from the railway bridge to Oaks Estate Rd including native and exotic plantings;
- the Aboriginal connection to the resources of the Molonglo River corridor;
- the junction of the Molonglo and Queanbeyan rivers as the location of the last recorded Aboriginal corroboree in the Canberra Region;
- corroboree A large 1882 gathering of Aboriginal people from throughout NSW, held at the junction of the two rivers, is said to have been the last Aboriginal corroboree in the Canberra Region. Aboriginal corroboree in the Canberra Region
- views along the river corridor in both directions to the north and east up to the immediate top of the river bank, to the south across the river flats and beyond to Oaks Estate, and a longer view to the east beyond the river confluence;
- the view from the riverside path to the railway bridge and beyond to the cemetery;
- the surviving evidence of the river crossing at the bottom of River Street including the natural topographical section through the river, both embankments, and the gentle slope and shallow water which made a natural crossing point;
- the dirt embankment and trackway remaining on the north side of the Molonglo River more or less evident up to its junction with Oaks Estate Road;
- the use of the river flats for agricultural purposes;
- the historic connection between Yass (Pialligo) Road and the Railway Station across the Molonglo River and up River Street;
- the historic Oaks Estate subdivision, including blocks and street layout;
- buildings and places of potential individual significance (which may require further research); and
- buildings, places and elements (fences, landscaping) which contribute to the early 20th century suburban village character, including individual dwellings and community facilities such as the bus shelter, the fire hose shed, the community hall and water tanks.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Precinct listing

Oaks Estate should be listed as a precinct on the ACT Heritage Register. The proposed precinct boundary and significant features are illustrated on the following diagrams.

The extent of Oaks Estate recommended for listing as a heritage precinct is as follows:

Section 2 Blocks 16 & 19-22
 Section 3 Blocks 2, 3, 13-16 & 25
 Section 5 Blocks 1-7
 Section 6 Blocks 1-6 & 17-27
 Section 7 Blocks 1-6 & 9-13
 Section 8 Blocks 1-13 & 21-33
 Section 10 Blocks 1-5
 Section 11 Blocks 1, 4-15, 20, 23-32, 37 & 38
 Section 12 Blocks 20-25
 Section 13 Blocks 3-6
 Section 14 Blocks 1, 3-5
 Section 15 Blocks 1, 2, 4 & 5

The following places within the precinct should be identified as places of individual significance within the precinct listing.

The Oaks	Blocks 16 & 19, Section 2
Robertson House	Blocks 11 & 12, Section 7

The following places within the precinct with potential individual significance should be identified within the precinct listing:

The original burial ground relating to the Elmsall Inn (The Oaks) lies under the concrete driveway of the existing house. Remains unearthed and dated in 1991.	Block 1 / Section 3
A former worker's cubicle, possibly from Westlake or the Molonglo settlement is said to have been incorporated into rear of a later house.	Block 1 / Section 6
Weatherboard house said to have been relocated in two parts from Acton. Designed by HM Rolland, similar to houses in Westlake & The Causeway.	Block 1 / Section 6
1926 Hudson Ready Cut Cottage In good condition.	Block 1 / Section 8
'Weowna' - One of the earliest houses in Oaks Estate, thought to have been built for Ned Robertson in c.1890s, front wing added c. 1906	Block 1 / Section 8
Slab hut located behind later 1930s cottage.	Block 1 / Section 8

The following places within the precinct which contribute to the urban village character should be identified within the precinct listing:

Weatherboard cottage, c. 1950s, chain wire fence and gates, mature cypress pine	Block [REDACTED] / Section 3
Double fronted weatherboard cottage, c. 1920s, decorative steel gates, art deco 1930s era brick fence	Block [REDACTED] (western part) / Section 6
1930s weatherboard cottage	Block [REDACTED] / Section 6
Weatherboard house said to have been relocated in two parts from Acton. Designed by HM Rolland, similar to houses in Westlake & The Causeway.	Block [REDACTED] / Section 6
Built c. 1943 by Tom Robertson with concrete blocks made from local river gravel.	Block [REDACTED] / Section 6
1920s weatherboard cottage with high quality sympathetic additions	Block [REDACTED] / Section 6
Hudson Ready Cut Cottage, built c. 1926 In good condition. Was originally one of two; the second on block 21 section 8 was destroyed by fire and replaced by a modern building.	Block [REDACTED] / section 8
Four identical weatherboard houses developed by a Queanbeyan dentist c. 1924	Blocks [REDACTED] / Section 8
Late 1920s concrete block cottage built for Ned Robertson	Block [REDACTED] / Section 8
Weatherboard cottage, two storey section at rear	Block [REDACTED] / Section 8
'Weowna' - One of the earliest houses in Oaks Estate, thought to have been built for Ned Robertson in c.1890s, front wing added c. 1906	Block [REDACTED] Section 8
1930s double fronted weatherboard & brick cottage. Slab hut at rear.	Block [REDACTED] Section 8
Early brick house c.1889 with later sympathetic additions	Block [REDACTED] / Section 8
Brick house, simple California Bungalow Style	Block [REDACTED] / Section 8
Pair of early brick semi detached cottages, c. 1889	Blocks [REDACTED] / Section 11
1920s double fronted weatherboard cottage	Block [REDACTED] / Section 11
Double fronted weatherboard cottage	Block [REDACTED] / Section 11
Fire Hose Shed	Part Block 21 / Section 8
Bus Shelter	Hazel Street
Community Hall	Block 4 / Section 15
Water Tanks	Adjacent to Block 5 Section 10

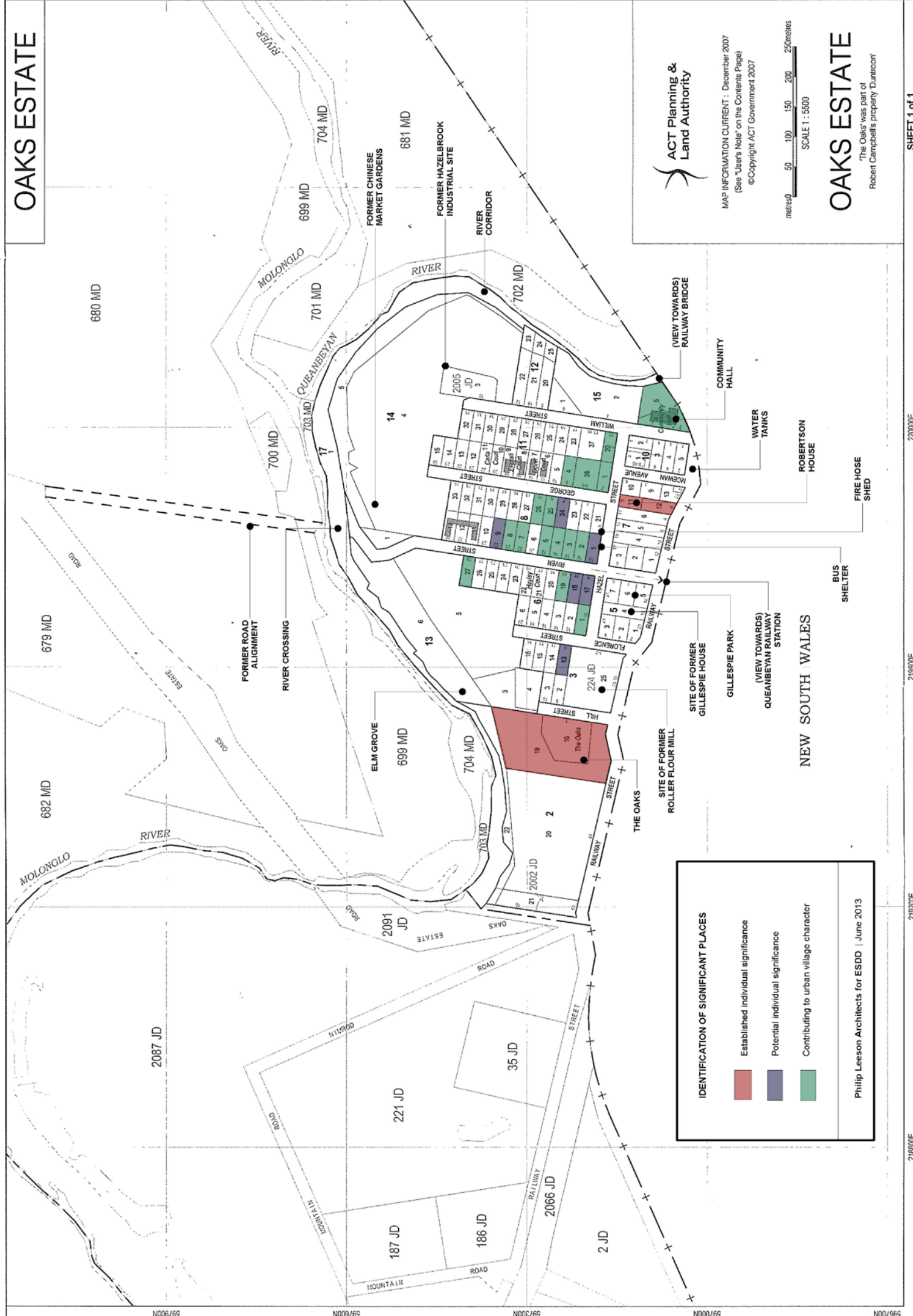
The following significant landscape elements should be identified within the precinct listing:

The river corridors of the Queanbeyan and Molonglo rivers from the railway bridge to the east, around to The Oaks on the west with its native and exotic planting
The remains of the river ford and the original road embankment up to Oaks Estate Road
The Elm grove between The Oaks and the river
The alluvial river flats including the former Chinese Market Gardens

The following significant views should be identified within the precinct listing:

Views from River street up to the Railway Station and down to the river
Views along the river corridor in both directions from the railway bridge to Oaks Estate Rd - generally up to the top of the immediate embankments
The longer view to the east from the river ford to the distant ridgeline

Figure 104 • (overleaf) Identification of Significant Places, **2013** • Source: Philip Leeson Architects



IDENTIFICATION OF SIGNIFICANT PLACES

- Established individual significance
- Potential individual significance
- Contributing to urban village character

Philip Leeson Architects for ESDD | June 2013



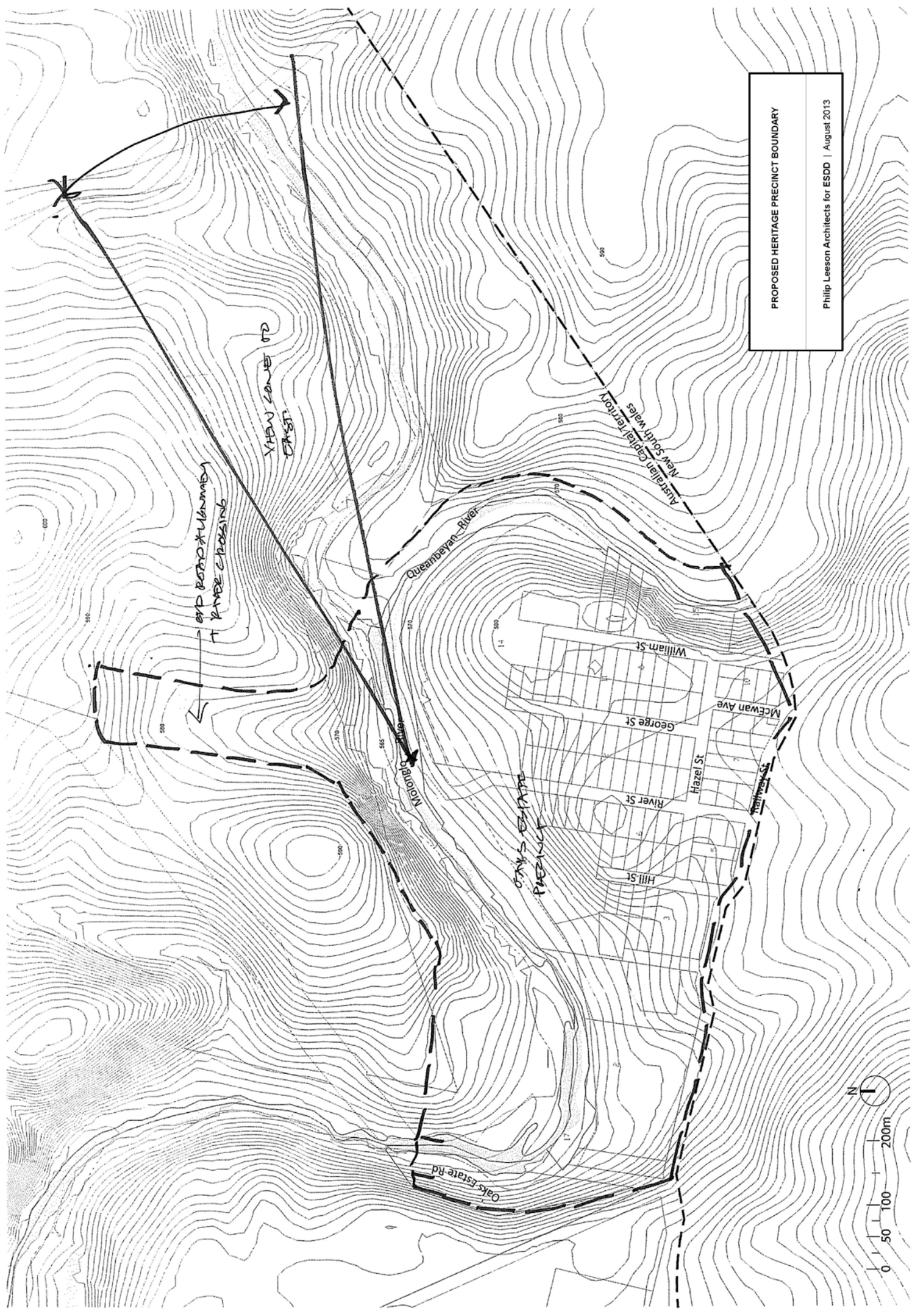
MAP INFORMATION CURRENT : December 2007
(See 'User's Note' on the Contents Page)
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OAKS ESTATE

The Oaks was part of
Robert Campbell's property 'Duntroon'

Figure 105 • (overleaf) Proposed Heritage Precinct Boundary, **2013** • Source: Philip Leeson Architects



PROPOSED HERITAGE PRECINCT BOUNDARY

Philip Leeson Architects for ESDD | August 2013

6.2 Development guidelines

Future development should be directed by guidelines designed to conserve the significant features of the place.

Guidelines should recognise that the following characteristics of the built environment presently contribute to the urban village character of Oaks Estate:

- low scale, predominantly single storey buildings within a mature landscaped setting;
- a hierarchy of buildings on a block – typically a main dwelling and then smaller ancillary structures to the side and rear, including carports, garages, sheds and sometimes second dwellings;
- buildings often display a variety of styles and materials – evidence of changes made over time with materials readily at hand;
- a variety of building materials including painted, rendered or face brick, weatherboard or fibrous cement walls, mostly timber doors and windows, and corrugated iron or terracotta tiled roofs;
- a variety of building setbacks;
- formal street verge plantings – a different species in each street;
- driveways and car accommodation are unobtrusive in the streetscape – generally to the side or rear of the main dwelling; and
- front and side fences in a variety of materials and styles, including brick, wire and timber.

Possible guidelines may include:

- the river corridor should be maintained as a natural reserve. It should be managed with regard to flood mitigation and pest species;
- existing non-pest native and exotic plantings should be conserved;
- the ford location at the bottom of River Street and the northern embankment of the Molonglo River should be conserved. The original southern approach from River Street should be interpreted in a new track and landscaping;
- the views from River St north across the river and south to the Railway Station should be retained and enhanced, and recovered where lost;
- the existing subdivision blocks should be retained;
- land adjacent to the river should continue to be used for agricultural purposes (market gardens, flowers etc);
- the Elm Grove should be conserved and managed;
- there may be some scope for further subdivision at the north end of William Street. This is dependent on further investigation of any surviving evidence (either above ground or archaeology) of Hazelbrook. Any significant features should be conserved.

Otherwise any additional subdivision should be set slightly differently to differentiate it from the original block pattern. New development in this location should not detract from the natural landscaped characteristics of the river corridor. There should be a suitable buffer and setbacks;

- existing subdivision blocks should remain predominantly single dwelling with a collection of outbuildings in a landscaped surround. There may be scope for dual occupancy;
- non- contributory blocks which are currently consolidated and contain multi residential housing may be redeveloped for similar purposes. Further discussion is required about an appropriate density and scale for such development; and
- blocks adjacent to the railway corridor may be developed for light commercial / mixed use purposes with a higher density than the single residential blocks.

6.3 Engagement with other jurisdictions

There should be consultation with Queanbeyan City Council and the NSW Rail Authority regarding integration of policies and development guidelines for heritage areas adjacent to Oaks Estate in NSW, i.e the railway corridor, including the station, siding and former goods yards.

6.4 Further research

Further detailed studies should be undertaken to determine the following:

- The histories of items of potential individual significance identified in this report, and
- any places of natural significance within Oaks Estate, e.g. rock formations along the river corridor.

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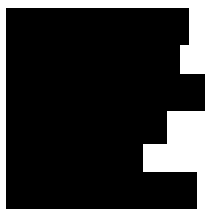
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8 APPENDICES

8.1 Appendix A – National Trust draft citation, Oaks Estate

ACT INTERIM HERITAGE PLACES REGISTER

DRAFT CITATION

OAKS ESTATE

NOMINATED BY: National Trust of Australia (ACT)

LOCATION OF PLACE:

All that land within the Australian Capital Territory bounded by the eastern side of Oaks Estate Road to the Molonglo River thence along the River to the ACT/NSW border thence along the southern side of Railway Street to Oaks Estate Road; to include Sections 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10-15 inclusive, Section 17 and Blocks 224 and 2005, District of Jerrabomberra.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Oaks Estate has historical significance as a place of very early settlement by as part of Duntroon; and subsequently with the town of Queanbeyan, particularly in the period around the time of the development of the Goulburn-Cooma railway. The historical significance is extended by its arbitrary separation from New South Wales as part of a Commonwealth/State agreement relating to the establishment of the Australian Capital Territory, and for the social and physical influences that the separation has had on the place.

Oaks Estate has town planning significance as an example of surviving 19th Century subdivision patterns upon which has been imposed unplanned and expedient changes during a long period during the 20th Century when the administration of the place was confused and misunderstood and which resulted in the place developing a high level of social and physical cohesion and independent character strikingly different from the remainder of the National Capital,

FEATURES INTRINSIC TO THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PLACE:

The features intrinsic to the heritage significance of the place are:

- The village of Oaks Estate.
 - *The Oaks* homestead and its immediate surroundings.
 - The original house and mature trees on blocks 11 and 12 section 7.
 - The original subdivision pattern including the remnant road way of River Street north of the Molonglo River.
 - The large blocks with separate dwellings and front fences.
 - Remnants of original gardens and mature exotic tree plantings in streets, on house and rural blocks, on sites of market gardens and on river banks.
 - The open vista to the Queanbeyan railway station that links the streetscape of Oaks Estate to the station.
 - The river walking track that follows the Molonglo and Queanbeyan River banks from River Street to Queanbeyan.
-

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS:

In accordance with s.54(1) of the *Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991*, the following requirements are identified as essential to the conservation of the heritage significance of the place. These requirements are prepared to implement the following conservation policy for the place:

Any action relating to these requirements is development for the purposes of the Act and will require approval prior to undertaking the activity. To undertake development without such approval may be an offence.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Proposals for development, redevelopment, alterations and extensions should reflect the original character of the place as a residential subdivision, while recognising the departures that have occurred over time through the unplanned introduction of industrial uses and high density housing. Consideration of development proposals will need to be sensitive to potentially intrusive development with a view to ensuring the existing out-of-character development is not seen as a precedent for further incursions.
2. The integrity of the historical layering of the built landscape and its significant elements is to be protected and maintained. These elements include the street plan and the pattern and size of blocks as determined in the original subdivision of 1887.
3. Land shall not be further subdivided or consolidated, except that Block 224 District of Jerrabomberra may be subdivided so as to reestablish the original connection of Hazel Street to Hill Street. Subdivision of Block 224 shall be consistent with the block layout in the remainder of the residential sections.
4. Remnant flora and fauna habitats are to be protected and maintained.
5. Any proposed development, including development in the A9 (Residential, Mixed Use) Area shall be of a scale and character that is consistent with and does not detract from the original low rise detached housing.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

In assessing this place for the interim Heritage Places Register, the Council recommends that the following actions and activities should be undertaken which will enhance the heritage values of the place. They are made as recommendations and have no legal effect.

1. A conservation management plan should be prepared for the *place*
2. The conservation management plan should provide for the retention of the village like character of Oaks Estate, and for the preservation of the low density development pattern.
3. The significance of the surrounding land, insofar as it directly relates Oaks Estate as a *place* should be assessed and recorded in interpretative material including reference to Aboriginal and European history, and significant geological, geographic and landscape characteristics of the *place*

DOCUMENT HISTORY

- | | | |
|----|------|---|
| 1. | date | Draft citation considered by ACT Heritage Council at meeting (number) |
| 2. | date | Draft citation released for public comment |
| 3. | date | Revised citation for ACT Heritage Council meeting (number) |
| 4. | date | Gazetted in an interim Heritage Places Register |
-

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Oaks Estate is set on a small sandy knoll at the junction of the Molonglo and Queanbeyan Rivers. The land slopes gently northward to the Molonglo River and on the eastern side there is a steep slope to the Queanbeyan River. The Estate is surrounded on three sides by paddocks and separated from Queanbeyan, to the south, by a strip of railway land. This landscape setting contributes significantly to its semi-rural village character.

Access to the Estate is along Railway Street, adjacent to the railway corridor. The western end passes through rural landscape consisting of grazing leases and agistment paddocks and the abattoir paddocks via Oaks Estate road and Canberra Avenue. This approach accentuates the semi – rural character of Oaks Estate and the sense of separation from Queanbeyan and other built up areas.

The eastern access is via a railway bridge in McEwan Avenue. This approach is off Henderson Road and is a direct link to Queanbeyan. The original wooden overhead railway bridge near the station was replaced with a two lane concrete bridge in the early 1990s.

John Bull's cottage, now 24 Henderson Road, is located at this approach, on the NSW side of the border. This house is one of the early houses of Oaks Estate and was part of the development of the area prior to its subdivision. It is as important to understanding the early layout of the estate before the influence of the NSW/ACT border as the Queanbeyan railway station is to understanding the function of the estate.

The original Oaks Estate subdivision of 1887 was part of Queanbeyan and extended south beyond the railway line to Derrima Road. The subdivision uses a grid street pattern with the majority of streets running north to south with River Street acting as a line of axis in this design with the Queanbeyan railway station at its apex. River Street was originally part of the main thoroughfare between Yass and Queanbeyan and was surveyed as a parish road in 1886 to provide a direct access between the station and the Yass-Queanbeyan Road (present day Pialligo Avenue).

The Queanbeyan–Cooma railway line was to become the eastern border between New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory resulting in Oaks Estate being severed from Queanbeyan and becoming part of the Territory. The station, railway bridge and gatehouse are all landmarks of the area with the station being the dominant visual focus of the estate. The railway corridor contains numerous relics of past railway activity including a turn-table, goods platform, gantry crane, and a number of wells.

The majority of the 65 residential blocks in Oaks Estate are concentrated to the north of Hazel Street and commercial and industrial blocks to the south. Most of the blocks are quarter acre (1000 sq metres) in size. Industrial and commercial activities include a transport depot, plastic coating factory, and two retail stores. The Mobil fuel depot that operated from Oaks Estate from 1926, and had previously been the site of the Queanbeyan Roller Flour Mill, was recently dismantled and the blocks are currently being rehabilitated for residential purposes.

Other industry including the Boral gas depot and a disused fuel depot is located in the railway corridor on Railway Street. The presence of these sites on a main entry to Oaks Estate detracts from the visual qualities of the place, especially when viewing the area from the train. This activity is on State Rail land and is therefore outside ACT planning controls relating to Oaks Estate. In the past, the Oaks Estate Progress Association has negotiated with State Rail over reducing the visual impact on the vista of the railway station of fencing railway land.

A buffer of land between Railway Street and Hazel Street consists of vacant blocks of land interspersed with two residences, an obtrusive two storey factory building and a park. This area separates the main body of houses from the passing traffic and activity near the railway line. The two houses are at the eastern end of this land and include 9 Hazel Street, the last example of a "workers' humpy" remaining in the ACT. This house is surrounded by pine trees ranging up to approximately 70 years of age and is classified by the National Trust. Some of these vacant blocks of land provide an open vista to the station.

Gillespie Park has a range of mature trees, many planted by the Gillespie family in the late 1930s. These include Eucalypts, willows, poplars, pines and some fruit trees. The Oaks Estate community garden is on the site of the Gillespie home, built in 1895 and demolished in 1988.

Houses in Oaks Estate are spaced relatively well apart, though in some instances, some of the older houses have been placed on a front, back or side boundary or askew on the block. Numerous backyard sheds and

garages also tend to be a feature, some having been used as accommodation at various times of their history. This is particularly the case of those blocks that were occupied up to and including WWII.

Apart from the five blocks of two storey flats built in the 1970s, the remaining houses in Oaks Estate are detached and mostly single storey. They date from the 1880/90s, the 1910s, 1920s and 30s, the 1940s and 50s till 1990s and generally hold more heritage significance as a group than singularly. They reflect the major social changes of the region including the arrival of the railway, the selection of the FCT and the early construction of Canberra, the Depression and the World War II years. Their design and construction vary with age and tend to reflect the typical housing styles as determined by economic circumstances of the working classes of the various times. Generally, the houses of Oaks Estate, between the 1880s and the 1950s, tended to be small and cheaply built to simple design.

Construction materials include weatherboard, fibrous cement, hand-made cement blocks, brick, make-shift materials and a combination of all or any. During the 1950s, a number of buildings were transported to Oaks Estate from elsewhere in the ACT, thus retaining in the Territory buildings that were often otherwise condemned. These include a worker's cottage from Acton, designed by W H Rolland (11 River St); two Air Force huts from 2 STT Kingston (16 Florence St and the shop on Railway St) and a dormitory building from Eastlake hostel (now the community hall).

Front fences are an important feature of the streetscape having had a practical purpose in the days when stock was driven through the streets. There are few footpaths and street trees vary and include Hawthorn, Prunus, Eucalypts and Pin Oak.

The local bus shed stands on the corner of River and Hazel Streets. It was built in 1955 and is the last of its type remaining in the ACT. Near the bus stop, on private property, stands a shed that was built in 1942 to store a fire cart. The front doors of the shed open onto the street and still bear the words "Fire Hose Post", although in bad repair. The community hall is in an isolated location on William Street near the Queanbeyan railway bridge.

Blocks with river frontage, below the 100 year flood line, are of large acreage and have been traditionally leased for rural and horticultural use. The blocks between *The Oaks* and *Hazelbrook* have been the site of market gardens, including Chinese market gardens, since the 1890s at least. Apart from "Hazelbrook" and "Capital Flowers" wholesale nurseries, there are no houses on these blocks.

Rural vistas across these blocks, towards the paddocks and river, are visible from most streets in Oaks Estate and contribute to the rural character. The vista from the crest of River Street is important in appreciating the old track from Yass Road to the Queanbeyan railway station and the River Street Ford.

Slightly isolated from the other, younger, houses on the Estate is *The Oaks*, the original homestead of the property. It was built in the middle 1830s by the Campbell family. It is a single storey stone building with brick and stone partitions and stands within its original block boundaries on Hill Street, surrounded by mature trees and high box-thorn hedges. The site of the Oaks burial ground is under houses on Florence Street.

The Hazelbrook wholesale nursery occupies the blocks with river frontage east of River Street and below William and George Streets. The property dates from the 1870s when John Bull operated a fellmongery establishment from the site and it became the early industrial centre of Queanbeyan.

The house on this property has been substantially renovated over many years. Rooms were added, in stages, around what is thought to be the original structure of one or two rooms built from hand made brick. Mature trees near the house probably date from around the turn of the century. Major terracing work over recent years has covered most early building foundations known to be on the property. However, there are some bricks and white washed stone beginning to be exposed on the walking track below the property fence line.

2. STATUS OF NOMINATION:

The Oaks Estate cultural landscape has a number of sites that have been recognised as having heritage significance.

- The Oaks
 - Register of the National Estate
 - Classified by the National Trust (ACT)

- 9 Hazel Street
 - Classified by the National Trust (ACT)
- Queanbeyan railway station and station master's residence
 - Listed by the Heritage Council of NSW
 - National Trust of Australia (NSW) Regional

Pialligo Avenue is identified by the National Capital Plan as an approach route to Canberra and as such the area adjacent to it is subject to special development requirements.

The railway corridor that separates Oaks Estate from Queanbeyan is controlled by State Rail, which is a third party to planning issues in Queanbeyan and the Oaks Estate area.

3. BACKGROUND:

In 1829, Robert Dixon surveyed the Molonglo and Murrumbidgee Rivers and across the Yass Plains in preparation for the proclamation of the County of Murray and the opening up of the area to permanent occupation. The first survey mark to be placed in Queanbeyan was a peg driven by Dixon's assistant, Mr Docker, at the junction of the Molonglo and Queanbeyan Rivers. Dixon also surveyed the location of *Queenbeeann* on the same day.

Beard's men would have chosen the south bank of the river because Robert Campbell already had control of the northern bank. The Molonglo River was the eastern boundary of Pialligo (*Duntroon*). Timothy Beard was a pardoned convict who kept an inn on the Cow Pastures Road, and was a squatter. Because Beard had no legal control of his land, John Palmer was able to purchase the *Queenbeeann* site in 1832 and incorporate the area into his *Jerrabomberra* estate. Beard also squatted on land that became part of *Lanyon*.

By the middle 1830s, Robert Campbell had provided huts for his shepherds on the northern bank of the river directly opposite *Queenbeeann* huts. This area became known as *Honeysuckle*. Gilbert and Mary McInnes came to work for Campbell in 1839 and lived in these huts for some 20 years. Later, the Southwell family worked the *Honeysuckle* farm and in 1919 it became a soldier settlement block and was leased to James Muir.

Early survey maps show tracks passing close to these huts. These tracks linked Robert Campbell's Pialligo (*Duntroon*) to *Queenbeeann*, *Jerrabomberra* and Michelago. By the middle 1830s, Campbell was in control of most of the river and creek frontage around the junction of the Molonglo and Queanbeyan Rivers and the Jerrabomberra Creek valley as far as *The Waterholes*. The track was described on the application to purchase *The Waterholes* in 1835 as the line of road from the Limestone Plains to Michelago. Campbell would have been using "the old road" up the Jerrabomberra Creek valley as early as 1831. Michelago Creek formed the southern boundary of the Nineteen Counties.

In 1838, there was a licensed inn at either end of the road to Michelago from the Limestone Plains. These were the Union Inn, licensed to Thomas Shanahan,¹ and the Elmsall Inn (later called *The Oaks* house) which was licensed to William Kaye and Joseph Hunt.

The building that became the Elmsall Inn and, from about the late 1850s, *The Oaks*, is thought to be originally built by Robert Campbell for relatives in the middle 1830s. He placed it on the south bank of the Molonglo River on Portion 35, an extension of his Duntroon Estate. The building was oriented toward the north, facing the river and at a good crossing point. This crossing was where the track from the Kowen Forest crossed the Molonglo River before heading south to Jerrabomberra.² It was later known as the Oaks crossing.

By 1838, this track would have been carrying a relatively substantial amount of traffic as it now linked with the road to the south at Jerrabomberra. It must have appeared to be a reasonably economic proposition for Kaye and Hunt to license it as the Elmsall Inn and for them to open a store off the end of it. The river crossing would have been a well established and reliable one as it served as access to a dwelling and to the

¹ Moore, Bruce, 1981, *Burra, County of Murray*, Bruce Moore, ACT, page 12.

² AO map 3811 Map of Survey of part of the Murrumbidgee and Country South of Lake George by H F White, 15th January, 1834

first principal burial ground for the Queanbeyan region until a new one was established in 1846. The burial ground was located a few hundred meters to the east of the inn on present day Florence Street Oaks Estate.

The adjoining store is likely to have been the addition on the eastern end of the inn that is shown in a title plan drawn in the 1880s. It is shown as a small section added onto the corner of the building at an angle that would offer a good view of traffic coming up the track. Being at a good crossing would not hinder travellers from calling at the inn on their way to Queanbeyan from the Duntroon/Canberra area or from the Kowen Forest area. Kaye and Hunt may have decided that they had chosen the wrong track and crossing into the newly surveyed township of Queanbeyan because by 1842, the Elmsall Inn had moved into Queanbeyan.

The crossing that was later known as the Oaks crossing was significant to the development of Queanbeyan and, later, to that of Oaks Estate. It was one of a number of crossings of the Molonglo River within the Citation area. It was not the major point of access into Queanbeyan; however, it was a main one, being a part of the road between Yass and Queanbeyan. The original track across the river was in front of *The Oaks* house. The crossing was still being used in 1866, however, it was washed away during the floods of the 1870s.

What appears to have been remnants of the track between the crossing and the Queanbeyan-Yass Road (Pialligo Avenue) have been eroded and formed a creek that runs along the north side of Oaks Estate Road. After the 1870s, a new crossing was used at what is now called the River Street ford or the "Chinamen's Crossing". This was still in use in the 1950s. River Street incorporates this track with remnants of the track from the Oaks crossing. Until the railway line and Queanbeyan station was built, it linked directly to Crawford Street, Queanbeyan.

After Kaye and Hunt moved their inn to Queanbeyan, John and Mary Ryan lived in *The Oaks* house for a short time before Queanbeyan's first doctor, Dr William Foxton Hayley, and his family lived there from the late 1850s till 1868. *The Oaks* appears to have acquired its name from the Hayleys. Following Hayley, *The Oaks* may have been a hospital for a number of years during the 1870s.

John Bull bought *The Oaks* and the 100 acres on which it stood in 1877 and established a wool washing and fellmongery on 12 acres in the north-east corner of the property, at the river junction and adjacent to the River Street crossing. This was to become the centre of industry in Queanbeyan for many years. Bull later sold the complex to George Tomsitt and set up a new tannery and slaughter yards nearby. Tomsitt renamed the complex the Hazelbrook Wool-Scouring Works, Tannery and Wholesale Produce Warehouses.

By 1885, a syndicate comprising William Price, John Bull, George Tomsitt and possibly others, owned the entire area known as *The Oaks* including everything that stood on it. The station was built on the southern end of these paddocks and opened in 1887. The remaining open area around the station was subdivided – Duntroon Estate Subdivision (the Mountain Road area) in 1886 and Oaks Estate in 1887.

The railway was the beginning of some substantial changes in the Oaks Estate landscape. The area was marketed as having close proximity to the station yards, easy access to the river for watering purposes and being "intersected by all the important thoroughfares leading thereto. It being the most valuable for business and private building purposes ever offered to the Queanbeyan public".

The pattern of development of the area remained sparse and slow and included a mix of industry, farming and residential. The original subdivision of Oaks Estate included land from the railway line south to Derrima Road. Over and above *The Oaks*, Hazelbrook wool works, and John Bull's cottage and butcher shop, there were four new houses scattered throughout the Estate in 1888. The Queanbeyan Roller Flour Mill was built on the blocks opposite the station in 1890 and, in 1915, was the only surviving industry in Queanbeyan. Development tended to concentrate around the main thoroughfares and the railway.

Apart from a house associated with John Bull's new tannery on Nimrod Road, and with Dudley's farm, houses in the Mountain Road area did not appear till the 1890s. There were five by 1895. The farm blocks were largely leased out as fenced land or as house and land.

People buying in these subdivisions were a mix of farm labourers and farming families of Canberra/Queanbeyan, Queanbeyan businessmen, teamsters and railway workers drawn to the area by the increase in opportunities offered by the railway. The first to begin living in the area in the 1880s and 90s were associated with the Robertson, Gillespie, Bambridge, Blundell, Waters, Parkes and Nugent families.

From about this time, or possibly earlier, market gardens are known to have been located in Oaks Estate. John Bull employed a group of Chinese men at his wool-washing works in the 1870s but there has been no evidence found, to date, which suggests that there was a market garden at that time.

The site of the garden was leased from the respective owners of "Hazelbrook". The lease in 1913 showed the gardens consisting of the area along the river to the east of the River Street crossing. In the 1920s, the gardens extended westwards to *The Oaks* but were considerably damaged during the 1925 flood and were reduced back to the area east of River Street after that time.

The gardeners worked the gardens by hand and lived in a "humpy" on the site. They sold their vegetables to passers-by using the river crossing or by taking them by horse and cart to Canberra and Queanbeyan. They left the area in 1937. There was also a Chinese market garden in the Mountain Road area in about 1913.

In 1901, the *Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act* was proclaimed in Sydney, uniting the six previously separate colonies into one Federal Commonwealth. This was the first of a chain of events that resulted in the drawing of boundaries that severed Oaks Estate from Queanbeyan and New South Wales. The eastern boundary of the Territory coincided with the Sydney to Cooma railway line.

The construction of the provisional Parliament House began in 1923 and with this came an increase in construction jobs in Canberra. The extra work brought an increase in the work force living in the Territory and a housing shortage. A result of this was that temporary housing was used by the Territory Administration to accommodate workers and their families.

Almost from the start of work on Parliament House, there was a considerable increase in the numbers of houses being built and businesses establishing themselves in Oaks Estate. People saw it as an easy way into the Territory. Many people moved from Queanbeyan or other close regional towns to Oaks Estate to become eligible for employment in the Territory.

Having freehold land tenure, being inside the Territory boundary and being close to the centre of construction activity in the 1920s and 30s made Oaks Estate an attractive place to live or at least own land. This was particularly so when people living inside the FCT were preferred for employment on Government jobs during the Depression years. Land values had been fixed to 1908 levels and because there were fewer enforceable restrictions, housing could be built or rented more cheaply than in the inner city area. The housing shortage of the Canberra construction era also meant that houses were at a premium, no matter what they looked like. The housing styles included make-shift materials, weatherboard and fibro and hand-made cement blocks made from sand from Oaks Estate backyards.

At the eastern end of the paddock is a cricket pitch that once comprised the Oaks Estate Sports Field. In the early to middle 1950s, the Oaks Estate Progress Association planted trees and erected a shed using materials supplied by the Commonwealth. The pitch was called the West Queanbeyan Cricket Pitch. The lease was later taken over by Queanbeyan Council for their sewerage works. Council surrendered the lease in 1984.

The Oaks Estate rubbish tip was also located on the eastern end of the round paddock. It was about two thirds of the way along Nimrod road. It was a surface tip for locals and was closed in 1930.

4. RELEVANT PRINCIPAL NATIONAL THEMES:

1. Tracing the evolution of a continent's special environments.
2. Peopling the continent
 - 2.5 Promoting settlement on the land through selection and group settlement
3. Developing local, regional and national economies
 - 3.2 Surveying the continent and assessing its potential
 - 3.3 Exploiting natural resources
 - 3.4 Developing primary production
 - 3.6 Establishing lines and networks of communication
 - 3.7 Moving goods and people
 - 3.11 Feeding people
 - 3.15 Struggling with remoteness, hardship and failure
 - 3.21 Lodging people

- 4 Building settlements, towns and cities**
- 4.5 Making towns to serve rural Australia
- 4.6 Remembering significant phases in the development of towns and suburbs
- 7 Governing**
- 7.3 Federating Australia

5. ANALYSIS AGAINST THE CRITERIA SPECIFIED IN SCHEDULE 2 OF THE LAND (PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT) ACT 1991:

Criterion (iii) A place which demonstrates a distinctive way of life, taste, tradition, religion, land use, custom, process, design or function which is no longer practiced, is in danger of being lost, or is of exceptional interest.

Oaks Estate demonstrates traditional European and Asian land use patterns, common throughout the region prior to European settlement and during contact history of the pastoral era. It also demonstrates how human activity in the area generally evolved around trade.

The urbanised parts of the citation area stand in contrast to the planned order of the city areas of Canberra. The earliest buildings demonstrate the slow haphazard development of the late 19th Century that also centred round trade. With the exception of *The Oaks*, which is an early colonial style stone-built gentleman's residence of the 1830s, the housing is generally representative of the working classes. The houses built from the 1920s till the 1940s show the style and economy of materials typically associated with the Canberra construction era during the Great Depression and World War II years. They all made use of simple designs, cheap materials and in some instances, make-shift building practices.

Criterion (iv) A place which is highly valued by the community or a cultural group for reasons of strong or special religious, spiritual, cultural, educational or social associations.

Because of its political separation from New South Wales and its physical separation from Canberra, Oaks Estate is one of only three (Tharwa and Hall are the others) distinctly separate settlements in the Australian Capital Territory. The physical separation, though more apparent than actual, has seen Oaks Estate ignored for many years by both governments, a condition that allowed the development of an independent and self-dependent local society. That group has continued in place and both contribute to and create the significance of the place in respect to social importance.

Criterion (vii) A place which has strong or special associations with a person, group, event, development or cultural phase which played a significant part in local or national history.

The area has associations with early exploration and surveying of the region and with the pastoral era that followed. There are links with a number of pioneering families and prominent business people of Canberra and Queanbeyan.

Oaks Estate is the location of the first European land use of the Queanbeyan district-Timothy Beard's *Queenbeeann*, and the oldest substantial building in the Queanbeyan area- *The Oaks*. The Estate is associated with the early expansion of Robert Campbell's *Duntroon* and John Palmer's *Jerrabomberra* and was also the site of the only known Chinese market gardens in the ACT.

The land was originally chosen as the site for the Queanbeyan railway station and was used as a railway workers camp site as the line progressed towards Cooma. For Queanbeyan residents the land near the river was a popular picnic area before being subdivided. The excision of Oaks Estate from New South Wales as part of the agreement with the Commonwealth for the establishment of the Federal Capital Territory was entirely dictated by the location of the railway line that led to administrative confusion, misunderstanding and neglect by both the Commonwealth and the State. However, that accident of location led ultimately to the creation of a somewhat independent social group that remains extant although the relationship with the Territory and the State is now resolved.

Oaks Estate has strong associations with the early construction era of Canberra. It became what was essentially a construction workers' settlement. A number of houses have been transported from workers hostels and settlements in Canberra to Oaks Estate.

Criterion (xi) A place that demonstrates a likelihood of providing information which will contribute significantly to a wider understanding of natural or cultural history, by virtue of its use as a research site, teaching site, type locality or benchmark site.

Oaks Estate displays evidence of each layer of development from the first European settlement to the present day. The slow change that has occurred in the urban areas and the semi-rural nature of the landscape as a whole makes it possible to interpret early maps and plans to determine where such cultural features as early huts, fence lines, tracks and crossings were located.

The general history of the Oaks Estate Landscape can be seen as a microcosm that reflects changes in the local and regional area. The human and physical elements within the cultural layers of the citation area are associated with:

- Aboriginal occupation
- exploration and survey of the County of Murray and the nineteen counties.
- pastoral era
- the Chinese in Australia
- the expansion of railway transport and the development of regional Australia
- Federation and the location of the Federal Capital Territory
- building the Federal city.
- soldier settlement

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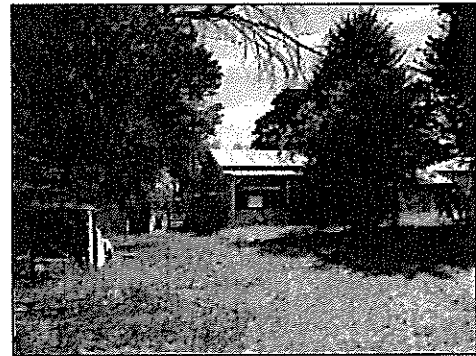
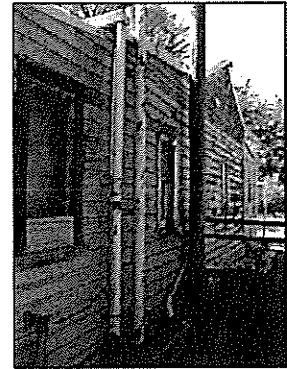
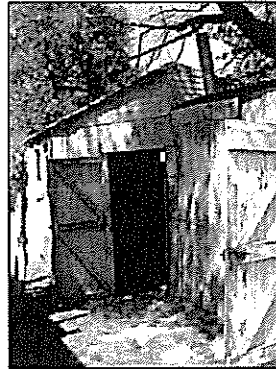
8.2 Appendix B – NGH Heritage, Assessment of 9 Hazel Street



Assessment of Heritage Significance

9 HAZEL STREET (ROBERTSON HOUSE)

OAKS ESTATE, ACT



ngh heritage




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Cover Photos: House and grounds, 9 Hazel Street (Robertson's House), Oaks Estate



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Table of Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	4
1.1	BACKGROUND	4
1.2	ABOUT THE REPORT	4
1.3	LOCATION	5
1.4	STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS	6
1.4.1	ACT Heritage Act	6
1.4.2	Environment Protection & Biodiversity Act (Commonwealth)	7
2	HISTORICAL OVERVIEW	8
2.1	OAKS ESTATE	8
2.1.1	Early Settlement.....	8
2.1.2	Oaks Estate from 1910.....	9
2.1.3	Robertson's at Oaks Estate	11
3	PHYSICAL OVERVIEW	14
3.1	OAKS ESTATE	14
3.2	THE ROBERTSON HOUSE & GROUNDS	14
3.2.1	Condition.....	19
4	HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE	23
4.1	INTRODUCTION	23
4.2	HERITAGE ASSESSMENT	23
4.2.1	Assessment of Significance	23
4.3	STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE	25
5	CONCLUDING REMARKS	27
6	REFERENCES	28
	Appendix A floorplan	29
	Appendix B site plan – block & section.....	31

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

nghheritage were commissioned to undertake this Assessment of Heritage Significance for 9 Hazel Street, Oaks Estate, ACT, for the ACT Territory & Municipal Services (TAMS).

The property at 9 Hazel Street (also known as the Robertson House), is located within the Oaks Estate Heritage Precinct, currently nominated for inclusion to the ACT Heritage Register. The nomination for Oaks Estate was assessed by Eric Martin & Associates in 2002. A draft Interim Heritage Place Register (IHDR) entry was then prepared for the place in accordance with the heritage provisions of the former *Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991*.

In late 2004 it was the intention of the Heritage Council to enter Oaks Estate to the IHPR to facilitate the entry of the place to the Heritage Register under the transitional provisions of the new *Heritage Act 2004*. Following public consultation on the Draft IHPR and the introduction of the new heritage legislation there was insufficient time available to progress the interim registration of Oaks Estate. Subsequently the Oaks Estate Draft IHPR has been transferred into the new Draft Provisional Register Entry format; however additional work, such as this assessment, is required prior to the Heritage Council further considering the place for entry to the Register.

In September 2007, ACT Heritage commissioned a condition report of the site prepared by Philip Leeson Architects (ACT Heritage Advisory Service). The report was commissioned as the first stage of a study to determine if the building/s could be restored and if so, to investigate possible uses for the site. The condition report described each element of the building, its current condition and a brief summary of the work that would be required to bring the house into a reasonable state of repair (see Section 3.2). The measured drawings included a floor plan layout of the house (Appendix A). A structural engineering/building report has also been prepared by Sellick Consultants in June 2008 to determine the existing structural integrity of the house.

1.2 ABOUT THE REPORT

This assessment is required to be prepared to assess the individual heritage values of 9 Hazel Street, Oaks Estate. A site inspection was carried out by nghheritage on December 2nd 2008 in order to determine the physical aspects of the site to assist in preparation of this assessment.

Specifically, this report:

- Outlines the background of the current study/proposal and discusses issues such as statutory heritage listings and requirements (Section 1)
- Provides a contextual framework in terms of an historical overview of the site (Section 2)
- Identifies and describes a physical description of the heritage item and setting (Section 3)

- Provides a heritage significance assessment against the ACT Heritage criteria, following with a summary Statement of Heritage Significance for the place (Section 4) and
- Makes general recommendations in regard to the above assessment (Section 5).

1.3 LOCATION

The property is located within Oaks Estate is within the ACT, but lies adjacent to the NSW border and the large regional town of Queanbeyan (Fig. 1.1). The property is located not far from Queanbeyan Railway Station (Fig 1.2).

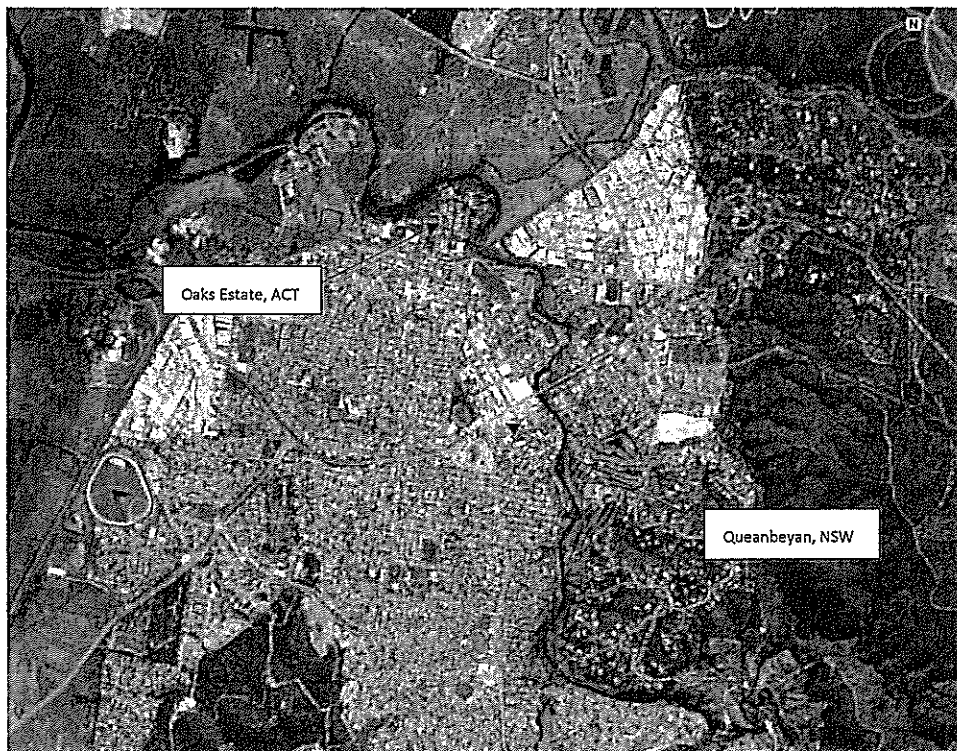


Figure 1.1. Aerial view of the Queanbeyan area, with Oaks Estate located near its northern suburbs near the Molonglo River

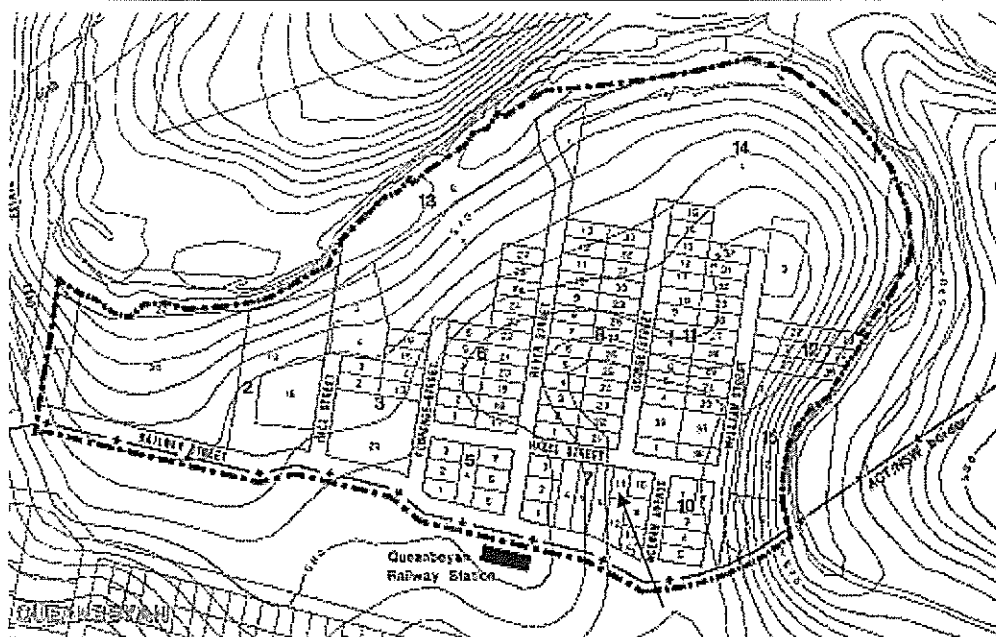


Figure 1.2. Boundary of Oaks Estate and the ACT-NSW border. 9 Hazel Street is indicated by arrow

1.4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

1.4.1 ACT Heritage Act

The *ACT Heritage Act 2004* is a statutory tool designed to conserve the cultural heritage of the ACT and used to regulate development impacts on the heritage assets of the Territory. Administered by ACT Heritage, the Act details the statutory requirements for protecting historic buildings and places and includes any place or object as defined under Clause 8 of the Act.

Under the *Heritage Act 2004* all ACT public authorities are required to identify and manage heritage places and objects for which for which they are responsible. The place or object must be:

- vested in, or subject to the control of, the authority, or
- owned by the authority, and
- registered, or
- not registered, but able to meet one or more heritage significance criteria, or
- an Aboriginal place or object.

Places of heritage value can be subject to different levels of recognition and protection. This protection includes specific measures for the protection of heritage items. As a Statutory body of the ACT Government, TAMS has a legal obligation under both Territory and Commonwealth legislation to effectively manage heritage items it owns or affects.

As discussed, the whole Oaks Estate Precinct is nominated ~~to~~ for registration to the ACT Heritage Register. This report assesses the individual heritage significance of the property at 9 Hazel Street to assist TAMS management objectives for the site.

1.4.2 Environment Protection & Biodiversity Act (Commonwealth)

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) enhances the management and protection of Australia's heritage places. Any action that is likely to have a significant impact on the matters protected under the EPBC Act must be referred to the Commonwealth Environment Minister for further consideration.

The Australian Heritage Database (AHD) includes the National and Commonwealth Heritage Lists, which includes the natural, historic and indigenous places that are of outstanding national heritage value to the Australian nation. Items on both of these lists are protected under the EPBC Act.

There are no items listed in the area on the National or Commonwealth Heritage Lists of relevance to the proposal.

2 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

2.1 OAKS ESTATE

2.1.1 Early Settlement

The first European to make use of land in the Queanbeyan district is believed to be Timothy Beard, a pardoned convict, and former Innkeeper from Campbelltown, NSW. His station huts were located between the Queanbeyan-Cooma Railway line and the Molonglo River, a little over 2kms downstream from the Molonglo/Queanbeyan River confluence. He called his station 'Queenbeeann' and the closest properties to this 1829 were 'Jerrabomberra' and another owned by Robert Campbell on the Molonglo River at Pialligo, later called 'Duntroon'.

Surveyor Robert Hoddle's map of February 1833 shows the site of Timothy Beard's station huts had by then, become part of Lot 4 County of Murray, parish unknown. 'Queebeeann', or 'Queenbeeann', as it was written on the Grant of Land, was on the south bank of the Molonglo River, and is the northeast corner of the property (MC & BP 2001). The original huts at 'Queenbeeann' are described by Cross (1985), as being made from bark. These buildings were located adjacent to the river and approximately a mile from the road that runs from Maneroo to the Limestone Plains.

The building later to be known as 'The Oaks' was built around c.1837 (Fig 2.1). The house first operated as the Elmsall Inn, and by 1839 the Inn had an adjoining shop and a burial ground nearby, which extended to what is now Florence Street. In April 1840, part of Robert Campbell's estate was conveyed to Charles Campbell. This land was in turn conveyed to John Bull, a Tarago grazier in August 1877. During John Bull's ownership 'The Oaks' ceased to be an Inn and had a succession of occupants.



Figure 2.1. 'The Oaks', one of the earliest and more significant buildings in the area pre-dating Oaks Estate (National Heritage Library)

In 1885 John Bull sold 'The Oaks' to George Tomsitt and the remainder of the 100 acres (93 acres, 37 perches) to William Price, a Sydney merchant. Price subdivided the land in 1887, which was marketed as 'Oaks Estate'. In December 1887, Dulhunty and company, auctioneers, put up 300 building blocks in Oaks Estate for sale in the hope that due to their proximity to the railway line they would sell quickly. However, the early results were disappointing.

In 1888 (the year plans were deposited with the Department of Lands), Oaks Estate acquired the names for its streets. George Street was named after George Tomsitt, who at the time owned 'The Oaks' and the Hazelbrook works. Hazel Street was named after Tomsitt's business enterprise, and Florence Street after John Bull's daughter. John Bull was the original owner of the Woolwashing Works purchased by Tomsitt. He was an influential business man at the time, owning 'The Willows', and an adjacent butcher shop (Cross 1983). McEwan Street dates from only about 1936, named after the then Minister for the Interior, ACT, John McEwan who facilitated the extension of the water service to Oaks Estate.

The original proposal for the site of the Capital Territory included a portion of the catchment of the Molonglo and Queanbeyan Rivers, located to the east of the Goulburn-Cooma railway line. This proposal was vetoed by the NSW Government and instead it was decided to include the catchment areas of the Gudgenby, Naas and Paddy's Rivers, an area, which lay to the west of the railway line to the south of Canberra (Williams 1997). It was eventually decided that the eastern boundary of the Territory for the Seat of Government should follow the Goulburn-Cooma railway line, instead of the Molonglo River. Thus, Oaks Estate was separated from Queanbeyan and NSW.

As Oaks Estate pre-dates the ACT, its planning and early housing development reflected the opportunistic development around early transport routes of the 1870s-1890s, rather than the design planned for Canberra (Williams 1997).

2.1.2 Oaks Estate from 1910

When the first land acquisitions were made in 1911, the Seat of Government Act 1910 had amended the Act of 1909 to allow compensation to be based not only on the unimproved value of the land at 8 October 1908, but to make allowances for those improvements on the land that existed at the date of acquisition. The real consequences of being absorbed into the Federal Capital Territory for Oaks Estate did not become apparent till after 1913, when the construction of Canberra seriously began with the establishing of water, electricity, and sewerage systems. Some of the workers of this period lived in Oaks Estate (Williams 1997). As a result Oaks Estate became the home for many working on the construction of Canberra. In 1913 there were about 13-14 families living in the homes of Oaks Estate. At this time Oaks Estate was still largely paddocks with some fencing to confine stock. Generally roads were unformed, with the main thoroughfares being River and Railway Streets. River Street took the traffic from the Yass, Majura and Duntroon districts, turned off the Yass to Queanbeyan Road to cross the Molonglo River at the ford.

Most workers living in Oaks Estate from 1913, unless they were working in Queanbeyan or for the railway, were working on Government projects in Canberra. Dick Robertson was building a house on Railway Street at that time and working at the Royal Military College, Duntroon. Ned Robertson (Dick Robertson's brother) was contracting to the Commonwealth on road projects, clearing land and

carting (Williams 1997). Others, who came from country areas surrounding the Territory, lived in the various camps and settlements in Canberra, only later buying land in Oaks Estate. At this time, the area was still sparsely developed. In fact, the Oaks Estate survey map of 1913 gives a good indication of what Oaks Estate looked like two years after it became part of the Federal Territory. The overall picture is not that much different from that of 1902-1907. Recent developments that appeared on the 1913 survey map included the house of Walter Richard (Dick) and Mary Robertson on the large paddock between Railway and Hazel Streets (Williams 1997).

It was not until the 1920s that the effect of the growth of Canberra was physically reflected in Oaks Estate. During this period there was a considerable increase in the number of houses being built and businesses being established in Oaks Estate. The majority of residents moving into the area, whether buying or renting, were tradesmen and labourers, with their families. By 1933 a total of 34 houses had been built, with the majority on Railway, Hazel, River and George Streets (Fig 2.2). The estate attracted several investment purchasers (Williams 1997).

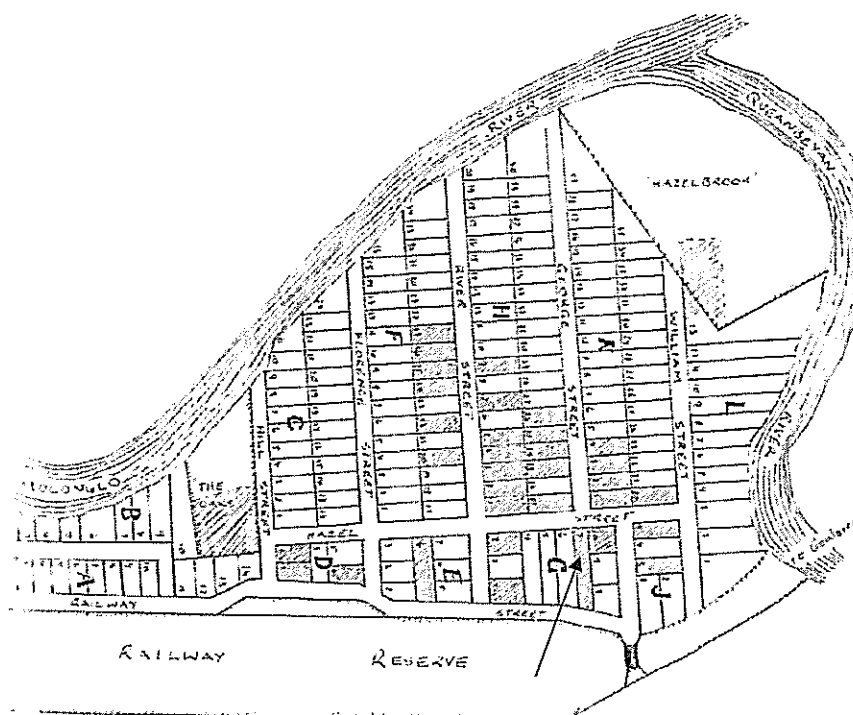


Figure 2.2. Blocks at Oaks Estate built upon as of April 1933. The Robertson House was previously in Section G (arrow) (Williams)

From the outset, after the initial influx of construction workers, the Federal Capital administration viewed Oaks Estate as a temporary workers settlement (like others that existed in Canberra), and at the time viewed the place as outside any development plans for the Territory. The lack of enforceable building controls in Oaks Estate as a result of freehold tenure, made it possible to build more economically, or when the opportunity presented itself. This situation also facilitated the transport of second hand homes into the estate. As a consequence housing in Oaks Estate varied

considerably in style and standard. This was what ironically is responsible for the preservation of the earlier development of Oaks Estate (MC & BP 2001). Another factor that saved some places in Oaks Estate was its location outside the Canberra City area. Most of the pre-existing buildings and structures lying within the city area were demolished with new buildings rebuilt in their place.

The acquisition of Oaks Estate freehold land by the Commonwealth Government was gazetted in the Australian Government Gazette No 6, 15 January 1974. In the community there was widespread unease as to what the future held. A number of residents and business owners accepted the Government's offer of compensation and left the village. Those residential landowners, who decided to remain, were compensated by the offer of 99-year leases in exchange for their freehold titles. However, some were only offered life leases.

Many dwellings were neglected as owners were prevented from selling them, pending the completion of title transfer negotiations. Some landowners managed to rent out their houses, whilst others let their houses fall into disrepair and were eventually demolished (Williams 1997). Although not part of the original plans for Canberra, Oaks Estate today is technically the oldest settled suburb in the ACT.

2.1.3 Robertson's at Oaks Estate

The pioneer of the Robertson family in the Oaks Estate area was Scotsman, Duncan Robertson. The earliest record of his presence dates from 1835, when a son, John, was born at Parramatta. In 1844, Duncan and wife, Janet, along with son John, moved from a property near Windsor to the Canberra area (Cross 1983).

John Robertson, the only child of Duncan and Janet, married a Susan Blundell and had a family of 6 daughters and a son. However, Susan passed away in 1875, and John remarried to Rebecca Forrester who was from Yass. John and Rebecca had 9 children (Cross 1983). One of these children was Walter Richard (Dick), born c.1886 in Irishtown. Dick Robertson first came to Oaks Estate with his parents John and Rebecca in 1888.

The title for the property now at 9 Hazel Street was originally transferred to Amelia Southwell in 1895. Walter Richard (Dick) and Mary Robertson (nee McCauley) built the house that stands on block 11 in about 1912/13. The house is the last example of a workers shanty left in the ACT. It was built, in stages, using make-shift building materials including bush poles, flattened kerosene tins, flat iron off cuts, packing case boards and weatherboards. Some materials were offcuts from construction jobs in early Canberra including the Provisional Parliament House. The sheds in the yard were used as cookhouse and sleep-outs at different times.

Dick Robertson worked at Duntroon from August 1914 as a mechanic (Fig 2.3); from 1915 to 1919 as a gardener's assistant and from 1919 to 1922 his position is described as 'canteen control'. After leaving the college, he worked as a plumber on the construction of the Westlake worker's settlement and other jobs including the provisional Parliament House. He also patented a number of inventions including a sprinkler and bee-hive smoker (Williams 1997).

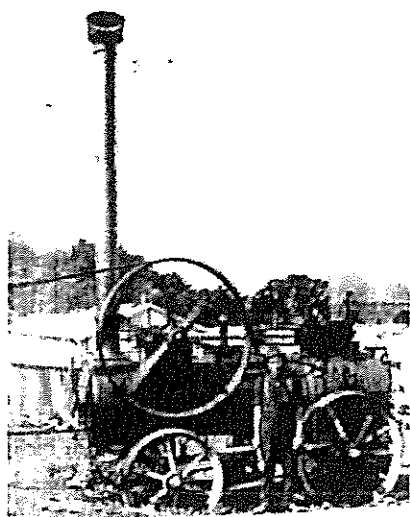


Figure 2.3. Dick Robertson working at Duntroon (Williams 1997)

It is believed the house built by Dick Robertson at 9 Hazel Street is the only known complete example of this style of vernacular workers cottage left remaining in the ACT. The house represents a form of design that has disappeared from the Canberra region. The house has been described as a heritage 'Humpy'. This was not meant as a derogatory term, but was used in official documents, generally to describe a dwelling built by the owner without any reference to building regulations. The Robertson's house (Fig 2.4) was mainly built in various stages from about 1912/1913 (Williams 1997).

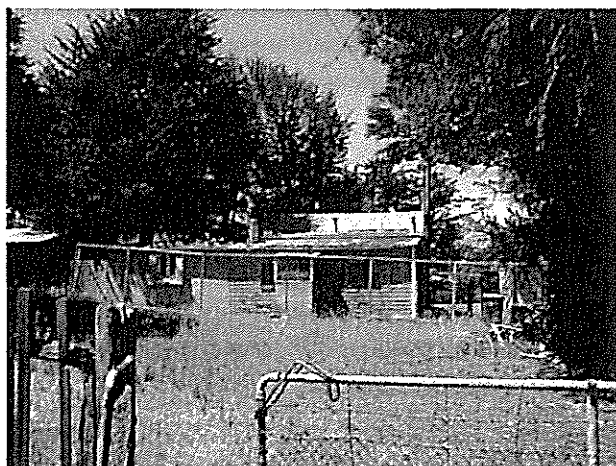


Figure 2.4. The Robertson House as it fronts the Hazel Street elevation

Dick and Mary Robertson (Fig 2.5) and family lived at the Queanbeyan Roller Flour Mill until 1911. After this, they moved with their increasing family up the street, where living first in a temporary dwelling, they began building the house that still stands today.

Building materials for the Robertson's house were short at the time, so a variety of makeshift materials were used. These were acquired from a number of sources including pack cases and flat iron off-cuts from various construction jobs (including Parliament House). A combination of round bush timbers and sawn timbers were used for the frame and flattened out kerosene tins were used to line the inside of the house. The outside linings were weatherboard of various profiles. Most of the house was relined with boards from cottages that were demolished at Duntroon during the 1930s (Williams 1997). The Robertson's continued to work on the house through the years with the original part of the house comprising just 4 rooms and detached cookhouse. Later, in the 1920s, a kitchen was added and an additional bedroom, and front verandah in the late 1920s.



Figure 2.5. Dick & Mary Robertson (Williams 1997)

The Robertson House at 9 Hazel Street was first nominated for inclusion on the interim ACT Heritage Place Register in 1994 and is one of only two houses identified, in the draft interim Heritage Place Register Entry, as being of 'high significance' ('The Oaks' being the other).

The property was returned to the ACT Government (ACTPLA) several years ago when the lessee Les Robertson, the son of Dick and Mary Robertson, passed away. More recently the property, including Blocks 11 and 12 of Section 7 (Appendix C) was transferred to TAMS.

3 PHYSICAL OVERVIEW

3.1 OAKS ESTATE

Oaks Estate represents a unique enclave of Canberra, located on the northern edge of the town of Queanbeyan. The estate covers an area of about 40 hectares, bound by the ACT-NSW border, and the Molonglo River. Prior to 1911, Oaks Estate had been part of Queanbeyan and due to its location retains close links to the NSW regional centre.

Physically, the boundary of the Oaks Estate landscape setting can be defined by:

- Oaks Estate Road to the west from its crossing of the Molonglo River south to the ACT Border
- To the north, by the northern bank of the Molonglo River from Oaks Estate road low level bridge eastward to its junction with the Queanbeyan River
- To the east, by the western bank of the Queanbeyan river from its junction with the Molonglo River south to the ACT/NSW border
- To the south by the ACT/NSW Border from Oaks Estate Road eastward to the western bank of the Queanbeyan River.

The terrain around Oaks Estate slopes down to the rivers in a predominantly northerly and easterly direction from a relatively level area in the south. It is set within a cultural landscape that extends well to the north of the Molonglo River to ridgelines in the vicinity of Pialligo Avenue and Yass Road (MC & BP 2001).

Since the primary land use of the cultural landscape has been largely limited to grazing after European settlement, ample evidence remains of the area's geological structure, springs, old creeks, and remnants of tracks and sites of occupation. The relatively unchanged rural character also assists the visual interpretation of land use in the 19th and 20th Century Canberra/Queanbeyan.

3.2 THE ROBERTSON HOUSE & GROUNDS

The Robertson House at 9 Hazel Street (Block 11 & 12 of Section 7) is located within the Oaks Estate Precinct, which is nominated for inclusion to the ACT Heritage Register. The place consists of 2 adjoining blocks of land of some 1853 m² containing a timber framed house, 2 outbuildings and a chicken shed. It is surrounded by some large conifer trees, a number of smaller garden trees, and remnant fences and gates around the site (Fig 3.1 and 3.2).

In preliminary assessments of heritage values completed to date within Oaks Estate, the dwelling is 1 of only 2 residences identified as being of high significance in the area. The house was constructed circa 1912/13, and is a unique example of vernacular construction that utilises a range of building materials and techniques.



Figure 3.1. The Railway Street elevation of the Robertson House, which is believed to be the original front of the dwelling.

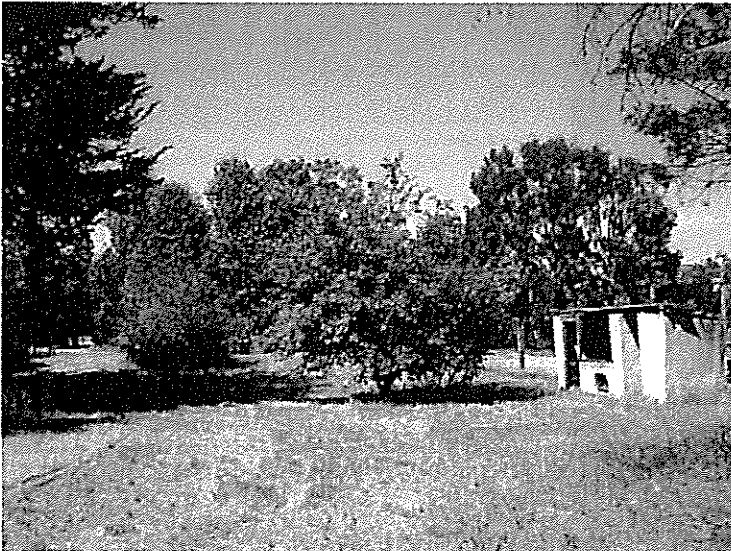


Figure 3.2. The grounds of the Robertson House (with chicken shed and various plantings) looking towards the Railway Street end from the house.

The house was constructed from a wide range of materials and differing construction systems. It is predominately timber framed with weatherboard walls and corrugated iron roofs but there is also a rendered masonry room on the northern elevation, constructed in the 1920s (Figs 3.3 and 3.4).

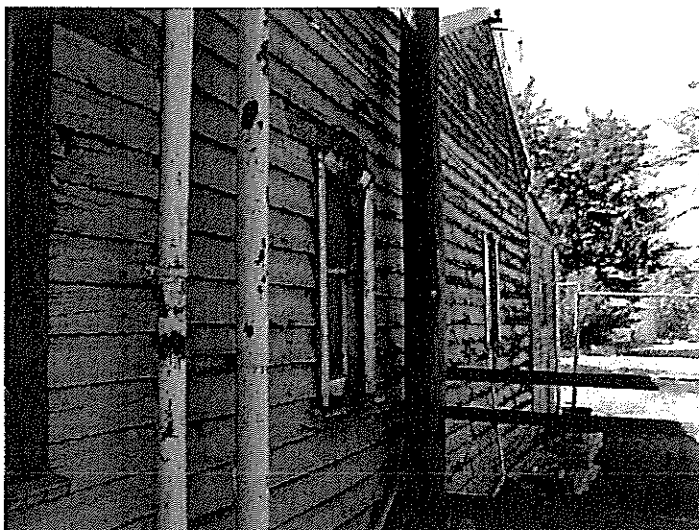


Figure 3.3. Western elevation of the house.

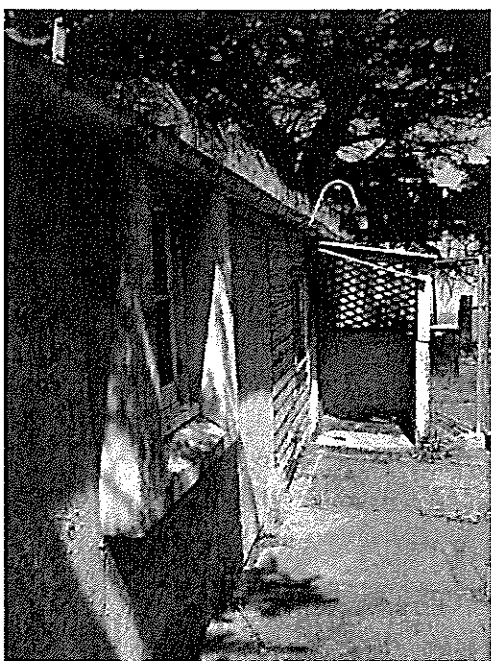


Figure 3.4. The northern (Hazel Street) side of the Robertson House, showing part of the masonry room addition to the building

Other materials used in construction include flattened kerosene tin for cladding and linings (Fig 3.5), tongue and grooved linings and asbestos cement and masonite linings. There are remnant wall papers in one room, painted walls in another (Fig 3.6 and 3.7).



Figure 3.5. Kerosene tins flattened out to be used for the cladding of the shed

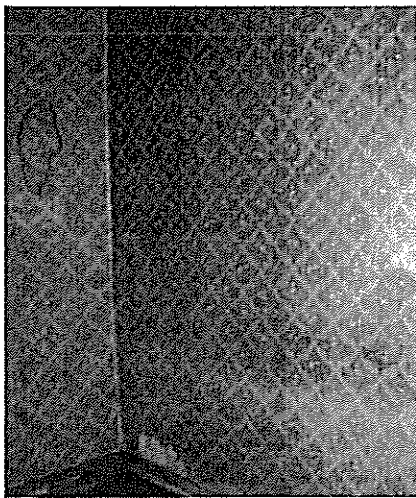


Figure 3.6. Wallpaper remaining on the wall covering of room 4 (Bedroom 1) (see Appendix A)

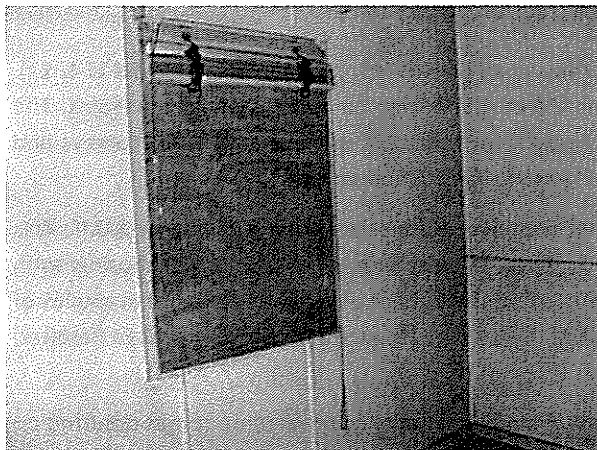


Figure 3.7. Lining of room 2 (Bedroom 2) opposite the main living room

The building when first constructed consisted of 2 rooms under a gable roof and 2 other rooms under an attached skillion roof. A veranda was on the south side and a kitchen (Fig 3.8) and the bedroom on the north side were subsequently added to the building (Leeson 2007).

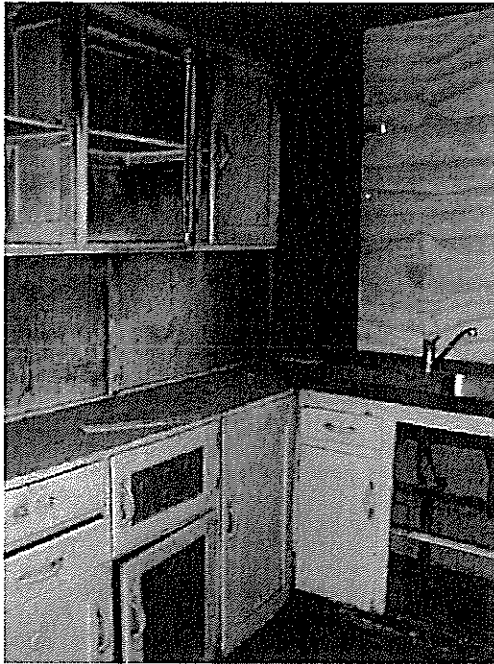


Figure 3.8. Part of the kitchen on the north side of the house

The garage is a bush pole timber framed building clad externally with corrugated iron on the roof and flattened kerosene cans on the walls (Fig 3.9). It has an attached, brick and tin lean-to toilet closet to one side. It has an earth floor with walls and roof framed with bush poles, clad in flattened kerosene cans and corrugated iron and cement block walls. A chicken shed on the south side of the block consisted of plastered masonry walls with cement tile roof.

In more recent times, the original house block has been divided into two (to create blocks 11 & 12). The original 1920/30s plantings of pines along the east and west boundaries are still standing. The section of the yard near the chicken shed was used for vegetable gardens and to run turkeys and provided much of the sand for the cement bricks made by Dick Robertson.

The House is surrounded by three other vacant and unleased blocks also maintained by TAMS. This provides a potential development opportunity (such as aged care units, affordable housing) with some of the revenue being utilised to repair/renovate the Robertson House. There are examples of this occurring previously, such as the retention of the Whitley House (listed on the Heritage Register) at Braddon in Canberra.

The grounds are currently maintained by TAMS, but no maintenance or restoration has occurred on the buildings in recent times.

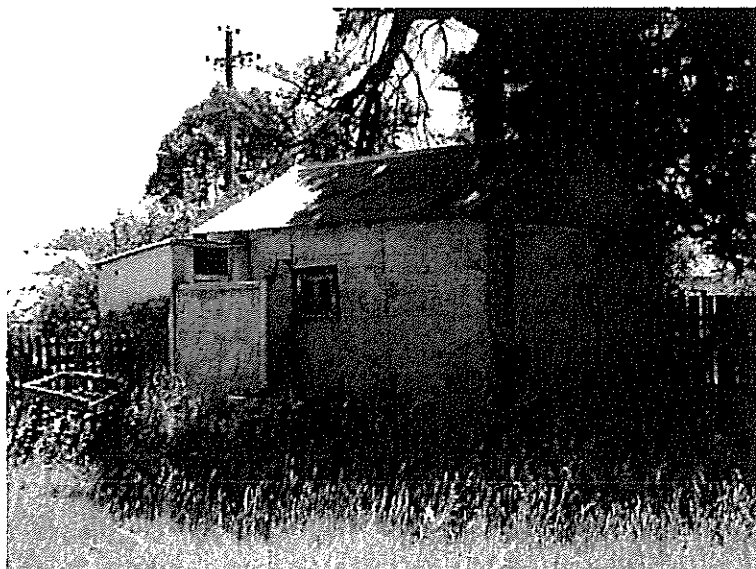


Figure 3.9. The garage on the north (Hazel Street) end of the block

3.2.1 Condition

A previous onsite inspection by TAMs staff and representatives of the Oaks Estate Progress Association confirmed that the house had been vandalised in recent and was in very poor condition. A fence has since been erected around the house and most windows have been boarded. It is doubtful that the house is habitable in its current condition, and in fact, has probably deteriorated further since this earlier inspection.

A preliminary 'condition assessment' report of the house was recently prepared to provide an overview of what options are available. The following summarises this condition report prepared by Philip Leeson Architects in late 2007 on the main house and other structures at the property.

House

The exterior of the house is in very poor condition and the interior ranges from very poor to reasonable condition. Large areas of the weatherboard cladding are in poor condition showing significant signs of decay, are loose and cracked (Fig 3.10). There is evidence that some walls have been affected by termites.

The roof sheeting, flashings and gutters are in poor condition. The gutters are loose, and rusted, and are falling away from the roof. Much of the roof sheeting is loose and flashings in poor condition. The downpipes are in poor condition and not connected to a drainage system.

The drainage and plumbing system (where visible) is in poor condition. The joinery, fittings and fixtures are in a completely dilapidated state. The house in its current form and condition does not comply with current construction standards or the Building Code of Australia.



Figure 3.10. Existing appearance of the 'Front' of the house with veranda that faces the Railway Street end of the block

The floors are very close to ground level and sub floor spaces lack ventilation. Bedroom 3 (room 8) has been eaten out by termites and has rotted throughout. Other flooring in the house appears to be in better condition than this room.

The wall linings and ceilings in the 2 main rooms and hall are in fair condition. The other linings are in fair/poor condition. The kitchen walls and ceilings are black with smoke stain. The windows are in very poor condition generally. Some windows are missing. Most doors are in fair condition but some are considerably lower than normal standards.

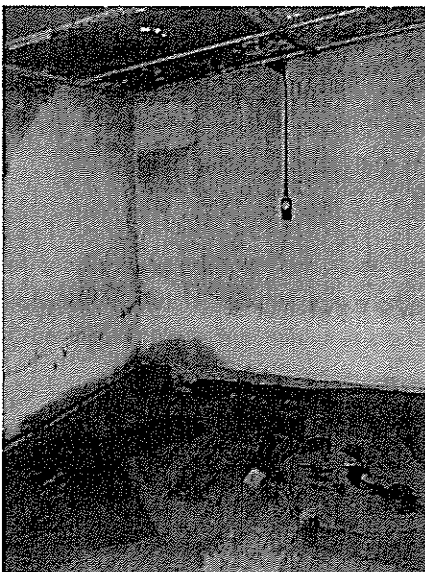


Figure 3.11. Interior of Bedroom 3 (room 8) showing very poor condition of flooring

Garage

The garage was assessed to be in fairly poor condition, but could be repaired.

Workshop/shed

This building (Fig 3.12) was simply and poorly constructed from materials that were found and used to construct the structure. It is partially collapsed (western side) but could possibly be stabilised but it would remain as a very substandard building/shelter albeit showing the ingenuity of its builder.

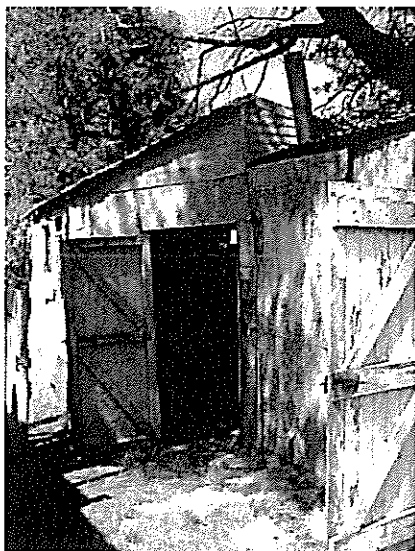


Figure 3.12. Workshop shed located on the west side of the main house

Chicken Shed

This structure is currently in poor condition but could possibly be stabilized (Fig 3.13).

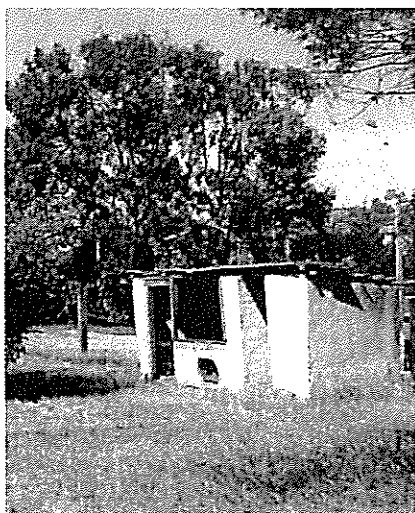


Figure 3.13. Chicken shed located on the southern part of the block of the Robertson House

Overall, the condition of the Robertson House would appear to be deteriorating in the absence of any agreed management strategy in relation to the property. Since the condition assessment by Philip Leeson, the main house structure may have deteriorated further.

The building is surrounded by three vacant blocks that are also managed by TAMS and, as discussed, the opportunity exists for development opportunities to be considered with revenue rose being utilised to renovate and repair the building.

4 HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

'Heritage significance' is a term used to describe the inherent cultural and historical value of an item. Significance may be contained within the fabric of a building or other place, in its setting and its relationship with other nearby items, or its social association with the history of a place. The main aim in assessing significance is to produce a succinct statement of significance, which summarises an item's heritage values.

In 2002, Eric Martin and Associates prepared the draft entry entitled Oaks Estate Precinct, Proposed Interim Heritage Place Register. In the statement of significance for the entire precinct, 9 Hazel Street is described as:

" ... a rare example in the ACT urban areas of vernacular construction and maintains a high degree of integrity. It represents a distinctive way of life during the establishment and growth of the Federal Capital. The house has strong historical and social with the growth of Oaks Estate and Queanbeyan. The grounds ... contain mature landscape elements of trees, shrubs, remnant fruit trees and fences, which reflect the historic development of the site".

The following assessment of significance is based on the ACT heritage assessment criteria and assesses the Robertson House as an individual item. A summary statement of heritage significance follows the assessment below (Section 4.3). The criteria encompass the four values in the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter (1999), which are commonly accepted as generic values by Australian heritage agencies and professional consultants:

- Historical significance
- Aesthetic significance
- Scientific significance
- Social significance

4.2 HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

4.2.1 Assessment of Significance

Pursuant to s10 of the Heritage Act 2004, a place or object has *heritage significance* if it satisfies 1 or more of the following criteria (the *heritage significance criteria*):

- a) it demonstrates a high degree of technical or creative achievement (or both), by showing qualities of innovation, discovery, invention or an exceptionally fine level of application of existing techniques or approaches*

- b) *it exhibits outstanding design or aesthetic qualities valued by the community or a cultural group;*
- c) *it is important as evidence of a distinctive way of life, taste, tradition, religion, land use, custom, process, design or function that is no longer practised, is in danger of being lost or is of exceptional interest;*
- d) *it is highly valued by the community or a cultural group for reasons of strong or special religious, spiritual, cultural, educational or social associations;*
- e) *it is significant to the ACT because of its importance as part of local Aboriginal tradition;*
- f) *it is a rare or unique example of its kind, or is rare or unique in its comparative intactness;*
- g) *it is a notable example of a kind of place or object and demonstrates the main characteristics of that kind;*
- h) *it has strong or special associations with a person, group, event, development or cultural phase in local or national history;*
- i) *it is significant for understanding the evolution of natural landscapes, including significant geological features, landforms, biota or natural processes;*
- j) *it has provided, or is likely to provide, information that will contribute significantly to a wider understanding of the natural or cultural history of the ACT because of its use or potential use as a research site or object, teaching site or object, type locality or benchmark site;*
- k) *for a place—it exhibits unusual richness, diversity or significant transitions of flora, fauna or natural landscapes and their elements;*
- l) *for a place—it is a significant ecological community, habitat or locality for any of the following:*
 - i. the life cycle of native species;
 - ii. rare, threatened or uncommon species;
 - iii. species at the limits of their natural range;
 - iv. distinct occurrences of species.

The Robertson House at 9 Hazel Street, Oaks Estate is considered to be of significance against 4 of the above criteria (detailed below).

Criterion C: *it is important as evidence of a distinctive way of life, taste, tradition, religion, land use, custom, process, design or function that is no longer practised, is in danger of being lost or is of exceptional interest*

The Robertson House (Section 7, Blocks 11 and 12) at 9 Hazel Street is a rare example of vernacular construction using available rudimentary building materials, in the ACT. The intactness of the building, outbuildings and the remnant early landscaping of the site collectively illustrate a way of life no longer practised in the ACT region.

The landscape setting and elements of which surround the Robertson House are contributory to the whole significance of Oaks Estate. There are two other landscapes with heritage qualities that are of sufficient distinction and difference to other places within the ACT that they warrant heritage protection. These are: 'The Oaks' and associated setting, and the Molonglo River flats.

Criterion F: it is a rare or unique example of its kind, or is rare or unique in its comparative intactness

The Robertson House, including the out-building structures, and landscape setting, is a rare example of its kind, not only in the Oaks Estate area, but in the ACT. Although the condition of the main house has deteriorated in recent years, it is possibly the only relatively intact example of this form of construction in the ACT urban area. Although of a different construction type, the only other individual sites within the Oaks Estate that satisfies this criterion include the slab hut at the rear of 7 George Street dating from the early 1830s and 'The Oaks' which is the earliest surviving substantial building associated with the history of Queanbeyan and the only surviving building to predate the survey of Oaks Estate (ACT Heritage draft register citation).

Criterion H: it has strong or special associations with a person, group, event, development or cultural phase in local or national history

Overall, Oaks Estate has historic and social associations with the early settlers of the area and is still home to descendants of families of some of the early settlers of the ACT, Queanbeyan and the village itself. These include Dick and Mary Robertson, who constructed the house at 9 Hazel Street and other members of the Robertson family who are associated with the early development of Oaks Estate.

Criterion J: it has provided, or is likely to provide, information that will contribute significantly to a wider understanding of the natural or cultural history of the ACT because of its use or potential use as a research site or object, teaching site or object, type locality or benchmark site

The Robertson House has a degree of potential to demonstrate changes in the way people lived in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, mainly due to its existing high level of integrity. Examples of this type of building construction in the ACT are very rare.

4.3 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Robertson House at 9 Hazel Street, Oaks Estate is a rare example of vernacular construction in the ACT, using available rudimentary building materials. The intactness of the building, outbuildings and the remnant early landscaping of the site collectively illustrate a way of life no longer practised in the region. Although these elements are typical of a rural village, they stand in dramatic contrast to the planned order of the suburbs of Canberra established post 1913.

The site represents a distinctive way of life during the establishment and growth of the Federal Capital. The house has strong historic and social associations with the growth of Oaks Estate and Queanbeyan.

The setting and elements of which surround the Robertson House are contributory to the overall landscape significance of Oaks Estate. The grounds contain mature landscape elements including trees, shrubs, remnant fruit trees and fences, which reflect the historic development of the place.

The historic development of Oaks Estate, as illustrated by its buildings of the twentieth century, can also be related to the growth of the Federal Capital. There are buildings, like the Robertson House, which reflect the hardship of acquiring building materials, and a number of such buildings were relocated from other parts of Canberra once they were no longer required.

5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This report has assessed 9 Hazel Street, Oaks Estate, to be of heritage significance to the Oaks Estate and the wider ACT region.

The Oaks Estate Precinct contains a number of buildings and elements that are not of high individual significance, but collectively, in their setting, they contribute to the precincts cultural landscape of a random and diverse urban streetscape character with buildings set in a predominantly open landscape setting. It is this character that is valued by the community, and retaining these elements, such as the Robertson House is important in the preservation of places of heritage value to the ACT.

It is considered that an opportunity exists for appropriate development opportunities to be considered with revenue raised being utilised to repair and renovate the Robertson House and outbuildings. For example, aged care units or affordable housing may be considered appropriate development outcomes for the surrounding vacant blocks.

The ACT Heritage Council should place a priority on the site in order to progress the nomination to the Provisional Registration. This may be part of the wider registration process for the Oaks Estate Precinct. Oaks Estate residents and the Progress Association should be advised of ACT Heritage intentions about the future management and conservation of the place and the wider Oaks Estate setting.

As the place is assessed to be of individual heritage significance, any future development proposed for the place would require preparation of a Statement of Heritage Effects (SHE) to assess any impacts to the heritage values of the place and the proposal are assessed against the heritage guidelines for Oaks Estate.

6 REFERENCES

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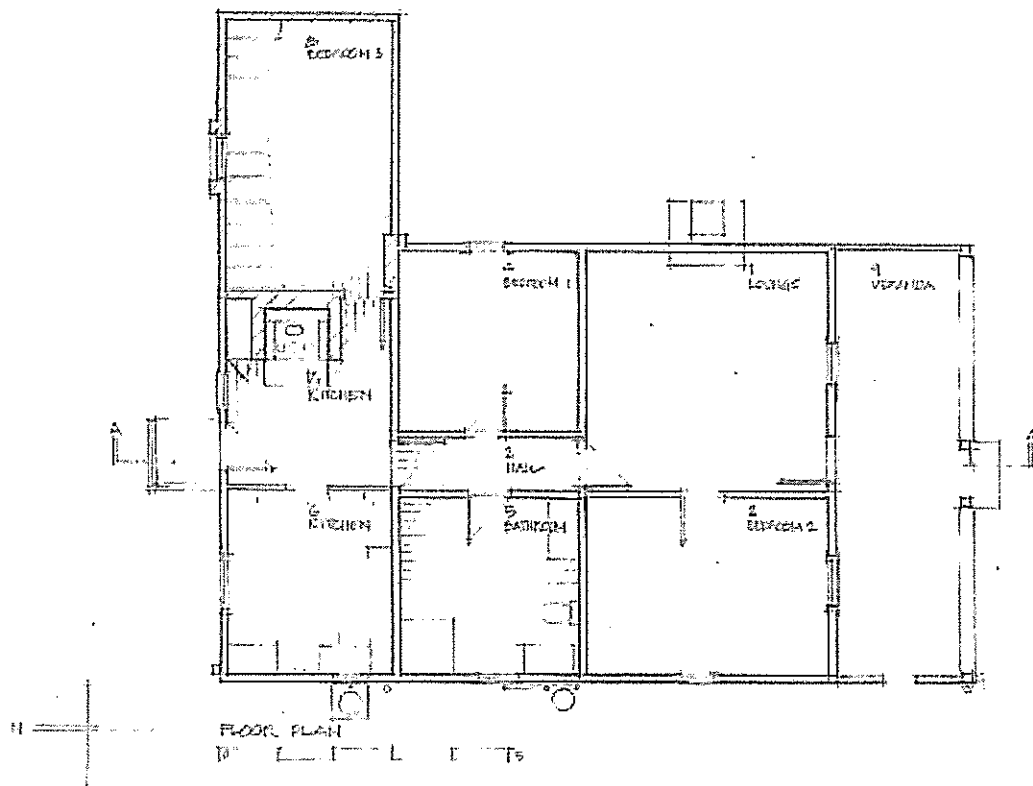
National Trust (1999) *A Heritage Tour of Oaks Estate: Tour one: The Urban Area*.

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Appendix A FLOORPLAN

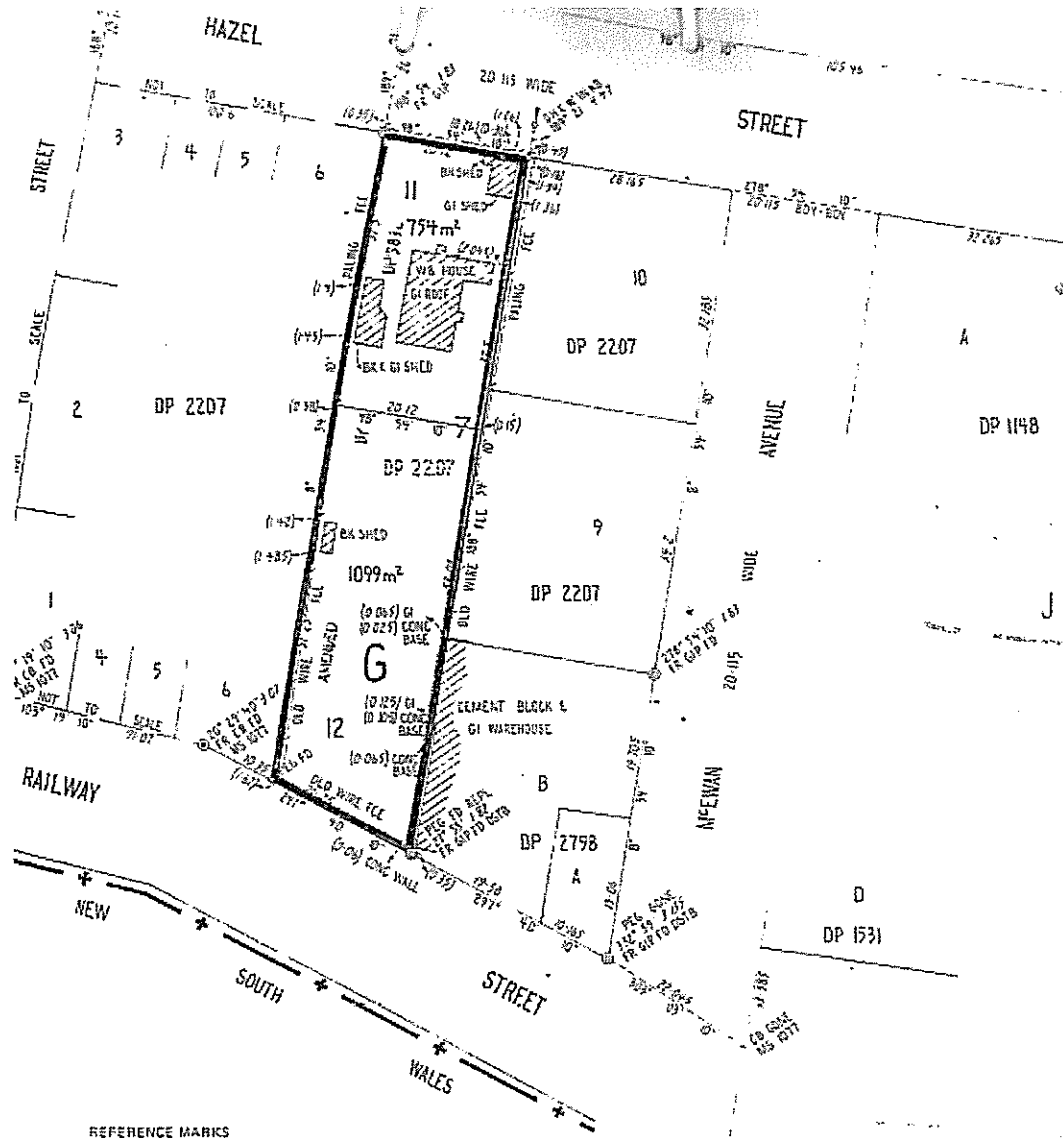
Floorplan of 9 Hazel Street (Robertson House), Oaks Estate

(source: Philip Leeson Architects)



Appendix B SITE PLAN – BLOCK & SECTION

Assessment of Heritage Significance
9 Hazel Street
Oaks Estate



REFERENCE MARKS

- ⊙ Denotes G.P. monument (if any) and its position.
⊙ " C.B. monument (if any) and its position.
(Except as otherwise shown)
As shown on the Surveyors Certificate 1965

SS STUART WALKER of JERRABOMBERRA
not registered under the Surveyors Ordinance 1965. I certify
that the Survey described in this plan is accurate and has been
made by me (21) in accordance with the provisions of the
Surveyors Ordinance 1965 and last amended on 10 FEB 1976

(Signature) *Stuart Walker* 10 MAR '78
registered under the Surveyors Ordinance 1965

This plan is to be prepared in accordance with
the Ordinance 1965

(Signature) *Stuart Walker* 31. 3. 78
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SURVEYOR GENERAL

PLAN OF
BLOCKS 11 & 12 SECTION G
BEING A SUBDIVISION OF BLOCK 7 SECTION G
OAKS ESTATE
DISTRICT: JERRABOMBERRA

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SCALE 1:500

Field Books: K 8097

0 5 10 15 METRES

72/2650
76/2747

Deposited at the office of the Registrar
of the Australian Capital Territory the
day of APRIL 1978
Book TWO of the plan AFTER
Approval

DEPOSITED

489

AMENDS DP 2207

8.3 Appendix C - Detailed physical assessment, Oaks Estate

In early 2013 Philip Leeson Architects made a visual assessment of the buildings in Oaks Estate as viewed from the public domain. The visual information gathered during this inspection has been tabled here together with title information and oral history records compiled by Karen Williams.

Philip Leeson Architects took all photographs in this section in 2013.

Section 2 (previously section B)

Blocks 19 & 16, Section 2 - The Oaks

Refer to the full entry provided in Section 4. It is not duplicated here.



Block 18, Section 2 (no apparent street address)

Description:

Previously known as block 2002, Jerrabomberra District, and prior to that as block 1 section A and block 1 section B

History:

Blocks 1-5, section A and blocks 1-3, section B were sold in 1901 to the wife of a Queanbeyan labourer and tanner associated with the local tannery. The tannery was on land adjacent to blocks 1-5 section A. In 1904 title transferred to a woman, and in 1920 to a family. The blocks were sold again in 1921 and 1925.

Blocks 1-5, section A and 1-3, section B were transferred twice in 1952, and block 1 section A was the only block on the parcel of land to contain a house. The weatherboard house is said to have been built by the Campbells of Duntroon to accommodate travelling teamsters.

Section 3 (previously section C)

Block [REDACTED], Section 3, [REDACTED]



Description:

Previously block 224, and prior to that blocks 1-5, section D and blocks 1-12 section C and part of Hazel Street. It contains;

- 1940s Canberra style brick house with rendered walls, pitched concrete roof, timber windows. Derelict condition.
- low rendered brick fence to boundary.
- remainder of block empty, evidence of earlier structures
- modern industrial chain wire fence
- mature cypress trees

History:

This block divided in two by the continuation of Hazel Street in 1913. Creek running through northern undeveloped portion, large building footprint and smaller building on subdivided parts of southern section on 1913 survey.

In 1926, title of blocks 9 – 11, 13 -17 & 23-24 section C, blocks 2-5, 7-10 and 32-34 section F, blocks 32-35 section H, blocks 6-13, 24-32 section K, blocks 10-11 section L were sold to a surveyor in 1901.

Block transferred in 1939.

Block [redacted], Section 3, 9 Florence Street



Description:

- mature cypress in front south-west corner pre-dates house
- building form similar to late 1950s Canberra cottage. Double gable, timber framed construction, pitched concrete tile roof, Hardiplank cladding, aluminium windows.
- 1950s era concrete retaining wall and chain wire fence on front boundary.

History:

In 1926, title of blocks 9 – 11, 13 -17 & 23-24 section C, blocks 2-5, 7-10 and 32-34 section F, blocks 32-35 section H, blocks 6-13, 24-32 section K, blocks 10-11 section L were sold to a surveyor in 1901.

In 1991 it was discovered that the modern day location of the burial ground associated with Elmsall Inn is under the driveway of this property. This block not subdivided and no house located here on 1913 survey. Blocks 13, 14 and 15 owned as a single parcel in 1952. Block 13 sold in 1954, with a house built here about 1956. A 1975 aerial shows a fibro house on this block.

Block [REDACTED] Section 3, [REDACTED]



Description:

- mature Monterey Pine at eastern side.
- no permanent structure – caravan, lean to, unusual timber paling fence to street.

History:

In 1926, title of blocks 9 – 11, 13 -17 & 23-24 section C, blocks 2-5, 7-10 and 32-34 section F, blocks 32-35 section H, blocks 6-13, 24-32 section K, blocks 10-11 section L were sold to a surveyor in 1901.

This block not subdivided and no house located here on 1913 survey. Blocks 13, 14 and 15 owned as a group in 1952. Block 14 had a small wooden shed on it in a 1975 aerial.

Block [REDACTED] Section 3, [REDACTED]



Description:

- four mature Monterey Pines across frontage and sides suggesting 1890s development
- Hardiplank 1980s timber framed buildings consisting of two separate forms linked by low entry. Low-pitched gables, corrugated galvanized iron roof, aluminium windows.
- timber paling fence
- neighbour said there was once an old hut co-located with Monterey Pines, now demolished.

History:

In 1926, title of blocks 9 – 11, 13 -17 & 23-24 section C, blocks 2-5, 7-10 and 32-34 section F, blocks 32-35 section H, blocks 6-13, 24-32 section K, blocks 10-11 section L were sold to a surveyor in 1901.

This block not subdivided and no house located here on 1913 survey. Blocks 13, 14 and 15 owned as a group in 1952.

Block [REDACTED], Section 3, [REDACTED]



Description:

- double fronted cottage with original red brick chimneys.
- altered form, cladding and aluminium windows, Colorbond bullnose verandah.
- colorbond garage with pitched roof
- older fibro and corrugated galvanized iron garage at back with lean to
- colorbond and standard timber paling fences at sides

History:

Title of blocks 9 – 11, 13 -17 & 23-24 section C, blocks 2-5, 7-10 and 32-34 section F, blocks 32-35 section H, blocks 6-13, 24-32 section K, blocks 10-11 section L were sold to a surveyor in 1901.

This block not subdivided and no house located here on 1913 survey. A house was probably being built in 1950/51, and this house was on the block in 1967

Section 5 (previously Section E)

Block [REDACTED] Section 5, [REDACTED]



Description:

- community vegetable garden covering entire block
- single mature Pine tree and a group of Poplar trees

History:

Building on this block facing Railway Street on 1913 survey

Gillespie House on block 4 section E was an Oregon frame clad in weatherboard

Block 5, Section 5, 1 River Street / 16 Railway Street



B

Description:

- municipal park across blocks 5, 6 & 7 established in the 1990s. 21st Century play equipment, gazebo, pathways, stone entry gates and black powder coated fencing
- mature eucalyptus and Poplar trees

History:

This site part of larger block containing two small buildings on 1913 survey

Block 6, Section 5, 3 River Street



Description:

- municipal park across blocks 5, 6 & 7 established in the 1990s. 21st Century play equipment, gazebo, pathways, stone entry gates and black powder coated fencing
- mature eucalyptus and Poplar trees

History:

This block part of subdivided site, but no development on this site on 1913 survey

Block 7, Section 5, 5 River Street / 21 Hazel Street

Description:

- municipal park across blocks 5, 6 & 7 established in the 1990s. 21st Century play equipment, gazebo, pathways, stone entry gates and black powder coated fencing
- mature Eucalyptus and Poplar trees

History:

This block part of subdivided site, but no development on this site on 1913 survey

Section 6 (previously section F)

block section 6,



Description:

- 1980s timber framed house with rough sawn timber weatherboards, corrugated Colorbond roof and aluminium windows.

History:

This site not subdivided or developed on 1913 survey

Block [REDACTED], Section 6, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1930s double fronted painted weatherboard cottage with original corrugated iron roof and timber windows.
- 1930s driveway gates, 1930s Art Deco style brick fence at front boundary, made taller with a recent paling fence in pine.

History:

This site not subdivided or developed on 1913 survey

Block [REDACTED], Section 6, [REDACTED]



Description:

- mature cypress pine at front predates house
- 1970s/80s brick veneer house with face brickwork, aluminium windows and later colorbond corrugated iron roof.
- colorbond garage at rear

History:

Title of blocks 9 – 11, 13 -17 & 23-24 section C, blocks 2-5, 7-10 and 32-34 section F, blocks 32-35 section H, blocks 6-13, 24-32 section K, blocks 10-11 section L were sold to a surveyor in 1901.

This block not subdivided and no house located here on 1913 survey. Block purchased in 1926 as a parcel of 11 acres of land consisting of with blocks 2, 3, 4 and 5 in this section.

Block [REDACTED], Section 6, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1970s or 1980s brick veneer house with aluminium windows and pitched concrete tiled roof
- attached garage at side

History:

Title of blocks 9 – 11, 13 -17 & 23-24 section C, blocks 2-5, 7-10 and 32-34 section F, blocks 32-35 section H, blocks 6-13, 24-32 section K, blocks 10-11 section L were sold to a surveyor in 1901. This block not subdivided and no house located here on 1913 survey. Block purchased in 1926 as a parcel of 11 acres of land consisting of with blocks 2, 3, 4 and 5 in this section. Sold to a wood merchant in 1950 who operated a brick works here and had a shed on block 3.

Block [REDACTED], Section 6, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1940s era timber cottage, originally timber weatherboards, timber casement windows and corrugated galvanized iron roof, now altered significantly and almost un-recognisable.
- newer hardiplank cladding, aluminium windows and Colorbond kliplok roof. Possibly
- 1980s additions in painted concrete block walls.
- concrete block retaining wall to front boundary.

History:

Title of blocks 9 – 11, 13 -17 & 23-24 section C, blocks 2-5, 7-10 and 32-34 section F, blocks 32-35 section H, blocks 6-13, 24-32 section K, blocks 10-11 section L were sold to a surveyor in 1901. This block not subdivided and no house located here on 1913 survey. Block purchased in 1926 as a parcel of 11 acres of land consisting of with blocks 2, 3, 4 and 5 in this section.

Originally accommodation for Air Training Corps in WW2, then part of Eastlake Workers Camp. House transferred in two sections to the site from Kingston during the 1960s.

Block [REDACTED] Section 6, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1980s face brick veneer house with concrete roof tiles, aluminium windows and lower level garage

History:

Title of blocks 9 – 11, 13 -17 & 23-24 section C, blocks 2-5, 7-10 and 32-34 section F, blocks 32-35 section H, blocks 6-13, 24-32 section K, blocks 10-11 section L were sold to a surveyor in 1901. This block not subdivided and no house located here on 1913 survey. Block purchased in 1926 as a parcel of 11 acres of land consisting of with blocks 2, 3, 4 and 5 in this section. A small fibro building is shown at the back of this block along with a backyard toilet on 1975 survey map.

Block [REDACTED], Section 6, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1950s brick house, rendered and painted. New corrugated galvanized iron roof and timber windows.

- approximately 1980s concrete block retaining wall to front boundary.
- detached laundry and toilet to rear?

History:

This block not subdivided and no house located here on 1913 survey. Parcel of land consisting of blocks [REDACTED], section 6 and blocks [REDACTED] section 8 purchased in 1901 and transferred in 1925. Block [REDACTED] section 6 transferred in 1948. House built of hand-made cement blocks by the owner between 1946 and 1953. Canberra bricks were used in the back part of the house. Second house at the back of the block housed another family for some time during the 1950s.

Block [REDACTED] Section 6, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1930s timber weatherboard cottage with corrugated galvanized iron roof, double hung timber windows, red brick chimney and wall at front verandah. 1930s era details on front verandah including brick corbels and sun ray door. Sympathetic additions at rear.
- mature cypress plantings in south-east corner.
- sympathetic timber sleeper and paling fence and gate.

History:

Block purchased in 1890 as part of a parcel of land with block 9 section A. Block sold in 1937 with house built about this time, sold in 1938 and again in 1942, the house was extended in 1944 and sold again in 1947. The wood merchant owner stored wood on the block in the 1940s. He also transported a worker's cubicle from Canberra and is said to have added it to the rear of the house. This owner also operated the cement brick works on Florence Street during the 1950s. The house was sold in 1953, then again in 1956 to the Queanbeyan Age.

Block [REDACTED] Section 6, [REDACTED]



Description:

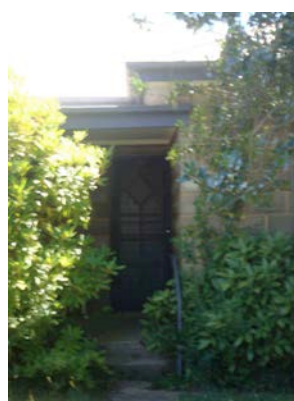
- 1920s timber framed cottage with salvaged items and details of a mix of eras, original form unrecognisable. Hardiplank cladding, new corrugated galvanized iron roof.
- Lightweight steel carport and relatively new timber picket fence.

History:

Title of blocks [REDACTED] section 6, block 6 section H, blocks 1 & 2 section J, block 5 section K and block 3 section M were transferred to a Queanbeyan Bank Manager in 1888. No house located here on 1913 survey. Title transferred in 1926.

Block transferred in 1939 to an ACT labourer, and again in 1946 to a woodcutter and his wife who had moved to Oaks Estate from Westlake. A small house built of cement blocks was built at the back of the site, perhaps in the 1940s, the owners intending to build something larger at the front of the block. Later, in the late 1950s or early 1960s, a house was transported from Acton in two parts and placed at the front of the block. Government architect W H Rolland designed the weatherboard house, and similar cottages were used at Westlake and the Causeway.

Block [REDACTED], Section 6 [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1940s double fronted cottage of concrete block work. Original corrugated galvanized iron roof, red brick chimneys, classic front door and timber windows
- matching double garage in concrete block work
- matching 1940s concrete block and chain wire fence and gate
- corrugated galvanised iron shed in back garden

History:

Title of blocks [REDACTED] section 6, block 6 section 8, blocks [REDACTED] section 10, block [REDACTED] section 11 and block 3 section M were transferred to a Queanbeyan Bank Manager in 1888. Title transferred in 1926. No house located on this block on 1913 survey.

The block was transferred in 1939 to an Oaks Estate plumber and his wife. Tom Robertson was born in the miller's cottage associated with the Queanbeyan Roller Flour Mill, and had worked on the construction of Old Parliament House and other government buildings in Canberra. The house was built during WWII when materials were in short supply. Cement blocks made from Oaks Estate river sand were used in its construction. The house was completed in about 1943 and named Oakville. Tom Robertson undertook much of the plumbing work when Oaks Estate was connected to mains water supply, and also operated a tank making business from the large shed on the back of his block.

Block [REDACTED], Section 6, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1900s timber cottage with brick chimneys. 1980s alterations and hardiplank cladding, original form unidentifiable

History:

Title of blocks 20 & 21 was transferred to a midwife and labourer of Queanbeyan in 1895. They lived and raised their family in a house on block 20, and this house is shown on this site on a 1913 survey. The family sold the house in 1914, and it was sold again in 1927 to a Queanbeyan contractor.

There is evidence to suggest that the small house was originally clad in tin. The family who lived in the house after WWII did a lot of work to the house.

Blocks [REDACTED] Section 6, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1970s three storey walk up flats 'Hayley Court' in face brick

History:

Parcel of land consisting of blocks 6 & 22, section 6 and blocks 7 & 27 section 8 purchased in 1901 and transferred in 1925.

Block 21 transferred in 1950. The owner intended to build a cement block house on the block, but this never eventuated.

Block 22 transferred in 1957. House built for Ned Robertson in the mid 1920s from cement blocks made in Oaks Estate using sand from block 7 section 7.

Block [REDACTED], Section 6, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1940s timber framed building with corrugated asbestos roof. Modern sand stock brick veneer. Small timber windows look original, small footprint. Possibly a relocated Narrabundah prefab.

History:

Title of blocks [REDACTED] section 6, block 6 section H, blocks 1 & 2 section J, block 5 section K and block 3 section M was transferred to a Queanbeyan Bank Manager in 1888. This site was probably vacant in 1913. Title transferred in 1926.

Title of this block was transferred in 1939, and several times between family members in 1951. A small slab cement garage house was built on the block as a temporary house, and had an orchard growing on it for many years. The house was demolished in the late 1980s.

Block [REDACTED], Section 6, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1980s brick veneer house with crimped metal roof to simulate tiles and timber windows

History:

Title of blocks [REDACTED] section 6, block [REDACTED] section 8, blocks [REDACTED] section 10, block 5 section 11 and block 3 section M were transferred to a Queanbeyan Bank Manager in 1888.

Title transferred to a Queanbeyan carpenter in 1925, and to another Queanbeyan carpenter the same year. In 1927 a Queanbeyan engineer and his wife purchased the house, living in a weatherboard house on the block. The owners later built a second house of weatherboard and fibro at the back of the block, to rent out.

Block [REDACTED], Section 6, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1940s timber cottage with terracotta tiled roof. Later brick veneered and timber windows replaced with aluminium

History:

Blocks [REDACTED] were transferred to a Queanbeyan storekeeper in 1912. A survey shows a house and two smaller buildings on this parcel of land in 1913, the house itself located on block [REDACTED]. The parcel of three blocks was transferred to a Queanbeyan

labourer in 1920, who sold blocks [REDACTED] to a Queanbeyan plumber in 1925, but retained block 25.

In 1927 there was a weatherboard cottage on the block and a shed at the back of the house. A large family lived in the house and three men lived in the shed during the Depression.

The block was sold twice in 1941, and transferred to the owner's son in 1949. Another family member and their family later occupied the house until the 1960s.

The original weatherboard house on block [REDACTED] was replaced with a house transported from Canberra in the 1980s, later clad in brick.

Block [REDACTED], Section 6, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1920s fibro clad cottage of two rooms. 1950s front gable addition and rear skillion additions
- possibly 1960s stone fence at boundary
- steel framed metal clad garage at rear

History:

Blocks [REDACTED] were transferred to a Queanbeyan storekeeper in 1912. A survey shows a house and two smaller buildings on this parcel of land in 1913, the house itself located on block [REDACTED]. The parcel of three blocks was transferred to a Queanbeyan labourer in 1920, who sold blocks [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to a Queanbeyan plumber in 1925.

Block [REDACTED] was mortgaged to a Clerk of Petty Sessions from 1927.

There was a weatherboard house on block 26 in 1933.

Block [REDACTED], Section [REDACTED], [REDACTED]



Description:

- double fronted weatherboard cottage with new corrugated galvanized iron roofing, new weatherboard cladding, new timber windows and new verandah carefully added in traditional style. High quality architect-designed addition at rear in more modern style

History:

Blocks [REDACTED] were transferred to a Queanbeyan storekeeper in 1912. A survey shows a house and two smaller buildings on this parcel of land in 1913, the house itself located on block [REDACTED]. The parcel of three blocks was transferred to a Queanbeyan labourer in 1920, who sold blocks [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to a Queanbeyan plumber in 1925.

A weatherboard house was built at the front of block [REDACTED] sometime after 1925, and this house remains today.

By 1941 there was a second house, a two-bedroom fibro house at the rear of the block, which was leased separately.

The block was sold to a market gardener in 1959, and the front weatherboard house was renovated in the early 1960s.

Section 7 (previously section G)

Block [REDACTED] Section 7 [REDACTED]

Description:

- vacant block with a few small trees and shrubs

History:

Entire section 7 is one block on 1913 survey, no buildings on this site

Title was transferred in 1890, and then not until 1925, to a family member. Later the same year, the block was sold to a Queanbeyan shop fitter. The shop fitter lived with his family in a fibro and weatherboard house on the block and the house was reportedly lined in Queensland Maple timber paneling, leadlight doors, and built in cabinetry. A workshop was built on the eastern side of the block adjacent to the house, each accessed from Railway Street. The shop fitter employed a number of local people in his workshop until it was destroyed by fire in 1937. The factory was rebuilt, but the business did not recover, and the block was sold in 1940. The block was sold a number of times between 1940 and 1941, a family of ten living in the house for the next three decades. The house was then rented out while the Commonwealth resumed the land.

Block [REDACTED], Section 7, [REDACTED]

Description:

- vacant block with a few small trees and shrubs

History:

No record of this site having been developed at any stage

Block [REDACTED] Section 7, 17 Hazel Street



Description:

- vacant block with a few small trees and shrubs

History:

Block transferred in 1890 along with block [REDACTED] section 7. The two blocks were then transferred to a family member in 1925. Block 3 was sold later that year, and a man of Chinese descent lived in a house on this block from 1928. The weatherboard house faced Hazel Street on the corner of River Street, and a large vegetable garden ran the full width of the block along the River Street frontage. The owner sold vegetables and seedlings to Oaks Estate residents and lived in the house with his family until his death in 1956. His family continued to live in the house until sometime in the 1960s. Later in the 1960s, two houses were located where the vegetable garden had been, possibly transported from elsewhere.

Block 4, Section 7, 15 Hazel Street



Description:

- 1970s or 80s light industrial building of face brick with entrances on both Hazel Street and Railway Street
- wiremesh fences and gates

History:

A large parcel of land consisting of blocks 4, 5 and 9 section 7, along with blocks 8-18 section N were purchased in 1895 by a Queanbeyan widow. Her late husband George Harcourt had been a land owner of Ginninderra, the owner of Ginninderra Store, the Post Master, and a director of the Queanbeyan Wool and Manufacturing Company. Title transferred in 1907 and again in 1926. In 1940, blocks 4 and 5 were transferred to a lime burner and cement worker of Queanbeyan, and block 5 became the site of a terrazzo works operated by the owner between 1944 and 1975. The main part of the works, an open sided fibro shed, covered most of the southern half of the block, while there may have been another small shed on block 4.

Block 5, Section 7, 13 Hazel Street



Description:

- vacant site
- vehicular crossing from Railway Street

History:

See block 4.

Block 6, Section 7, 11 Hazel Street



Description:

- vacant site

- small brick retaining wall on boundary with block 12, section 7
- vehicular crossing from Railway Street

History:

Entire section 7 is one block on 1913 survey, no buildings on this site

A parcel of land consisting of blocks 6 and 7, section 7 together with block 2 section M were sold in 1895. The same parcel was sold in 1913 to a Queanbeyan carrier, who sold blocks 6 and 7, section 7 to a couple and their growing family in 1919. The family initially lived in a temporary dwelling while building the house of makeshift materials that stands on block 7 - the Robertson House. Block 6 was used as a horse paddock and to grow melons from 1913, was sold in 1921 and used by a wood supply business to store firewood during the 1940s, and sold again in 1950. The block was then used to operate a brick making factory, which produced concrete bricks and concrete roof tiles. The factory building was located at the southern end of the block, with a narrow open sided shed running the length of the block.

Block 9, Section 7, 3 McEwan Avenue



Description:

- vacant block
- large gum tree and some screen plantings
- front fence of concrete posts, steel star pickets, wire and chicken wire
- no vehicular crossing and gates

History:

This block not subdivided or developed on 1913 survey

Block [REDACTED], Section 7, [REDACTED]



Description:

- double fronted cottage with corrugated galvanized iron roofing in short lengths. - masonry clad and rendered at some stage, with small addition at rear. Modern aluminium windows and verandah columns
- open shed at rear boundary with galvanized corrugated iron roofing and cladding
- mix of fence types including timber post and 1920s style wire mesh at front of house; newer steel post and wire mesh fences and vehicular gates; and timber post and chicken wire fence at side boundary

History:

This site not subdivided on 1913 survey

Blocks 11 & 12, Section 7, 9 Hazel Street, Robertson House



Note blocks 11 & 12, section 7 were previously block 7 section G

Description:

- weatherboard timber cottage with weatherboard and masonry lean-tos
- tin shed and brick dunny at Hazel Street boundary
- tin shed and concrete block shed at side boundary adjacent to the house
- mature pine trees along boundaries
- rough log and railway sleeper fence posts with newer paling fence added along - -
- front and side boundaries

History:

Single building shown on this site, but site not subdivided from the section on 1913 survey



Block 13, Section 7, 2 Railway Street

Note blocks 13 & 14 section 7 was previously block 8 section G

Description:

- large shed with painted corrugated iron cladding in short lengths and brick addition at one end with painted timber gable end above. Galvanized corrugated iron roofing in short lengths, large industrial sliding doors
- newer shed addition of painted concrete block and Colorbond corrugated iron
- wire mesh fences and gates

History:

Entire section 7 is one block on 1913 survey, no buildings on this site



Block 14, Section 7, 2A Railway Street

Note blocks 13 & 14 section 7 was previously block 8 section G

Description:

- exposed brick 1980s shopfront with parapet and awning. Pitched roof with new - colorbond roofing
- asphalt surrounds, irregular concrete verandah

History:

Entire section 7 is one block on 1913 survey, no buildings on this site

Section 8 (previously section H)

Block [REDACTED], Section 8, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1920s timber cottage in naïve Californian bungalow style with brick chimney, new colorbond corrugated iron roof. Reclaimed windows of both metal and timber
- large double garage to rear with corrugated galvanized iron roof and hardiplank cladding
- modern picket fence with steel posts and modern concrete base

History:

A parcel of land consisting of blocks [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] section 8 was purchased in 1890 and transferred to a family member in 1925. Later the same year, the parcel was sold to a Canberra foreman. In about 1926, prefabricated weatherboard Hudson Ready-Cut houses were built on each of these blocks. Recent renovations to the house on block [REDACTED] have revealed 1927 newspapers were used in construction.

The manager of the brickworks near the Queanbeyan railway bridge was the first occupant of the house on block [REDACTED]. Until 1937 there were a few other occupants, and between this time and 1996, one single family maintained ownership of the house.

(Block 2, Section 8) [REDACTED]



Description:

- double fronted timber weatherboard cottage. hardiplank enclosed verandah addition at front
- various sheds at rear of different ages
- red brick fence at boundary with 1920s chainmesh gates

History:

Blocks [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] section 8 were purchased in 1892 by a Queanbeyan grazier as a single parcel of land along with blocks 1, 2 and 12 section C. The entire parcel was bought and sold in 1902 and 1903, also to graziers, before the blocks on section C were sold separately in 1904. In 1924 blocks [REDACTED] section 8 were bought by a Queanbeyan dentist, who had identical houses built on blocks 2, 3 and 4 and sold all but block 4 immediately afterwards to different owners.

The design of the houses was a four-room weatherboard cottage with brick chimney and bull-nose front verandah, and the houses were built on site by Queanbeyan and Oaks Estate tradespeople.

The house on block 2 was named Roslyn, and the original 1924 owners lived in the house for the next five decades. The family maintained ownership of the house until 1979.

Block [REDACTED], Section 8, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1920s double fronted timber cottage with brick chimney, new corrugated galvanized iron roof, and weatherboard cladding. Later bullnose verandah enclosed with aluminium cladding and aluminium windows
- several metal sheds at rear

- galvanised mesh fence on concrete posts

History:

See Block [REDACTED] above.

The house on block [REDACTED] had a series of owners in its first few years, and was named Delora by the family who owned and lived in the house between 1927 and 1939. The house was sold in 1939 to an Oaks Estate tractor driver, and was rented out during part of the 1940s. Between 1947 and 1980 an Oaks Estate truck driver and his wife lived in the house.

Block [REDACTED] Section 8, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1920s double fronted timber cottage with painted corrugated galvanized iron roof, fibro cladding, timber windows, brick chimney and enclosed front verandah
- detached fibro garage of salvaged materials

History:

See Block [REDACTED] above.

The Queanbeyan dentist maintained ownership of block [REDACTED], renting the house until 1939 when the block was sold. The block was sold twice during 1939 and a transport worker then owned the house until 1946. The house was rented out, and in 1952 the house was again sold multiple times. The house sold in 1958.

Block [REDACTED] Section 8, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1920s weatherboard cottage with corrugated galvanized iron roof. In derelict condition and set back significantly from the street.

History:

Blocks [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] section 8 were purchased in 1892 by a Queanbeyan grazier as a single parcel of land along with blocks 1, 2 and 12 section C. The entire parcel was bought and sold in 1902 and 1903, also to graziers, before the blocks on section C were sold separately in 1904. In 1924 blocks [REDACTED] section 8 were bought by a Queanbeyan dentist, who had identical houses built on blocks [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and sold them immediately afterwards to different owners.

The daughter of a Naas grazier lived with her family in a weatherboard cottage on block [REDACTED] between 1926 and 1956. The house was named Rose Cottage, and was initially two rooms with a separate shelter for cooking. A kitchen and other rooms were added to the cottage over time, while a more permanent cookhouse replaced the earlier shelter. The front part of the block had an extensive vegetable garden during the depression years.

Title transferred in 1941 to a Queanbeyan solicitor.

Block [REDACTED] Section 8, [REDACTED]

Description:

- 1970s brick veneer duplex with concrete roof tiles and aluminium windows

History:

Block [REDACTED] was owned by the same owners as block [REDACTED] and used to grow potatoes. The block appears not to have been built on until after 1959.



Block 7, Section 8, 22 River Street

Description:

- double fronted brick cottage with original corrugated galvanized iron roof, rendered brick chimney and walls, and double hung timber windows. Reconstructed timber verandah on concrete base
- modern studio at rear
- 1970s chain wire front fence

History:

Parcel of land consisting of blocks [REDACTED], section 6 and blocks 7 & 27 section 8 purchased in 1901 and transferred in 1925. Block 7 section 8 transferred in 1957. House

built for Ned Robertson in the late 1920s from cement blocks made in Oaks Estate using sand from block [redacted] section 8.

Block [redacted] Section 8, [redacted]



Description:

- double fronted timber cottage with new corrugated galvanized iron cladding, weatherboard cladding, and timber windows. Architect designed modern two storey addition at rear
- attached carport at front of house
- chain wire fence on concrete retaining wall

History:

This block was purchased in 1902 and the first house was built on the block in the late 1940s. The 1902 owner passed title to his son, a dragger at the Canberra Brickworks, in 1951.

Block [redacted] Section 8, [redacted]



Description:

- double fronted brick cottage with additions. Rendered walls scored to simulate stone coursing. Bullnose front verandah addition, new corrugated galvanized iron roof well restored, and 'M' roof addition

History:

In 1902 title of this block was transferred to Ned Robertson, and Queanbeyan rates books show a house on the block at that time. The house was named *Weowna* and may have initially been constructed in the 1890s. Construction was staged as the

family grew, and earlier stages were constructed from lightweight or makeshift materials such as bush poles, boards from packing crates, flat iron, pressed tin, weatherboards and railway sleepers. Two brick rooms were added to the front of the house sometime around 1906 when the owner bought part of a brickworks at Captains Flat. The 1902 owners lived in the house until their deaths in 1946 and 1954, and the history of this family is an integral part of Oaks Estate history. Ned and Jane came to own 17 blocks of land and about five houses in Oaks Estate over their lifetimes. Ned operated a sawmill on blocks of land now occupied by the flats on River Street, he supplied wood to the Queanbeyan Roller Flour Mill and ran horses, pigs and other animal on blocks in Oaks Estate.



Block [REDACTED] Section 8, [REDACTED]

Description:

1970s brick veneer house with concrete roof tiles and aluminium windows

History:

In 1926 Ned Robertson bought a parcel of land consisting of blocks [REDACTED], section 8. A sawmill was operated from this parcel of land. In 1957 blocks 11, 12 & 13, section 8 were sold, while block 10 was not.

Blocks 11, 12 & 13, Section 8, 30 – 34 River Street



Description:

1970s walk up flats in face brick

History:

In 1926 Ned Robertson bought a parcel of land consisting of blocks 10-13, section 8. A sawmill was operated from this parcel of land. In 1957 blocks 11, 12 & 13, section 8 were sold, and the sawmill continued to operate under new ownership.



Block [REDACTED], Section 8, [REDACTED]

Description:

- 1990s brick veneer house with Colorbond roof, aluminium windows and faux lace on verandah brackets
- reproduction picket fence

History:

A parcel of land consisting of blocks [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] section 8 was purchased in 1890 and transferred to a family member in 1925. Later the same year, the parcel was sold to a Canberra foreman. In about 1926, prefabricated weatherboard Hudson Ready-Cut houses were built on each of these blocks. Recent renovations to the house on block [REDACTED] have revealed 1927 newspapers were used in construction.

Block [REDACTED] was sold in 1926 to a haulage contractor and his wife, the owners living in the house between 1928 and 1930. Over the next decades, a series of couples and families were to occupy the house. The last owner recorded by Karen Williams vacated the house in the late 1980s. Shortly after the Ready Cut house was destroyed by fire and subsequently replaced by a modern dwelling.

Block [REDACTED], Section 8, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1950s timber framed house with skillion roof, fibro cladding, timber framed windows and corrugated galvanized iron roofing
- informal and unsympathetic reo fence at front

History:

In 1893, title of blocks [redacted] and [redacted] were transferred to a Queanbeyan blacksmith who lived in a house on block [redacted]. Blocks [redacted] and [redacted] were sold in 1905 to a railway permanent way ganger. Title of the property passed to the Public Trustee in 1932, where it was sold in 1938 to a couple from Tharwa who lived in the house on block [redacted] until 1942 when they moved to another house in Oaks Estate. Block [redacted] was transferred to one of the couple's sons in 1959, and a house was built for this couple on block [redacted] for the first time.

Block [redacted], Section 8, [redacted]



- 1970s brick veneer cottage with concrete roof and timber windows
- detached metal garage

History:

In 1893, title of blocks [redacted] and [redacted] were transferred to a Queanbeyan blacksmith who lived in a house on block [redacted]. Title of block [redacted] transferred in 1900 to a railway employee, in 1904 to a railway ganger, before both blocks [redacted] and [redacted] were sold in 1905 to a railway permanent way ganger. Title of the property passed to the Public Trustee in 1932, where it was sold in 1938 to a couple from Tharwa who had lived previously with family at Tuggeranong Homestead. This couple lived in the house on block [redacted] until 1942 when they moved to another house in Oaks Estate. The house on block [redacted] at that time was a six room house built of sand-stock bricks, with two fibro-clad rooms added to the rear in the period 1938-42. The house was home to another family in the 1950s before it was demolished in the 1980s.

Block [redacted], Section 8, [redacted]



Description:

- 1920s timber double fronted cottage with new timber weatherboard cladding, 1930s or 1940s salvaged double-hung timber windows, new corrugated iron roof. 1950s era concrete verandah with skillion verandah. Unusual single red brick wall on west side
- detached weatherboard clad garage at rear

History:

In 1892 this block was sold to a widow who later married a widower and farmer, and the title describes a house on this land from 1893. Title transferred in 1910 after the death of this couple, to a sub-inspector of railways. There is an indication that the house may have been demolished by 1913, with the present house built sometime between 1913 and 1933.

At some stage a timber slab shed was built at the rear of this block, and this slab shed may be the structure recorded in the same location on a 1913 survey. During the 1990s it was recorded that the interior of the shed was finished with newspaper, painted linoleum and hessian linings at wall and ceiling, as well as a chimney and fireplace, indicating that it may have been inhabited at some stage.

Another shed located in the same place as the garage located on the 1913 survey, and now demolished, was used to house a family for a short time during the 1930s.

A Queanbeyan labourer purchased the block in 1934, selling it on to another Queanbeyan labourer in 1935 who lived in the house until 1958. The house was extended during the 1940s. In 1958 the owners moved next door to block [REDACTED] and their newly married daughter occupied the house on block [REDACTED] with her husband, a ganger responsible for sealing the roads in Oaks Estate for the Territory Government.

Mention of a slab shed, clad in corrugated iron, still standing on this block.

Block [REDACTED] Section 8, [REDACTED]





Description:

c.1890 cottage with 1990s alterations and additions making original form difficult to decipher. New corrugated iron roofs, face brick walls extensively altered and patched, some painted. Timber casement windows to front elevation not authentic to era. Reproduction timber front verandah posts with skillion roof
brick garage to side
timber framed carport to front / side

History:

Title of this block was transferred to the wife of a Queanbeyan labourer in 1888, and 1889 records indicate that there was a house on the block from this time. The property was rented between 1890 and 1899, when the property was sold to a Queanbeyan fettler. In 1904 the property was sold to a sub-inspector of railways. The 1913 survey shows fenced boundaries but no house on this block, suggesting that the house may have been demolished and another built in its place around this time.

In 1922 the property was sold to a Queanbeyan storekeeper, who continued to own it until 1957 when title of the property was transferred to family, before being sold to a Queanbeyan butcher and his wife in 1959. The present brick house is of brick construction, and is of the same design as houses located on Mountain Road and at ■■■ Blundell Street in Queanbeyan.

A well still standing at the rear of the house in the 1990s collected run off from the roof.

Block ■■■ Section 8, ■■■■



Description:

-1920s double fronted rendered cottage with original corrugated iron roof, extending onto front verandah. 1920s era leadlight windows and doors, although openings appear altered/patched. Later timber weatherboard addition to east side
-1920s style front fence and chain link gate

History:

This site was vacant and not yet subdivided on the 1913 survey. In 1925 this block was sold to Elizabeth Jane Robertson, and a house was built in 1926/27 using cement blocks made by Dick Robertson. The property was sold in 1940 to a retired railway worker and his wife, who moved from the railway house near the pump house upon retirement. After WWII, the couple's son and his wife lived in the garage while they made cement blocks for their own house in Queanbeyan.

Block [REDACTED] Section 8, [REDACTED]

Description:

- 1990s brick veneer house with aluminium windows and concrete tile roof, possibly remodeled around an earlier house

History:

A parcel of land consisting of blocks [REDACTED], section 6 and blocks [REDACTED] section 8 was purchased in 1901 and sold in 1925. Block [REDACTED] section 8 was sold in 1958, and the house was not built until after 1959.

Block [REDACTED] Section 8, [REDACTED]



Description:

Timber framed house on brick base, significantly remodeled. Low-pitched gable roof form with skillions to the front and side, corrugated galvanized iron roof material. 1950s style stone veneer to front wall panel, 1950s style varnished timber reeded boarding, and proprietary ribbed asbestos cement sheet cladding. Stone front fence with later picket fence above and 1970s yellow brick letterbox pillar.

History:

This site vacant and not yet subdivided on 1913 survey

Block [REDACTED] Section 8, [REDACTED]



Description:

- re-locatable home from caravan park with an annexe. Corrugated iron roof,colorbond bullnose verandah and aluminium cladding.
- 1920s fibro clad building with rusting corrugated iron roof.
- shipping container
- partly rendered brick front boundary wall with modern aluminium gate

History:

This site vacant and not yet subdivided on 1913 survey

Block [REDACTED] Section 8, [REDACTED]



Description:

1980s brick veneer house with crimped Colorbond roof and aluminium windows
Face brick front fence with picket inserts

History:

This site vacant and not yet subdivided on 1913 survey

Block [REDACTED] Section 8, [REDACTED]

Description:

- vacant site

History:

This site vacant and not yet subdivided on 1913 survey

Block [REDACTED] Section 8, [REDACTED]

Description:

- 1980s era transportable lightweight framed house in two halves. Colorbond roof, wood grain aluminium cladding, aluminium windows with stained timber paneling under, house sitting on brick base.

History:

This site is shown to be vacant on the 1913 survey. In 1927 this block was sold together with block 33 section 8 to a Wollongong surveyor. In 1951 the twin blocks were sold to a Queanbeyan sawmiller and then again the same year to an Oaks Estate millwright. In 1952 the owners were living in a small garage-type house on block 33. In 1956 the property was sold to an Oaks Estate truck driver.

Block [REDACTED] Section 8) [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1980s timber framed house with Kliplok Colorbond roof, stained rough sawn timber cladding and aluminium windows
Skillion drive through garage with face brick arched porch feature

History:

This site is shown to be vacant on the 1913 survey. In 1927 this block was sold together with block [REDACTED] section 8 to a Wollongong surveyor. In 1951 the twin blocks were sold to a Queanbeyan sawmiller and then again the same year to an Oaks Estate millwright. In 1952 the owners were living in a small garage-type house on block [REDACTED]. In 1956 the property was sold to an Oaks Estate truck driver.

Section 10 (previously Section J)

Block 1, Section 10, [REDACTED]

Note blocks 1 & 2 section J became blocks 4 & 5 section 10
Also blocks 4 & 5 section J became blocks 1 & 2 section 10



Description:

- Large 1980s lightweight industrial shed with unfinished addition to the front corner

History:

Title of blocks 1 to 5 section 10 were transferred to a Queanbeyan bank manager in 1888 as part of a larger parcel of land which also included blocks 18 and 19 section 6, block 6 section 8, block 5 section 11 and block 3 section M.

This block not subdivided or developed on 1913 survey.

Block 2, Section 10, [REDACTED]



Description:

- series of five 1980s metal clad industrial workshops

History:

This block not subdivided or developed on 1913 survey

Block 3, Section 10, [REDACTED]



Description:

-two storey light industrial workshop c.1980s or 1990s

History:

Title of blocks 1 to 5 section 10 were transferred to a Queanbeyan bank manager in 1888 as part of a larger parcel of land which also included blocks 18 and 19 section F, block 6 section H, block 5 section K and block 3 section M.

A Gundaroo farmer purchased blocks 3, 4 and 5, section 10 in 1889, and retained ownership until these same blocks were transferred to a family member in 1928. No buildings are shown on this block on the 1913 survey.

Title of block 3 transferred to a Batlow carpenter in 1933, and it appears as though a house was constructed on the site sometime during the 1930s. The property was sold in 1938 to a labourer, and in 1953 to an Oaks Estate driver. The driver and his family lived on the block until about 1974, when they sold the land to the Commonwealth. This coincided with a change of zoning for this section from residential to industrial.

Block 5 was purchased by a Queanbeyan builder in 1929, and this owner built a house on the block before selling it on to an Oaks Estate labourer in 1929. The Oaks Estate labourer and his family lived in the house into the 1930s, although the house was sold to a retired Sydney man in 1933. In 1944 block 5 was sold to an Oaks Estate road ganger and his wife, who lived in the house until about 1946. The road ganger had worked for the government in the 1930s when the roads were formed in Oaks Estate. In 1946 a Queanbeyan traveller purchased the block, selling it the following year to a retired man of Queanbeyan. The traveller also accepted rent from a couple living in the rundown house, after it had been sold. Upon discovering the situation, the Queanbeyan plasterer and his wife, an Ainslie Clinic Sister, arranged to rent then purchase the house from the actual owner, acquiring the title of blocks 4 & 5 in 1948. The block was bought by a fibrous plaster manufacturer and businessman in 1950, who sold it on to two Oaks Estate Builders in 1951. Sometime in the 1980s a transport warehouse was built across blocks 3, 4 & 5.

Block 4, Section 10, [REDACTED]



Description:

- Nissen hut of painted corrugated iron, sitting atop lower brick walls. 1960s exposed brick parapet walls at each end, aluminium framed shop front glazing to street elevation.
- separate freestanding corrugated iron shed with flat roof adjacent

History: See above.

Block [REDACTED] Section 10, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1920s double fronted cottage with exposed brick chimney and newer hardiplank cladding. Large 1960s concrete block motel unit addition at rear.
- carport on rear boundary
- timber picket fence

History:

This block not subdivided or developed on 1913 survey.
See history above.

Section 11 (previously Section K)

Blocks [REDACTED] Section 11, [REDACTED]

Description:

- pair of double fronted semi-detached brick cottages with rendered brick walls and skillion front verandah

History:

In 1888 title of blocks 1 & 20 was transferred to a Queanbeyan builder, and records show that the land had been built upon by 1889. A pair of brick semi-detached houses was rented out to various occupants including a railway employee and a traction engine driver. In 1903 title of the two blocks transferred to a retired grazier, who occupied one of the dwellings with his wife, while the couple's daughter and her husband occupied the other. The owner was also part owner of the Queanbeyan Roller Flour Mill from 1897 until his death in 1909. Following the division of the deceased estate, the two blocks were transferred to family in 1915, before being sold to a Queanbeyan widow in 1916. The two blocks remained in joint ownership when sold to a retired grazier of Oaks Estate in 1934. A Queanbeyan widow purchased the two blocks in 1938, selling them again virtually immediately to the wife of a Queanbeyan hotelkeeper. During the 1930s various tenants occupied the pair of brick semi-detached houses and another building at some stage added to the eastern end of the earlier building. In 1947 a couple bought the two blocks and converted the duplex into a single house for their family.

Block [REDACTED] part, Section 11, [REDACTED]

Block [REDACTED] was once blocks [REDACTED], section 11. The garage is located on the former block [REDACTED] while the house is located at the rear of the former block [REDACTED]

Description:

- 1990s two-storey weatherboard and red brick house with gabled roof forms and corrugated iron roof. Set back towards rear of block
- 1990s reproduction timber garage associated with house behind

History:

Block [REDACTED] was sold several times in 1926, to Sydney schoolteachers and then to a Queanbeyan grazier. There was a weatherboard house on block 2 by the time the couple that bought the property in 1928 moved to Oaks Estate, a driver/superintendent for the Vacuum Oil Company depot in Oaks Estate and his wife. Another couple bought block 2 in 1941, and this family owned it continuously until the 1990s, working in Queanbeyan and raising children in Oaks Estate. The house that had been on block [REDACTED] since the 1920s was demolished in 1996.

[REDACTED] part, section 11) [REDACTED]

Block [REDACTED] was once blocks [REDACTED] & [REDACTED], section 11, and this house is located on the former block 3



Description:

- double fronted timber weatherboard cottage, extensively remodeled and re-clad, timber windows, new reproduction timber verandah and corrugated galvanized iron roof

History:

Block [REDACTED] was sold in 1913, and there was a weatherboard house on the block by 1925. The next recorded sale was by Sydney schoolteachers to a Queanbeyan grazier in 1926, although not the same grazier as purchased the neighbouring block [REDACTED] the same year. Title transferred to a builder's labourer and his wife in 1939, who had lived in the house on block [REDACTED] since 1925. A second smaller house was built at the back of block [REDACTED] at some stage, and this house was used to house the couple's son and his wife while they built their own house. The weatherboard house at the front of the block was later rented out, before the block was sold in 1950. It was these owners who extended the house at the back of the house, adding a second storey.

Block [REDACTED], Section 11, [REDACTED]



Description:

- double fronted timber cottage with red brick chimneys, painted corrugated iron roof, rusticated weatherboard cladding with pressed metal gable cladding, timber windows, and fibro enclosed verandah. Addition at side in similar style

History:

Block [REDACTED] was sold in 1903 to a Sutton farmer, and in 1911 to a Queanbeyan shopkeeper. The 1913 survey of Oaks Estate shows a house on this block, and this is the same cottage still standing today. The block was sold in 1923 to a Queanbeyan labourer. The labourer sold the block in 1942, and title was transferred to that owner's widow in 1948. Local history records that the house was rented out to a local businessman and his wife in the 1960s while they were building a house on William

Street. The couple ran their transport from home in this house, then their house on William Street, before moving the business to large premises on the corner of Hazel Street and McEwan Avenue.

Block [REDACTED] Section 11, [REDACTED]



Description:

- timber framed weatherboard cottage with aluminum windows and skillion roof. -
- potentially older cottage substantially altered and unintelligible
- concrete block fence

History:

A woman purchased block [REDACTED] in 1926, and sold it to a Queanbeyan labourer in 1937. There is evidence that there was a house on the block in 1938, and oral history records that the house is a Molonglo cottage transported to Oaks Estate. Title transferred to a family member and labourer of Oaks Estate in 1940, before being sold to an Oaks Estate labourer in 1943. Sometime during the 1950s a strong storm blew part of the roof off the house. The house was subsequently remodeled and a new roof added. Oral history records that during the mid 1960s, 19 mature pine trees were removed from the northern boundary of this block, one of the tree trunks measuring 4 feet in diameter. This line of trees is likely to have been planted across the crest of the hill at some stage as a windbreak.

Blocks 6 & 7, Section 11, [REDACTED]



Description:

1970s walk up flats, 'Dover Court'

History:

This site not yet subdivided and without buildings on 1913 survey

Title of blocks 6 to 13 and 25 to 32, section 11 were purchased as part of an 11-acre parcel of land in 1927. Blocks 6 to 13 and 25 to 32 were sold to a woman in 1951, then split up for sale to various owners.

Blocks 6 to 13 were sold as a parcel to an Ainslie cleaner in 1952.

The owner of these blocks lived in a hut of two small rooms located on block 6, and kept chickens on the property. By 1959, block 6 had been sold.

Blocks 29 to 32 were sold as a parcel to a man in 1954 who then sold blocks 25 to 28 to his brother in law in 1955.

Blocks 8 & 9, Section 11, [REDACTED]

Description:

1970s walk up flats, 'Elmsall Court'

History:

Title of blocks 6 to 13 and 25 to 32, section 11 were purchased as part of an 11-acre parcel of land in 1927. Blocks 6 to 13 and 25 to 32 were sold to a woman in 1951, then split up for sale to various owners.

Blocks 6 to 13 were sold as a parcel to an Ainslie cleaner in 1952.

The owner of these blocks lived in a hut of two small rooms located on block 6, and kept chickens on the property. By 1959, block 6 had been sold.

Blocks 10 & 11, Section 11, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1970s walk up flats, 'Carla Court'

History:

Title of blocks 6 to 13 and 25 to 32, section 11 were purchased as part of an 11-acre parcel of land in 1927. Blocks 6 to 13 and 25 to 32 were sold to a woman in 1951, then split up for sale to various owners.

Blocks 6 to 13 were sold as a parcel to an Ainslie cleaner in 1952.

The owner of these blocks lived in a hut of two small rooms located on block 6, and kept chickens on the property. By 1959, block 6 had been sold.

Block [REDACTED] Section 11, [REDACTED]



Description:-

- 1970s brick veneer house with aluminium windows
- detached garage with kliplok skillion roof

History:

Title of blocks 6 to 13 and 25 to 32, section 11 were purchased as part of an 11-acre parcel of land in 1927. Blocks 6 to 13 and 25 to 32 were sold to a woman in 1951, then split up for sale to various owners.

Blocks 6 to 13 were sold as a parcel to an Ainslie cleaner in 1952.

The owner of these blocks lived in a hut of two small rooms located on block 6, and kept chickens on the property. By 1959, block 6 had been sold.

Block [REDACTED] Section 11, [REDACTED]



Description:

- timber framed building on brick base with a combination of aluminium framed and salvaged timber framed coloured glass windows, stucco textured panel cladding, corrugated Colorbond roofing and lightweight verandah

History:

See above

Blocks 14 & 15, Section 11, No street address

Description:

- blocks undeveloped
- road does not extend to the frontage of these blocks, finishing at the frontages of block 13, section 11 and block 33, section 8

History:

This site not yet subdivided and without buildings on 1913 survey

Block [REDACTED] Section 11, [REDACTED]

Block [REDACTED] was once blocks [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] section 11



Description:

- two storey 1960s red brick house with terracotta tiled roof, aluminium windows and concrete terrace
- large steel framed shed to east side
- some colorbond metal fencing, some pool fencing

History:

A Queanbeyan grazier bought blocks [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in 1894, and sold them to a Queanbeyan labourer in 1907. There are no structures shown on the blocks on the 1913 survey. The two blocks were sold to another Queanbeyan labourer in 1939 before they were separated.

Block [REDACTED] was sold to a couple in 1940 who had previously lived on George Street. In 1950 title transferred to the couple's son, who lived in Oaks Estate his whole life, and built the fibro house with a War Service Loan in the early 1950s. Apart from Hazelbrook, this was one of only three houses on William Street during the early 1950s.

Block [REDACTED] was sold to a labourer in 1940, and transferred to family in 1948.

Block [REDACTED] Section 11, [REDACTED]



Description:

- timber framed fibro cottage on concrete block base with terracotta tiled roof, new aluminium windows and sympathetic addition to the rear
- detached concrete block garage
- steel mesh fence

History:

A Queanbeyan grazier bought blocks [redacted] and [redacted] in 1894, and sold them to a Queanbeyan labourer in 1907. There are no structures shown on the blocks on the 1913 survey. The two blocks were sold to another Queanbeyan labourer in 1939 before they were separated.

Block [redacted] was sold to a couple in 1940 who had previously lived on George Street. In 1950 title transferred to the couple's son, who lived in Oaks Estate his whole life, and built the fibro house with a War Service Loan in the early 1950s. Apart from Hazelbrook, this was one of only three houses on William Street during the early 1950s.

Title of block [redacted] was sold to a labourer in 1940, and transferred to family in 1948.

Block [redacted] Section 11, [redacted]



Description:

- brick veneer house with terracotta tiled roof and timber windows
- brick and wrought iron fence

History:

This block not subdivided and not developed on 1913 survey

Block [REDACTED] Section 11, [REDACTED]



Description:

- timber framed weatherboard house with concrete roof tiles and timber windows
- garage under
- brick fence, wrought iron gate

History:

This block not subdivided and not developed on 1913 survey

Block [REDACTED] Section 11, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1950s brick house with concrete tiled roof, steel framed windows, rendered brickwork and geometric steel balustrade
- garages under

History:

This block not subdivided and not developed on 1913 survey

(Block [REDACTED] Section 11, [REDACTED])



Description:

- 1970s brick veneer house with concrete roof tiles and aluminium windows
- garage under

History:

This block not subdivided and not developed on 1913 survey

Block [REDACTED] Section 11, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1980s brick veneer house with aluminium windows
- similar house behind built later as dual occupancy

History:

This block not subdivided and not developed on 1913 survey

Block [REDACTED] Section 11, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1980s brick veneer house with concrete roof tiles and aluminium windows
- timber picket fence

History:

Title of blocks 6 to 13 and 25 to 32, section 11 were purchased as part of an 11-acre parcel of land in 1927. Blocks 6 to 13 and 25 to 32 were sold to a woman in 1951, then split up for sale to various owners.

Blocks 29 to 32 were sold as a parcel to a man in 1954 who then sold blocks 25 to 28 to his brother in law in 1955.

Block [REDACTED] Section 11, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1970s brick veneer house with concrete roof tiles and aluminium windows
- skillion carport at side
- metal shed at rear

History:

Title of blocks 6 to 13 and 25 to 32, section 11 were purchased as part of an 11-acre parcel of land in 1927. Blocks 6 to 13 and 25 to 32 were sold to a woman in 1951, then split up for sale to various owners.

Blocks 29 to 32 were sold as a parcel to a man in 1954 who then sold blocks 25 to 28 to his brother in law in 1955.

Block [REDACTED] Section 11, [REDACTED]



Description:

- solid 1950s brick house with terracotta roof, Canberra red bricks, timber windows and stone facing to lower level
- garage below
- stone fence with wrought iron above

History:

Title of blocks 6 to 13 and 25 to 32, section 11 were purchased as part of an 11-acre parcel of land in 1927. Blocks 6 to 13 and 25 to 32 were sold to a woman in 1951, then split up for sale to various owners.

Blocks 29 to 32 were sold as a parcel to a man in 1954 who then sold blocks 25 to 28 to his brother in law in 1955.

Block [REDACTED] Section 11, [REDACTED]



Description:

- 1960s brick veneer house with concrete tiled roof and timber or PVC windows

History:

Title of blocks 6 to 13 and 25 to 32, section 11 were purchased as part of an 11-acre parcel of land in 1927. Blocks 6 to 13 and 25 to 32 were sold to a woman in 1951, then split up for sale to various owners.

Blocks 29 to 32 were sold as a parcel to a man in 1954 who then sold blocks 25 to 28 to his brother in law in 1955.

Section 12 (previously section L)

Block [REDACTED] Section 12, 8 [REDACTED]

Blocks [REDACTED], section 12 was previously blocks 10-12, section L



Description:

- 1950s brick house appears to be standard Canberra type with Canberra red bricks, timber windows, terracotta tiled roof
- separate brick garage and carport

History:

This block not subdivided and not developed on 1913 survey

Title of blocks 10 and 11 (likely to be blocks 20 & 25, 21 & 24, certainly some portion of the modern day blocks 20 - 25, section 12) was sold in 1889, and then in 1926. The water main was extended to William Street in 1945, and in 1946/47 a Queanbeyan carpenter built a weatherboard house, together with his father-in-law, on block 10 (likely to be blocks 20 & 25). This was the first post-WWII house built on William Street. The owner built a second house on the same block in about 1953, of brick, and moved into this house. His parents-in-law lived in the earlier weatherboard house. The owner later acquired all the blocks in this section.

Block [REDACTED] section 12) [REDACTED]

Blocks [REDACTED], section 12 was previously blocks 10-12, section L



Description:

- mature Cypress trees at front may predate house
- timber frame house just visible right at back of block

History:

Title of blocks 10 and 11 (likely to be blocks 20 & 25, 21 & 24, certainly some portion of the modern day blocks 20 - 25, section 12) was sold in 1889, and then in 1926. The water main was extended to William Street in 1945

Block [REDACTED] Section 12, [REDACTED]



Description:

- colorbond garage at front of block
- timber framed weatherboard cottage at rear with corrugated iron roof and timber framed windows

History:

This block not subdivided and not developed on 1913 survey

Blocks 23, 24 & 25, Section 12, No street address

Description:

These blocks only accessible from the river corridor up a steep embankment, they appear to have been subdivided from the rear of blocks 20, 21 & 22 at some stage, perhaps flood related?

History:

Title of blocks 10 and 11 (likely to be blocks 20 & 25, 21 & 24, certainly some portion of the modern day blocks 20 - 25, section 12) was sold in 1889, and then in 1926. The water main was extended to William Street in 1945.

Section 13 (previously part of sections 3, 6)

Block 3, Section 13

Description:

- vacant land, heavily treed

History:

Part of a parcel of land owned by the Queanbeyan Wool and Manufacturing Company from 1895 until 1898. The area included blocks 3-8 and 18-22 section c, blocks 11-16 and 28-31 section F, blocks 14-20 and blocks 36-40 section H, blocks 16-19 and section 35 sections K.

Block 4, Section 13

Description:

- some scattered structures
- open grassed area with some trees at the perimeter

History:

See above

Block 5, Section 13

Description:

- not currently built upon
- undulating grassed area with scattered plantings

History:

See above.

In 1926, title of blocks 9 – 11, 13 -17 & 23-24 section C, blocks 2-5, 7-10 and 32-34 section F, blocks 32-35 section H, blocks 6-13, 24-32 section K, blocks 10-11 section L were sold to a surveyor in 1901.

Block 6, Section 13

Description:

- banks of the Molonglo River, recently cleared of weed tree species

History:

Part of a parcel of land owned by the Queanbeyan Wool and Manufacturing Company from 1895 until 1898. The area included blocks 3-8 and 18-22 section c, blocks 11-16 and 28-31 section F, blocks 14-20 and blocks 36-40 section H, blocks 16-19 and section 35 sections K.

Section 14 – (previously section N)

Block 1, Section 14, No street address

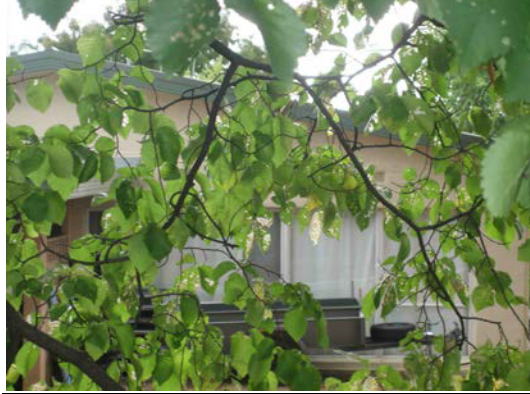
Description:

- this is a riverside block at the end of River Street

History:

This block not subdivided and not developed on 1913 survey

([redacted] or block [redacted], section 14?) [redacted]



Description:

- 1940s rendered brick house behind tall Colorbond fence and gate
- large mature trees including Elms and Monterey Pine
- site also used to store relocated timber framed showroom in four parts
- timber paling fence

History:

This is the Hazelbrook block

This block not subdivided and not developed on 1913 survey

Part Block [redacted], Section 14, [redacted]



Description:

- nursery at end of street

History:

Building located on a site of a different shape in this location on 1913 survey

Section 15

Blocks 1-3 previously section L

Block 1, Section 15, 6 William Street

Description:

- vacant block

History:

Title of blocks 1-9 section L (now blocks 1-3 section 15) transferred to a Queanbeyan grazier in 1888. The property was mortgaged to the Bank of NSW in 1890 and in 1912 title transferred to a man of the same family name, a Bungendore hotel keeper, after the bank exercised power of sale. Later the same year, the property was sold to a Queanbeyan stock inspector. The owner is understood to have made a request to the Commonwealth government, following which the land was acquired by the Commonwealth in 1914.

Block 2, Section 15, 4 William Street

Description:

-vacant block

History:

Title of blocks 1-9 section L (now blocks 1-3 section 15) transferred to a Queanbeyan grazier in 1888. The property was mortgaged to the Bank of NSW in 1890 and in 1912 title transferred to a man of the same family name, a Bungendore hotel keeper, after the bank exercised power of sale. Later the same year, the property was sold to a Queanbeyan stock inspector. The owner is understood to have made a request to the Commonwealth government, following which the land was acquired by the Commonwealth in 1914.

Blocks 4 and 5, Section 15, Community Hall, William Street



Previously blocks 1 and 2, section L

Description:

1950s era painted weatherboard community hall with original pitched roof form intact, later Colorbond roofing material. Extensively modified internally, various ramps added at entrances

Separate freestanding toilet building with flat metal roof, painted timber board and batten cladding and painted timber louvres. No longer in use

History:

This site not subdivided or developed on 1913 survey

The building was transported to the site in early 1953 from Eastlake Hotel, where it had previously been a dormitory building, divided into small rooms. The Oaks Estate community replaced the inner walls, lining and flooring before the building was pressed into community service. It is remembered for its use over time as a Mothercraft Centre, a function room for dances, Christmas parties and wedding receptions, and a meeting place for the Oaks Estate Progress Association.
