

Australian Capital Territory

# Heritage (Decision about Provisional Registration of Arboreta: Piccadilly Circus, Blundell's & Reid's Pinch) Notice 2012

Notifiable Instrument NI2012—383

made under the

***Heritage Act 2004* s34 Notice of decision about Provisional Registration**

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**1. Name of instrument**

This instrument is the *Heritage (Decision about Provisional Registration of Arboreta: Piccadilly Circus, Blundell's & Reid's Pinch) Notice 2012*.

**2. Commencement**

This instrument commences on the day after notification.

**3. Notice of Decision**

Pursuant to Section 32 of the *Heritage Act 2004* the ACT Heritage Council has decided not to provisionally register Arboreta: Piccadilly Circus, Blundell's & Reid's Pinch to the ACT Heritage Register.

Jennifer O'Connell  
A/g Secretary  
ACT Heritage Council

19 July 2012



## ACT Heritage Council

### STATEMENT OF REASONS

#### **DECISION NOT TO PROVISIONALLY REGISTER ARBORETA: PICCADILLY CIRCUS, BLUNDELL'S & REID'S PINCH IN THE ACT HERITAGE REGISTER**

##### **Summary**

Piccadilly Circus, Blundell's & Reid's Pinch arboreta are nominated to the ACT Heritage Register.

In January 2003 the arboreta were destroyed by bushfire.

Following destruction their integrity has been lost and insufficient evidence remains to meet any of the significance criteria of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

This Statement of Reasons provides an assessment of the Arboreta: Piccadilly Circus, Blundell's & Reid's Pinch and finds that these places do not meet any of the criteria of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

##### **Background**

In January 2003 the arboreta were destroyed by bushfire and insufficient evidence remains to meet the significance criteria of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

This Statement of Reasons provides an assessment of the Arboreta: Piccadilly Circus, Blundell's & Reid's Pinch and finds that the arboreta do not meet any of the criteria of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

At Meeting 48 on 19 July 2012 the Council decided that the arboreta are not eligible for provisional registration and this is reflected in the following Statement of Reasons.

##### **Assessment**

In assessing the nomination for the Arboreta: Piccadilly Circus, Blundell's & Reid's Pinch, the Council considered:

- The material identified under **References** below;
- Site inspection of June 2012.

The Council's assessment against the criteria specified in s.10 of the *Heritage Act 2004* is as follows.

**Criterion (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*

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

*Heritage Council assessment:*

The arboreta do not meet criterion (a) or (b).

**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 practiced, is in danger of being lost or is of exceptional interest***

*Heritage Council assessment:*

The Council recognises that prior to the 2003 fires the arboreta provided evidence of a distinctive land use and function that enable scientific monitoring and research. Following 2003 there is insufficient evidence and integrity for the arboreta to demonstrate this function or land use.

The arboreta do not meet this criterion.

**Criterion (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***

*Heritage Council assessment:*

The Council recognises that prior to 2003 the arboreta were valuable to students and others interested in arboriculture, forestry and horticulture however; there is no evidence that the current condition of the arboreta are highly valued by the community.

The arboreta do not meet this criterion.

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

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

**Criterion (g) *it is a notable example of a kind of place or object and demonstrates the main characteristics of that kind.***

*Heritage Council assessment:*

The arboreta do not meet criterion (e) (f) or (g).

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

*Heritage Council assessment:*

The arboreta had a strong association with the Forestry Bureau and its successor the Forestry & Timber Bureau. It is understood that early planting of the arboreta was undertaken by students of the Australian Forestry School, which was run by the Forestry Bureau until the school closed in 1965 and the Department of Forestry at the ANU began enrolling students. Some plots in the arboreta are associated with the world's foremost forest geneticists of the day – Professor Syrach

Larsen of Denmark, Professor Hyun of South Korea and Dr Jack Fielding of Australia and their development of the unique hybrids in the *Pinus* species.

The Council recognises the strong association of the arboreta with the Forestry Bureau and its successor the Forestry & Timber Bureau, however due to their destruction by fire in January 2003, all original plantings, plots and formations have been destroyed. The integrity of the places has been lost and insufficient evidence remains to meet the criterion of the *ACT Heritage Act 2004*.

The arboreta do not meet this criterion.

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

*Heritage Council assessment:*

The arboreta do not meet this criterion.

**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***

*Heritage Council assessment:*

Prior to 2003 the arboreta were used as research sites for collecting botanical and chemical specimens and measuring tree growth. They were considered excellent sites for teaching species recognition and enabled people to experience exotic forests and obtain an understanding of the growth habits of particular species.

Following their destruction in January 2003 by bushfire, insufficient evidence remains to enable meaningful research of the arboreta.

The arboreta do not meet this criterion.

**Criterion (k) *for a place—it exhibits unusual richness, diversity or significant transitions of flora, fauna or natural landscapes and their elements***

**Criterion (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*

*Heritage Council assessment:*

The arboreta do not meet criterion (k) or (l).

## History

A Bill to establish a Forestry and Timber Bureau was introduced into Federal Parliament in 1927, but was not passed until 1930. One of the functions of the Forestry Bureau was the establishment of experimental stations for the study of silviculture, forest management and forest protection (Carron, 1985).

Pursuant to this, in the period 1928 to 1969, 34 arboreta were established in and near the ACT to test various species for possible introduction into Australia for timber. At that time, and continuing to the present day, there was a large import bill for timber, mainly for softwood. The species planted were therefore mainly conifers. Since it was felt that lowland areas would not be available for forestry or would be less suitable climatically, the plantings were concentrated on the higher parts of the ACT.

The arboreta were a tangible outcome of Commonwealth forest research activities aimed at producing softwood timber to substitute for imports. The arboreta demonstrated scientific thinking of the time, with the different species planted in blocks of about 80 so their plantation growth characteristics under climatic conditions at higher altitudes could be compared. The unique plantings of different provenances of Radiata pine, Bishop pine and Knobcone pine were highly significant in that they confirmed the widespread use of Radiata pine for plantation forestry in Australia.

### Piccadilly Circus

Piccadilly Circus Arboretum (Arboretum No 4) is located in Namadgi National Park, near the Mt Franklin Road about 0.5 kilometres south of its junction with the Brindabella Road at an elevation of 1240 metres.

Piccadilly Circus Arboretum was one of the earlier arboreta and the first plantings were made in 1932 and 1933, with a few later plantings. The arboretum is the fourth highest of the series of arboreta, and is at about the same elevation as the Bendora arboretum. It has an easterly aspect.

Piccadilly Circus Arboretum occupied an area of about 2.02 hectares, or 5 acres, and consisted of 24 plots, most of which were square plots of 0.04ha or 0.1 acres each. A variety of exotic trees were planted in the arboretum, with some plots containing up to 80 specimens of a single species.

As at October 1999, about 25 species were represented in Piccadilly Circus Arboretum in 24 plots. The great majority of these species were softwoods, with many growing well and having potential as possible plantation species for Australia. Included in the plots were a series of western yellow pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) from different provenances (locations within its natural range). Other interesting species were Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*, known as Oregon in the timber trade), Torrey pine (*Pinus torreyana*, an endangered species), several species of spruce and fir, two provenances of black pine (*Pinus nigra* var. *maritima* and var. *calabrica*) and a plot of giant sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*).

The arboretum was used for educational functions and classes by the Australian Forestry School, Yarralumla who visited the plots as part of their studies. The Australian National University's Department of Forestry also made use of the arboretum.

Growth rates of the trees were determined through a measuring program with results disseminated primarily through conference proceedings and publications with the data still being utilised today. Measurements continued until the early 1970s.

The arboretum was regularly visited by the public and presented a good opportunity for people who wished to study and enjoy examples of mature exotic tree species.

### Blundell's

Blundell's Arboretum (Arboretum No 1) is located in Uriarra Forest, approximately 13 kilometres by road from the junction of Uriarra Road and Brindabella Road (near Uriarra homestead) and is about 30 km to the west of Canberra at an elevation of 780 metres.

Blundell's arboretum is the largest in the series of 34 arboreta established by the Forestry Board and its successors. It is at about 780 metres elevation with an easterly aspect. Most of the trees in Blundell's arboretum were planted between 1929 and 1959. Many of the original plots were destroyed in a bush fire in January 1939 and subsequently replanted, often with different species. Blundell's Arboretum consisted of 97 plots, usually 0.04 hectares in area. The arboretum was at an elevation of 780 metres on a gentle east-facing slope, in a forest setting surrounded by commercial pine plantations. It was accessible by car along 2 km of forest roads leading off the Brindabella road.

Additional plots were established to the north and east of the original arboretum, some of which contained progeny trials of Monterey pine (*Pinus radiata*). These were felled and returned to commercial forestry. Evidence of other additional plots (est.1956) southeast of the arboretum are still visible and included some unique plantings of hybrids developed by the world's foremost forest geneticists of the day (Professor Syrach Larsen of Denmark, Professor Hyun of South Korea and Dr Jack Fielding of Australia).

A "poplar arboretum" was established on the nearby Blundell's Flat from 1959-63 these trees were planted in lines, rather than plots, which presented a contrast with the plots in the arboretum.

The arboretum was used for educational functions and classes by the Australian Forestry School, Yarralumla who visited the plots as part of their studies. The Australian National University's Department of Forestry also made use of the arboretum.

Growth rates of the trees were determined through a measuring program with results disseminated primarily through conference proceedings and publications with the data still being utilised today. Measurements continued until the early 1970s.

The arboretum was regularly visited by the public and presented a good opportunity for people who wished to study and enjoy examples of mature exotic tree species.

### Reid's Pinch

Reid's Pinch South Arboretum (Arboretum No 3) is located adjacent to the southern side of the Brindabella Road at its junction with Blundell's Creek Road, approximately 33 km south west of Canberra, near the entrance into Namadgi National at an elevation of 950 to 1000 metres.

Reid's Pinch South arboretum was one of the earlier arboreta with the first planting completed in 1932. The trees in some of the plots were killed by fire in January 1939, and the plots were subsequently re-planted.

Reid's Pinch arboretum occupied an area of about 5 hectares, consisted of 55 plots mostly of 0.04 ha each. Forty one exotic species of tree were represented in the arboretum together with 3 provenances of Radiata pine and 6 provenances of Bishop pine.

The arboretum was used for educational functions and classes by the Australian Forestry School, Yarralumla who visited the plots as part of their studies. The Australian National University's Department of Forestry also made use of the arboretum.

Growth rates of the trees were determined through a measuring program with results disseminated primarily through conference proceedings and publications with the data still being utilised today. Measurements continued until the early 1970s.

The arboretum was regularly visited by the public and presented a good opportunity for people who wished to study and enjoy examples of mature exotic tree species.

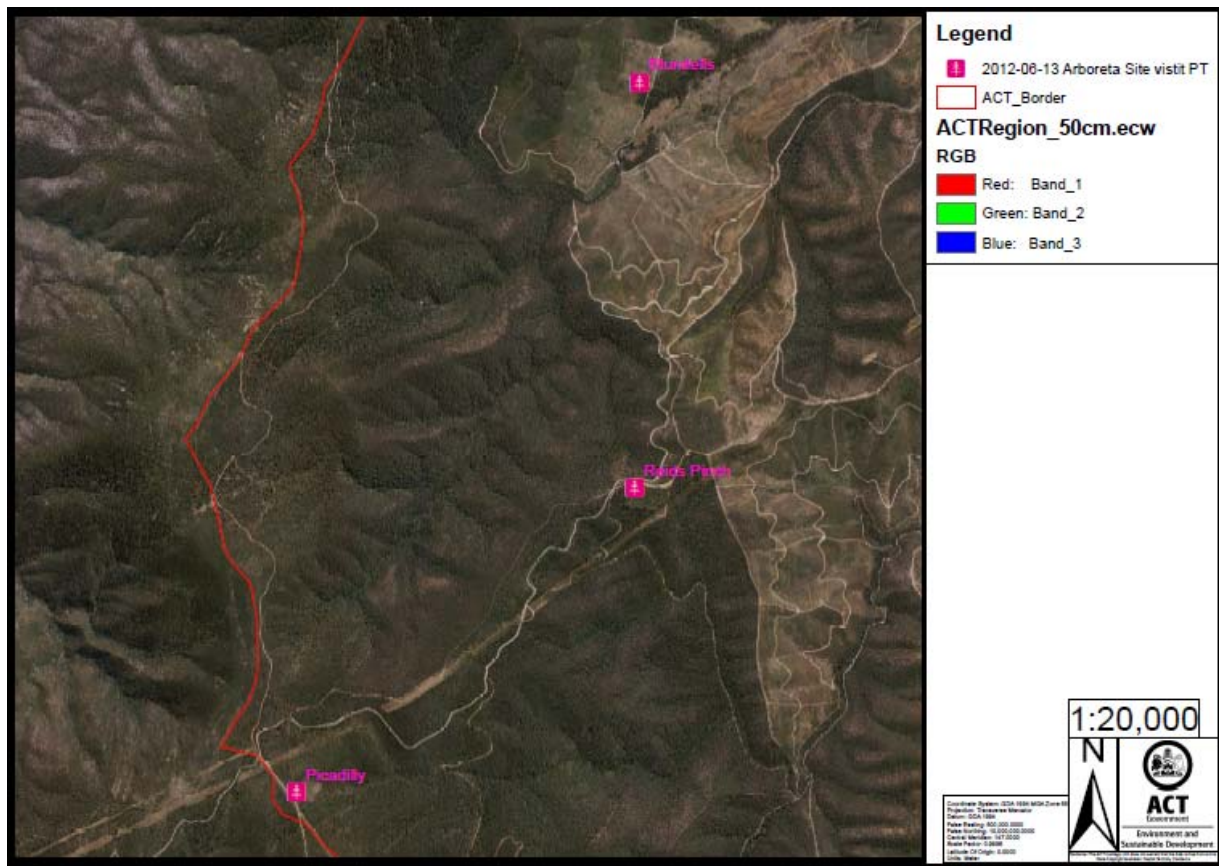
## Description

### Physical condition and integrity

In January 2003 the Arboreta: Piccadilly Circus, Blundell's and Reid's Pinch were destroyed by bushfire.

As at June 2012, no plantings from prior to 2003 remained; however considerable re-growth, consisting of eucalyptus saplings, ferns and a small number of Radiata pine saplings had overrun the sites.

## Maps and Images





Piccadilly Circus



Piccadilly Circus Arboretum, 13 June 2012, ACT Heritage Unit



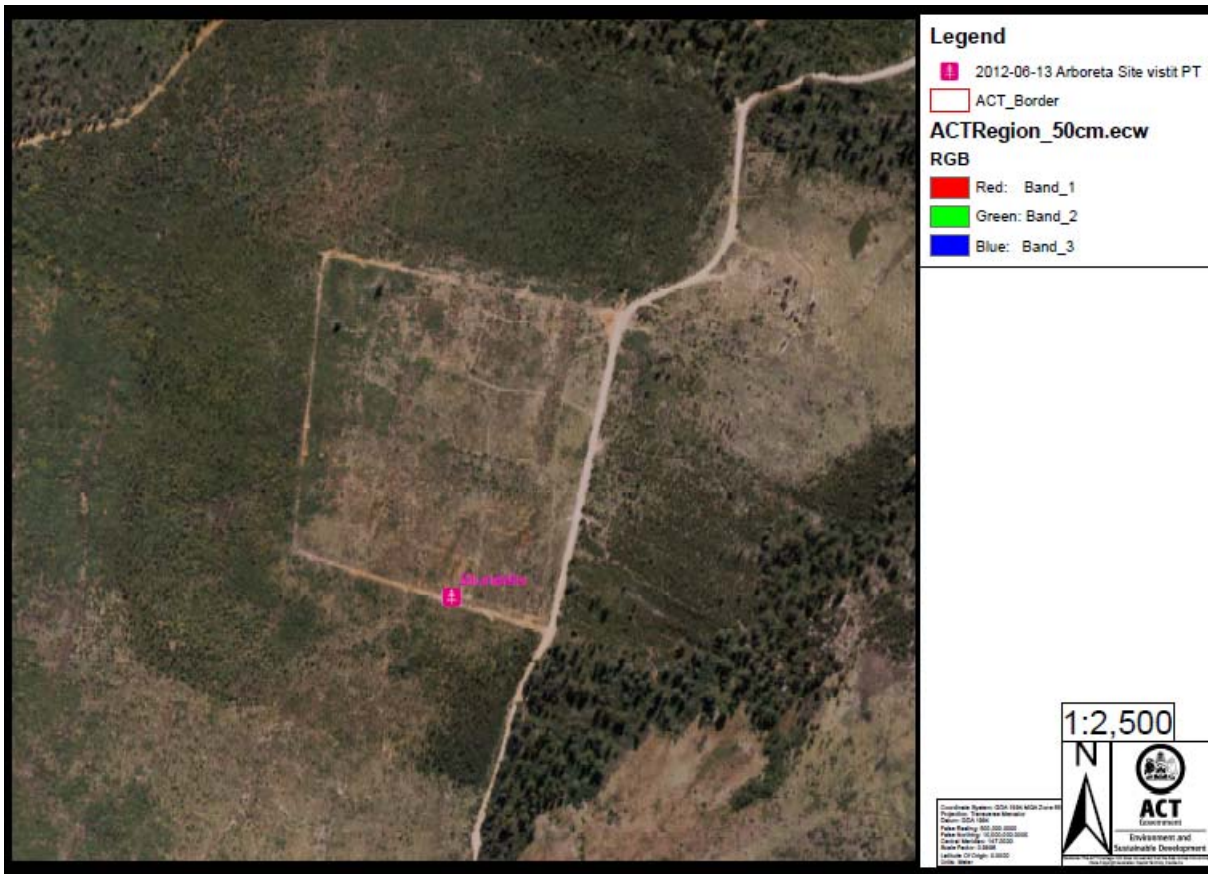


Piccadilly Circus Arboretum, 13 June 2012, ACT Heritage Unit



Piccadilly Circus Arboretum, 13 June 2012, ACT Heritage Unit

Blundell's



Blundell's Arboretum, 13 June 2012, ACT Heritage Unit





Blundell's Arboretum, 13 June 2012, ACT Heritage Unit



Blundell's Arboretum, 13 June 2012, ACT Heritage Unit

# Reid's Pinch



Reid Pinch Arboretum, 13 June 2012, ACT Heritage Unit





Reid Pinch Arboretum, 13 June 2012, ACT Heritage Unit



Reid Pinch Arboretum, 13 June 2012, ACT Heritage Unit

## References

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### **Conclusion**

In January 2003 the arboreta were destroyed by bushfire.

Following destruction their integrity has been lost and insufficient evidence remains to meet the significance criteria of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

This Statement of Reasons provides an assessment of the Arboreta and finds that they do not meet any of the criteria of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

**Jennifer O'Connell**  
**A/g Secretary**  
**ACT Heritage Council**

**19 July 2012**