

Heritage (Decision about Provisional Registration of the Corroboree Ground and Aboriginal Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River, Majura and Jerrabomberra) Notice 2017

Notifiable Instrument NI2017–171

made under the

Heritage Act 2004, s32 (Decision about provisional registration) s34 (Notice of decision about provisional registration) and s37 (Public consultation about registration of place or object)

1 Name of instrument

This instrument is the *Heritage (Decision about Provisional Registration of the Corroboree Ground and Aboriginal Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River, Majura and Jerrabomberra) Notice 2017*.

2 Decision about provisional registration

On 6 April 2017, the ACT Heritage Council (the **Heritage Council**) decided to provisionally register the Corroboree Ground and Aboriginal Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River, Majura and Jerrabomberra (the **Place**).

3 Registration details of the Place

The registration details of the Place are in the schedule.

4 Reasons for the decision

The Heritage Council decided to provisionally register the Place because it has heritage significance as it meets one or more of the heritage significance criteria in section 10 of the *Heritage Act 2004* (the **Act**), as set out in the schedule.

5 Date of provisional registration

The date of provisional registration is 7 April 2017 (being the day after the Heritage Council entered into the heritage register the registration details for the Place together with an indication that the registration is provisional).

6 Indication of the Heritage Council's intention

The Heritage Council intends to decide whether to register the Place under Division 6.2 of the Act during the period of provisional registration.

7 Invitation to make written comments during public consultation period

The Heritage Council invites written comments about the registration of the Place. Any written comments must be made within 4 weeks after the day this notice is notified and are to be provided to:

The Secretary
ACT Heritage Council
GPO Box 158
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Email: heritage@act.gov.au

Fiona Moore
A/g Secretary (as delegate for)
ACT Heritage Council
6 April 2017

Schedule

(See sections 3 and 4)



ACT Heritage Council

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

HERITAGE REGISTER

(Provisional Registration)

For the purposes of s. 33 of the *Heritage Act 2004*, a provisional entry to the heritage register has been prepared by the ACT Heritage Council for the following place:

Corroboree Ground and Aboriginal Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River

Block 700 MAJURA

Part Blocks 662, 663, 699, 680, 701, 702, 703, 704 MAJURA

Part Blocks 2002, 2091, 2117 JERRABOMBERRA

OAKS ESTATE Block 22, Section 2; Block 13, Section 3; Block 4, Section 13; Block 6, Section 13, Block 5, Section 14; Part Block 15, Section 2; Part Block 19, Section 2; Part Block 20, Section 2; Part Block 21, Section 2; Part Block 5, Section 13; Part Block 1, Section 14; Part Block 4, Section 14; Part Block 1, Section 17

DATE OF DECISION

6 April 2017

DATE OF PROVISIONAL REGISTRATION

7 April 2017 Notifiable Instrument: 2017–

PERIOD OF EFFECT OF PROVISIONAL REGISTRATION

Start Date: 7 April 2017 End Date: 6 September 2017

Extended Period (if applicable) Start Date _____ End Date _____

Copies of the Register Entry are available for inspection at ACT Heritage. For further information please contact:

The Secretary
ACT Heritage Council
GPO Box 158
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Telephone 13 22 81

This statement refers to the location of the Corroboree Ground and Aboriginal Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River as required in s. 12 (b) of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

LOCATION OF THE PLACE

The Corroboree Ground and Aboriginal Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River encompasses Block 700 District of Majura

Part Blocks 662, 663, 680, 699, 701, 702, 703, 704 District of Majura,

Block 2117 District of Jerrabomberra ,

Oaks Estate: Block 22, Section 2; Block 13, Section 3; Block 4, Section 13; Block 6, Section 13, Block 5, Section 14; Part Block 15, Section 2; Part Block 19, Section 2; Part Block 20, Section 2; Part Block 21, Section 2; Part Block 5, Section 13; Part Block 1, Section 14; Part Block 4, Section 14; and Part Block 1, Section 17.

It is situated on the northern bank of the Molonglo River, primarily within the 100 year flood zone, with the exception of an elevated area that is enveloped by the junction of the Molonglo and Queanbeyan rivers.

This section refers to the description of the Corroboree Ground and Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River as required in s.12(c) of the *Heritage Act 2004*. The attributes described in this section form part of the heritage significance of the place. For the purposes of s. 12(c) of the *Heritage Act 2004*, the boundary of the place is at Image 1.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLACE

Corroboree Ground and Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River is encompassed by the area of land, detailed in Image 1, from the confluence of the Queanbeyan and Molonglo Rivers to Oaks Estate Road linked to historical descriptions as corroboree grounds.

The boundary, as demonstrated in Image 1, excludes the area identified as ‘Sand Quarry.’

Corroboree Ground and Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River includes any artefactual material relating to Aboriginal land use in the area, which may occur anywhere within the provisionally registered area, particularly within 100m of the Queanbeyan and Molonglo Rivers or buried within the alluvial soil within the 100 year flood zone (note: all Aboriginal heritage objects and places are protected under the *Heritage Act 2004*, regardless of registration status).

This statement refers to the heritage significance of the Corroboree Ground and Aboriginal Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River as required in s.12(d) of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Corroboree Ground and Aboriginal Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River represents traditional Aboriginal ceremonies and burial practices, and important figures, such as Bill the Ram, in the Aboriginal history of the ACT. The historical report relating to the site from early European settlers who witnessed the corroboree, the burial, and the subsequent exhumation represents one of few detailed recordings of a corroboree and a burial at a specific location on the ACT. The place was an important pathway and meeting place for several groups of the region with a connection to the Bogong Moth harvest. The place is also a documented location for an important Aboriginal

ceremony and a burial. As such, there is a high likelihood that archaeological investigation will yield unique information on important Aboriginal lifeways and contact history for which there is currently little data for in the ACT. [Criteria (a) (b) (c) (g)].

CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE

The guiding conservation objective is that the Corroboree Ground and Aboriginal Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River shall be conserved and appropriately managed in a manner respecting its heritage significance.

The ACT Heritage Council may adopt heritage guidelines applicable to the place under s25 of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

For further information on guidelines applicable to the place, or for advice on proposed works or development, please contact ACT Heritage on 13 22 81.

REASON FOR PROVISIONAL REGISTRATION

Corroboree Ground and Aboriginal Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River has been assessed against the heritage significance criteria and been found to have heritage significance when assessed against criteria [a, b, c, and g] under s.10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

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

In assessing the heritage significance of Corroboree Ground and Aboriginal Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River, Jerrabomberra and Majura, the Council considered:

- the original nomination and documentary evidence supplied by the nominator;
- the Council's *Heritage Assessment Policy* (February 2015);
- information provided by a site inspection on 16 March 2017 by ACT Heritage;
- the report by ACT Heritage titled, *Background Information Corroboree Ground and Aboriginal Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River* April 2017, containing site photographs as well as information on history, description, condition and integrity.

Pursuant to s.10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*, a place or object has heritage significance if it satisfies one or more of the following criteria. Future research may alter the findings of this assessment.

(a) importance to the course or pattern of the ACT's cultural or natural history;

Corroboree Ground and Aboriginal Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River, Jerrabomberra and Majura, meets this criterion.

The place bears a strong association with a well-known and detailed recording of an Aboriginal burial, and an important Aboriginal ceremony: the corroboree. The recording (a piece in the Queanbeyan Age) places both events near the Molonglo and Queanbeyan Rivers in the autumn of 1862. There are few records in the ACT's history that locate significant Aboriginal ceremonies such as these at specific dates and locations, with similar levels of detail.

(b) has uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the ACT's cultural or natural history;

Corroboree Ground and Aboriginal Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River, Jerrabomberra and Majura, meets this criterion.

The place is associated with one of few recordings of a traditional corroboree and also burial of an Aboriginal person ('Billy the Ram') in the ACT, using burial methods that are no longer practiced, making the site uncommon, rare, and endangered.

In addition, there are few other recordings of corroborees on the Limestone Plains. William Wright of Lanyon observed corroborees between the 1840's and 1850's, as did William Rile at Tuggeranong in 1831. Bluett noted the importance of the foot of Black Mountain and Duntroon Dairy as Corroboree grounds, and in 1927 Robinson identified Corroboree Park in Ainslie as a location for gatherings.

Recordings of burials are also rare in the context of the ACT. Clause-Long (2006) has collected information pertaining to certain recordings on the Limestone Plains and in the surrounding region. Some were recorded as 'traditional,' performed by Aboriginal people, or by European people under instruction (such as the McKeahnie family for Jimmy the Rover). Others appear to have been performed according to European custom. She lists burials of certain individuals at Ginninderra, Charnwood, Glenwood, Booroomba, Queanbeyan, Cotter Falls, and Tharwa (Onyong). Of these, Onyong's Grave Site is listed on the ACT Heritage Register.

(c) potential to yield important information that will contribute to an understanding of the ACT's cultural or natural history;

Corroboree Ground and Aboriginal Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River, Jerrabomberra and Majura, meets this criterion.

The area around confluence of the Molonglo and Queanbeyan Rivers was a known meeting place for several groups of the region on an Aboriginal pathway with particular connection to the annual Bogong Moth harvest. The potential for buried significant Aboriginal cultural heritage exists. The location was highlighted in 1862, on the occasion of the last corroboree recorded there, as being on the banks of the Queanbeyan River, within view of The Oaks. Aboriginal use and occupation of the area would have extended to both sides of the rivers depending on the time of year and the activity taking place, which also conforms to the generally accepted model of Aboriginal site locations in the region as most likely occurring within 100m of water sources. This place has the potential to yield further information about Aboriginal culture in the ACT and region, and contribute particularly to greater understanding of the contact period in the region.

(d) importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or objects;

Corroboree Ground and Aboriginal Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River, Jerrabomberra and Majura, does not meet this criterion.

There is insufficient evidence before the Council at this time to assess whether the site demonstrates the principal characteristics of its class of place, because the exact location of the recorded corroboree or Billy the Ram's burial is unknown, and has not been examined.

(e) importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by the ACT community or a

cultural group in the ACT;

Corroboree Ground and Aboriginal Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River, Jerrabomberra and Majura, does not meet this criterion.

There is insufficient evidence before the Council at this time suggesting the Aboriginal community of the ACT values the place for its aesthetic characteristics to a significant degree.

(f) importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement for a particular period;

Corroboree Ground and Aboriginal Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River, Jerrabomberra and Majura, does not meet this criterion.

There is no evidence before the Council at this time to suggest that the place represents exceptionally fine application of techniques and approaches to an Aboriginal Corroboree or burial for the period, because the exact location of the corroboree site and Billy the Ram's burial is unknown, and physical evidence has not been examined.

(g) has a strong or special association with the ACT community, or a cultural group in the ACT for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;

Corroboree Ground and Aboriginal Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River, Jerrabomberra and Majura, meets this criterion.

This site has a special association with the Aboriginal people of the ACT as a site representing a traditional ceremony, and a site representing traditional burial methods. Places where corroborees and/or burials have been recorded are rare and highly valued, and as such, are highly enduring in oral sources and collective conscious. The account of Billy the Ram endures in contemporary cultural memory, and the focus of that memory has been upon the river location where the corroboree and the burial are recorded.

(h) has a special association with the life or work of a person, or people, important to the history of the ACT.

Corroboree Ground and Aboriginal Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River, Jerrabomberra and Majura, does not meet this criterion.

Billy the Ram was a well-known figure in the ACT and surrounding region. His incident of his burial was reported not only in the Queanbeyan Age but also as far away as Goulburn. He is an important figure in the history of the ACT, particularly with regards to contact history between Aboriginal people and European settlers. At this time, it is untested whether he was influential to the course of the ACT's history, however, future research or consultation may change this assessment. A comparative example would be Onyong's Grave Site, which represents the burial of a person who is widely regarded as an influential leader in the history of the ACT.

Image 1. SITE PLAN – Corroboree Ground and Aboriginal Cultural Area



Corroboree Ground and Aboriginal Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River (Jerrabomberra and Majura)