

Heritage (Decision about Provisional Registration of Hooker Street Housing Precinct, Yarralumla) Notice 2007 (No 1)*

Notifiable Instrument NI2007—121

made under the

Heritage Act 2004, s. 34 Notice of decision about Provisional Registration

1. Name of instrument

This instrument is the Heritage (Decision about Provisional Registration of Hooker Street Housing Precinct, Yarralumla) Notice 2007 (No 1).

2. Commencement

This instrument commences on the day after notification.

3. Notice of Decision

Pursuant to Section 34 of the *Heritage Act 2004* the ACT Heritage Council has decided not to provisionally register Hooker Street Housing Precinct, Yarralumla.

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Gerhard Zatschler
Secretary ACT Heritage Council
GPO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2602

23 April 2007



ACT Heritage Council

STATEMENT OF REASONS “HOOKER STREET HOUSING PRECINCT, YARRALUMLA”

DECISION REGARDING THE INCLUSION OF THE HOOKER STREET HOUSING PRECINCT WITH THE ACT HERITAGE REGISTER

Background

The Hooker Street Housing Precinct, Yarralumla (1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 17, 18 Hooker Street) was nominated for assessment pursuant to entry to the interim ACT Heritage Places Register on 30 September 1993. 18 Hooker Street is already nominated for listing under Banks/Hutchins of the ACT Heritage Register.

Initially, the nomination included 20 Hooker Street, which was dropped by the nominator on 8 January 1994. At its meeting on 21 August 2003, the Heritage Council deferred the decision about the nomination of the Hooker Street due to lack of sufficient information.

The Hooker Street Housing Precinct is in close proximity to Hutchens Street where a number of houses are included with the Early Canberra Brickworks Housing Precinct listed under the ACT Heritage Register. These houses comprise of red brickwork walls, pitched tiled roofs, timber framed windows and are illustrative of the early settlement of Canberra. However, the houses on Hooker Street do not represent a similar architectural character mainly because of recent development that detracts from the heritage significance of the area.

Since the initial nomination, a high level of intervention has been made to the houses on Hooker Street, which includes demolition and replacement of dwellings, addition of storey and rear wings to existing houses. It is considered that this has resulted in an inconsistent heritage and streetscape character for the Hooker Street.

In particular the street lacks integrity with several of the houses having been altered or replaced. Detailed reasoning of why the street does not meet the threshold for listing under the heritage criteria is included under Assessment.

Assessment

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

In assessing the nomination for the Hooker Street Housing Precinct, Yarralumla, the Council considered:

- The original nomination form provided by the nominator.
- Materials held on file by Council on the Assessment File:94/17857.
- The physical evidence and surrounding context as ascertained from a tour of the areas by conservation officers individually during the assessment period, photographs shown as below:

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Fig. A: 1 Hooker Street



Fig. B: 3 Hooker Street



Fig. C: 5 Hooker Street.



Fig. D: 7 Hooker Street



Fig.E: 9 Hooker Street



Fig.F: 11 Hooker Street



Fig.G 17 Hooker Street



Fig. H: 18 Hooker Street

It should be noted that the nominator addressed none of the criteria at the time of nomination in 1993.

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In relation to the place:

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”;

Heritage Council assessment:

The houses on Hooker Street are constructed of timber, face brick walls and pitched roof. It is considered that they do not demonstrate high levels of technical achievement, as this construction method was widely used at the time of construction in the 1920s and 1930s. A limited number of houses have certain levels of design and aesthetic qualities however these qualities are not unique and significant enough to warrant listing under the ACT Heritage.

The Hooker Street Housing Precinct does not meet the threshold for heritage listing under this criterion.

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

Heritage Council assessment:

No community or cultural groups have made representations to or provided evidence to Council to indicate that the place exhibits outstanding design or aesthetic qualities that are highly valued by the community. Since their initial construction, most of the buildings on Hooker Street have been extended, altered or replaced, which diminishes their ability to demonstrate design qualities.

As there is no evidence of the community valuing the design or aesthetic qualities of the Hooker Street, Yarralumla. Hooker Street Housing Precinct does not meet the threshold for heritage listing under this criterion.

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 houses on Hooker Street are not individually important as evidence of the phase of Canberra’s history that is amply reflected at other sites and is not in danger of being lost.

The Hooker Street Housing Precinct does not meet the threshold for heritage listing under 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:

There is no evidence that the Hooker Street Housing Precinct is highly valued by a community or cultural group for reasons of strong or special religious, spiritual, cultural, educational or social associations.

The Hooker Street Housing Precinct does not meet the threshold for heritage listing under this criterion.

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

Heritage Council assessment:

There is no evidence that the Hooker Street Housing Precinct is significant to the Aboriginal community.

The Hooker Street Housing Precinct does not meet the threshold for heritage listing under this criterion.

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

Heritage Council assessment:

The houses on Hooker Street do not demonstrate a rare or unique example of construction type. The houses at 5 and 17 Hooker Street have been replaced since the initial nomination; therefore do not have any heritage significance. Other nominated houses demonstrate certain levels of aesthetic qualities and intactness, however the construction method used for these houses was a very common method used in ACT at the time of construction. It is considered that the Hooker Street Housing Precinct does not demonstrate a consistent intactness and streetscape character due to extensive levels of intervention since the time of the nomination.

The Hooker Street Housing Precinct is therefore not assessed as a particularly good demonstration of this criterion, and does not meet the threshold for heritage listing under this criterion.

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:

While Hooker Street was likely conceived as a relatively homogenous group of houses built using mainly timber and brick, since their construction most of the houses of the Hooker Street have been altered to significant degrees and some of the blocks along the street totally redeveloped with new houses. The precinct no longer exhibits notable characteristics of a particular kind of place.

The Hooker Street Housing Precinct does not meet the threshold for heritage listing under this criterion.

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 Hooker Street Housing Precinct and its associated houses are shown on maps published by the Government Printer in 1933. It may have certain associations with the early settlement of Canberra however recent redevelopment of the area has diminished its heritage significance and its contribution it would have had on the Yarralumla area. Early Canberra Brickworks Housing Precinct included with the Heritage Register demonstrates the significance of this housing

period to a significant degree. There is no strong evidence that Hooker Street has had strong associations with a person and/or group.

The Hooker Street Housing Precinct does not meet the threshold for heritage listing under 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:
Not applicable.

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:

The Hooker Street Housing Precinct does not demonstrate an overt likelihood of providing information valuable for research that would give a wider understanding of natural or cultural history.

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

Heritage Council assessment:
Not applicable.

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:
This criterion is not applicable.

Conclusion

The ACT Heritage Council finds that the Hooker Street Housing Precinct at Yarralumla is of insufficient heritage value to warrant provisional registration in the ACT Heritage Register.

Dr Michael Pearson (Chair)
ACT Heritage Council
April 2007