

Heritage (Decision about Provisional Registration of Canberra Girls Grammar School Boarding House, Deakin) Notice 2008 (No 1)

Notifiable Instrument NI 2008 - 263

made under the

Heritage Act 2004 section 34 Notice of decision about provisional registration

1. Name of instrument

This instrument is the Heritage (Decision about Provisional Registration for Canberra Girls Grammar School Boarding House, Deakin) Notice 2008 (No 1).

2. Registration details of the place

Registration details of the place are at [Attachment A](#): Provisional Register entry for Canberra Girls Grammar School Boarding House, Deakin.

3. Reason for decision

The ACT Heritage Council has decided that Canberra Girls Grammar School Boarding House, Deakin meets one or more of the heritage significance criteria at s 10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*. The provisional register entry is at [Attachment A](#).

4. Date of Provisional Registration

30 June 2008.

5. Indication of council's intention

The council intends to decide whether to register the place under division 6.2.

6. Public consultation period

The Council invites public comment by 4 August 2008 on the provisional registration of Canberra Girls Grammar School Boarding House, Deakin to

The Secretary
ACT Heritage Council
GPO Box 158
CANBERRA ACT 2602

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

30 June 2008



ACT Heritage Council

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

**HERITAGE REGISTER
(Provisional Registration Details)**

Place

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

- **CANBERRA GIRLS GRAMMAR SCHOOL BOARDING HOUSE at Deakin**

DATE OF PROVISIONAL REGISTRATION

Notified:1.07.08 Notifiable Instrument: 2008/263

PERIOD OF EFFECT OF PROVISIONAL REGISTRATION

Start Date [30 June 2008] End Date [23 September 2008]

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

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

The Secretary
ACT Heritage Council
GPO Box 158, Canberra, ACT 2601

Telephone: 132281 Facsimile: (02) 6207 2229

IDENTIFICATION OF THE PLACE

- Canberra Girls' Grammar School Boarding House at Block 2 Section 9, Deakin, District of Canberra Central.
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HISTORY OF THE PLACE

The Canberra Girls' Grammar School, originally named St Gabriel's School (1926-1933), then the Canberra Church of England Girls Grammar School (1933-2000), was the first Anglican school in Canberra.

The school's heritage can be traced back to the vision and vocation of Emily Ayckbown. She was later known as Mother Emily, became its first novice and made her vows in 1872 (St Mildred's Lightbourne School Web Site 2004). The daughter of a clergyman, she grew up to feel a call to help restore the Religious Life in the Church of England that had been destroyed at the time of the Reformation. During the Anglo-Catholic Revival, many orders for both monks and nuns were founded, and Ms Ayckbown began the Sisters of the Church. (Wilson 1987).

By the end of the nineteenth century, the Sisters had founded schools in most capital cities of Australia, including Sydney. Bishop Radford, who greatly admired their work, invited them to come to Canberra. (Wilson 1987)

As St Gabriel's, the school was opened in May 1926 in the Old Rectory of St John's in Reid. By 1927 plans were under way for a more permanent building on the south side of Canberra. A slight rise at the foot of Red Hill where sheep still safely grazed was granted for the new site. The five and a half acres bordered by Empire Circuit, Gawler Crescent (then Southland Circuit) and Melbourne Avenue was valued at £7/5/- per acre. The School's location was marked on some maps as being in the suburb of Blandfordia (meaning Christmas bells). When the name Blandfordia was changed to Forrest at the end of 1927 to commemorate the work of a member of the first Federal Cabinet, Sir John Forrest, the School adopted the alteration in its address. (Waterhouse 1978).

Plans for a Tudor-style building were drawn up by the Canberra architects Rudd and Limberg and the contract was let to F J McCarthy. The School's elaborate design was in marked contrast with the functional lines of the homes being erected in the neighbourhood, but was nevertheless considered to be a fitting style both for scholarship and for a garden city. The laying of the School's foundation stones coincided with the ultimate recognition of Canberra as the national capital – 8 May 1927. On 8 May, the Duke and Duchess of York arrived for the opening of Parliament House the following day. (Waterhouse 1978).

In the spring of 1927 two of the classrooms at the Melbourne Avenue site were ready for occupation. The building was dedicated on Saturday 10 September and opened the following Tuesday for the senior students. It was early in 1928 when all the students were accommodated in the new building. The new building faced Melbourne Avenue and extended west from the entrance hall to the kitchen. The first annual School concert held in the newly completed Albert Hall raised £31 and a bazaar raised £110/14/- to go towards a new extension. Construction of the western half began in July 1928 and the teachers' voices ebbed and flowed according to the intensity of the hammering. The extension included a large, airy room with double doors opening on to broad steps where generations of girls have sat for their school photographs. The School was set in a fine stand of trees which helped to make the new red brick walls look more established. The lath and plaster work on the second storey and the diamond-pane windows of the Chapel and Headmistress's office gave the building its distinctive appearance. For country girls who had never been to England, it had all the romance of the Shakespearean age. (Waterhouse 1978).

In late 1928 that the Boys' Grammar School was founded in Red Hill, the successor to a small grammar school in Cooma. (Wilson 1987), and the 'brother' school to CEGGS.

In 1932, due to the Depression and lack of support from the Church of England Synod, it was announced that the school would close at the end of the year. However, through the strength of local support, including that of the Roman Catholic Church and the Greek community, it was saved and renamed Canberra Church of England Girls' Grammar School at Christmas 1932/33. (National Trust 1998)

In 1935 the school was sold by the Sisters of St Gabriel's School to a non-profit company formed by prominent Canberra citizens for £12,500, this debt was not closed until 1946. (National Trust 1998).

Initially the building included teaching areas on the lower level and boarders' accommodation above. As the school grew particularly in the 1950s the building became used for boarders only.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLACE

The two storey building with attic room is designed in the Interwar Old English (or Tudor) style. The building now extends around a rectangular courtyard.

The principal façade faces Melbourne Avenue and includes a red brick lower half with imitation half timbered details over a rendered surface (Old English or Tudor style) above, with a shorter wing facing Gawler Circuit. The roof is medium pitched terracotta tiled with a number of chimneys. There are dormer windows incorporated into the roof area for extra accommodation. Windows are timber framed divided into a number of panes. Other details include corbelled brickwork and bay windows

Over several years, a north-westerly wing was added in 1948 to reach the substantive U-shape around a quadrangle it retained for several decades, later being closed on the NW façade by the Mitchell Wing in 1968.

The main foyer retains the original dark stained timber details (skirting, beams, panelling, doors, architraves and window frames) and rendered walls.

The building sits within a landscape setting of shrubs, gardens and trees around the buildings, and the grassed quadrangle.

Although the building's uses have changed from its original school and boarding house, to being only the boarding house of the school, and it has been extended, it retains the essential character and detail of the original building.

Extensions are proposed for the SW façade, mistaking it for the the NW façade which is identified as not of significance; these proposed extensions had not been started in April 2008.

STATEMENT ABOUT THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PLACE

The Canberra Church of England Girls Grammar School Boarding School is significant as a fine example of Interwar Old English style architecture and one of the very few in Canberra.

This building, originally being both school and boarding house, is significant as an educational institution of high standing that has contributed greatly to Canberra's cultural development, its community and social history.

ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

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. Significance has been determined by research as accessed in the references below. Future research may alter the findings of this assessment.

- (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;**

This place does not meet this criterion.

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

The building is Interwar Old English (or Tudor) style and has a certain quaintness and aesthetic quality which is valued by the community particularly Canberra Church of England Girls Grammar School. The building has a striking presence from Melbourne Avenue by sitting higher than the street across relatively open landscape.

- (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 school retains boarders in the original boarding house which would be very rare in schools today. Boarding schools are not common today except in the older traditional schools.

- (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;**

The school has generated a very strong community educational and social association which are highly valued. This is illustrated by the strong commitment of teachers and past students and support within the school community.

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

This criterion is not applicable.

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

The school is one of the few Interwar Old English buildings in Canberra. The only other notable one is the Desprose Annear house at CSIRO Forestry School Yarralumla.

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

The building is a notable local example of Interwar Old English style with gables, decorative timber barge boards, imitation half timbering, textured render, tall chimneys, corbelled brickwork, bay windows and lead light glazing. The details are extended into the main foyer area.

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

The school is the work of local architects Rudd and Limberg which formed in 1926 after Limberg resigned from the Federal Capital Commission. They also designed a house at 36 Furneaux Street Griffith, which is in the RAI A RSTCA list, but they are not well known architects of the period.

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

This criterion is not applicable.

(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

This place does not meet this criterion.

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

This criterion is not applicable.

(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.**

This criterion is not applicable.

FEATURES INTRINSIC TO HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The physical features of the Canberra Church of England Girls Grammar School, Deakin, that particularly reflect its heritage significance are:

- The exterior of the building (except the north-west side).
- The interior of the foyer.
- The setting of the building within the immediate landscape including the grassed quadrangle and shrubs, gardens and trees around the buildings.

Intangible aspects that reflect its heritage significance are:

- The history of the use of the buildings as boarding accommodation.

REASON FOR PROVISIONAL REGISTRATION

The Canberra Girls Grammar Boarding House, Deakin, has been assessed against the heritage significance criteria and been found to have heritage significance against 6 of the heritage criteria under the ACT Heritage Act.

APPLICABLE HERITAGE GUIDELINES

The Heritage Guidelines adopted under s27 of the *Heritage Act* 2004 are applicable to the conservation of the Canberra Girls Grammar School Boarding House, Deakin.

The guiding conservation objective is that the Canberra Girls Grammar School Boarding House, Deakin, shall be conserved and appropriately managed in a manner respecting its heritage significance and the features intrinsic to that heritage significance, and consistent with a sympathetic and viable use or uses. A conservation management plan (CMP) would help to guide conservation and future use. Any works that have a potential impact on significant fabric (and/or other heritage values) which are necessary prior to the development of a CMP shall be guided by a professionally documented interim assessment and conservation policy relevant to that area or component (i.e. a Statement of Heritage Effects - SHE).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Draft provisional registration entry was released for public comment on 30 June 2008 and period for public comment closes on 4 August 2008.

2. REFERENCES

National Trust of Australia (ACT) , citation for the National Trust Register of Significant Places (24/4/1998)

St Mildred's Lightbourne School Website <http://www.smls.on.ca/welcome/history.html>

Waterhouse, Jill 1978 *A light in the bush: the Canberra Church of England Girls' Grammar School and the capital city of Australia, 1926-1977*, Old Grammarians Association, ACT.

Willson, the Reverend Robert 1987 'School reaches 60-year milestone', *The Canberra Times*, Sunday 10 May 1987.

3. PHOTOGRAPHS AND PLANS

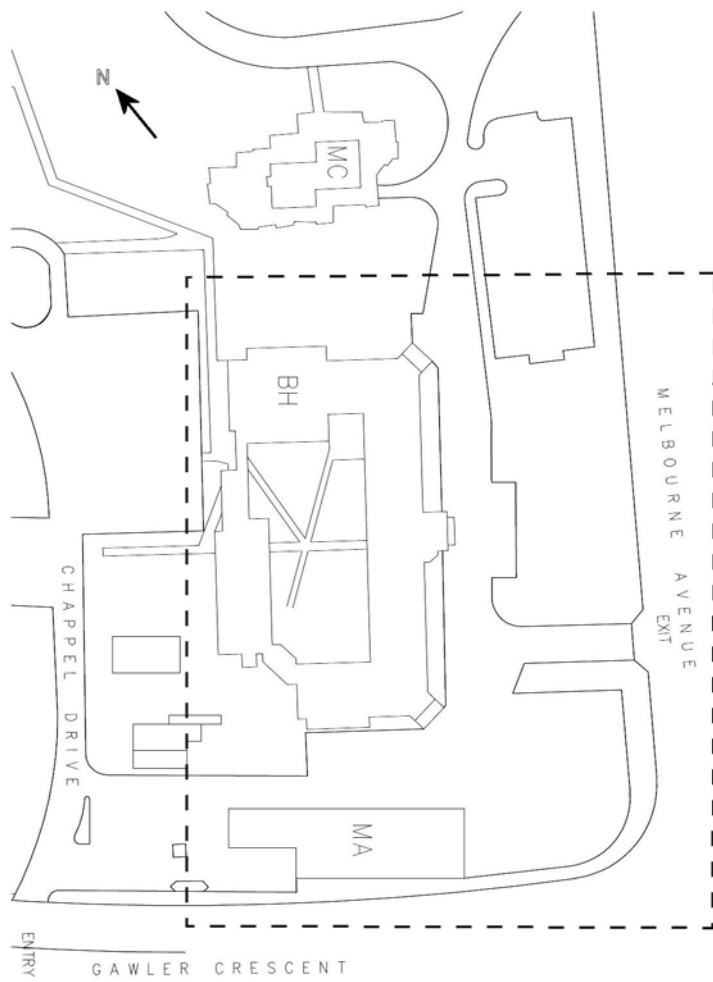


Figure 1. Plan of Canberra Grammar School Boarding House.

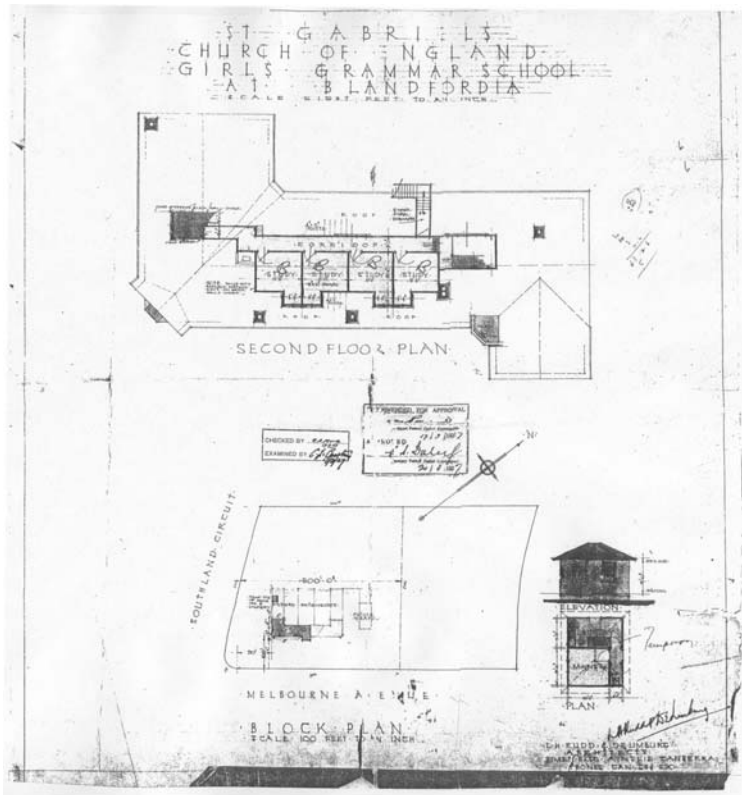


Figure 2. Site Plan (EMA 2004) ----- CEGGS Boarding House Precinct

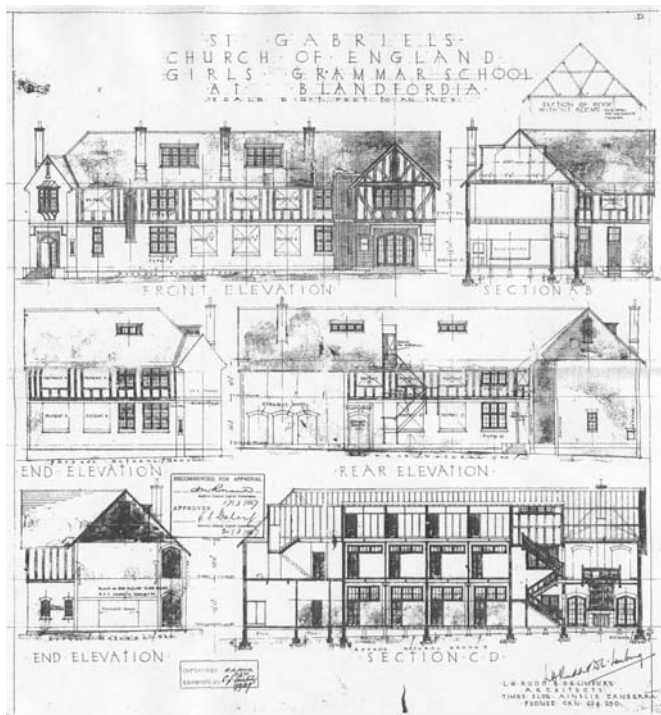


Figure 3. Original Elevations of Canberra Grammar School Boarding House (National Trust of Australia (ACT) files)

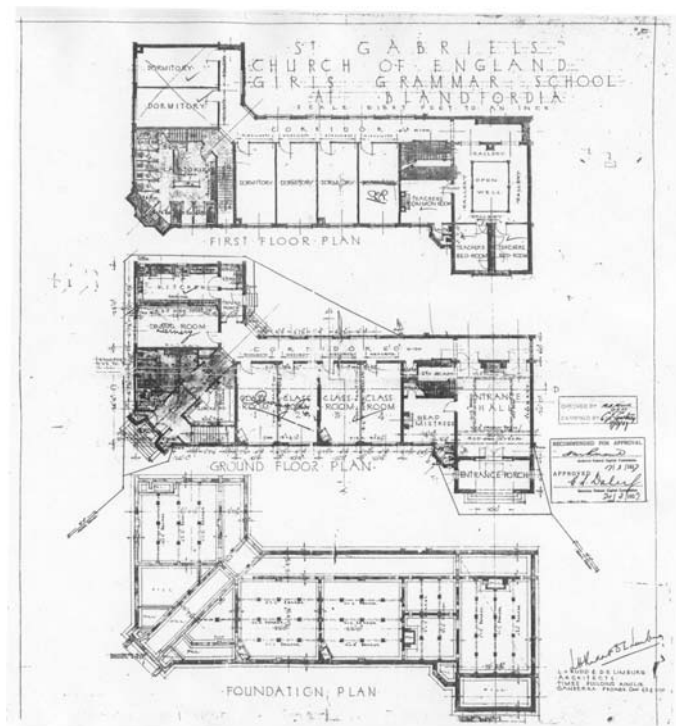


Figure 4. Original plans of Canberra Grammar School Boarding House (National Trust of Australia (ACT) files)



Figures 5 and 6. CEGGS Boarding House from north (EMA 2004)



Figure 7. CEGGS Boarding House from north east (EMA 2004)



Figure 8. Location of Canberra Girls Grammar School Boarding House, Deakin.