

Australian Capital Territory

# Heritage (Decision about Provisional Registration of Discovery House, Phillip) Notice 2008 (No 1)\*

Notifiable Instrument NI2008— 70

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 Discovery House, Phillip) Notice 2008 (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 Discovery House, Phillip.

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**Dr Michael Pearson**  
**Chair ACT Heritage Council**  
**GPO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2602**

**6 March 2008**

\*Name amended under Legislation Act, s 60

## STATEMENT OF REASONS

### DECISION REGARDING THE INCLUSION OF DISCOVERY HOUSE (BLOCK 1, SECTION 4, PHILLIP) IN THE ACT HERITAGE REGISTER

#### Background

Discovery House (Block 1, Section 4, Phillip) was identified as being of potential heritage significance in the *Woden Town Centre Heritage Study* by Eric Martin & Associates (2002).

A formal nomination was not received however the place was assessed as part of the Nominated Interim Heritage Place Register (IHPR ) Project in 2004-05. The nomination has now been assessed and at Meeting 18 on 6 March 2008 the ACT Heritage Council endorsed a Statement of Reasons which does not find Discovery House eligible for provisional registration (heritage listing).

Detailed reasoning of why the Discovery House, Phillip, does not meet the threshold for listing under the heritage criteria at Section 10 of the *Heritage Act 2004* 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 Discovery House, Phillip, the Council considered:

- Eric Martin & Associates 2002 *Woden Town Centre – Heritage Study*
- 2004-05 Nominated IHPR project assessment
- Materials held on file by Council on the Assessment File: 04/15076

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:*

Discovery House, Phillip, does not meet the threshold for heritage listing under this criterion. The place demonstrates a reasonable degree of creative achievement recognised by the RAIA Merit Award in 1997 when it stated it was “a fresh and innovative solution, being a significant and welcome departure from the existing surrounding office block typology”.

However in a review over time the ‘high’ degree required by this criterion is not met.

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

*Heritage Council assessment:*

Discovery House, Phillip, does not meet the threshold for heritage listing under this criterion. Whilst, the building achieves a high aesthetic appeal recognised by the RAI Merit Award and the refreshing use of external materials and interior foyer and large atrium space of striking proportions but not outstanding qualities.

***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***

*Heritage Council assessment:*

Discovery House, Phillip, 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:*

Discovery House, Phillip, does not meet the threshold for heritage listing under this criterion. No evidence of significance has been found against 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 Discovery House, Phillip, is significant to the Aboriginal community. Discovery House, Phillip, 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:*

Discovery House, Phillip, does not meet the threshold for heritage listing under this criterion. The central atrium is not unique, for there are other buildings with a central atrium, eg the Australian Tax Office, Discovery House being one of the earlier examples.

***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:*

Discovery House, Phillip, 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:*

Discovery House, Phillip, does not meet the threshold for heritage listing under this criterion. The building is a RAI A Award winner by well known Australian Architects Woods Bagot. The building was for the then the Patents Office (now IPAustralia) which is a leading government agency for licensing innovation. However, this is insufficient association for the threshold to be met in this case.

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

*Heritage Council assessment:*

This criterion is 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:*

Discovery House, Phillip, does not meet the threshold for heritage listing under this criterion.

***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:*

This criterion is 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 Discovery House, Phillip, is of insufficient heritage value to warrant provisional registration in the ACT Heritage Register.

**Dr Michael Pearson (Chair)**  
**ACT Heritage Council**

**6 March 2008**