

Heritage (Decision about Provisional Registration of former Bus Depot, Kingston) Notice 2010

Notifiable Instrument NI 2010—385

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 former Bus Depot, Kingston) Notice 2010

2. Registration details of the place

Registration details of the place are at [Attachment A](#): Provisional Register entry for former Bus Depot, Kingston.

3. Reason for decision

The ACT Heritage Council has decided that the former Bus Depot, Kingston 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

15 July 2010

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 18 August 2010 on the provisional registration of the former Bus Depot, Kingston to:

The Secretary
ACT Heritage Council
GPO Box 158
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Gerhard Zatschler
Secretary
ACT Heritage Council

15 July 2010

 <p>ACT Heritage Council</p>	<p>AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY</p> <p>HERITAGE REGISTER (Provisional Registration Details)</p> <p>Place No:</p>
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The following is mandatory:

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:

Former Bus Depot, Wentworth Avenue, Kingston
(Part of) Block 13, Section 49, Kingston, Canberra Central

DATE OF PROVISIONAL REGISTRATION

Notified: 15 July 2010 Notifiable Instrument: [2010]/[385]

PERIOD OF EFFECT OF PROVISIONAL REGISTRATION

Start Date 15 July 2010 End Date 15 December 2010

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: 13 22 81 Facsimile: (02) 6207 2229

IDENTIFICATION OF THE PLACE

Former Bus Depot, Wentworth Avenue, Kingston, ACT.
(Part of) Block 13, Section 49, Kingston, Canberra Central

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The former Bus Depot, Kingston is of heritage significance as the engineering and construction of the 1940-41 fully welded rigid portal frame exhibits a high degree of technical achievement and design quality, demonstrating new invention and application in Australia at the time.

The design of the fully welded rigid portal frame is of exceptional interest as the earliest notable example of a steel fully welded rigid portal frame in Australia.

There were two fully welded steel structures prior to this in Australia, though these were bridges rather than portal frames.

The design of fully welded rigid steel portal frames went on to achieve a high level of use in its ability to span wide spaces in an economical way.

The former Bus Depot is a key element in the original public works precinct with value to transport workers and their families.

The former Bus Depot is also of significance for its strong association with the cultural phase of transport history in the early and continuing development of Canberra.

The former Bus Depot is also of significance for its strong association with the foundational transport history of Canberra.

FEATURES INTRINSIC TO THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PLACE

The place comprises the features listed below:

- a) fully welded rigid steel portal frames; and
 - b) the orientation of the building in relation to the former railway siding and Wentworth Avenue.
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APPLICABLE HERITAGE GUIDELINES

The Heritage Guidelines adopted under s27 of the *Heritage Act* 2004 are applicable to the conservation of the former Bus Depot, Kingston.

The guiding conservation objective is that the former Bus Depot, Kingston, 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. Any works that have a potential impact on significant fabric (and / or other heritage values) shall be guided by a professionally documented assessment and conservation policy relevant to that area or component (i.e. a Statement of Heritage Effects – SHE) informed by an up-to-date conservation management plan.

REASON FOR PROVISIONAL REGISTRATION

The former Bus Depot Kingston has been assessed against the heritage significance criteria and been found to have heritage significance when assessed against four criteria under the ACT Heritage Act.

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;**

The technical achievement of the engineers at the Department of Works, Canberra, is apparent in the design of the fully welded rigid portal frame to roof over the existing main structure and its south eastern extension, which was innovative when compared with other steel structures built in Australia at that time.

The design of the fully welded rigid portal frame in 1940 represented a new structural system in Australia at the time and exemplifies the heritage theme of developing an Australian engineering and construction industry.

It would appear that this is one of the earliest examples in the world of a fully welded rigid portal frame of any great size and is the first Australian example. The design and construction of this structure demonstrates a very high degree of technical achievement by the government structural engineers representing a new achievement of the time.

The technical interest and significance of the technology of the fully welded portal frame is acknowledged.

The former Bus Depot, Kingston meets the threshold against this 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;**

The design of the fully welded rigid portal frame is of exceptional interest in that its advanced technology reflected a departure from the normal bolted truss structural frame design of the time to a structurally more complex but more efficient and economical design.

It demonstrates an important advance in building construction during and after WWII and is important as evidence of developing an engineering and construction industry.

No other structures were built in Australia prior to WWII that incorporated a fully welded rigid steel portal frame.

The former Bus Depot, Kingston meets the threshold against this 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;**

Establishment of the Bus Depot at Kingston and of Canberra's first railway station created a transport precinct that gives the site strong associations with the city's transportation history, evident in its value to transport workers and their families.

The former Bus Depot, Kingston meets the threshold against this criterion as a significant element of the place.

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

The former Bus Depot has a strong association with early transport history in the early and continuing development of Canberra. The former Bus Depot remains testament to the former transport precinct here, including the railway station.

The establishment and operation of the Bus Depot continued the associations with public transport at this site for some 70 years. The orientation of the Bus Depot buildings indicates the relationship with the railway.

The former Bus Depot, Kingston meets the threshold against this criterion.

The following criteria were found not to be applicable: b, e, f, g, i, j, k, and l

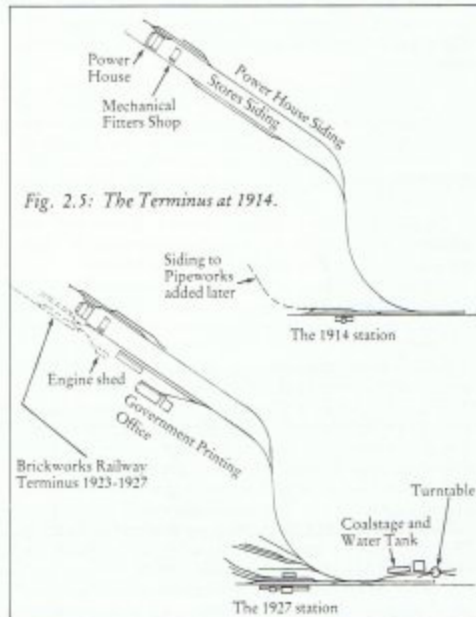
**SUMMARY OF THE PLACE
HISTORY AND PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

History

The Commonwealth Department of Works began an omnibus service in 1923 to transport workers, using two Graham Dodge char-a-bancs. The initial sale of leases in the Territory occurred the following year on December 12, 1924, for Giles Street, Eastlake (now Kingston).

The railway branch line from Queanbeyan to Canberra was in use from 24 May 1914, with passenger services from October 1923 apparently terminating at the Powerhouse siding, the site Walter Burley Griffin had preferred for Canberra's railway station.

The establishment in this public works precinct of the city's railway station made it the gateway to Canberra from 1923, with most travellers from Sydney arriving by train. The establishment and operation of the Bus Depot developed the precinct's associations with public transport for some 70 years.



Walter Shellshear diagram

After Telopea Park school opened in 1923 the FCC closed schools at Acton, Ainslie and Narrabundah, making bus transport essential. From the winter of 1925 a school bus service ran from Hostel No.1 [the Hotel Canberra from 1927] and in the summer of 1926 parents at Mount Stromlo settlement protested that the bus meant to transport the seven Telopea students broke down more often than not and six months later parents at the Cotter complained about the dilapidated Graham Dodge 'char-a-bancs' servicing the route.

The first public omnibus transportation in Canberra began in 1925 when Mrs H Barton started a service between Canberra and Queanbeyan. Other than taxi services, and the train from Sydney, private transportation was dominated by the horse over gravel streets.

On the 19th of July 1926 the Federal Capital Commission (FCC) started a limited public city omnibus service using a second hand omnibus. The transport section was responsible at this time for transporting daily 350 workmen, 130 staff members, and between 300 and 350 school children. The section was 'also employed in connection with social service activities & during the next few weeks a City Bus Service will be operating throughout the day and the evening, thus affording a much needed convenience to the increased population of the Territory'.

There were at this time two public bus routes in Canberra with a small three-space bus-parking depot constructed at Corroboree Park, Ainslie, at the end of one bus route.

In August 1926, a bus service was introduced and over the following year approximately 246,000 passengers were carried. Four additional omnibuses had been added to the public bus service.

Within the FCC Annual Report of 1926 the *Report of the Architect's Department* stated amongst the buildings it had designed the '*Eastlake Garage*—A large brick garage to accommodate 13 cars and 23 lorries is being erected opposite the Power House, by the Building Construction Department'.

The *Eastlake Garage*, the original Transport Depot, was designed by the Architect's Department in 1926 and was constructed in 1927, as was the railway station for the Queanbeyan-Canberra railway line, making this precinct the gateway to Canberra, with most travellers from Sydney arriving by train.

The building was constructed around a vehicle turning courtyard with brick external walls to all sides except along part of the north eastern façade that faced onto the railway lines and Molonglo River, and away from the Avenue. A continuous brick parapet concealed the skillion roofs that sloped inward to the unroofed vehicle turning area. The parapet stepped up in the centre of the north western and south eastern elevations.

The 'Garage at Kingston', plan number Ag 313, shows that it was designed to provide undercover shelter for 4 buses, 13 cars and 18 lorries. At the four corners of the depot were rooms used as storage, toilets and a mess room. At the main entry, on the north western side, were two centrally located offices. The fuel pumps were located in the northern half of the turning area.

The fifth 'Annual Report of the FCC, Year Ended 30th June 1929', reported on the provision of 'a complete city bus service'. It states that practically the whole of the government departments rely on the Transport Department for the transport of goods and passengers with cars used to meet the requirements of parliament (special duty cars) and commonwealth departments, and that the goods transport service conducted for all government purposes was by means of the vehicles from the depot.

The requirements for construction were maintained, including road material transported by the depot lorries. The report noted the addition of three 31 seat Daimler omnibuses bringing the total number of buses to 12. It noted that 761,000 passengers were carried including 110,500 school children and that this was running at a 'considerable annual loss'. There were 26 passenger cars including ministerial (chauffeured) cars. The number of employees was now 64 full time and 3 casual.

The transport requirements continued to expand into the 1930s and by the end of the Great Depression the depot required what was described by the, July 7 and July 9, 1936, Canberra Times, as considerable" extensions to the "Transport Depot". The extension consisted of a new lower level covered workshop to the east of the centre of the depot, designed in 1936 by the Commonwealth Department of Works Branch 5. It was constructed with a bolted steel trussed double gabled roof supported on steel columns. Freestanding brick walls were built along the railway line to separate the workshop from the line and to enclose unroofed yards at either end.

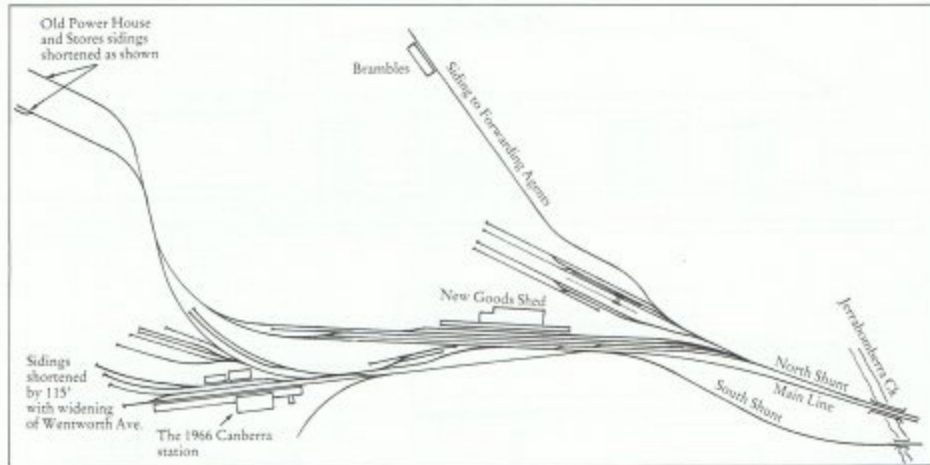
The vehicles, requiring maintenance, were driven into the workshop area at the lower level through new roller shutters located between the staggered freestanding brick walls. The new workshop housed the mechanics and provided a covered area for lubricating and general repair work. Five vehicle inspection pits were constructed in the central northeast section next to the original building, at the upper level, to allow the mechanics to work on the underside of the vehicles from the new lower level workshop. Offices were located on the opposite side of the building and in the southern corner.

Canberra Times articles reported that 'The additions have been necessitated by the growing demand of transport services, and, by the desirability of co-ordinating the various repair departments in one unit. The present repair shop will be transferred from the engineering and fitting department to the new building when completed', and that 'provision will be made for staff recreation room, repair pits, store rooms, offices, fitting shop and garages for housing of trucks and buses'.

The department had determined that major improvements were necessary by the late 1930s. A number of their administrative staff were to be located at the depot and there was a need for basic protection of the workforce and vehicles from the elements, including provision of an environment that was conducive to keeping the large number of vehicles clean.

For this purpose, the fully welded rigid portal frame and roof over the existing main structure and its south eastern extension was designed by the Department of Works for the Department of the Interior, Canberra, in January 1940.

The 1927 railway station served until 1966 when a new building was constructed.



Walter Shellshear diagram

At the time the depot was closed in 1992 there were 168 bus drivers and an additional 81 car drivers working out of the Kingston Transport Depot.

The building development runs parallel with the development of government transport in Canberra, both public transport and commonwealth cars, from its very beginning in the 1920s, continuing as the only workshop for Government buses, trucks and cars for most of its existence.

Steel portal frame

In the early days of steel framed industrial buildings, the economic solution was a column-and truss configuration. However, since truss fabrication is inherently labour intensive, rising labour costs have now made this system less economical.

In response to the need for a roofed structure at the former Bus Depot, Kingston, the Civil Engineering Section of the Commonwealth Department of Interior Works Branch designed the fully welded rigid joint steel portal frame over the circulation area in early 1940, using an exceptionally high degree of creative and technical skill.

The use of a steel fully welded rigid portal frame as the structure to support the roof was innovative at that time not only in Australia but also in the world generally. Prior to WWII, in Australia, only two fully welded steel structures appear to have been built. These were bridges in Tasmania, not portal frames.

Internationally this structural system was still in its exploratory stage as evidenced in two reports in the *Commonwealth Engineer Journal*. The first, September 1, 1941, p42, titled 'Welding and the War' reported on an address to the Institute of Welding, in London, by Dr H J Gough, Director of Scientific Research at the Ministry of Supply, who reviewed the progress of welding in industry. The report stated 'Dr Gough did well to mention a branch of research which does not appear to have received the official attention that its present importance warrants. This research comprises investigations into the strength and behaviour of steel frame-work with rigid joints. It has now been shown that the load carrying capacity of such rigid steel frames exceeds that of a similar structure with flexible joints by as much as 30%'.

The other report, March 1, 1943, p187 titled 'Welded Frames Cut Cost and Save Steel' reported on an article in the *USA Engineering News-Record*, November 1942; 'Twenty percent saving using welded rigid frame design and other economies accrue because the shop fabrication and field costs are much lower than on the conventional truss design'. The photograph accompanying the report showed new storage and shipping facilities for the Commercial Book-binding Company, Cleveland, Ohio, constructed using fully welded rigid frames with spans of 33' (this was a simple beam structure not a rigid portal frame).

The article continued; ‘In addition to the important savings in steel, the use of welded rigid frames eliminates...lateral bracing, and knee-braces,...and is easy to clean and paint’.

Miles Lewis (n.d., <http://mileslewis.net>) further reports that ‘in about 1936 W D Chapman wrote of the potential use of rigid welded joints for Vierendeel trusses, and one gathers that there were as yet no examples in Australia’. Chapman continues on to state that ‘open web joists became increasingly common after World War II, and began to be produced in standard sizes for uses such as industrial buildings and garages’.

It is also believed that a portal frame of the width demonstrated the former Bus Depot, Kingston, even if bolted and not welded, would have been very rare in Australia before WWII because engineers at that time did not fully understand the dynamics of a portal frame.

The depot’s portal frame knee fabrication and the column base pin joint detail would most probably have been shop welded and possibly transported to site using the rail system, which passed directly next to the depot. The spliced joints at the ridge, rafter to haunch and haunch to column would have been site welded.

From about the mid 1950s to the 1990s the rigid portal frame was often the most economical structural solution in spans between 15 metres and 45 metres. Although the portal frame may require a greater mass of steel than the equivalent column-and-truss structure, the savings in the cost of fabrication and erection due to the relative simplicity of the work nearly always make it the optimum system. Almost all portal frame structures built in Australia are custom designed and manufactured.

A rigid portal frame is generally designed to span the full width of the structure requiring no additional internal supports. For spans over 20 metres haunching of the rafters near the columns is usually required.

Each rigid frame consists of a rafter in two segments and two columns with the maximum depth of the section occurring at each haunch.

In a typical portal frame designed in recent times the major connection at the knee joint is designed with haunches fabricated from cut universal beams spliced to the columns using either splice plates shop welded to the ends of the haunch and connected to the column using high strength bolts, rather than site welding, or shop welded haunch joints and bolted rafter splices beyond the haunch zone.

Site welding is generally avoided since it is more economical to bolt connections on site rather than to weld. With large steel framed buildings, however, the cost of welding may be spread over many connections and may be considered as an economical solution.

The base connection is generally designed as a pin joint and is usually connected using only commercial bolts.

Computers are now used to carry out the complex analysis and determination of section sizes for a rigid frame structure. Stiffness analysis programs have been developed in the past 50 years to alleviate the complex calculations required for steel portal frame design. Before the advent of the computer, engineers often used formulae produced by Professor Kleinlogel to calculate moments, shears and support reactions for specific load cases.

Fillet welding of large structural steel frames was a new procedure before the 1950s in Australia. The process requires minimum edge preparation and probably would have been done on the depot site using manual metal arc welding.

Description

The Kingston Transport Depot is located in the Kingston Foreshore area, on Wentworth Avenue, which was a relatively large, and Canberra’s first, industrial site dating from around 1915.

The location of the depot in the industrial area provided a convenient point of departure: close to two main shopping areas, Kingston and Manuka; close to the railway siding for materials and goods; the railway station; other industrial infrastructure, and on a major road that connected Canberra to Queanbeyan.

The depot building is not set parallel with Wentworth Avenue (formerly Interlake Avenue). The siting of nearly all the buildings on the industrial site was related to the two sets of railway tracks that extended through the site rather than the avenue.

The depot generally comprises two large joined sheds with some internal bricked rooms and an attached single storey brick office complex. These structures were designed and constructed over a period of about fifty years.

Directly behind this office area is the main turning and parking area of the depot, referred to on the 1940 drawing as the 'Garage'. Most of the doors that were present when the depot was in use appear to have been closed off. The 1940 plan shows the main entry leading directly through into the garage. There were also several other secondary entries from the front office and staff areas. The vehicle entries are to the northwest and the southeast via large roller shutters.

The footprint of the garage is based on the overall floor area of the original 1926 building with the addition of 9.75 metres to the south. The entry, from the northwest, opens into a large portal framed space.

The main garage level is constructed from a fully welded rigid portal frame. Generally this space is about 85 metres long. The engineering drawings show that the end portals have a span of approximately 31 metres and the typical portal spans 29.7 metres. The central portal spans approximately 35.5 metres.

The typical portal frame is constructed from 600x200 mm I sections with the shaped knee and the shaped pin joint base of the column fabricated from welded plate. The central portal has slightly smaller rafters with 820x360mm columns fabricated from welded plate.

The base of the central column differs from the typical column in that it has not been fabricated as a pin joint but appears to be designed as a moment joint. The roof purlins are I sections fully welded to the rafters. The roof is clad in corrugated fibre cement sheet and skylights extend along both sides of the roof. There are various pipes and heating appliances attached to the frame. This part of the building structure is well maintained and is in good condition.

The integrity of the fully welded portal frame is intact.

References

Carnall, J and the Australian Institute of Architects (ACT Chapter), 2010, 'Heritage Nomination of Kingston Bus Depot (Kingston Transport Depot), Wentworth Avenue, Kingston, ACT'.

Lewis, M., n.d., 'Australian Building: A Cultural Investigation. Section Eight: Metals'
<http://mileslewis.net/australian-building/> Date accessed: 9 June 2010

Shellshear, Walter 'Railways' in *Canberra's Engineering Heritage*

NON-STATUTORY BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Oral histories and social value

John Harold Benson & Recollections of Val Emerton, John's daughter.

John (Jack) Benson was first employed as a fitter at the Electrical Workshop when he moved from Sydney to Canberra in 1926. He married Agnes Prowse in 1928 at the newly constructed Ainslie Methodist Church.

Jack was a keen photographer recording much of the social and working life associated with the early years of the depot and Kingston, some of these have been incorporated in this document. Benson's value to the early years of the depot's functioning can be appreciated when reading the *Memorandum* (reference) written by C E F Roach, Transport Officer in 1936. John Benson had transferred to the Transport Section in 1932 where he "built up the necessary equipment and instruments" to maintain "ninety-eight (98) vehicles in Transport, Governor General's fleet, Post Office fleet, Police fleet and electrical appliances connected with the mechanical plant".

Benson also taught the apprentices "the electrical side of the trade". Roach's point of view was that since Benson had "grown with the fleet and is fully conversant with the past and present history of same" that he was not supporting Benson moving to another section but rather requesting that Benson gain a wage increase to match that of the proposed other position. Roach goes on to conclude; "A great deal of the satisfactory performance of the Government Fleet and mechanical plant's performance is due to Benson's work". Following are Val's recollections of the people and events she holds close to her in association with the depot. It begins with her description of the physical conditions at the time of her early childhood in her short story titled "The Swing under the Pine Trees".

"There were no roads (bitumen) and nice green lawns around Canberra then, it was a dusty bare paddock where the winds whipped up the dry grass and dirt until it rained, and then there was a great old muddy mess that father and the boys tramped into the house."

The transport depot was the centre of operations and maintenance for all government vehicles, cars, buses and trucks. She has kept a record of the Canberra Times article of July 22, 1927, that reported "The bus services of Canberra are in the melting pot. Within the next few weeks, suburbs will be occupied by civil servants and the rapid expansion and alteration of the public needs in city transport have necessitated an entirely new bus system".

At the same time as the bus fleet was expanding the government was building up a collection of official cars and much-needed trucks.

Mr Gargett was the first senior Transport Officer; later Mr C E Roach took over and was responsible for many innovations to the new building. Other early transport officers were Harry Knight, who was second in charge, Jack Traynor, Eugene Desmet, and Harold Strachan, Alf Milton, Milton Purcell, Alf Barber, George Edwards, Perce Jolley, Alf Stafford and Ken Dinnerville. One of the original workers at the depot was Jack Saunders, who came to Canberra in 1925 when he became the chauffeur to Sir John Butters, Chief Commissioner of the FCC. He worked in this position until the Commission was disbanded in 1930 when Saunders became the first Leading Hand of the Transport Department.

Jack Saunders and his family lived in one of the three houses built behind the Power House, and were provided with a rare facility in those days, a phone. The phone, No 57, was part of the job, to take messages for parliamentarians wanting a car or other transport arrangements. Jack Saunders' daughter, Jene, was one of the first three women bus conductors during WWII. She joined in 1941, and worked shifts either during day or night for two and a half years. (Refer later Jack Saunders & Jene Baker). Val remembers these women as ground breakers, knowing that they could work along side men.

Jack Traynor joined the Transport Department as one of the first three bus drivers and worked there until he retired in 1953. He went from being a bus driver to traffic inspector and during WWII was put in charge of all the drivers and conductors. He once drove an old grey ambulance to pick up a politician, Sir George Pearce, at the railway station.

Harold Strachan also drove the ambulance before he was made Leading Hand. Harold had a long career in the Transport Department and was presented to the Queen in 1954 in appreciation of his work in organizing the cars for several royal tours.

Ken Dinnerville was working at the Fitters' and Turners' shop near the Powerhouse when Mr Roach began to set up his own fitters shop at the depot. He took the young Ken Dinnerville out to Duntroon when the RMC had relocated to Sydney during the Depression years, and here Ken managed to find some very acceptable machinery which had been left behind; including a lathe.

The new fire/ambulance station was opened in 1923 behind the Power House, a series of temporary galvanized sheds clustered around a workshop where all government vehicles were maintained.

In 1926 a Social Services Association had been established by the FCC, which amongst other things arranged for the construction of playgrounds for children, sporting and other facilities for adults in the new suburbs. Materials were provided and labour was voluntary. Besides the hall the Association also constructed a pavilion and two tennis courts; the beginnings of the Eastlake Tennis Club. It was a close-knit community which helped one another; besides which you knew just about everybody in town – and usually met them all on Saturday mornings at the Kingston shops. Some of us are still living in Canberra and remain friends today.

Women's services were another facility provided by the Social Service Association and the first Mothercraft Centre was opened in 1927. Mothers living on the north side often pushed their prams all the way to Eastlake on the dusty roads to seek advice from the local sister. The church hall (St Paul's galvanized hall), playgrounds, tennis courts and the Mothercraft Centre were all provided by the Social Services Association and built by voluntary labour...they were the start of a vibrant community which moulded the present suburb of Kingston.

The Trades and Labour Day picnics were held at the Cotter River starting in the 1930s with depot buses taking women and children while the preferred transport was on the back of the depot lorries.

Keith Carnall & Recollections of Eddie Carnall; two generation that worked at the depot.

Keith Carnall joined the Transport Section of the Department of the Interior as a clerk in the workshop in April 1939. He was responsible for instigating improvements to the welfare of the workforce at the depot with the formation of the Transport Section Canberra Benefit Fund (known as the 'Sick Fund') to assist the transport workers. At the beginning, in 1939, the subscription was 2/- per pay. The object of the fund was to assist members during loss of work through sickness or accident not covered by sick leave or later the Workers Compensation Act.

A funeral benefit of £75 was also paid; this was later increased to £125. So that benefits could be managed equitably the administration of the fund required the recording of names, commencement dates and addresses of all of the car drivers, bus drivers, conductors, lorry drivers, cleaners, bus supervisors, leading hands, mechanics, panel beaters, and other ancillary workers such as carpenters, vulcanisers, spray painters, etc. This record also assisted in determining seniority for promotion. Over the years many members obtained benefits from this fund. These records are retained as part of the clubs memorabilia.

Keith was a member of the Transport Rugby Club known as the 'Frothblowers', they were the dominant team in the Inter-Departmental Competition. Refer Plate 19. Keith played many sports in depot teams, organising many of the competitions. The depot workers competed in sports, winning the following trophies; Grand Final Runners up, 1969 VIP Squash; Premiers, 1970, 10 Pin VIP League Div 1; Transport Engineer Social Club 1977 Dart Comp. to Graham Nelson; as well as others for Pool and the Fun Run. Keith also was involved in founding baseball in the ACT; in cricket he scored the first century at Manuka Oval in 1931, including hitting a six.

In 1939 Keith began a collection for the NSW Royal Deaf and Blind Society Children with a donation from members who wanted to contribute of 2/- per pay. This resulted in large amounts being donated and as a result the depot and Keith Carnall were honoured with Life Membership in 1960. The certificates are retained and displayed as part of the Retired ACT Transport Employees Club memorabilia.

Eddie started at the depot in 1955 as a conductor and soon took over the position of treasurer of the Fund from his father. In 1969 the fund purchased 3 units at Bateman's Bay for \$12,000 as convalescent homes which are now managed by the ACT Transport Institute Incorporated. He remembers the role the buses played in the opening of the Tumut hydroelectric power plants with great pride.

The Inter Government Department Ten Pin Bowling League was begun in 1968. The Transport Section had 6 teams and won nine straight challenges. They were presented with the trophy at the completion of the league. A report in the Canberra Times picturing Eddie's winning team being presented with the trophy by Mr Jim Fraser MP noted that the Canberra VIP League "is the largest sanctioned four player team competition in the world. A total of 48 teams competed for a \$500 trophy."

Both Keith, who was employed at the depot from 1939-66, and Eddie, from 1955-84, along with Perc Luton, from 1930-77, Steve Taylor, from 1940-71, and Don O'Reilly, from 1948-77, have donated their Retirement Plaques for permanent display at the Retired ACT Transport Employees Club. Eddie's wife Jean, on behalf of the Club, nominated the depot to the ACT Heritage Places Register in 2001.

Jack Traynor & Recollections of Peter Traynor, Jack's son.

Jack Traynor was one of the first three bus drivers at the depot, he then became a Traffic Inspector, and later was in charge of all the driver's and conductor's rosters; compiling the timetables. Jack and his wife Kathleen lived in Kingston. Peter Traynor, their youngest son, was born in Queanbeyan in 1927, and the family were long time residents of Kingston.

The following are Peter's recollections of the people and events he holds close to him in association with the depot. Jack Saunders and Eugene De Smet were some of the first men at the depot. The Saunders and Harris families lived at the back of the Powerhouse in two of the three weatherboard houses along the Molonglo River. The Lomax family lived in the other house; Mr Lomax was the fireman.

The first boss at the depot was Stan Gargett who was succeeded by Mr C E 'Cocky' Roach in 1932. Roach remained until the 1950s when he retired at the same time as Peter's father. Jack Rooney was a driver there for seven years before his death in 1932. Peter's father's other work mates were Perc Tucker, Bill Sykes, Dicky Dunn, George Edwards, Alf Milton, Ben Kelly and Herb Williams.

Bean buses, used up until the mid 1930s were chunky with no style whereas the new buses purchased in 1936 were beige coloured with a yellow band and carried many more passengers.

The most patronaged bus route was No.1 Kingston to Civic via Manuka, Arthur Circle, Melbourne Avenue, the Lodge, Westlake and Hotel Canberra. Route 2 travelled from Kingston to Civic via Manuka, Wellington Hotel, Brassey House, Kurrajong, Parliament House East and West Block, and Hotel Canberra. Both routes were often combined. In the early 1940s the fares were 1 penny to Kurrajong and 4 pence to Civic. The bus that drove the Cotter route seated only 20 passengers due to special passenger requirements.

During the WWII years women were employed as conductors, replacing the enlisting men. Their names were Mollie Malone, Jean O'Reilly, Jean Saunders and Maud Corrigan. There were also special buses provided for social functions. Buses left Albert Hall at 11pm after balls held by various churches as well as the Masons; similarly there were special buses for the Capital and Civic picture theatres, and during the day for school functions.

The depot phone was extended to the Traynor home so that his father could be contacted if there were any out of hours problems. The first ambulance service now operated out of the depot up until it was transferred to Forrest Fire Station. There was great mirth amongst the depot staff on one occasion in the early 1930s when Sir George Pearce MP was not amused at being picked up from the railway station in the ambulance.

His brother John was a mechanic at the depot and worked in the lower section that was built in the mid 1930's. Other mechanics, who did their apprenticeships there and stayed on as his brothers work mates, were Bill Winter, Arthur Smith, Riley Swan and Ken Dinnerville.

Peter remembers his father's large timetable sheets, about 400 x 600mm, hanging in the depot. Traynor is sure that many people who worked at the depot would be turning in their graves and if alive be devastated at the proposed destruction of a dear wonderful landmark which formed part of Canberra's history and memories', including Cocky Roach (manager), Bill Knight (2nd in charge), Jack Traynor (traffic officer), Cec Harris, Harold Strachan, Alf Mildon, Eugene de Smet, Bill Sykes, George Edwards, to name a few.

Recollections of Reg Walters

Walters started at the depot in 1963 as a Commonwealth Car Driver and remembers with pride Billy Beadman's achievements (refer below). He also holds bus drivers Harry Cooper and Bill Samious in high regard for their work in establishing the Transport Credit Union in the late 1960s at the depot. The Credit Union proved popular with the members where a maximum of \$300 could be borrowed. This was most needed during periods when members were on strike.

Repayment terms were negotiable for members in financial difficulties. The credit union became so successful that it relocated to Green Square in Kingston shops and a permanent manager was employed with both Samious and Cooper remaining as board members. The Transport Credit Union later became the Service One Credit Union.

Horace Luton, Bill Convine, Harold Covine & Recollections of Dion Convine

Dion Convine's family has been involved with the Kingston Bus Depot since at least 1938. Horace Luton, Convine's father-in-law, commenced work from the depot as a Conductor in 1938. He then worked as an Interstate Car Driver over the years and as a Supervisor on the Cars. Luton once drove the Duke of Gloucester to the ship in Sydney on the Duke's return trip from Australia. He also drove many politicians. Luton continued working at depot until his death in 1979.

Dion started at the depot in 1965 as a bus driver after leaving the Public Service. His training and first shift was from the depot. In the early 1970's there were only two depots operating, Kingston and Ainslie, until Woden and Belconnen became operational depots. He recalls helping with the social club that was set up for the benefit of the employees (refer W Redman & the Transport Social Club below). In 1972, still at Kingston, he became an Acting Leading Hand and in 1973 a Bus Inspector covering buses all over Canberra. In 1975 he became a Supervisor Grade 3 and then in 1977 the Depot Master of Kingston. In 1978 he initiated the formation of the Transport Employees Institute, an organization set up to look after members, socially as well as helping them in hard times.

Whilst Regional Manager of North/South Canberra in 1980 he obtained, through the Institute, funding to set up Gymsnasiums in all bus depots for the physical health of employees. Because office space became vacant in the Kingston Depot, he located the equipment in that area as well as also a room for social events; these were happy times.

In 1988 he set up and opened the Tuggeranong Bus Depot, then, in 1990 he was requested from head office to return to Kingston and close the original depot. He was not happy about closing the depot as it held many happy memories of both family and friends. He remained there until 1991 retiring after 26 years in the industry. The depot finally closed in 1992.

All apprentices were train in the early days at the depot. His brother, Bill Convine, commenced there in 1941/42 as an apprentice in the Work Shop and later trained as a motor mechanic. Bill also organized many different events for the benefit of the workers, both social and sporting, during his time at the depot. During Bill's time there, in the 40/50's, the number of staff in the workshop was 80 with a ratio of between 8-10 apprentices at any one time. The unions operating in the depot were the AFC, AEU, TWU, 4th Division Officers and ACOA, with the TWU covering all drivers.

His other brother Harold commenced as a Bus Conductor in 1948. During his time at the depot Harold also drove trucks, cars and buses until he retired. There were many socials and kids Christmas parties held at the depot bringing together families of the employees.

Alfred Barber & Recollections of Babette Scougall, Alfred's daughter.

Alfred Barber worked at the depot from about 1926 until his retirement in 1964, except for a short period when he worked as a courier for the Department of Foreign Affairs. From about 1940 to 1950 Alfred was a Commonwealth car driver, spending much time interstate often away sometimes for weeks at a time, especially during the War years.

He was an ex-serviceman from London who had been gassed in France during WW1 and who emigrated to Australia in 1923 hoping that a hot dry climate would help him to recover his health. As he had received training as a bus driver on demobilisation in London, he applied for a position with the Transport Section when it was first established. He was married in 1929 at St Columba's Church, Braddon, and was allocated a house in Gosse Street, Kingston, where many of his neighbours were depot workers, ambulance officers and firemen. A close bond developed among these families and this bond has continued over the years. He later moved to Howitt Street in Kingston where a number of Transport families also lived, including Albert Morris, Milton Purcell and Harold Strachan.

The following are Babette's recollections of the people and events she holds close to her in association with the depot.

The buses were absolutely essential to the everyday life of the scattered community of the new Federal Capitol. This was when few people had cars of their own. It enabled people to get to their work places (both private enterprise and the public service); children to school; to go shopping; keep dental and medical appointments, etc. Special buses were made available for people to attend funeral services (for everyone, not just note-worthies), sport and recreational activities, attend 'official' functions like Bert Hinkler's and Kingsford-Smith's landings in the 1920s, later war memorial services and other activities. Taking members of the community out to the Cotter for the annual Trades and Labour Council's picnics are memories most in the community at that time recall with great fondness. On those occasions, buses transported the elderly and women with babies and small children; family groups went on the back of trucks; their vehicle of choice, and government ministers were taken there in cars. One Canberra Times article mentioning that about 6000 participated. Few members of the public would've been able to get themselves out there if not for the vehicles from the depot.

The city of Canberra could not have been built without the use of vehicles from the depot. In the very earliest days, horses and carts (with forges), steam rollers and trucks and machines of all kinds, and the people who manned and maintained them, were all part of our transport history. As Canberra's climate was so dry and very few roads were surfaced back then, water carts had to be sent out to keep the dust down in order to make living conditions easier for everyone in the community. Photographs of bus drivers and conductors of the 1920s and 30s show them wearing grey dust coats. Roads in and out of Canberra were very poor and consequently most material needed to build Canberra came by rail. Government trucks were used to convey the material from the railway station to the various sites.

Going to school by bus is a memory of every child who grew up in Canberra, and also Mr Jack Wright, one of the bus inspectors. Special buses were sent out from the depot to bring in children from outlying rural areas. An example of this was Lyneham High School which in the 1970s had a course in agriculture designed especially for children from rural areas. They came in by bus. She remembers another special bus service for the children who lived in the southernmost corner of the A.C.T. The driver, Mr Piper, stayed overnight at Shannon's Flat Sunday to Thursday, so that he would be able to pick up the children early in the morning and get them to their schools on time. At 3.30pm he would pick them up and take them back home.

During WWII Babette's father, Alfred, was temporarily blinded when a gas-producer blew up near him at the depot. The gas was produced from charcoal. There were at least two places where charcoal was made: the kilns near the old Kowen school site, and at Uriarra near Blue Range Hut where the Italian prisoners of war were interned. By installing gas-producers to their vehicles, the depot was able to provide important ministerial transport during the War at a time of petrol restrictions.

There were early links with the whistle at the Powerhouse. Conductors had to 'punch the bundy' in three places to show that their buses were running on time. The first place was at the corner of Wentworth Avenue and Giles Street, the second was at the Acton Offices and the third at the terminus in Ainslie. The bundy was a metal box, about 3 feet high, that had a clock near the top with a brass plate under which the conductor had to push aside to key in the bus's time of arrival at the three stops. The time for both the Powerhouse whistle and bus had to be the same. The conductors collected tickets and small change, and returned the tickets and money at the end of the run in the front office along Wentworth Avenue.

The strong sense of community which developed back in the early days of Kingston remains with us today whenever old Kingston families meet, even though some of them have moved to other places. This sense of community, with everyone knowing everyone and working together for a cause, was made stronger by the children playing and going to school together; it made Kingston an exciting place to live. It was the working hub of the new, developing 'Bush Capital'. Everything came through it, both goods and people. People living in other suburbs turned to it for help of every kind. Little that's at the Kingston Foreshores now acknowledges or reflects this early history. The Powerhouse building, devoid of the railway lines or anything else to connect it to its past, and the empty Fitters Shop nearby, are not enough. The depot, however, still conveys some of that feeling. This is where people still come to the Markets. They enjoy visiting the old building. Without the building the sense of belonging to Canberra's early history will be lost and the past will be removed. What is important is that the history of old Eastlake be respected. So much of the past has already been removed. If the depot also goes, then not enough representing Kingston's early years will be there and so more of the community's local history will be gone. This should not be allowed to happen.

Recollections of Frank Dunshea

Frank was employed as an electrical fitter in the Electrical Workshop, adjacent to the depot, in the 1940-50s. He believes his experiences were typical of employees of other branches of the Department of the Interior and other departments that used vehicles supplied by the Transport Section; including the Fitters Workshop, plumbers, painters, builders, roads and bridges, water and sewerage, fire brigade, ambulance, police, forestry and bush fire and several other services. The vehicles supplied to the Electrical Workshop were mostly pre-war vintage and had already seen a lot of usage consequently they required a lot of servicing and repairs to keep them on the road. Frank considers that the mechanics at the depot carried out this task well and had to improvise due to the unavailability of spare parts.

On occasions much time was spent trying to persuade the Leading Hand Mechanic on duty at the reception room (in the northwest corner) to supply them with a replacement vehicle for one that was in for repair. Bert Robinson, Harry Obrien, Bill Wintle and Jack Delaney are a few of the men he remembers dealing with. They always tried to help and provided another vehicle. Frank strongly believes that much of the early development of Canberra would have been delayed without the efforts of the Transport Workshop staff. Many of these men later became successful in the private motor trade business in Canberra.

Frank points to the example of Jack Benson when highlighting the ingenuity of the men at the depot. Jack, an auto electrician in the depot workshop, built his own three wheeled, two seat electric vehicle with a small covered tray for batteries that looked like a small utility truck. He drove to it to and from work and could be seen driving it around Canberra for many years.

Recollections of Jules (Smokey) De Smet

Jules began work at the depot as an interstate driver in 1939, retiring in 1987, although the Canberra Times, August 13, 1987, stated he began as a conductor, and then became a bus driver. He drove John Curtin's staff to the opening of the Australian War Memorial in one of the special purpose vehicles. He joined the army soon after the war began, and in 1948 returned to the depot driving buses at first and then special purpose cars which later became the Commonwealth car Fleet. He was the driver for prominent politicians that included Dr Evatt, Ben Chifley, Billy Hughes, Sir Arthur Fadden, Harold Holt, Gough Whitlam, Sir William McMahon and Al Grassby.

William Beadman

Beadman's family moved to Canberra from Araluen in 1927 and lived at the Causeway when he was nine years old. He attended Telopea Park School and in 1934 he started work at the depot as a bus driver. Before the War he drove the school bus route to and from the Cotter; which including delivering grocers. The condition of the gravel roads and the distance he needed to travel made it necessary for him to stay overnight in a hut near the Cotter to make an early start picking up the school children. He enlisted in the Army in 1941 and returning from New Guinea he married Gloria Cameron in 1947, who worked at the Kingston pharmacy. In the 1960s, while driving his bus across King's Avenue Bridge he rescued a drowning man from Lake Burley Griffin and for this act was awarded the British Empire Medal for gallantry. He was appointed to the Commonwealth Car Fleet; parliamentarians he drove for included Doc Evatt, Doug Anthony and Gough Whitlam. After the Whitlam dismissal he was in attendance at the 'party' held by the dismissed Prime Minister at the Lodge. Beadman was also an accomplished cricketer playing at a young age with his older work mates in the local competition and a champion snooker and billiards player. He won 25 consecutive ACT Billiards Championships, winning 32 titles in all. At his peak he defeated Sir Walter Lindrum and Eddie Charlton, both world champions in their time. He was inducted into the ACT Sports Hall of Fame in 1999. Beadman's colleagues hold him in high esteem as a work mate and also consider him one of their finest. He had served in the War, chauffeured Prime Ministers and was a sporting champion in a government department where sport was a chief social leisure interest. He retired in 1978 and died in 2001.

John (Jack) Saunders & Jene Baker

Saunders came to Australia from England and first came to Canberra in 1914 to work as a groomsman to General Bridges at Duntroon Military College. He moved back to Sydney to work as a fireman in 1915, to England for a short period, then Armidale in northern NSW. He finally settled back in Canberra in 1925 and became chauffeur to Sir John Butters, the FCC Chief Commissioner. When the FCC was replaced by the Department of the Interior Butters left Canberra and appointed Saunders to the Transport Section. There he became the first Leading Hand responsible for timetables and the general workings of the depot. In 1933 the Saunders family moved into one of the few weatherboard houses behind the Powerhouse next to the fire station. During a period in the depression he was only employed one week in three at the depot and had to find other work to support his family. The two Saunders boys were killed in the WWII and the Korean War, and Jack died in 1954 just one year after the death of his youngest son.

Jene Baker, ne Saunders, was nine when her family moved back to Canberra, the eldest of four children. She watched the opening of the Old Parliament House where her father was chauffeuring Sir John Butters. At 16, in the depression, she left school to look after the family as her mother became ill and was sent to hospital in Sydney. On her mother's return she worked at various jobs and in 1938 married Jack Baker, a fireman and ambulance office living at the newly built Forrest Fire Station houses. When he enlisted she had to move from the fire station houses since her husband, on enlisting, was no longer considered a fireman. As mentioned above, due to the labour shortage as a result of the War, the Department advertised for female bus conductors. Her brother had enlisted and her father being employed at the depot made her eligible and she applied for the position. In 1941 she and three other women became the first female bus conductors in Canberra. Jene worked a double shift on Saturdays enabling her to earn £8 10/-. She worked as one of the 'Clippies' for 2½ years with a one-week night shift and then a one-week day shift, and for most of the time she had Steve Taylor as her driver. Due to petrol rationing the buses were mostly full with the busiest time on Saturday mornings between Kingston and Civic. After the War her husband rejoined the fire brigade and they moved back into the Forrest Fire Station housing.

W Redman & the Transport Social Club

Redman began work at the depot in 1950 as a bus driver. He was instrumental in forming the Transport Social Club in October, 1950. The object of the club were to foster a spirit of friendship and goodwill amongst its members by arranging social and recreational activities for members and their families; to encourage competitions with other similar organisations, and to arrange for testimonials to members and donations to charities. Membership was open to all transport employees during their time of employment at an annual subscription of 10/-. Christmas parties were organised with the social club providing children's presents, food and drinks. Apart from lunch time activities the social activities included golf days, cricket matches, fun runs, tennis and football. Later a gym was installed at the depot. At testimonials a plaque would be presented in appreciation which included their period of employment.

Retired ACT Transport Employees Club

The Retired ACT Transport Employees Club is an association of people who worked at the depot including conductors, drivers, inspectors and the earliest apprentices who started work their in the 1930s. The association held monthly meetings in one of the depots original storerooms located in the western corner. This office area was also the home of the depot's WWII Honour Roll, which originally had pride of place in the entry lobby of the 1940 single storey addition along Wentworth Avenue. These facilities were not made available once the ACT Land Development Agency took over the premises and the Honour Board is now kept at the club meeting hall in Campbell.

The Association has collected various items relating to the depot and the history of transport in Canberra with the intention that this is the beginning of the accumulation of heritage items to be displayed in a future transport museum inside the existing depot.

A short story titled *Ghosts of Kingston and the Old Bus Depot* written by Val Emerton concludes with the following passage which embodies the social significance of the depot to the community and the families of the people who worked there.

“The smell of grease and petrol, and the sound of men talking and laughing as they worked have long since gone. All evidence of the pin-up girl calendars and jokes on the walls, side by side with technical diagrams of buses, cars and trucks, and the paraphernalia of routes and shifts, times of parliamentary sittings, and the lists of materials and equipment to be ordered, has worn off, or been painted over.

There are men still around who, for many years, helped keep the wheels moving. As former bus, car and truck drivers, mechanics, fitters and office workers, walk in through those big roller doors facing onto the Power House, memories are revived of the strident noise of motors, footsteps on the concrete floors and the banter and laughter of the men.

Sad memories too of accidents, hardship, and the uncertainty of the war years. Now on Sundays the Old Bus Depot echoes to the happy sound of families wandering amongst a variety of stalls, and the old hangars smell of fresh cut flowers, hand crafted woodwork and all sorts of culinary delights, but for some, the ghosts still walk the concrete floors.”

Based on the research and workshops undertaken the collective attachment to the depot for the defined community, which embodies meanings important to this defined community, is as the place where two or more generations of people worked to provide: essential services to the Government of Australia and its departments; essential services to the local and district communities, and important transportation to help build early Canberra. The depot is the place were they formed social groups and recreational clubs, and had common social experiences, resulting in the depot representing strong symbolic qualities defining their community for over 50 years. There is a pride in this defined community in the knowledge that the depot performed essential community functions in Canberra's development leading to a special attachment by the defined community. There is a pride in the knowledge that the depot, from their perspective, was closely associated with events having a profound affect on the local community as well as nationally. This community's association with the depot for over 50 years until it closed and its strong social ties distinguishes this community and the depot from other communities and locations in Canberra.

The depot is a symbolic place that connects the past with the present and provides a strong sense of connection to Canberra's transport services for those associated with this community.

REFERENCES

Carnall, J and the Australian Institute of Architects (ACT Chapter), 2010, 'Heritage Nomination of Kingston Bus Depot (Kingstno Transport Depot), Wentworth Avenue, Kingston, ACT'.

SITE PLAN



The site boundary is indicated by red lines on the above plan – the eastern boundary includes the orientation of the building parallel to the railway siding and the western aligns with the block boundary on Wentworth Avenue. Northern and southern boundaries align with the former Bus Depot building footings.