

Australian Capital Territory

Heritage (Decision about Registration for the Manuka Oval and Caretaker's Cottage, Griffith) Notice 2012

Notifiable Instrument NI 2012 - 135

made under the

***Heritage Act 2004* section 42 Notice of Decision about Registration**

1. Revocation

This instrument replaces NI 2011-636

2. Name of instrument

This instrument is the Heritage (Decision about Registration for the Manuka Oval and Caretaker's Cottage, Griffith) Notice 2012 -

3. Registration details of the place

Registration details of the place are at Attachment A: Register entry for the Manuka Oval and Caretaker's Cottage, Griffith.

4. Reason for decision

The ACT Heritage Council has decided that the Manuka Oval and Caretaker's Cottage, Griffith meets one or more of the heritage significance criteria at s 10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*. The register entry is at Attachment A.

5. Date of Registration

8 March 2012

Gerhard Zatschler
Secretary
ACT Heritage Council
8 March 2012



ACT Heritage Council

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

**HERITAGE REGISTER
(Registration Details)**

For the purposes of s. 41 of the *Heritage Act 2004*, an entry to the heritage register has been prepared by the ACT Heritage Council for the following place:

Manuka Oval and Caretaker's Cottage, Manuka Circle, Griffith, ACT

Blocks 2, 4, 6, 10, 11, 14 and 15, Section 15, Griffith, Canberra Central
And adjacent road verges.

DATE OF REGISTRATION

8 March 2012 Notifiable Instrument: 2012-

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

Manuka Oval and Caretaker's Cottage, Manuka Circle, Griffith, ACT

Blocks 2, 4, 6, 10, 11, 14 and 15, Section 15, Griffith, Canberra Central
And adjacent road verges.

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

This statement refers to the Heritage Significance of the place as required in s12(d) of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

As one of the first developments of the nation's capital, the Manuka Oval demonstrates the importance of recreational and sporting venues for the emerging community in the 1920s, being established alongside the construction of buildings such as Parliament House and Albert Hall.

The heritage value of the oval is vested in its tangible fabric and intangible values—the history of the place and activity conducted there since the early 1920s which gives the Manuka Oval its strong historic, cultural and social heritage significance for the ACT community.

The oval's prominence and importance in the community has not waived, being the site of many significant sporting events, including the Prime Minister's XI matches, first played at this site in 1952.

The place has a significant role in the lives for the community, and is highly valued as a place for sporting matches, recreation and socialisation.

The Caretaker's Cottage compliments an historical understanding of the oval, illustrating its prominence through the need for an on-site caretaker to take care of the grounds. The Cottage was designed as an integral part of the sporting precinct and for many years was associated with the significant sporting life of the developing Capital.

The Manuka Oval is significant for its continual use as a Canberra sporting facility, retaining an array of features such as the historic tree plantings, the oval, the Caretaker's Cottage and the later scoreboard which tell the story of its development as a popular sporting venue.

The Manuka Oval and Caretaker's Cottage has an important association with the early development of Canberra as the nation's capital. The Oval, together with neighbouring places in the Griffith, Kingston and Barton areas, illustrates the immediate and changing needs of the community, as it grew and established from the 1920s and through the first half of the twentieth century.

OTHER RELATED PLACES

- Telopea Park
 - Telopea Park School
 - Manuka Swimming Pool
 - Former Griffith Child Welfare Centre and Old Jazz School
 - Brassey Hotel
 - Hotel Kurrajong
 - Manuka Shopping Precinct
 - Kingston Shopping Precinct
 - St Christopher's Cathedral Precinct
 - St Paul's Church
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- Garden city precincts – Barton Housing Precinct
Kingston/Griffith Housing Precinct
Red Hill Housing Precinct
Blandfordia 5 Housing Precinct
Blandfordia 4 Housing Precinct
Forrest Housing Precinct
- Site of the former Canberra Services Club

FEATURES INTRINSIC TO THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PLACE

The attributes listed below are assessed as features intrinsic to the heritage significance of the place and warrant conservation:

Manuka Oval

- Oval playing field;
- Function as a venue for sporting and recreation purposes;
- Surrounding setting of mature landscaping, including perimeter enclosure by evergreen and deciduous trees; and
- The screen of the Jack Fingleton Scoreboard.

Manuka Oval Caretaker's cottage

- All original internal and external building fabric including cottage and garage; and
- Location on central axis extending through Telopea Park, Manuka Swimming Pool and Manuka Oval.

APPLICABLE HERITAGE GUIDELINES

The 'Heritage Guidelines: General Conservation Guidelines for Historic Heritage Places 2011' adopted under s25 of the *Heritage Act 2004* are applicable to the conservation of the Manuka Oval and Caretaker's Cottage, Manuka.

The guiding conservation objective is that the Manuka Oval and Caretaker's Cottage, Manuka, 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).

REASON FOR REGISTRATION

The Manuka Oval and caretaker's Cottage, Manuka, has been assessed against the heritage significance criteria and been found to have heritage significance when assessed against three criteria under the ACT *Heritage Act 2004* including (c), (d) and (h).

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 Manuka Oval and Caretaker's Cottage does not meet this criterion.

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

There is no evidence before Council to indicate that the place meets 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 Manuka Oval and Caretaker's Cottage is important as evidence of a distinctive function of exceptional interest.

Shown on the early plans of Walter Burley Griffin, and initially mooted as a recreational park in the early 1920s, the Manuka Oval has a long legacy as a recreational facility within the ACT, continuing to the present day. It has, and continues, to serve the recreational needs of the community, and is one of the prominent sporting fields within the ACT, with many sporting matches of note having been held here in the past, and continuing.

It demonstrates one of the earliest needs of the emerging community of the nation's capital in the 1920s, and has played a significant part in the social lives and formation of the community.

The purpose-built nature of the Caretaker's Cottage demonstrates the importance and prominence of the oval in the need for a permanent on-site caretaker from the 1930s. The Cottage was designed as an integral part of the sporting precinct and for many years was associated with the significant sporting life of the developing Capital.

The Manuka Oval meets 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;**

There is evidence to suggest that the Manuka Oval is highly valued by the community as a prominent sporting venue, and for the role it plays in the life of the community, through the number of visitors the place receives each year, and through it being a place prominent in the lives and minds of Canberrans.

The Manuka Oval meets this criterion.

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

The Manuka Oval and Caretaker's Cottage does not meet this criterion.

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

The Manuka Oval and Caretaker's Cottage does not meet this criterion.

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

The Manuka Oval and Caretaker's Cottage does not meet this criterion.

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

The Manuka Oval and Caretaker's Cottage has a special association with the cultural phase of the earliest development of Canberra as the nation's capital. Together with neighbouring places within Griffith, Kingston and Barton, the area demonstrates the services required by, and provided to the new community, and demonstrates its evolution and changing needs over time during the first half of the twentieth century.

The Manuka Oval also has a strong and special association with sporting events in the life of the capital, including the annual Prime Minister's XI match which has been played on this site since 1952.

The Manuka Oval and Caretaker's Cottage meets this criterion.

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

The Manuka Oval and Caretaker's Cottage does not meet this 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

The Manuka Oval and Caretaker's Cottage 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

The Manuka Oval and Caretaker's Cottage does not meet this 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.**

The Manuka Oval and Caretaker's Cottage does not meet this criterion.

SUMMARY OF THE PLACE HISTORY AND PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

HISTORY

Contextual background

The Manuka and Telopea areas (incorporating Griffith, Kingston, Barton and Forrest) were among the first developed as part of the emerging nation's capital in the early 1920s. Together with Civic in the north, both were identified in Walter Burley Griffin's and the Federal Capital Advisory Committee's (FCAC) plans for the new city.

Walter Burley Griffin won the competition for the design of Canberra in 1912. Griffin prepared a preliminary plan of 1913 and a revised plan in 1918 following which the Official Plan was Gazetted. Griffin's plan included housing areas planned for different socio-economic groups within the community. This reflected contemporary views. The Barton and Kingston areas were planned for middle income public servants, while Griffith and Forrest were planned for higher-income families (RNE, 17370).

Griffin's design intent for the nation's capital included twin towns in the north and south. The Manuka area was intended by Walter Burley Griffin as the initial city, with Civic Centre located to the north.

The Manuka and Telopea areas are named after features identified on Walter Burley Griffin's original plan for Canberra—Manuka Circle and Telopea Park (now the site of the Telopea Park School).



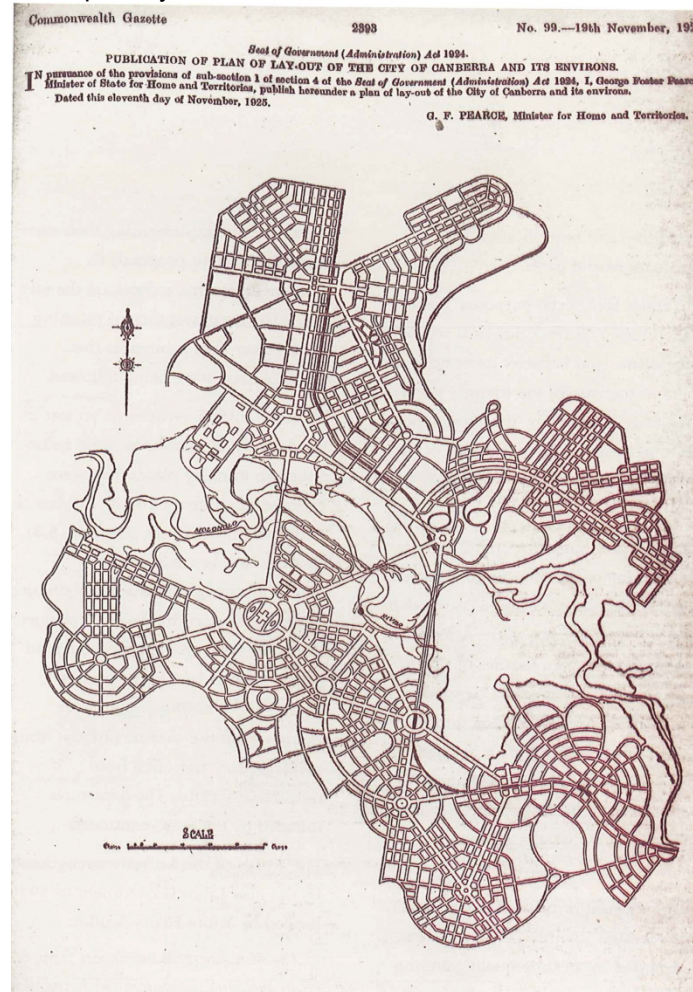
Detail of Walter Burley Griffin's final Plan of Canberra, 1918
'Canberra plan of city and environs. Walter Burley Griffin, Federal Capital Director of Design and Construction'
National Archives of Australia, A13312-8

Griffin left Canberra in 1921 leaving development under the control of the FCAC chaired by the planner, John Sulman. The Committee had been appointed to complete sufficient permanent buildings to enable Parliament to move from Melbourne to Canberra.

In the early 1920s the FCAC supported Griffin's notion of twin settlements and set about building the nation's capital. In the north, activity focused around the Civic Centre, with the adjacent suburbs of Ainslie and Braddon. In the south, work began in the areas of Manuka and Kingston, with adjacent suburbs of Kingston, Griffith, Barton and Forrest.

In the 1920s Canberra went through its first major phase of development as the National Capital. This phase was focussed on the completion of the Provisional Parliament House and the relocation of Parliament to Canberra in 1927. The Garden City movement was a very strong influence on the early planning and development of Canberra at this time.

The FCCs Gazetted Plan of 1925 provides an interesting comparison between Griffin's planning for the city, and the later version adopted by the FCC.



1925 Gazetted Plan
Commonwealth of Australia Gazette, no.99, November 1925

The development of the Manuka and Telopea areas in the early 1920s has left a strong legacy today of a number of features that were established early in the history of the nation's capital, to support the new community. They demonstrate the services provided for the city's earliest construction workers and public servants who relocated to Canberra from Melbourne for the opening of Parliament House in 1927 and paint a picture of the community and its needs at that time.

Development in the Manuka/Telopea area can be summarised through the following timeline of key developments:

- 1920s site of the Manuka Oval being used for recreation purposes
- 1922 plantings were introduced to the then Waratah Pathway (now Telopea Park)
- 1923 Telopea Park School opened
- 1924 first land auctions for residential and commercial premises – including for the suburbs of Barton, Kingston, Griffith and Forrest
- 1926 development started at the Manuka and Kingston shopping centres

- 1927 Kurrajong Hotel opened
- 1927 Brassey House opened
- 1928 St Christopher's Convent opened
- 1931 Manuka Swimming Pool opened
- 1937 Griffith Child Welfare Centre opened
- 1937 Manuka Oval Caretaker's Cottage constructed
- 1939 St Paul's Church, Griffith opened
- 1939 St Christopher's Cathedral opened
- 1941 Canberra Services Club opened
- 1947 Kingston Post Office opened

The floodplain of the Molonglo River divided the site of Canberra into two towns. 'The real city was the southern town, centred on the shopping centres of Manuka and Kingston, and lying in the sheltered valley east of Kurrajong where departmental officers had planned the capital since they first saw the site in 1908' (Reid, 2002: 193).

Manuka Oval

The site of the Manuka Oval was developed in the 1920s as a public park to meet the recreational needs of the growing population of south Canberra. The first concept for an oval at Manuka was introduced under the control of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee (FCAC) in the early 1920s and was approved by Parliament in 1925, following the planned layout and geometry of Griffin's plan (dsb landscape architects, 2002: 6).

Manuka Oval was originally called the Blandfordia Recreation Reserve and is shown on Walter Burley Griffin's plan of the area, as Manuka Circle, a small circle at the intersection of Wellington and Eastlake Avenues (now Canberra Avenue) (RNE 101939).

Manuka Oval has a rich and diverse history starting back as early as the 1920s when Manuka Circle Park was an open field. Manuka Circle Park fell away to Spring Creek on its eastern side. Football was played on the area - rugby league across the field and Australian football along its length. This field didn't provide adequate player facilities and, as an unfenced area, provided no means for sporting organisations to charge admission, limiting capacity to host major sporting events

(<http://www.manukaoval.com.au/about/history.php>).

In October 1925, Weston was designated Superintendent of the Parks and Gardens Branch of the Federal Capital Commission (FCC). This gave him the continuing responsibility for construction and maintenance of the Oval along with the golf link, bowling greens, tennis courts, recreation ground, reserves and plantations, landscape gardening and minor development of parks, gardens, boulevards, control of Yarralumla Nursery and cooperation with the Forestry Department (RNE 101939).

Manuka Circle Park became the home ground for the Federal Capital Territory Cricket Association which later became the ACT Cricket Association in 1939 (RNE 101939).

In 1926 and 1927 the cricket association, bodies representing football as well as local sporting associations made numerous approaches to the FCC to have the area enclosed. However, it was not until March 1929 that major work formally commenced on Manuka Oval. The open field was graded, grass sown, a turf pitch laid, and wire mesh fence erected around the perimeter. The first cricket pitch was in use in April 1930 (<http://www.manukaoval.com.au/about/history.php>).

All of the test teams that came to Australia from 1936 -37 until 1950 -51 played a match at Manuka Oval against a team representing the Southern Districts of New South Wales. In 1951 the program for the tour of Australia by the West Indies did not include Canberra and in order to compensate, Prime Minister R.G Menzies suggested a Prime Minister's XI match to be played in Canberra (RNE 101939).

It has been the Prime Ministers XI matches, which have brought particular attention to the oval. Manuka Oval became a ground where international cricket was played regularly. It also generated a cash flow that enabled the Cricket Association to develop cricket standards. The first matches were held in 1952 in the time of Prime Minister Menzies, and were regarded as 'Festival Matches'. However, in the 1980s Prime Minister Hawke saw their revival as a permanent cricket calendar event to be regarded by young players as stepping stone between Sheffield Shield matches and Test matches. Record crowds attended the first Prime Minister's XI match under Hawke in 1985 when almost 16,000 ticket holding people attended and also many others without tickets (RNE 101939).

The Oval was also important for being the only large open space area in Canberra and was used for events needing to accommodate large gatherings of people such as visits to Australia by Queen Elizabeth II in 1954, and Billy Graham (US evangelist) in 1959 (RNE 101939).

Brick gate posts with ticket selling booths and steel bar gates were constructed around 1962 (RNE 101939). Also at this time, the Bradman pavilion was constructed and named in honour of the great cricketer, Don Bradman who first played at Manuka Oval against Mailers 'Bohemians' (<http://www.manukaoval.com.au/about/history.php>).

In 1979, the ACT Administration decided to develop Manuka Oval primarily for cricket. The pitches were re-laid with couch grass (<http://www.manukaoval.com.au/about/history.php>).

In the early 1980s a scoreboard from the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) (understood to date from the early 1900s) was installed at Manuka Oval. Relocated to the Oval when the MCG installed the first electronic board, it was named the Jack Fingleton Scoreboard, after the late Australian opening batsman who made his career as a political journalist in the corridors of Parliament House, just kilometres away (<http://www.manukaoval.com.au/about/history.php>).

It is understood that during the dismantling of the scoreboard at the MCG, the roof, floors and rear and side walls were destroyed. The steel frame was also damaged and in 2011 it is the face or screen of this scoreboard that survives at Manuka Oval, in a purpose built housing.

In 1987 and 1992 the spectator areas at the northern and eastern side of the oval were reconstructed. The two grandstands were named after two Prime Ministers who brought international cricket teams to Canberra on 16 occasions, and were named the Robert Menzies stand and the Bob Hawke stand by Dame Patti Menzies and Mr. Hawke in 1992 (<http://www.manukaoval.com.au/about/history.php>).

During the 1980s, the cricket training pitches were moved to the area on the western side of the Oval, outside the Oval fence, in order to take advantage of an open unshaded area. A portable office, located behind the Bradman Pavilion, was used to house the Cricket Association until 1991 when the Curator's Cottage was allocated to the Association for use as its headquarters (RNE 101939).

Manuka Oval has been integral in the life of early Canberra, its history filled with a host of events and functions that today would seem rather unusual, including tennis matches, sheepdog trials, athletic carnivals and military celebrations. It has stamped its place in sporting and community history in Canberra and Australia. It has seen sporting heroes like Sir Donald Bradman, Alex Jesalenko, Steve Waugh, Alan Border, and James Hird to name just a few demonstrate their talents at the oval for the local community as well as national & international visitors (<http://www.manukaoval.com.au/about/history.php>).

Although both rugby league and union have a rich history at Manuka Oval, it is Australian Football and Cricket that have been the major tenants and those sports with which the Oval is most commonly associated today. Today the annual Prime Minister's XI cricket match and AFL games are the highlight with the ground often exceeding its 13,550 capacity (<http://www.manukaoval.com.au/about/history.php>).

The oval has also had a history of use for football, hosting some international football matches. It was used as the playing base for the first few years of the Canberra Vikings' (formerly the Canberra Kookaburras) existence (RNE 101939).

Manuka Oval Curator's Cottage

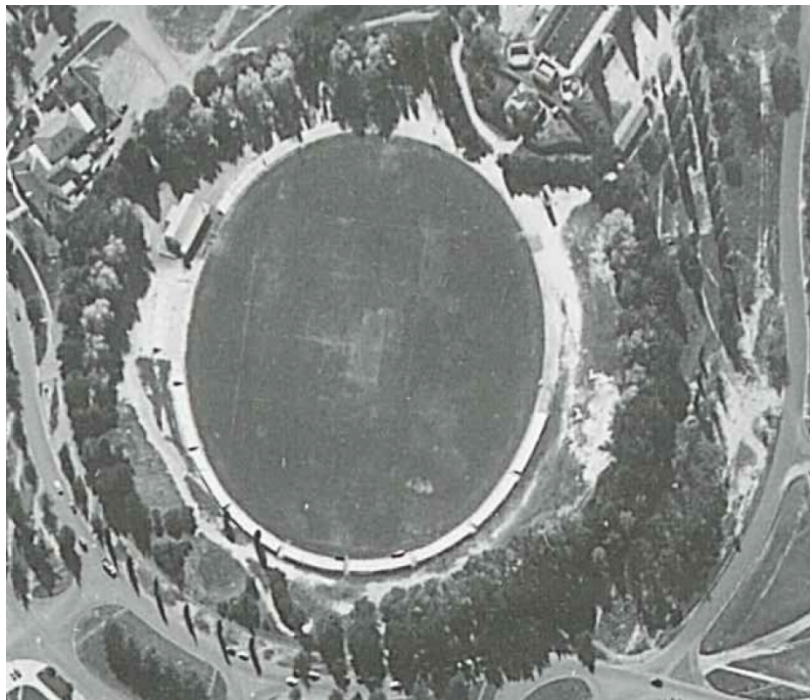
The following is taken verbatim from the RNE 101939

The Caretaker's Cottage was constructed in 1937 by the Department of Works and Housing as the residence for the curator of Manuka Oval. It was designed by the Federal Capital Commission as an integral part of the Manuka Oval design, lying at the northern end of the principal north south axis which runs through Telopea Park, Manuka Pool and the Manuka Oval. The second-storey windows provide an outlook across the oval.

Caretakers were appointed to look after the pitches but there was little expenditure on equipment during the war years. One curator Jim Thompson (Thomo) lived in the cottage from the mid 1960s to the mid 1980s. Prior to this the Trusdale family lived in the cottage during the 1950s.

The house incorporated the facility to keep mowing and rolling equipment under cover.

It has more recently been used as the office for the ACT Cricket Association.



ACTPLA 28-4-1961, Run 14 Print 69, ACT Government
Image shows alternating planting of deciduous and evergreen trees.

DESCRIPTION

Manuka Oval

The Manuka Oval precinct is a recreation area landscape. It includes the fenced oval, the Caretaker's Cottage and setting, grandstands and seating areas, the cricket practice areas and the surrounding landscape areas, as well as the areas of road verge which contribute streetscape plantings.

Although enlarged, the configuration of the oval precinct is an important nodal planning feature from the early Canberra design by Walter Burley Griffin. The precinct is a cohesive recreation landscape complimented by the adjacent Telopea Park.

The precinct retains much of its original tree planting from the 1920s, with now large mature specimens of cypresses, poplars, oaks and elms that define the circular space of the sports ground. The tree planting design reflects planting trends by T.C.G. Weston using trees that had been tested for Canberra conditions.

With some design intention as well as for their amenity values, T.C.G Weston laid out cypresses, oaks and elms as background trees to the field, with an array of different poplar species on the inner side of the plantings circle, which now provide the attractive white trunks against the darker backgrounds. Roman Cypresses are used outside the grounds and appear to emphasise the gateways.

Apart from the trees the grounds have an array of buildings and structures. There are a number of toilet blocks from different periods of development. The Bradman Pavilion is a modest low level building with fine detailing of tongue and groove boarding on the ceiling extending out to form the eaves lining. It has pleasant spaces created by an internal change of level. The pavilion underwent reconstruction in 1994, which added VIP seating with fabric shade structures in the front, along with some other internal improvements. The catalyst for this was the entry of a Canberra team into the Sydney Rugby Union club competition (Canberra Kookaburras). The grandstands symmetrically flank the pavilion. The Score Board is a major feature with historic associations.

The oval is renowned for its aesthetic of enclosure by trees. The enclosure excludes the hustle and bustle of Manuka and assists spectators to be absorbed in the sporting event. From the oval, the tower of Saint Christopher's Cathedral and Red Hill are the only outside visible features.

The Caretaker's cottage, its hedged garden and the Lord Taverners Garden beside the Score Board add charm to the environment.

Manuka Oval Caretaker's Cottage

The Caretaker's Cottage was built in 1937 and is located at the northern end of the Manuka Oval adjacent to the Manuka Swimming Pool.

The Caretaker's Cottage is a demonstration of Federal Capital Architecture, as a two storey brick residence with white painted cement rendered walls and red brick footings. The roof is a tiled hipped and gable and has two chimney stacks with original chimney pots. There are flat metal roofs over the two storey verandah and the attached garage.

The building has wooden doors, wooden sash windows (with flyscreens) and decorative features such as Art Deco chevron ventilators, plus moulded details on the exterior walls. The surrounds of the exterior openings are quite plain. Metal railings partially enclose the front porch.

The building is surrounded by mature plantings and sits on a main axis of Telopea Park, Manuka Swimming Pool and the Manuka Oval. The cottage is surrounded by a small garden which has been well tended.

A garage and wood-store attached to the house was designed to also house the groundsman's tractors and equipment.

A separate garage in the same architectural style as the cottage (rendered brick walls with gable tiled roof on the north west boundary of the site) has been constructed, as the original garage was being used as a storeroom for mowers etc.

Physical condition and integrity

Both the Manuka Oval and Caretaker's Cottage are in a good physical condition with a high level of integrity. A number of mature plantings, including original plantings from the 1920s remain at the Oval, and the cottage remains in a structurally sound condition, retaining many of its original elements.

REFERENCES

Canberra Sunday Times, March 28 2004, “ *Manuka Oval 75 not out, 1929 - 2004.*”

dsb landscape architects, 2002, 'Manuka Oval Master Plan', report prepared for the ACT Government.

<http://www.mcg.org.au/TheMCGStadiumFactsandFigures>

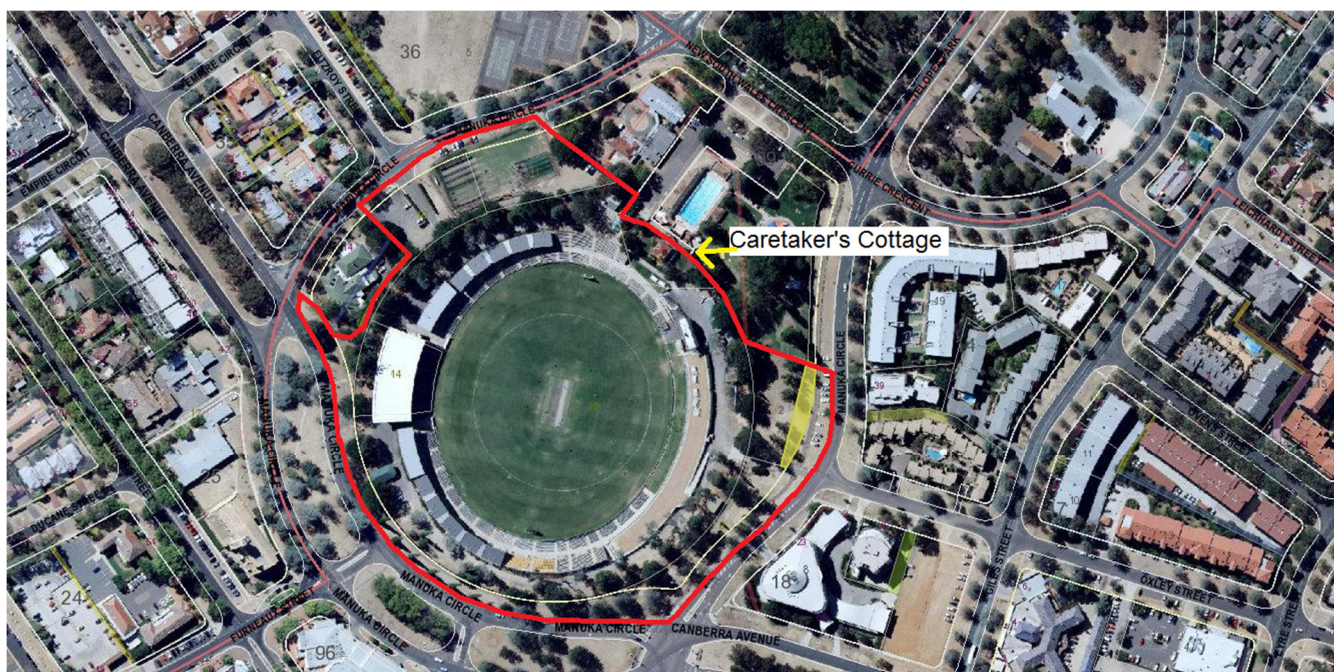
RNE, (Register of the National Estate), Place Identification: 101939, 'Manuka Oval Precinct', http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/ahdb/search.pl?mode=place_detail;place_id=101939, date accessed 23 August 2011.

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Gibbney, J., 1988, *Canberra 1913-1953*, Aus Government Publishing Service, Canberra.

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SITE PLAN



Place boundary indicated by solid red line

IMAGES

images taken 31 August 2011



Manuka Oval



Jack Fingleton scoreboard



Perimeter plantings



Manuka Oval and perimeter plantings



Cricket practice nets



Road verge plantings



Caretaker's Cottage



Caretaker's Cottage shed