

Heritage (Decision about Provisional Registration of Old Land's End, Belconnen) Notice 2017

Notifiable Instrument NI2017–59

made under the

Heritage Act 2004, s32 (Decision about provisional registration) and s34 (Notice of decision about provisional registration)

1 Name of instrument

This instrument is the *Heritage (Decision about Provisional Registration of Old Land's End, Belconnen) Notice 2017*.

2 Decision about provisional registration

On 9 February 2017, the ACT Heritage Council (the **Heritage Council**) decided not to provisionally register Old Land's End, part Block 1591, Belconnen (the **Place**).

3 Details and description of the Place

The location details and description of the Place are in the schedule.

4 Reasons for the decision

The Heritage Council decided not to provisionally register the Place because it did not have heritage significance as it did not meet any of the heritage significance criteria in section 10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*, as set out in the schedule.

5 Date decision takes effect

The decision not to provisionally register the Place takes effect on the day after this notice is notified.

Fiona Moore
A/g Secretary (as delegate for)
ACT Heritage Council
9 February 2017

Schedule

(See sections 3 and 4)



ACT Heritage Council

STATEMENT OF REASONS

DECISION NOT TO PROVISIONALLY REGISTER

Old Land's End

(part Block 1591, Belconnen)

IN THE ACT HERITAGE REGISTER

In accordance with Section 32 of the *Heritage Act 2004*, the ACT Heritage Council has decided not to provisionally register Old Land's End, Belconnen. This Statement of Reasons provides an assessment of Old Land's End, Belconnen and finds that the place does not meet any of the criteria under s.10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

Background

The Old Land's End property comprised portions 52, 53, 54, and 73, each of 40 acres, in the Parish of Weetangera, County of Murray. Portion 73 was selected by Robert Kilby in 1871 and shortly after the remaining portions were selected by his father, William. Robert Kilby and his wife, Jane, built a slab house on Portion 52.

The origin of the name Land's End comes from a conversation between Robert and Jane. Jane, lamenting belated news of a friend's death, said, "We never hear anything in this land's end of a place." Robert allegedly replied, "Land's End, that's the very name for our place."

Saunders (1992) conducted an archaeological survey at the site of Old Land's End homestead site for the Canberra Archaeological Society. The site was marked principally by the presence of mature exotic vegetation. With the homestead demolished in 1925, all that remained by 1992 were two chimney bases, a section of stone paving and a small amount of building material.

In 2016 the site consisted of some exotic plant species, including fig trees (*Ficus* sp.), Hawthorn (*Crataegus* sp.), a cypress tree, (*Cupressus* sp. see Image 10), and blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus*).

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 Old Land's End, Belconnen, the Council considered:

- the original nomination and documentary evidence supplied by the nominator;
- the Council's *Heritage Assessment Policy* (February 2015);
- information provided by a site inspection on 19 December 2017 by ACT Heritage; and
- the report by ACT Heritage titled, *Background Information Old Land's End*, February 2017, containing photographs and information on history, description, condition and integrity.

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. Future research may alter the findings of this assessment.

(a) importance to the course or pattern of the ACT's cultural or natural history;

Old Land's End, Belconnen, does not meet this criterion.

The place, when considered in association with the 1915 Territory Features Map, provides insight into the physical linkages between places in this period of the ACT's cultural history. While these linkages may demonstrate the interrelationship between pastoral places in the Weetangera area, they are not demonstrated strongly enough to meet this criterion at this time, however the Council acknowledges that future research may change these findings.

The Old Lands End site marks the beginnings of a longstanding network of family farming properties associated with churches. Its connection with the Weetangera Cemetery and church site, with the 1920s' Lands End homestead which includes material from it, and with the Parkwood homesteads and church, is evidence of a pattern of family settlement that exemplifies the culture and values of small rural landowners closely associated with the Methodist Church from the 1860s into the Federal period.

While it may be argued that the Old Land's End Site has an association with patterns of rural European land use and vernacular building techniques used by selectors during the late nineteenth century, there is insufficient physical fabric remaining to demonstrate the place's importance to the course or pattern of the ACT's cultural or natural history.

Slab construction was adopted as a result of availability of timber, enabling settlers to build homes from inexpensive, abundant materials, demonstrating the resourcefulness of settlers and the environmental and economic demands of the era and location. While most of the buildings at Old Land's End were of vernacular slab construction, there is no remaining evidence of the building techniques or materials at the place, which was divested of slabs once it was no longer occupied. Similarly, there is insufficient heritage fabric at the site that would enable interpretation of the process of dismantling and abandonment.

Pisé was adopted as a result of economic conditions, enabling settlers to construct homes from inexpensive, readily available materials. This demonstrates the resourcefulness of settlers and the environmental, social, and economic demands of the era and location. However, nothing remains of the pisé dairy that once stood at the Old Land's End site. As such, the place does not meet the threshold for inclusion under this criterion.

Remnant exotic landscape elements at European settler sites can reveal patterning of orchards and domestic and rural yards, however there is insufficient remaining structure or formality to the planting systems at the Old Land's End site that would allow the place to meet the threshold for inclusion under this criterion.

(b) has uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the ACT's cultural or natural history;

Old Land's End, Belconnen, does not meet this criterion.

Pisé and horizontal slab buildings are rare and endangered aspects of the ACT's cultural history, as few of these rural vernacular structures survive from nineteenth century pastoral landscapes, and fewer still survive in unmodified, 'good' condition. European holdings that demonstrate pastoral and agricultural lifeways of early settlers in the region also represent endangered aspects of the ACT's cultural history. However, there is insufficient physical fabric at the place to demonstrate these aspects of European settlement history and meet the threshold for inclusion under this criterion.

(c) potential to yield important information that will contribute to an understanding of the ACT's cultural or natural history;

Old Land's End, Belconnen, does not meet this criterion.

A 1992 archaeological report suggested there was potential for sub-surface archaeological material, pertaining to late nineteenth rural/domestic life to be present at the Old Land's End site. However, there is no strong indication that this evidence would be of high enough integrity, or broaden the existing body of knowledge for the history of the ACT, to meet this criterion.

There is potential for material culture to be present at all places occupied by settlers during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and there is no evidence at Old Land's End to indicate that there would be anything additional in its archaeological record than would be expected for a place of its type. In order to meet this criterion, the Council must be satisfied that the archaeological material is likely to contribute significant new information to the archaeological record. In the case of Old Land's End, any surviving evidence is likely to provide a further example of the material culture typical of European domestic settlement in nineteenth century Australia. The material culture from this period is adequately represented in the archaeological record.

(d) importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or objects;

Old Land's End, Belconnen, does not meet this criterion.

The Old Land's End site is the remains of a nineteenth century rural dwelling. However, the only characteristic of this that it can demonstrate is a small selection of exotic tree species, which are commonly seen at other similar rural dwelling sites of high integrity throughout the region. As such, Old Land's End is not important for demonstrating principal characteristics of nineteenth century rural dwellings.

(e) importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by the ACT community or a cultural group in the ACT;

Old Land's End, Belconnen, does not meet this criterion.

While the place is likely to be valued by descendants of the Cameron and Kilby families who still live in the ACT and surrounding region, this association is familial and personal. The association does not extend to the broader ACT community or a cultural group in the ACT.

The remnant exotic plant species set within surrounding paddocks possess an element of aesthetic appeal, somewhat evocative of a past era. However, there is no evidence before the Council suggesting the place possesses landmark qualities, artistic excellence, or visual prominence demonstrated to be valued by the wider ACT community or a cultural group.

(f) importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement for a particular period;

Old Land's End, Belconnen, does not meet this criterion.

There is insufficient remaining physical evidence of the original pisé dairy or slab buildings to demonstrate any degree of integrity, and therefore meet the basic test for inclusion under this criterion. While the assortment of dressed stones suggests the presence of a chimney, this material evidence does not demonstrate a high degree of technical achievement for the period in which they were constructed.

(g) has a strong or special association with the ACT community, or a cultural group in the ACT for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;

Old Land's End, Belconnen, does not meet this criterion.

There is no evidence before the Council suggesting a strong or special association between Old Land's End and the ACT Community or a cultural group in the ACT. While the place is likely to be

valued by descendants of the Kilby and Cameron families who still live in the ACT and surrounding region, this association does not extend to the ACT community or a cultural group in the ACT.

(h) has a special association with the life or work of a person, or people, important to the history of the ACT.

Old Land's End, Belconnen, does not meet this criterion.

Members of the Kilby and Cameron families exemplify the contribution to community and farming life that was critical to the development of the rural community before and after the ACT was established. They also played a role in the developing civic life of Canberra. Heather Shakespeare (nee Cameron) was born in the Belconnen district, and raised at the Old Land's End property, and her philanthropic and community contributions made her important in the context of the twentieth century history of the ACT. However, the birth and childhood of Heather Shakespeare at this place are not considered to be important enough events in the history of the ACT for Old Land's End to meet this criterion.

Evan Cameron and Heather Shakespeare are credited as foundation members of the Canberra and District Historical Society (CDHS). This is a significant repository for documentary sources on the history of the ACT, and an advocating body for the conservation and celebration of the history and heritage of the ACT and region, and also publishes the Canberra Historical Journal, an ongoing historical source for the ACT. While the Council values all efforts to conserve, catalogue, and archive historical sources, this act in itself cannot be said to be prominent in shaping the history of the ACT. Places under this criterion should demonstrate an association with a strong, notable or influential contribution to the evolution or pattern of development in society or environment. There is no evidence before the Council suggesting Old Land's End has made a strong, notable or influential contribution to the evolution of the ACT. As such, the association between Heather Shakespeare and Old Land's End is not considered special enough to meet this criterion.

Conclusion

Old Land's End, Belconnen, is an interesting feature of pre-Federal Capital settlement in the ACT, but has not been shown to have the necessary evidence required to meet the high thresholds for inclusion on the ACT Heritage Register.

The absence of any substantial evidence of the original buildings significantly diminishes the place's ability to be important as evidence and obscures any features or artefacts that could have contributed heritage values.

While the place has some potential to add to existing historical and archaeological knowledge of the area, it has not been shown to the extent required as evidence under the *Heritage Act 2004* to be able to contribute any new information that would extend, fill any gaps, or change our knowledge of the cultural history of the ACT. No evidence has been demonstrated that it could contribute to the cultural history of the ACT any more than other nineteenth century rural houses in the region.

Whilst the Council finds that the place does not meet any of the criteria of the *Heritage Act 2004* this does not mean that the place has no heritage values at all: they are just not demonstrated to be of a high enough degree under section 10 of the *Heritage Act 2004* to be considered significant to the ACT.

This Statement of Reasons provides an assessment of Old Land's End and finds that the place does not meet any of the criteria specified in s.10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

SITE PLAN



Site Boundary Old Land's End (part) Block 1591 Belconnen



Image 1. Site Boundary, Old Land's End