

# Heritage (Decision about Provisional Registration of the City Railway Remnants, Kingston and Reid) Notice 2017

## Notifiable Instrument NI2017–64

made under the

Heritage Act 2004, s32 (Decision about provisional registration) s34 (Notice of decision about provisional registration) and s37 (Public consultation about registration of place or object)

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### 1 Name of instrument

This instrument is the *Heritage (Decision about Provisional Registration of the City Railway Remnants, Kingston and Reid) Notice 2017*.

### 2 Decision about provisional registration

On 9 February 2017, the ACT Heritage Council (the **Heritage Council**) decided to provisionally register the City Railway Remnants, The Causeway and part Cunningham Street Southern Road Verge and part Block 7, Section 11, Kingston and part Block 12, Section 33, Reid (the **Place**).

### 3 Registration details of the Place

The registration details of the Place are in the schedule.

### 4 Reasons for the decision

The Heritage Council decided to provisionally register the Place because it has heritage significance as it meets one or more of the heritage significance criteria in section 10 of the *Heritage Act 2004* (the **Act**), as set out in the schedule.

### 5 Date of provisional registration

The date of provisional registration is 10 February 2017 (being the day after the Heritage Council entered into the heritage register the registration details for the Place together with an indication that the registration is provisional).

**6 Indication of the Heritage Council's intention**

The Council intends to decide whether to register the Place under Division 6.2 of the Act during the period of provisional registration.

**7 Invitation to make written comments during public consultation period**

The Council invites written comments about the registration of the Place. Any written comments must be made within 4 weeks after the day this notice is notified and are to be provided to:

The Secretary  
ACT Heritage Council  
GPO Box 158  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Email: [heritage@act.gov.au](mailto:heritage@act.gov.au)

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

**Schedule**

**(See sections 3 and 4)**

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ACT Heritage Council

**AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY  
HERITAGE REGISTER  
(Provisional Registration)**

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

**City Railway Remnants, Kingston (The Causeway) and Reid (part Block 12 Section 33)**

**part Cunningham Street Southern Road Verge and part Block 7 Section 11, Kingston**

**DATE OF DECISION**

9 February 2017

**DATE OF PROVISIONAL REGISTRATION**

10 February 2017 Notifiable Instrument: 2017–

**PERIOD OF EFFECT OF PROVISIONAL REGISTRATION**

Start Date: 10 February 2017 End Date: 9 July 2017

Extended Period (if applicable) Start Date \_\_\_\_\_ End Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

The Secretary  
ACT Heritage Council  
GPO Box 158  
CANBERRA ACT 2601  
Telephone 13 22 81

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This statement refers to the location of the place as required in s. 12 (b) of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

#### **LOCATION OF THE PLACE**

Section 33 Block 12 (part), Reid;

The Causeway, Kingston; and

The road verge (part) on the southern side of Cunningham Street across from its intersection with Parbery Street in Kingston as well as Section 11 Block 7 (part), Kingston.

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This section refers to the description of the place as required in s.12(c) of the *Heritage Act 2004*. The attributes described in this section form part of the heritage significance of the place. For the purposes of s. 12(c) of the *Heritage Act 2004*, the boundary of the place is at Image 1.

#### **DESCRIPTION OF THE PLACE**

The City Railway Remnants, consisting of the following attributes:

- The ~290mx48m long strip of land at Reid that remains undeveloped within the former railway easement;

The Kingston Railway Easement, consisting of the following attributes:

- The ~27m wide median between the two roads that form The Causeway;

The Remnant Temporary Railway, consisting of the following attributes:

- The west tracks from the original alignment of the temporary construction railway that run for ~25m from the road verge through to the southern edge of the rail yard perimeter road in Section 11 Block 7, Kingston;
  - The east tracks from the 1967-1969 track realignment that run for ~47m from the road verge to the existing track termination in Section 11 Block 7, Kingston.
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This statement refers to the heritage significance of the place as required in s.12(d) of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

#### **STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

The City Railway Remnants are the only remaining evidence of the main railway system planned for Canberra. In 1911, the Department of Home Affairs included a rail system as a requirement in the competition for the design of the city. The winning design of Walter Burley Griffin located the railway to the east of the Parliamentary area offset from the main avenues that would then connect with a tram system to move people around the city. Following a Parliamentary Standing Committee inquiry in 1916 into its construction, it was decided that there was no reason to construct other than temporary lines until the development of the city warranted the construction of the permanent line. The route for the permanent line was included in the 1925 gazetted plan of the City of Canberra. It remained as an easement on the ground and on the Canberra plan under legislation until 1950 when it was determined that a rail link to Yass was no longer required and the railway route was removed from the plan.

Griffin, as Director of Design and Construction approved the construction of a temporary line to be used in the construction of the city. It roughly followed the proposed main rail route from Kingston to City. The only remaining evidence of this temporary line is a small section of tracks near the Kingston railway station which also include a section of the track realignment that served the nearby government printing office in the 1960s.

After 1950 the former easement land was quickly taken up and built over, and today there are only two sections of the easement that remain, one in Reid along Amaroo Street and one in The Causeway in Kingston.

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### CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE

The guiding conservation objective is that the City Railway Remnants shall be conserved and appropriately managed in a manner respecting its heritage significance.

The ACT Heritage Council may adopt heritage guidelines applicable to the place under s25 of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

For further information on guidelines applicable to the place, or for advice on proposed works or development, please contact ACT Heritage on 13 22 81.

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### REASON FOR PROVISIONAL REGISTRATION

The City Railway Remnants has been assessed against the heritage significance criteria and been found to have heritage significance when assessed against three criteria [(a), (b) and (h)] under s.10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

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### ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

The Council's assessment against the criteria specified in s.10 of the *Heritage Act 2004* is as follows.

In assessing the heritage significance of City Railway Remnants, Reid and Kingston, 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 inspections on 20 July 2011, 19 April 2016 and 9 December 2016 by ACT Heritage; and
- the report by ACT Heritage titled, *Background Information City Railway Remnants*, January 2017, containing photographs and information on history, description, condition and integrity; and

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;**

The City Railway Remnants, Reid and Kingston, meets this criterion.

The City Railway Remnants are the only remaining physical evidence of the implementation of the planning for the main railway that was part of Walter Burley Griffin's design for the city of Canberra.

Griffin's design for Canberra always included a railway that was designed to operate alongside a city-wide tram network. The location of the railway was formalised in the 1925 gazetted plan of the Layout-out of the City of Canberra and Its Environs. In the 1940s the planned railway easement was landscaped with trees and shrubs to help identify the route as well as help control wind and reduce dust from adjacent city development. The railway route was removed from the gazetted plan in 1950 and development quickly resumed most of the easement. In 2016, all that

remained of the former easement was a small section along Amaroo Street in Reid and the Causeway in Kingston.

The Amaroo Street remnant easement is a ~290m long stretch of land that until 1950 had been reserved for the railway. The remnant part is the southern half of the original easement with the other half contained in the Amaroo Street road easement and the southern half of Section 2 Reid. The design for the railway was for tracks in a 12 foot deep cutting with embankments on both sides through the city area north of the Molonglo River (later Lake Burley Griffin) and running offset from main avenues to separate it from the main public spaces. The tree planting pattern of an avenue that still exists today would have been located on the south of the rails as a part of the landscape buffer planned for each side of the easement.

The Kingston section of the remnant easement remains as the wide strip of land, 350m long, between the two parallel roads that form The Causeway road easement. This section of the planned railway was designed to run at ground level in the open as it was on the outskirts of the planned city and would allow for grand views and vistas for passengers arriving in Canberra, particularly where it changed direction at intersections of Griffin's axial lines and the planned embankment across what is now the Jerrabomberra Wetlands. This section of the remnant easement had landscaping similar to the section in Reid, but the trees failed to thrive and there is little suggestion of a formal avenue of trees, however the relationship of the place to the existing railway can still be clearly discerned.

The temporary construction railway existed for a very short time at the start of the 1920s and was laid out according to Walter Burley Griffin's plan, albeit on a temporary basis to help construction of the city. While the railway had only a minor role in the construction of Canberra, it is a testament to Griffin's planning and influence as Director of Design and Construction that it was built along his intended route. The only remnant of this railway is the short section in Kingston adjoining the rail yards.

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

The City Railway Remnants, Reid and Kingston, meets this criterion.

The City Railway Remnants are considered uncommon and endangered aspects of the ACT's cultural history. Very little rail was built in the ACT and planning history notes the changes in mass transportation away from rail to motorised travel. This has resulted in what little physical evidence there was of the easements reserved for the railway being built over so that only a small portion of that land remains. The land remaining in Reid has survived as it acted a barrier between a large educational institution and a low density residential area. The land remaining in Kingston has survived as the avenue had been constructed before 1950. It was one of the few sections of Griffin's plan where the railway would be above ground and run down the median of the avenue.

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

The City Railway Remnants, Reid and Kingston, does not meet this criterion.

There is some potential for the City Railway Remnants to yield important information that will contribute to an understanding of the ACT's cultural history. The planning history is better

represented by the planning documents and designs for the ACT, while the remnants of the temporary construction railway are of a standard gauge track that is well documented already.

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

The City Railway Remnants, Reid and Kingston, does not meet this criterion.

The City Railway Remnants are not important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a railway easement. As land that has been reserved for a possible future use, the only defining feature is that it has not been built over; and as this is a very common feature of many areas across the ACT, it cannot be considered important for demonstrating the type of place. While the plantings may add to the ability of the place to be interpreted, they are necessarily of a temporary nature and would have needed to be removed when the railway was built. As such, the plantings in themselves cannot be considered to be an important characteristic of the type of place.

The remnants of the temporary construction railway are of a standard type of track and design that still exists as part of the working Kingston railway station and the line out to Queanbeyan. As a common feature that still exists elsewhere, they cannot be considered to be important in the broader context of railway tracks.

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

The City Railway Remnants, Reid and Kingston, does not meet this criterion.

The City Railway Remnants may be valued by rail, engineering and Griffin planning enthusiasts, but they are not considered to be representative of the ACT community as a whole, nor are they considered to be cultural groups. Additionally, the Council could find no existing evidence that would suggest it is valued for exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

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

The City Railway Remnants, Reid and Kingston, does not meet this criterion.

While Griffin's design of Canberra is an important creative achievement of urban design at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the land reserved for one part of that design which was not built cannot be said to be important in demonstrating this.

Additionally, the remnant temporary construction railway was of a standard design for the time and is not important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

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

The City Railway Remnants, Reid and Kingston, does not meet this criterion.

While the ACT Railway Easements may be held in high regard and be visited by some community groups, such as those associated with engineering and railways or Walter Burley Griffin, there is no evidence that the place has a strong or special association with the ACT community as a whole, or a cultural group in the ACT for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

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

The City Railway Remnants, Reid and Kingston, meets this criterion.

The City Railway Remnants are associated with Walter Burley Griffin, a person important to the history of the ACT, who designed the railway route which existed in every version of his design of the City and in his role as Director of Design and Construction he pushed to create the temporary construction railway along his chosen route. Paul Reid's 2002 book *Canberra Following Griffin: a design history of Australia's national capital* clearly shows the administrative challenges Griffin faced in trying to get his railway built, which he considered would eventually become a major factor in the growth and success of the city. The temporary construction railway was one of the few major, albeit temporary, projects that occurred during Griffin's employment in Canberra and his efforts to get it built along his original planned route show how important it was to him.

While the remnants of the temporary railway do meet this criterion, this does not apply to the easements for the proposed railway. The easements were formalised by the 1925 gazetted plan several years after Griffin had left Canberra and while they were based on his designs, many others were involved in the refinement of the design. This is not considered to be a special association as required by this criterion.



SITE PLAN



Image 1 City Railway Remnants boundaries