

Heritage (Decision about Registration of Mulligan’s Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry, Gungahlin) Notice 2020

Notifiable instrument NI2020—209

made under the

Heritage Act 2004, s 40 (Decision about registration)

1 Name of instrument

This instrument is the *Heritage (Decision about Registration of Mulligan’s Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry, Gungahlin) Notice 2020*.

2 Decision about registration

On 2 April 2020, the ACT Heritage Council (the **Heritage Council**) decided to register Mulligan’s Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry, Block 685, Gungahlin (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 is satisfied on reasonable grounds that the Place has heritage significance as it meets one or more of the heritage significance criteria in section 10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*. A detailed statement of reasons including an assessment against the heritage significance criteria is provided in the schedule.

5 Date registration takes effect

The registration of the Place takes effect on the day after this notice is notified.

6 Revocation

The *Heritage (Decision about Provisional Registration of Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry, Gungahlin) Notice 2019* (NI2019—733) is revoked.

Fiona Moore
Secretary (as delegate for)
ACT Heritage Council
2 April 2020



ACT Heritage Council

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY
HERITAGE REGISTER
(Registration)

For the purposes of s40 of the *Heritage Act 2004*, an entry to the heritage register has been prepared by the ACT Heritage Council for the following place:

Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry

Block 685, Gungahlin

DATE OF REGISTRATION

2 April 2020 Notifiable Instrument: 2020–

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

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

LOCATION OF THE PLACE

Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry, Mulligan's Flat Nature Reserve, Block 685, Gungahlin.

This statement refers to the description of the place as required in s12(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 s12(c) of the *Heritage Act 2004*, the boundary of the place is at Image 1 [Image 1 declared restricted under s54 of the *Heritage Act 2004*].

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLACE

Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry, consisting of the following attributes:

- The area of land encompassing the quarry and artefact scatter on the hill spur between two ephemeral drainage lines in Image 1;
- The flaked stone artefacts, particularly the three main concentrations;
- The source stone lying undisturbed on the ground or where it is exposed as bedrock;
- The exposed bedrock with negative flake scars indicating direct resource procurement; and
- The natural landscape and vegetation of the area.

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

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry is an important tangible link to Ngunnawal ancestors who called the region home. The site is a location where the metamorphosed volcanic tuff is exposed as surface cobbles as well as outcrops of bedrock and is of a good enough quality for flaking to produce useful implements that were important to past lifeways. The size and intactness of the site make it important for future research, but it is the ability of the place to evoke an important part of cultural history that makes it particularly important to the Ngunnawal and for the early history of the ACT.

CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE

The guiding conservation objective is that Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry 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.

REASON FOR REGISTRATION

The Council has assessed the Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry, Gungahlin, against the heritage significance criteria and is satisfied that the place has heritage significance when assessed against six criteria [(a), (b), (c), (d), (g) and (h)] under s10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

The Council's assessment against the criteria specified in s10 of the *Heritage Act 2004* is as follows.

In assessing the heritage significance of Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry, Gungahlin, the Council considered:

- the original nomination and documentary evidence supplied by the nominator;
- the Council's *Heritage Assessment Policy* (March 2018);
- information provided by a site inspection on 16 August 2019 by one of the Council's experts on archaeology and an archaeologist from ACT Heritage; and
- the report by ACT Heritage titled, *Background Information Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry, April 2020*, containing photographs and information on history, description, condition and integrity;
- the report, Barber, M. & Williams, D. (1998) *An Archaeological Investigation of an Aboriginal Stone Quarry, Mulligan's Flat, Canberra Nature Park, Gungahlin, ACT*. Canberra; and
- information and comments arising from consultation with Representative Aboriginal Organisations (RAOs) under s31 of the Act.

Pursuant to s10 of the Heritage Act, 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 Council has assessed Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry against criterion (a) and is satisfied that the place meets this criterion.

Quarry sites are an important part of how past peoples lived in the area, making use of the local resources and providing a reliable source of material that would support a cultural connection to the land over time. Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry is one of the larger and more intact examples in the ACT of this site type and its location at the northern end of, and overlooking, the Limestone Plains make it stand out as an important place to understand how people lived in the landscape in the past. It is now a tangible reminder of Aboriginal people's lives in the region.

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

The Council has assessed Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry against criterion (b) and is satisfied that the place meets this criterion.

There are five other known quarry sites in the local area and more in the wider region. They are a relatively restricted site type as they are dependent on the underlying geology of the region, unlike stone artefact scatters that can occur wherever people make stone tools. They are important in that they are able to inform us about movement of past people in the landscape as well as what resources were used and, with further research, how they were used and how far they spread. Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry stands out from the other known quarry sites as being a relatively large and undisturbed example of the type making it a particularly uncommon aspect of the ACT's cultural history.

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

The Council has assessed Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry against criterion (c) and is satisfied that the place meets this criterion.

Quarry sites are important in that they are able to inform us about movement of past people in the landscape as well as what resources were used and, with further research, how they were used and how far they spread. This site in particular has a high potential to provide a wide range of evidence for interpretation of Aboriginal artefact manufacture and lithic exploitation. This quality is enhanced by the fact that there has been little damage to the site from ploughing and other agricultural practises. The site illustrates a distinctive type of lithic exploitation and site use pattern. The site is of educational value to both the local Ngunnawal community and to the wider community and will contribute significantly to a broader understanding of Aboriginal traditions. This is particularly so in relation to its completeness, its undisturbed nature, its high artefact density, the range of artefact types and its accessible location.

The 1998 Barber & Williams report on the site note several research questions that further work at the site could contribute to a better understanding of the ACT's cultural history, such as exploring the distribution of artefacts between the different concentration zones to see if the differences are due to utilisation or taphonomic processes (i.e. is the movement of artefacts the result of people or natural forces), if there was a particular type of end product that was being made for use elsewhere, or how does this site interact with the other known quarry sites and artefact scatters in the area?

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

The Council has assessed Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry against criterion (d) and is satisfied that the place meets this criterion.

Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry is one of the largest known Aboriginal stone procurement sites within the ACT. It is an excellent example of a quarry with different procurement and processing areas apparent within the same site and relatively undisturbed and intact. The other five quarries of similar material within Gungahlin have been affected by ploughing and urban development. The Mulligan's Flat site has only been subject to grazing, a comparatively low impact activity. As such the site is important for its ability to demonstrate an Aboriginal stone quarry site, with areas demonstrating different procurement strategies as well as flaking or processing areas.

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

The Council has assessed Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry against criterion (e) and is satisfied that the place does not meet this criterion.

While the site has excellent views over Canberra and is in a picturesque setting, the Council is not aware of any evidence that demonstrates the community or a cultural group valuing the place for its aesthetic characteristics, rather the values people demonstrate for it relate to its tangible link to the past and its ability to contribute to future research.

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

The Council has assessed Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry against criterion (f) and is satisfied that the place does not meet this criterion.

Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry demonstrates the procurement stage of artefact manufacture as well as the initial stage of stone reduction. However, the current state of research on the site does not indicate that the stone procurement strategies or the stone flaking and tool making processes demonstrate a high degree of creative or technical achievement for a particular period. Future research as noted in criterion (c) on the use of the stone or dating of the site may change the assessment against this criteria.

(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 Council has assessed Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry against criterion (g) and is satisfied that the place meets this criterion.

For the Ngunnawal people, Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry is an important tangible connection to their ancestors as it demonstrates how they worked with the land, how they moved through it and how they maintained their culture through the generations. Large and important sites, such as this quarry, have a strong and special relationship to the Ngunnawal people as it is a particularly useful place to demonstrate culture and past lifeways that can be passed on to new generations and as an educational site.

Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Quarry is considered by the local Aboriginal community to be a highly significant place which displays evidence of their ancestor's way of life and traditions. It is a place that was frequently visited by their ancestor's as a part of their way of life and traditions. It is a place that demonstrates an important part of the traditional economic activities prior to European arrival. The site is valued for its special educational potential for the younger and future generations of the Aboriginal community.

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

The Council has assessed Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry against criterion (h) and is satisfied that the place meets this criterion.

The human history of the region can be dated as early as 25,000 years ago. For much of this time Aboriginal people lived a lifestyle which was based on a seasonal specialist economy and settlement which had rich cultural, social and religious ethics. These traditions suffered from the early 1800's with the arrival of European colonists. The Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry provides a physical link to these people and to an aspect of their former lifestyle. As such the quarry provides an important tangible link to the everyday lives of the Aboriginal people of the region before the arrival of Europeans, giving it a special association to the original people of the area and making it important to the history of the ACT.

SITE PLAN

[Image removed - information declared restricted under s54 of the *Heritage Act 2004*].

Image 1 Mulligan's Flat Aboriginal Stone Quarry registration boundary