

Australian Capital Territory

Heritage (Decision about Provisional Registration of Arnold Grove, Gungahlin) Notice 2011

Notifiable Instrument NI2011-501

made under the

***Heritage Act 2004* s34 Notice of decision about Provisional Registration**

1. Name of instrument

This instrument is the Heritage (Decision about Provisional Registration of Arnold Grove, Gungahlin) Notice 2011 - 501

2. Commencement

This instrument commences on the day after notification.

3. Notice of Decision

Pursuant to Section 32 of the *Heritage Act 2004* the ACT Heritage Council has decided not to provisionally register Arnold Grove, Gungahlin to the ACT Heritage Register.

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Ms Jennifer O'Connell
Acting Secretary
ACT Heritage Council
GPO Box 158
Canberra ACT 2601

25 August 2011

STATEMENT OF REASONS

DECISION NOT TO PROVISIONALLY REGISTER ARNOLD GROVE, GUNGAHLIN (Block 800, District of Gungahlin) IN THE ACT HERITAGE REGISTER

Background

A nomination for Arnold Grove, Gungahlin was received in 1996.

At Council Meeting #38 on 25 August 2011 the ACT Heritage Council endorsed a Statement of Reasons which does not find Arnold Grove eligible for provisional registration.

Assessment

In assessing the nomination for Arnold Grove, Gungahlin, the Council considered:

- The material identified under the heading 'References', above; and
- A site visit undertaken by Heritage Unit staff on 17 May 2011.

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

Criterion (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*

Heritage Council assessment:

The place does not show a high degree of technical or creative achievement and therefore does not meet this criterion.

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

Heritage Council assessment:

There is no evidence to suggest that any design or aesthetic qualities of Arnold Grove are valued by the community or a cultural group.

Arnold Grove cannot be assessed in relation to this criterion.

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 practiced, is in danger of being lost or is of exceptional interest*

Heritage Council assessment:

Whilst demonstrating some aspects of Wilkinson's architectural design, Arnold Grove is not considered a distinctive design of Wilkinson's, being a modest example of his work.

Arnold Grove does not meet this criterion.

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*

Heritage Council assessment:

No information has been provided to suggest that Arnold Grove is highly valued by the community or a cultural group.

Arnold Grove cannot be assessed in relation to this criterion.

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

Heritage Council assessment:

This criterion is not applicable.

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

Heritage Council assessment:

Arnold Grove is the only place in the ACT designed by prominent architect, Leslie Wilkinson. In comparison with other houses designed by Wilkinson outside of the ACT, it is a modest example of his work.

Arnold Grove is not considered to be an outstanding example of Wilkinson's design. However, it displays many features which are common to Wilkinson's designs, including small-paned, double-hung windows, timber window shutters, pergolas and courtyards, exposed rafter ends, loggia, and wrought iron detailing in wall openings, which allow a view of the landscape beyond. Its smooth walling in pastel colour is another of Wilkinson's features. The consideration which Wilkinson gave to the siting and aspect of the house, taking advantage of the rural vista and views, is also common to his design philosophy.

Arnold Grove is unusual in that it is a single storey residence, whereas Wilkinson generally designed two storey residences for purposes of cooling. Arnold Grove has undergone some modification since Wilkinson designed it, including the sympathetic addition of a swimming pool and courtyard to the south-east, and sympathetic internal modifications.

While employing many of his design traits and presenting as an enchanting home, Arnold Grove is not a readily identifiable example of Wilkinson's work, given its modesty in scale and design traits. As such, it cannot be considered an 'example of its kind'.

Arnold Grove is designed in the Inter-War Mediterranean style of architecture, albeit it's construction well outside of the Inter-War period of architecture (1915-1940). It is not a rare or unique example of this style of architecture in the ACT. Other examples of the Inter-War Mediterranean style in the ACT include the Sydney and Melbourne Buildings, and residential housing of the Federal Capital Commission.

Arnold Grove does not meet this criterion.

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

Heritage Council assessment:

Arnold Grove is of the kind of place designed by prominent architect, Leslie Wilkinson and demonstrates the main characteristics of this kind. However, it is not a notable example of this kind of place.

Although demonstrating many of the design traits commonly employed by Wilkinson as identified under criterion (f), it is a modest example, not readily identifiable as his work.

As stated under criterion (f), Arnold Grove is designed in the Inter-War Mediterranean style of architecture and demonstrates many characteristics of this kind, albeit it's construction date well outside of the Inter-War period of architecture. However, it is not considered to be a notable example of this kind of place in the ACT. Other examples of the Inter-War Mediterranean style in the ACT include the Sydney and Melbourne Buildings, and residential housing of the Federal Capital Commission.

Arnold Grove does not meet this criterion.

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

Heritage Council assessment:

Arnold Grove is associated with its architect and designer, Leslie Wilkinson who was responsible for bringing the Mediterranean style of architecture to Australia and is a prominent figure in architectural spheres, within New South Wales in particular.

It is the only building in the ACT designed by Wilkinson and is a modest example, not readily identifiable as his work. Wilkinson's association with this residence is not of sufficient strength to meet the requirements of this criterion.

Throughout their working life, an architect is associated with many places on which they have worked. In order for Arnold Grove to have a 'strong or special' association with Wilkinson, the house would need to have outstanding characteristics which render his association with this place different and more noteworthy from associations he has with other places which he has designed. There does not appear to be anything out of the ordinary in the association between Wilkinson and Arnold Grove.

Arnold Grove does not meet this criterion.

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

Heritage Council assessment:

This criterion is not applicable.

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

Heritage Council assessment:

Arnold Grove does not meet this criterion.

Criterion (k) for a place—it exhibits unusual richness, diversity or significant transitions of flora, fauna or natural landscapes and their elements

Heritage Council assessment:

This criterion is not applicable.

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

Heritage Council assessment:

This criterion is not applicable.

History

Arnold Grove was designed in 1957 by prominent Australian architect Leslie Wilkinson.

Upon his emigration to Australia in 1918 Wilkinson became aware that Sydney's climate was similar to that of Mediterranean Italy and Spain, with bright sunlight and a water-oriented topography, all of which were conducive to architecture of simple shapes, light and shade, bleached pastel colours and accents of classical detail. He urged his students to consider the virtues of designing for the climate, along the lines of Mediterranean architecture in Spain and Italy and was responsible for the introduction of a style of architecture known as Inter-War Mediterranean. This was similar to the Colonial Revival style and the Spanish Mission style, which was popular in America. Wilkinson, his colleagues and the graduates of his school were often commissioned to design houses for upper class and upper middle-class clients, as well as modest-sized commercial and institutional buildings. The Inter-War Mediterranean style was established most strongly in the temperate belt of the Australian continent, stretching from Sydney, through Canberra, to Perth in the west (Apperly, Irving and Reynolds, 1989, 172).

Examples of this style in the ACT include the Melbourne and Sydney Buildings on Northbourne Avenue, designed by John Sulman and J.H. Kirkpatrick in 1927.

In the years between 1918 and 1973, Wilkinson undertook 44 separate commissions for the University of Sydney, as well as designing churches, chapels, blocks of flats and a Sydney City Council housing project. This was in addition to many commissions for private houses and numerous alterations and additions to existing buildings, as well as his university career, from which he retired in 1947. Many of the buildings he designed, both public and private, are to be found in Sydney. Outside the metropolitan area, his designs include a homestead for K. Maple-Brown at Gundry Plains, Goulburn, in 1936; a homestead for Philip Ashton at Coreena, Junee, in

1939; alterations to Hazeldean at Cooma for J. Litchfield in 1937; and the north wing and two cottages in 1960 and the entrance courtyard in 1964 at Micalago (near Michelago in NSW) for J.A.G. Ryrie.

Professor Wilkinson was influential in a shift from the formal to a more informal aesthetic for residential buildings in Australia.

Examples of Wilkinson's designs are below. A number of Wilkinson's designs are entered in the NSW Heritage Register, including both large-scale properties such as University and Church buildings, and private residential houses.



Greenway, 24 Wentworth Road, Vaucluse
Google Street View



'Westray', 34 Wentworth Road, Vaucluse
Westray, constructed in 1927, as the first private residence designed by Wilkinson.
NSW Heritage Office http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/07_subnav_04_1.cfm



21 Wentworth Street, Point Piper, constructed between 1956-1959, as the second last of his residential designs.

NSW Heritage Office http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/07_subnav_04_1.cfm



Zoology Building, university of Sydney

NSW Heritage Office http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/07_subnav_04_1.cfm



Old Geology Building, University of Sydney

NSW Heritage Office http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/07_subnav_04_1.cfm

Arnold Grove

The house at Arnold Grove was one of the commissions for private houses undertaken by Wilkinson. It was commissioned in 1957 by Dr Clive L. Statham and was named after his family home in Nottingham, England. At this time, Wilkinson was 75 years of age and had retired from his position at the University of Sydney ten years earlier. The house was designed according to Wilkinson's adage "aspect, not prospect", with living areas facing north-east across the garden court, allowing the pergolas to temper the effects of sun and wind. It is also in keeping with his ideas as expressed in an article in *Domestic Architecture in Australia*: "Convenience in planning and arrangement, honest, sound construction, and the beauty of simplicity in mass and in detail. Simple, firm lines and spaces acting as a foil to the garden and broader landscape without; and within, restrained decoration" (quoted in Wilkinson et al, 1982, 34).

Wilkinson believed that it was the siting of a building, in relation to its relevant neighbours, its boundaries and its aspect, that was crucial to the success of its design. When designing buildings, he studied the proposed block in detail, noted the position of existing trees, as well as means of access by foot or vehicle, the view and the best possibilities for enjoying it without undue exposure to the sun. The siting of the house at Arnold Grove demonstrates his method, exhibiting the concern for aspect and the inclusion of a circular driveway for ease of access. (The circular driveway no longer remains).

Arnold Grove is a modest example of Wilkinson's work. A number of residences designed by Wilkinson, most of which are located in Sydney, display features common to his designs. In these houses, he used a full range of traditional architectural devices, including arcades and loggias, recessed porches, timber shutters, pergolas, protruding balconies and screen walls. He generally designed houses of two storeys for coolness, with thick walls and high ceilings. He had no overhang on his eaves, to allow winter sun to come through the windows. His own house, Greenway at Vaucluse, demonstrates the working integrity of these views. It is a house in harmony with its setting, with rocks and trees of the original site left undisturbed.

While not an outstanding example of Wilkinson's design, the house at Arnold Grove displays those features which are common to Wilkinson's designs, including small-paned, double-hung windows, timber window shutters, pergolas and courtyards, and wrought iron detailing in wall openings, which allow a view of the landscape beyond. Its smooth walling in pastel colour (preferably weathered to show the 'patina') is another of Wilkinson's features. Due to the short-term nature of the lease on the property, Dr Statham decided to save on materials by using concrete blocks instead of the 'well burnt common' bricks specified by Wilkinson. Wilkinson designed a pergola for the western side of the house in 1962, after hearing that Dr Statham was thinking of adding one. However, due to costs, it was never built.

The internal features of the living room at Arnold Grove are similar to those of the original Greenway living room and include a centrally placed sandstone fireplace, heavy beamed ceiling, polished timber floors covered with carpets (Persian for preference), and Georgian, double-hung sash windows. The carpets have since been removed and the polished floorboards remain.

The house at Arnold Grove is the only example of an architectural design by Professor Wilkinson in the ACT.

When the Stathams lived at Arnold Grove, the property was slightly less than 100 acres and they ran sheep and cattle. Dr Statham was a dermatologist practising in Civic Centre, Canberra. As well as treating locals, his patients came from as far away as Goulburn, Wagga Wagga, Cooma and

elsewhere. The Stathams had two sons and a daughter. They were renowned for their hospitality and held many dinners and dinner dances, sometimes under a marquee in the central courtyard. Guests included heads of government, diplomats, generals, admirals and friends from Canberra and the Monaro.

The Stathams moved to Sydney in 1972 when the property was resumed by the Federal Government. The property was leased for some years to various tenants until the lease was purchased in 1979 by Mr Alby Sedaitis, a local businessman. Since 1986, it has been leased by Mr and Mrs Wingrove (Mrs Robyn Wingrove, 2011).

Dr Statham's son, Richard, has visited the house and other visitors during the Wingrove's occupancy have included people whose rural properties have had some work carried out by Professor Wilkinson or who are interested in his work (Mrs Robyn Wingrove 2011).

Physical Description

Arnold Grove is a property located to the north of Canberra, at the south eastern extremity of Gungahlin. It is accessed from the Federal Highway, by turning left at the first turn after Wells Station Road, before reaching Antill Street.

The house was built in 1957 for Dr Clive L. Statham. It has painted concrete block (besser brick) walls, a gabled colorbond roof and small paned double hung windows. Concrete pipe colonnaded pergolas with timber rafters are located to the west and south sides of the central garden courtyard. The house is painted cream and the roof is grey. The house was originally painted pale pink, with white woodwork. The original roof was corrugated asbestos cement and was replaced with colorbond in 1996.

Professor Wilkinson designed the building in the Mediterranean style. His original specifications were for the house to be constructed of 'well burnt common bricks' (Wilkinson et al, 1957, 3). He also specified that the brickwork of external walls was 'not to be too regular and to have occasional snapped headers' (Wilkinson et al, 1957, 4); this is in keeping with his belief that a house should have a 'patina' of age. The specifications for the roof of the house were for 'Marseilles pattern tiles of approved colour' (Wilkinson et al, 1957, 10). Wilkinson allowed for an alternative price to be quoted for a galvanised, corrugated iron roof instead of tiles. The choice of alternative materials for the walls and roof was due to the need to reduce costs. A limiting factor was the fact that the farm was leasehold, and likely to be resumed by the Federal Government, as it was in 1972.

The house was designed according to Wilkinson's adage, 'aspect, not prospect', with living areas facing north-west across the garden court, allowing the pergolas to temper the effects of sun and wind. The siting of the house demonstrates his method, exhibiting his concern for aspect and the inclusion of a circular driveway for ease of access.

It is an attractive building in its landscaped setting, with mature trees planted by the Statham family who first lived there.

The main double entrance door of timber is off the central courtyard and opens into the gallery (wide hall).

The south eastern courtyard, surrounded by a low wall, contains an in-ground pool. This courtyard and the pool were not part of Wilkinson's design; the pool was added by the Stathams and the courtyard was built around it by subsequent owners.

To the north-west, located between the garage and laundry, is a walled courtyard, used for drying clothes and more recently for growing herbs. It was originally enclosed but the wall has been partially removed to allow entry to the house and concrete steps have been added. There is a water tank in this courtyard and a hopper which was used for unloading and storing coal or coke for the Aga stove.

Physical condition and integrity

The house is in very good condition and has been little altered from the original design. The timber pergola rafters in the main courtyard have been replaced to their original design and the small-paned windows and doors have been re-painted. The roof guttering has been replaced and a new corrugated iron tank (the same type as the old one) has been placed in the north western courtyard. The current lessees are maintaining the building in the style of the original design.



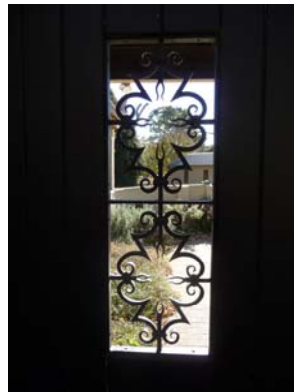
Courtyard design



Residence, showing timber shutters and paned-windows



Formal entrance, off courtyard



Wrought-iron detail, enabling views through



Pergola and loggia



Eastern courtyard and laundry windows

Trees

There are mature trees in the grounds, including Deodars (*Cedrus deodara*), Yellow box (*Eucalyptus melliodora*), an English elm (*Ulmus procera*) and an Arizona ash (*Fraxinus velutina*). These were planted by the Stathams. Two weeping cherries in the main courtyard have been removed. Five Monterey pines (*Pinus radiata*) at the front of the building have also been removed. A circular driveway around the house was part of Wilkinson's original design but is no longer used. A shed and yards are located on the block at the rear of the house. The fence along the drive leading to the house and part of the boundary fence have recently been replaced with treated timber fencing.

In recent years, the Federal Highway has been widened to include extra traffic lanes. However, this has not affected the block at Arnold Grove. In the future, the property may be located in the Gungahlin suburb of Kenny.



Arnold Grove and its setting of mature trees planted circa 1957.

References

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Dunbar, D. in 'The Manuka grouped houses' in Freeman, P. (ed.), *The Early Canberra House*, Federal Capital Press, 1996

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Garnett, R. and Hyndes, D (eds), *The Heritage of the Australian Capital Territory*, National Trust of Australia (ACT), 1992

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Conclusion

Arnold Grove is a private residence designed by prominent architect, Leslie Wilkinson, in the Inter-War Mediterranean style of architecture.

Built in 1957, the house at Arnold Grove displays features which are common to Wilkinson's designs.

A modest example of his work, the house at Arnold Grove is the only example of the architecture of Professor Wilkinson in the ACT, though it is not a readily identifiable example of Wilkinson's work. It is an attractive building in its landscaped setting, including mature trees planted by the Statham family.

However, it is a modest example of Wilkinson's work and, although a delightful home in a pleasant setting with mature trees, it does not meet any of the criteria of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

This Statement of Reasons provides an assessment of Arnold Grove and finds that the place does not meet any of the criteria of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

Jennifer O'Connell (Acting Secretary)
ACT Heritage Council

25 August 2011

NON-STATUTORY BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Leslie Wilkinson

Leslie Wilkinson was born on 12 October 1882 in London and obtained his schooling at a private preparatory school and at St Edwards in Oxford. After leaving school he worked on stained glass for C.E. Kemp before becoming an articled pupil of J.S. Gibson from 1901-1904. At the same time he attended five years of formal training in architecture at the Royal Academy and Northern Polytechnic in London. In 1904 he was awarded the Royal Academy Silver Medal and Travelling Scholarship and the next year the Gold Medal and Scholarship. He used the scholarships to travel and study in France, Italy and Spain and it was here that he developed an interest in Mediterranean architecture.

Wilkinson also received the Arthur Cates Prize and the Royal Institute of British Architecture Silver Medal for measured drawings. In 1908 he joined the School of Architecture at the University College, London, as an assistant tutor and also established his own private practice. In 1910 he became an assistant professor in the School of Architecture. He was commissioned into the London University Officers' Training College during the First World War, where he became a Lieutenant and commanded 'A' company of the infantry for two and a half years.

Wilkinson arrived in Australia in August 1918 to take up the first Chair of Architecture in Australia at the University of Sydney. The idea of a Chair of Architecture had been first raised in 1888 by Professor William Warren but it was not until 1916 that this was achieved (Freeland, 1971, 220-221). Wilkinson had been chosen for the position from 16 applicants.

From the moment he arrived in Australia, Wilkinson displayed a lively curiosity about the country. He rented a flat in Darling Point, Sydney where he was joined by his wife and children in 1919. He was keen to build a house in Vaucluse and in 1922 he bought land there and completed his house at 24 Wentworth Road in 1923. It was called Greenway after the convict architect, Francis Greenway.

Wilkinson introduced a new approach to architectural education: a full-time course in which the intellectual and aesthetic education of students was more important than their technical training. The course set a pattern for architectural courses that was to spread to all universities in Australia and colour the outlook of generations of architects for nearly forty years (Freeland, 1971, 220).

Wilkinson was the first person to be registered on the roll of the Board of Architects of New South Wales in 1923, when it was set up as a result of the Architects' Act of 1921. He became President of the Institute of Architects of NSW in 1933. He remained President in 1934, when the Institute of Architects of NSW became a Chapter of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA). In 1934, Wilkinson won the Sulman Prize for his design for a house in Wiston Gardens, Double Bay and in 1942 he won the award again for alterations and extensions to St Michael's Church, Vaucluse.

As a mark of the debt the RAIA owed to Professor Wilkinson, he was made a Life Fellow of the RAIA on his retirement in 1947. In 1960, he was awarded the RAIA Gold Medal, the highest honour that the RAIA can bestow. The award was instituted in that same year to recognise architects who had given distinguished service to their profession (Wilkinson et al, 1982, 112).

In 1961 the Wilkinson Award was established by the NSW Chapter Council of the RAIA, with the aim of recognising, encouraging and rewarding good domestic architecture. It was in honour of

Professor Wilkinson, who the Chapter felt had contributed much to Australian architecture. The winning architect receives a diploma, and the owner of the winning house receives a suitable tablet. The first winner of the award, in 1961, was Don Gazzard (Wilkinson et al, 1982, 112).

In 1969 Wilkinson received the OBE for distinguished services to architecture. In spite of his achievements, he did not have a degree, and in 1970, to his amusement, he was awarded the degree of Hon.D.Litt. by the University of Sydney. He died in 1973, at the age of 90.