

Australian Capital Territory

# Heritage (Decision about Registration of Gossan Hill, Bruce) Notice 2015

Notifiable Instrument NI2015—251

made under the

**Heritage Act 2004, s40 Notice of decision about registration**

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**1 Revocation**

This instrument replaces NI2015—65.

**2 Name of instrument**

This instrument is the *Heritage (Decision about Registration of Gossan Hill, Bruce) Notice 2015*.

**3 Registration details of the place**

Registration details of the place are at Attachment A: Register entry for Gossan Hill, Bruce.

**4 Reason for decision**

The ACT Heritage Council has decided that Gossan Hill, Bruce 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**

4 June 2015

Pamela Hubert  
A/g Secretary (as delegate for)  
ACT Heritage Council  
4 June 2015



ACT Heritage Council

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

For the purposes of s. 40 of the *Heritage Act 2004*, an entry to the heritage register has been prepared by the ACT Heritage Council for the following place:

**Gossan Hill**

**Block 19, Section 4, Bruce**

**DATE OF REGISTRATION**

4 June 2015 Notifiable Instrument: 2015–

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 Gossan Hill, Bruce as required in s. 12 (b) of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

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

Gossan Hill, Block 19, Section 4, Bruce, bounded by College Street, Crisp Circuit, Belconnen Way, Jaeger Circuit and Haydon Drive

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This section refers to the description of Gossan Hill as required in s.12(c) of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

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

Gossan Hill, consisting of the following attributes:

- The gossan outcrop on the northern spur;
  - the road cutting on the southern side of College Street; and
  - the Aboriginal heritage, including:
    - the material culture / archaeological artefacts; and
    - potential archaeological deposits.
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This statement refers to the heritage significance of Gossan Hill as required in s.12(d) of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

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

The gossan that characterises Gossan Hill is rare in the ACT as one of only two positively identified true gossans and is demonstrative of a gossan with excellent integrity. Gossans are important geological features being intensely oxidised, weathered or decomposed rock, usually the upper and exposed part of an ore deposit or mineral vein. The formation processes of Gossan Hill have also led to a unique geochemical signature that has been identified through several decades of testing at the site by the University of Canberra. These deposits are additionally rare in the ACT for having features that suggest they are a skarn deposit: minerally rich areas with specific formation processes which are often an indication of possible commercial deposits [criteria (b) (d)].

Gossan Hill has been used as an important teaching site for geology over several decades and provides students and those interested in the natural history of the ACT with information about geological formation processes. Its excellent exposure and proximity to teaching facilities means that its potential to provide information furthering the understanding of the ACT's natural history is high [*criterion (c)*].

Gossan Hill may have been used by past Aboriginal groups as a source of ochre. Ochre has been associated with distinctive traditional practices in Aboriginal societies and is often an important part of ceremonies and meetings. This is representative of past Aboriginal lifeways in the ACT. The place may contribute significantly to the understanding of Aboriginal cultural history in the ACT through its potential archaeology, its association with past Aboriginal culture and links to other culturally significant sites [*criteria (a) (c)*].

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## CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE

The guiding conservation objective is that Gossan Hill 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 REGISTRATION

Gossan Hill, Bruce has been assessed against the heritage significance criteria and been found to have heritage significance when assessed against criteria [(a), (b), (c), and (d)] 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 nomination for Gossan Hill, Bruce the Council considered:

- the original nomination and documentary evidence supplied by the nominator;
- information provided by a site inspection on 19 June 2013 by ACT Heritage; and
- the report by ACT Heritage titled, *Background Information Gossan Hill*, June 2015, 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;**

Gossan Hill, Bruce, meets this criterion.

The place represents a geological feature which is important to the pattern of the ACT's natural history. The gossan that characterises Gossan Hill is one of only two positively identified true gossans. The other gossan is located at Paddy's River which has been heavily disturbed by previous mining activity. The site demonstrates notable complex geological formation processes associated with minerally rich areas displaying changing geophysical features and their relationship with each other.

Ochre pigment has been found on Gossan Hill, and the place may have been used by Aboriginal for extraction of this resource. Ochre has been associated with distinctive traditional practices in Aboriginal societies and is often an important part of ceremonies and meetings. This is representative of past Aboriginal lifeways in the ACT. Another area in the ACT that is associated with a similar tradition is Gubur Dhaura in Franklin and there is an Aboriginal pathway along the ridges between these two places.

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

Gossan Hill, Bruce, meets this criterion.

The gossan that characterises Gossan Hill is rare in the ACT as one of only two positively identified true gossans (see criterion (a) above). The formation processes of Gossan Hill have also led to a unique geochemical signature that has been identified through several decades of testing at the site by the University of Canberra. These deposits are additionally rare in the ACT for having features that suggest they are a skarn deposit: minerally rich areas with specific formation processes which are often an indication of possible commercial deposits.

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

Gossan Hill, Bruce, meets this criterion.

Gossan Hill has been used as an important teaching site for geology over several decades and provides students and those interested in the natural history of the ACT with information about geological formation processes. This teaching program has included ongoing testing and recording of results in a database that has shown Gossan Hill to contain a true gossan, whilst continued testing of other previously identified gossan sites around the ACT, such as Gubur Dhaura, have shown that they are not gossans. There are no other gossans in the ACT and few in Australia that have been studied so thoroughly. The information that Gossan Hill may contribute to the natural history of the ACT can be significantly expanded in the future by further sub-surface testing, such as core drilling, of the deposit. Its excellent exposure and proximity to teaching facilities means that its potential to provide information furthering the understanding of the ACT's natural history is high.

Gossan Hill may contribute significantly to the understanding of Aboriginal cultural history in the ACT through its potential archaeology, its association with past Aboriginal culture and links to other culturally significant sites. Kabaila (1997) identified pieces of ochre from Gossan Hill several kilometres away and alluded to the possibility of it being taken even farther afield for use in ceremonies, but this was not able to be conclusively proved at the time. There have been several studies in other parts of Australia and throughout the world where ochre used in rock art or found at sites can be linked to source locations through techniques such as portable x-ray fluorescence or trace element geochemistry analysis. It is only through the study of traceable resource origins that answers can be sought for questions relating to resource procurement, trade networks, pathways and direction of travel in ancient Australia.

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

Gossan Hill, Bruce, meets this criterion.

Gossan Hill is demonstrative of a true gossan with excellent integrity. The destruction of other examples during mining and prospecting has made them difficult to find. It is also observed in the study of geology as an excellent example of gossan boxwork. The gossan is exposed across a large area into unmineralised zones, placing the site in an excellent context for the study of gossan geological formation processes. The road cutting along College Street is an important extension of Gossan Hill, providing a section through the underlying rocks and excellent examples of porphyritic granite, major faulting and fold structures.

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

Gossan Hill, Bruce, does not meet this criterion.

Whilst Gossan Hill has areas of bushland and excellent views over the Belconnen and Central Canberra areas; there is insufficient evidence before the Council, at this time, suggesting Gossan Hill exhibits outstanding design or aesthetic qualities valued by the community or a cultural group.

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

Gossan Hill, Bruce, does not meet this criterion.

As a geological feature, this criterion is not applicable.

There is a lack of temporal data that could determine if Gossan Hill has Aboriginal technology of great enough antiquity to determine if it was an early adaptation; as such, there is insufficient evidence before the Council, at this time, suggesting Gossan Hill demonstrates a high degree of technical or creative achievement.

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

Gossan Hill, Bruce, does not meet this criterion.

While Gossan Hill has been used as a teaching resource by several local institutions, including the University of Canberra, Radford College and Lake Ginninderra College, these represent professional and special interest groups, and do not constitute the ACT community or a cultural group under this criterion.

While all Aboriginal places and objects are viewed as culturally significant by the Aboriginal community of the ACT, there is no evidence before the Council at this time to suggest the association with Gossan Hill is strong or special. The Aboriginal community's regard for the place is not considered to be beyond the ordinary, and is not clearly demonstrated.

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

Gossan Hill, Bruce, does not meet this criterion.

There is insufficient evidence before the Council, at this time, that Gossan Hill has a special association with the life or work of person, or people, important to the history of the ACT.

# SITE PLAN

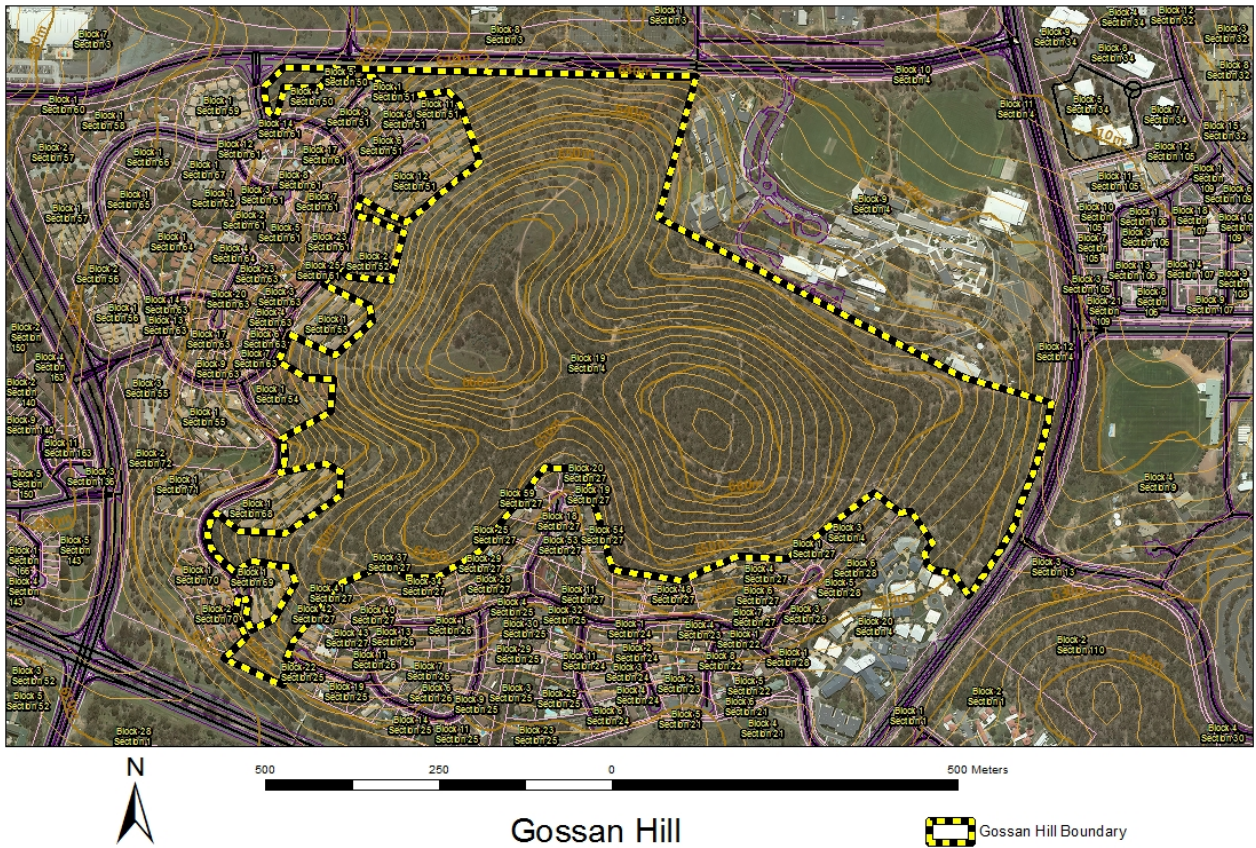


Image 1 Site Boundary Gossan Hill