

Heritage (Decision about Provisional Registration of the Oaks Estate Subdivision and Environs) Notice 2017

Notifiable Instrument NI2017–173

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 the Oaks Estate Subdivision and Environs) Notice 2017*.

2 Decision about provisional registration

On 6 April 2017, the ACT Heritage Council (the **Heritage Council**) decided not to provisionally register the Oaks Estate Subdivision and Environs (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
6 April 2017



ACT Heritage Council

STATEMENT OF REASONS DECISION NOT TO PROVISIONALLY REGISTER OAKS ESTATE SUBDIVISION AND ENVIRONS IN THE ACT HERITAGE REGISTER

This Statement of Reasons provides an assessment of the Oaks Estate Subdivision and Environs (also referred to as Oaks Estate, the precinct, and the place) and finds that the place does not meet any of the heritage significance criteria under s.10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

The Council has considered a broad range of place definitions and boundary arrangements for the assessment of Oaks Estate as a precinct, as well as previous nominations for the area, including:

- the larger “Oaks Estate Cultural Landscape”;
- the street grid and subdivision layout/configuration;
- The Oaks;
- 9 Hazel Street;
- Oaks Estate Hall;
- Chinese Market Garden;
- Market Garden;
- Hazelbrook Industrial Estate;
- Easement - Old water supply tanks;
- several individual houses on Florence Street;
- several individual houses on George Street, several individual houses on River Street;
- several individual houses on William Street; and
- Oaks Estate Village Precinct.

The Council’s assessment of the Oaks Estate Subdivision and Environs is based on the place being considered as a precinct. A precinct is defined as an area that contains buildings, structures or other constructed features that are spatially or thematically connected; and have a distinct identity; and are located in, or make up, a discernible zone. A precinct needs to be considered as a singular place, the power of which is that the combination is often greater than the sum of the parts. However, this is predicated on those parts each adding to the thematic connection or the distinct identity of the precinct; otherwise they are simply individual places whose heritage values would instead be distilled across the precinct rather than having connected values that build upon each other. In assessing the Oaks Estate Subdivision and Environs as a precinct, the Council has thoroughly considered the contribution of all of the component parts of the place and has found that it fits into the latter category of a series of individual places or groups of places that do not build upon each other to make the whole greater than the sum of its parts.

In determining heritage significance, the Council must first determine whether a place or object has value in relation to a criterion (applying a basic test), and then apply threshold indicators, to ‘test’ the degree to which the place or object is significant and hence whether it meets a criterion and warrants registration.

Throughout the assessment detailed below, the Council applied threshold indicators, and found that the various attributes of heritage significance considered have not passed the thresholds for any of the significance criteria; however, the Council have also considered all of these attributes as a collective feature and have found that the place still does not meet the threshold for any of the significance criteria.

There are places within the precinct that do have a greater role in telling the story of the development of the region, such as The Oaks and the Corroboree Grounds and Aboriginal Cultural Area, Queanbeyan River, but the heritage value of these places is based on individual merit rather than as part of an overall precinct. These places have, or will be, assessed as separate, individual nominations.

Despite having a long history that predates the ACT and having several individual features that are registered individually, on balance the Oaks Estate Subdivision and Environs as a precinct does not have sufficient evidence that demonstrates heritage values allowing it to pass the basic tests or thresholds to meet the heritage significance criteria as set out in s.10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

This statement refers to the location of the place as required in s.34(5)(b)(ii) of the *Heritage Act 2004*. For the purposes of s12(c) of the *Heritage Act 2004*, the boundary of the place and extent of features listed below is illustrated at Image 1.

LOCATION OF THE PLACE

Oaks Estate Subdivision and Environs, comprising:

The subdivision (suburb) of Oaks Estate, consisting of:

- Section 2 blocks 15-16, 19-22;
- Section 3 blocks 2-3, 13-16, 25;
- Section 5 blocks 1-7;
- Section 6 blocks 1-6, 17-27;
- Section 7 blocks 1-6, 9-14;
- Section 8 blocks 1-13, 21-33;
- Section 10 blocks 1-5;
- Section 11 blocks 1, 4-15, 20, 23-32, 37-38;
- Section 12 blocks 20-25;
- Section 13 blocks 3-6;
- Section 14 blocks 1, 3-5;
- Section 15 blocks 1-2, 4-5;
- The existing road reserves and verges within the subdivision of Oaks Estate; and

Oaks Estate Environs, consisting of:

- The Molonglo and Queanbeyan River corridors surrounding Oaks Estate
- The rural landscape surrounding Oaks Estate, including Majura blocks 662-663, 680-681, 699-704 and encompassing the ford and remnant road north of River Street.

This section refers to the description of the place as required in s.34(5)(b)(iii) of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLACE

Oaks Estate Subdivision and Environs, comprising the collective features of the built, cultural and environmental fabric within, and relating to, Oaks Estate.

This statement refers to the Council's reasons for its decision as required in s.34(5)(b)(iv) of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

REASONS FOR DECISION

The Council is not satisfied on reasonable grounds that the place is likely to have heritage significance as defined by s.10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

This statement refers to the Council's assessment of the place against the heritage significance criteria as a part of its reasons for its decision as required in s.34(5)(b)(iv) of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

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 Oaks Estate and Environs, Oaks Estate, the Council considered:

- various original and subsequent nominations and documentary evidence supplied by nominators;
- the Council's *Heritage Assessment Policy* (February 2015);
- information provided by site inspections by ACT Heritage on 4 July 2014, 4 August 2014, 4 September 2014 and 13 March 2015;
- information provided by site inspections by the ACT Heritage Council on 4 September 2014, 13 March 2015, 7 May 2015 and 25 February 2016; and
- the report by ACT Heritage titled, *Background Information Oaks Estate and Environs*, April 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;

Oaks Estate Subdivision and Environs, Oaks Estate, does not meet this criterion.

The Council acknowledges that Oaks Estate has had a long and interesting history. One aspect of its past was its role as a 19th century light industrial residential estate privately created for work and business. However, while elements of the place's history such as this are informative and contribute to the greater story of the ACT, and the Limestone Plains, they cannot establish to a high enough degree, as required by the necessarily high standards of the Act, the importance of the place in the course or pattern of the ACT's cultural or natural history. It is clear that the ACT has been important in the course and pattern of Oaks Estate's cultural history, but the reciprocal effect is not considered to be strong, noticeable or influential.

The precinct has witnessed the creation and growth of the ACT. However, this is a result of the precinct not being developed as a part of the Capital, rather in association with the Queanbeyan rail station and the Goulburn-Cooma line. While this is informative for the history of the place,

the development of settlements and townships in proximity to reliable transport, resources and amenities, is not in itself uncommon or significant.

The development of the place was associated with the ACT, but this association is not considered to be important to the course or pattern of the ACT's cultural history as its growth is similar to all areas surrounding the ACT, including Queanbeyan. Rather, it is the ACT that has been important to the course of Oaks Estate's cultural history. Specifically, it administratively separated the place from Queanbeyan and provided the impetus for growth. After the determination of the border, the construction of Canberra provided the precinct's existing community of trades and labourers with new opportunities for work which then attracted new residents looking for construction work.

The extent to which Oaks Estate retains evidence of its past is largely due to its post-border history. The NSW part of the original sub-division south of the railway today contains very little original material from the early development of Oaks Estate as it has remained in NSW after the creation of the border and was under Queanbeyan Municipal Council (currently Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council) building regulations. Most of the rest of the ACT came under Commonwealth control to be developed under the Griffin plan and then other regulatory controls. Oaks Estate, on the other hand, continued to develop organically until the land was transferred from freehold to leasehold in 1974.

From the time of subdivision to the transfer from freehold, development was largely driven by the needs, resources and skills of residents. Even though post-1974 ACT suburban building regulations have had some impact on Oaks Estate, the mixed uses of blocks and varied modest housing styles remain the predominant feature of the streetscapes. Documentary and anecdotal evidence suggests that the interest of residents in a less regulated, 'non-Canberra' environment and lifestyle has contributed to this in the post-war and self-government periods. However, while the organic nature of development at Oaks Estate demonstrates the general resourcefulness and independence of Oaks Estate residents, the course of development is nonetheless incidental to circumstances, with neither demonstrable planning approach, nor any influential contribution to the history of the ACT that would merit inclusion under this criterion.

The workers' lifestyles are demonstrated in the residential areas of Oaks Estate which include several houses built during the subdivision period as well as those built or transported to the location from the federal period onwards. The heritage registered Robertsons' House in Hazel Street is the most intact example of the vernacular style of the Federal period, but the overall scale of housing and streetscapes in Oaks Estate more generally demonstrate the typically modest, often makeshift style, form and materials of residential development until 1974. These are evident in many of the older dwellings clustered in River and George Streets, with the other main examples in Florence and Hazel Streets. This material evidence adds to the extensive documentary evidence of life at the two other important, but non-extant, construction workers' communities at the Causeway and Westlake as well as several smaller sites. However, the importance to the course or pattern of the ACT's cultural history is not great enough for the Council to consider the threshold for this criterion to be met.

Additionally, the number of workers that Oaks Estate provided for the building of Canberra, most as casual workers, was quite minor compared to the temporary workers' communities set up in Westlake, Molonglo, Camp Hill, Causeway as well as several smaller work site camps who generally worked under contract. There is no evidence that the workers living in Oaks Estate made a contribution to the building of the ACT that was any more important than those workers living in other suburbs or settlements.

Oaks Estate's post-border development is also evidenced by hard-won community amenities. Oaks Estate's geographical isolation from the centre of Canberra, its form as a light industrial and residential settlement, and its independent development as a construction workers' community has meant that residents have had to work hard to be recognised. The Oaks Estate Progress Association was established in 1926 when the Federal Capital Commission (FCC) was encouraging other Canberra communities to work together for amenities such as halls and tennis courts. It was not until many years later that Oaks Estate won basic services and amenities long available in those other locations.

This history is recorded in the landscape by the 1938 raised water reticulation tank, the 1955 bus shelter (substantially rebuilt after damage in 2003), the community hall recycled from the FCC period and transported from Kingston in 1953, and the land donated by resident Bede Tongs on which the hall stands. The role of Minister for the Interior John McEwen in the connection to reticulated water in 1938 and rejection of the compulsory acquisition and demolition of all Oaks Estate properties is remembered, albeit misspelt, in the name of McEwan Street.

There were a number of resident-driven proposals for building medium density flats from 1972 (incidentally the year that the NCDC made the decision to acquire all the remaining freehold land, although this was not acted on until 1974 as the details were being figured out). Six of the ten proposals were built with one in Section 6 (east side of Florence Street) partially built before being acquired by the Commonwealth and demolished. With the transfer to leasehold in 1974, a number of these blocks of flats, many not yet completed, had to be purchased by the Commonwealth as the owners chose not to accept a lease.

As it did not conform to the regulatory environment of the newly developing city of Canberra, the precinct contains elements which are generally unusual within the greater planned area of the ACT. These include the mix of building materials and methods of construction found along one street frontage and the divergence of setbacks from the street frontage as a result of organic development without overall planning control. These elements, however, are also reflected in the suburbs of Hall and Tharwa and are considered common features of places that have developed under freehold title.

Although these are typical elements of rural towns, they do stand in contrast to the planned order of the suburbs of Canberra. While these physical elements set Oaks Estate apart from the typical Canberra suburb, it is not considered important as evidence as they are present in other rural suburbs in the ACT and are common throughout Australia.

The distinctive features of the 1888 subdivision remain largely as they were, in particular the grid street layout and the street names, the majority of the blocks have retained their original layout and sizes and the road corridors have maintained a width of 100 links (20m). Although these features are interesting, they are not considered to be important in the course or pattern of the ACT's cultural history. While Oaks Estate's history and development has been closely linked to the development of the ACT, the individual and collective aspects of this story are not considered to be an important part of the course or pattern of the ACT's cultural history.

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

Oaks Estate Subdivision and Environs, Oaks Estate, does not meet this criterion.

Oaks Estate may be unusual in the ACT as a late 19th century private subdivision and as a construction workers community; however its association with, and contribution to, the ACT's cultural history is not strong; therefore it does not meet the threshold for inclusion in this criterion. While it shares some characteristics with the other pre-FCT suburbs of Hall and Tharwa, it is distinguished from these self-contained villages by its late 19th century development as a light industrial and residential estate associated with the Goulburn-Queanbeyan railway line. A more appropriate comparative analysis with similar developments in the wider context of NSW, in which Oaks Estate developed as a part of, suggests that it is not of a type of place that is rare or uncommon.

Oaks Estate may also be considered as the only surviving example of a self-regulated workers' community in the ACT; however, this trait is incidental to the place and its relatively minor contribution to the ACT's cultural history mean that it does not meet the threshold for inclusion in this criterion. It provides some evidence of the built environment and self-sufficient lifestyle documented in histories and memories of the no longer standing communities of Westlake, Causeway and the smaller temporary settlements. This evidence includes a mix of low- and medium- density residential areas, light industry, various building styles and materials, and recycled buildings. It also includes services and amenities achieved as a result of community action: the raised water reticulation tank, the bus shelter, the community hall, and land donated for community use by Bede Tongs.

Oaks Estate has developed an individual identity through its particular mixture of built form and the long history through which it has developed. However, every suburb has an individual identity to some extent, but an individual identity does not necessarily extend beyond local significance. The precinct has a rich and interesting history with an interwoven community past with different families working and living together, joined by friendship and marriage. There are built elements throughout that are deeply rooted in these community connections and are reminiscent of different periods of growth in the region. The Precinct has been a part of the cultural history of the ACT by providing a location for workers during the establishment of the ACT, albeit a very small contribution compared to the workers settlements that were set up for this purpose. The individual elements of particular importance are The Oaks and the Robertsons' House which are excellent indicators of their different periods of growth and have been directly linked to the ACT's cultural history. The place has developed organically for over a century before coming under the planning controls of the ACT in 1974. However, the significance of the Precinct's cultural history outside of the individual elements is localised and is not considered to make a significant contribution to the cultural history of the ACT that would meet the high thresholds required for inclusion to the Register.

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

Oaks Estate Subdivision and Environs, Oaks Estate, does not meet this criterion.

The Oaks Estate Subdivision and Environs, as a precinct, is not considered to have the potential to yield important information that will contribute to an understanding of the ACT's cultural history. While there are individual areas of potential in the Aboriginal corroboree grounds, which have been assessed separately, and the unofficial 19th century burial ground, the boundary of which cannot be adequately defined, these do not relate to the precinct as a whole. The ability of the

precinct to yield information on the ACT's cultural history, even though it covers most of development of the area across time, is not of a sufficient potential to add significantly new information.

The area around the confluence of the Molonglo and Queanbeyan Rivers was a known meeting place for several tribes of the region on an Aboriginal pathway with particular connection to the annual Bogong Moth harvest. The potential for significant archaeological Aboriginal cultural heritage exists. The location was highlighted in 1862 with the last corroboree recorded there as being on the banks of the Queanbeyan River within view of The Oaks. Aboriginal use and occupation of the area would have extended to both sides of the rivers depending on the time of year and the activity taking place, which also conforms to the generally accepted model of Aboriginal site locations in the region as most likely occurring within 100m of water sources. This place has the potential to yield further information about Aboriginal culture in the ACT and region and is likely to contribute to a greater understanding of the contact period in the region; however, this relates to the individual significance of the corroboree grounds rather than the precinct as a whole. The corroboree grounds meet this criterion as an individual feature. A separate decision to enter the corroboree grounds as an individual place has been made, separate to the Oaks Estate Subdivision and Environs decision not to provisionally register.

The river ford and the remnant track north of River Street highlight the strategic location of The Oaks when European settlement was intensifying. They help make sense of the house and property's subsequent contribution to the earliest days of settlement and civic development of the Limestone Plains as roadside inn, hospital and burial ground. The roadway and the remains of the burial ground under Florence Street enhance understanding of The Oaks house and indicate the potential for the place to contribute to further understanding of the process of colonial expansion and settlement prior to the formation of the Capital. The burial ground may also provide information about unregulated burial practices of the early 19th Century and any unexcavated human remains may yield important scientific evidence of past lifestyles and health. The last recorded burial suggests the 'outsider' status of those buried there after 1846 and as a contact period burial ground it may include unrecorded graves of Aboriginal people. Several bodies were discovered in 1991 during excavations for a storm water drain in Florence Street; the authorities were notified of the discovery and the remains were exhumed and relocated to a nearby cemetery. This discovery and the research conducted on the remains confirmed that the burial ground was in the area and at least some of the remains were intact. However, the physical evidence with research potential cannot be ascertained with reasonable accuracy as the area has been built over with housing, roads and other infrastructure; which adds doubt as to the level of potential to yield important information due to intactness as well as an ability to actually locate any of the remaining burials. As such, this feature, as an individual place, does not meet the threshold for inclusion in this criterion, however future research may change this.

*****The Council notes that the area around Florence Street has a high probability of containing undisturbed human remains with at least 35 bodies unaccounted for from the unofficial burial ground. If any earthworks reveal bones or other materials that could be associated with a human burial, those involved should stop work immediately and contact the Australian Federal Police first, which is required for the discovery of any human remains, and then ACT Heritage.*****

The layout of Oaks Estate, being designed for residential enterprise and industry, remains as evidence of the intention to capitalise on the opportunities offered by rail. The result of this can be seen by scattered evidence of small scale farming and manufacturing activities such as the

remnants of the market gardens, light industrial sites and animal and work sheds in backyards (many now used only for storage). The remaining evidence of Oaks Estate's long and interesting history may have some potential to yield information that will add somewhat to an understanding of the ACT's cultural history, particularly concerning the contact and federal periods, rural/urban relationships and the dynamics of class; however, the Council does not consider that the potential would yield important information, i.e. information beyond what is already known or is considered to be of a common nature. Extensive documentary and oral history research into the past lifestyles and activities of Oaks Estate residents was initiated by local resident Dr Karen Williams in the 1990s. Her work has involved the Oaks Estate community and led to a wider interest in the history of the place. There is an opportunity for both professional and participatory community history and archaeology activities to contribute to further research. The precinct is best placed to provide information about development outside of the control of the ACT and is of a type that is common throughout NSW. It is therefore unlikely to have potential to yield important information that will contribute to an understanding of the ACT's cultural history.

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

Oaks Estate Subdivision and Environs, Oaks Estate, does not meet this criterion.

There is little evidence of the Canberra workers settlements, such as Westlake and Causeway, yet Oaks Estate retains much of the evidence of the workers who made the place their home in this period; however it is not considered important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a workers settlement as it contained a relatively small number of workers on relatively large privately owned blocks and its status as a workers community was incidental as it preceded the Federal Capital Territory and was mostly seen as a convenient existing location.

Oaks Estate has evidence of a construction workers community and can still demonstrate some of the independent identity, self sufficiency and resourcefulness as the more enduring example of these communities as indicated by documentary evidence concerning settlements such as the Causeway and Westlake. The evidence of the slow and hard-won way in which Oaks Estate gained services and amenities is relevant to its local history as an established settlement that was seen to be incompatible with national capital planning ideals. However, its identification as a class of place, be it as a workers settlement or a 19th century private subdivision or a less well-defined class of place, is not strong or well-defined enough for it to be considered important in demonstrating those characteristics.

Oaks Estate also provides evidence in the ACT of a 19th century private light industrial and residential estate. However as a semi-rural or railway related subdivision of the time for the greater region it is not unique and there is no evidence to suggest that it is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of such places.

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

Oaks Estate Subdivision and Environs, Oaks Estate, does not meet this criterion.

The place has many areas of natural beauty and contains areas of picturesque urban streetscapes with a mixture of mature trees and gardens set amidst a mixture of old and modern housing. Whilst these aesthetic qualities are present, there are other ACT suburbs that have similar

qualities with areas of natural beauty such as backing on to rural areas, river corridors, reserves, parklands, etc. Also present are areas of picturesque urban streetscapes which may be found in such suburbs as Hall and Tharwa which, like Oaks Estate, are highly valued by its residents, however there is insufficient evidence that the aesthetic qualities found at Oaks Estate are outstanding or 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;

Oaks Estate Subdivision and Environs, Oaks Estate, does not meet this criterion.

Oaks Estate was privately developed in 1888 as a sub-division based on the regulations laid out by Governor Darling in 1829 and there is no evidence for technical or creative achievement in planning. Since then it has largely developed over time in an ad-hoc manner. It is this combination of mundane beginnings and organic growth without planning controls that precludes the place from being able to demonstrate a high degree of creative or technical achievement for a particular period.

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

Oaks Estate Subdivision and Environs, Oaks Estate, does not meet this criterion.

The Oaks Estate Subdivision and Environs contains an area with a special association with the Aboriginal people of the ACT and surrounds for cultural reasons, however this is specifically related to that feature and not with the precinct as a whole. Additionally, the significance of the corroboree area has been assessed individually for inclusion on the ACT Heritage Register. The place is the location of a significant event, a large corroboree and the death and burial of a significant individual as a part of Culture and the subsequent desecration of the burial by European authorities. This rare ethnographic account of traditional practice helps link people to the lives of their ancestors while also demonstrating the attitudes of 19th century white Australia towards Aboriginal people.

Additionally, the Council has assessed the strong and special association that place has with the Oaks Estate community for social reasons, but they do not meet the basic test for this criterion as they are not considered to be a cultural group or representative of the ACT community as whole. While the Oaks Estate community do not meet the threshold for inclusion of these values in this criterion the Council acknowledges their strong and special association with the place as follows.

The rural landscapes and river corridor to the north are strongly valued by the Oaks Estate community as contributing to the local character, community and social significance of the place. The Oaks Estate community have noted that they also value the views into the area from adjacent hilltops and the views from within to landmarks and vistas beyond with the treed river corridor a strong visual marker in the area.

The mixed uses, styles, siting, scale and materials of the buildings, the streetscapes, access to open green spaces and the river, and the landscape created by a diversity of plantings over time collectively contribute to the distinct cultural landscape and history of Oaks Estate and are highly valued by the Oaks Estate community. Additionally, community facilities, such as the Community Hall and Gillespie Park which are part of the community history of Oaks Estate also hold local community values.

The community values are seen in the work of individual residents and the Oaks Estate Progress Association since the early 1990s to research and promote Oaks Estate's history to the wider Canberra community. Oaks Estate heritage tours and guided walks focusing on different aspects of the Precinct have been fairly successful (e.g. 60 visitors to Open Day Robertson House 2012). However, there is currently insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the place is highly valued by the wider ACT community as is necessary to meet this criterion.

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

Oaks Estate Subdivision and Environs, Oaks Estate, does not meet this criterion.

John McEwen, Minister for the Interior, was largely responsible for establishing water reticulation at Oaks Estate in 1938. He also rejected the compulsory acquisition and demolition of all Oaks Estate properties, and approved significant water and road works in the suburb. He is remembered at Oaks Estate through a street name. However, although McEwen is an important Australian figure there is nothing to suggest that his association with Oaks Estate was any more special than any other works he signed off on as Minister for the Interior that coincided with his Country Party policies, or any other event in his political career.

Associations with significant local individuals of the pastoral period are discussed in the registration of The Oaks. In the context of Oaks Estate Subdivision and Environs these associations are more important as evidence of the area's role in ACT pastoral history.

There is no evidence to suggest that those responsible for the subdivision itself contributed more significantly or widely to ACT history. Nor is there sufficient evidence to indicate that prominent ACT people, who supported Oaks Estate residents or had other interests in the place, had special or long term associations with it.

During the 20th century, several Oaks Estate residents, past and present, such as Dr Karen Williams with her history of Oaks Estate and Mr Bede Tongs' involvement in the Oaks Estate Progress Association and acquiring amenities for the area, have indicated their special association with the place by contributing significantly to its development. However, in a reflection of the position of Oaks Estate as a relatively self-sufficient enclave within the ACT, their activities, while locally important to Oaks Estate, have not played a significant role in wider ACT history.

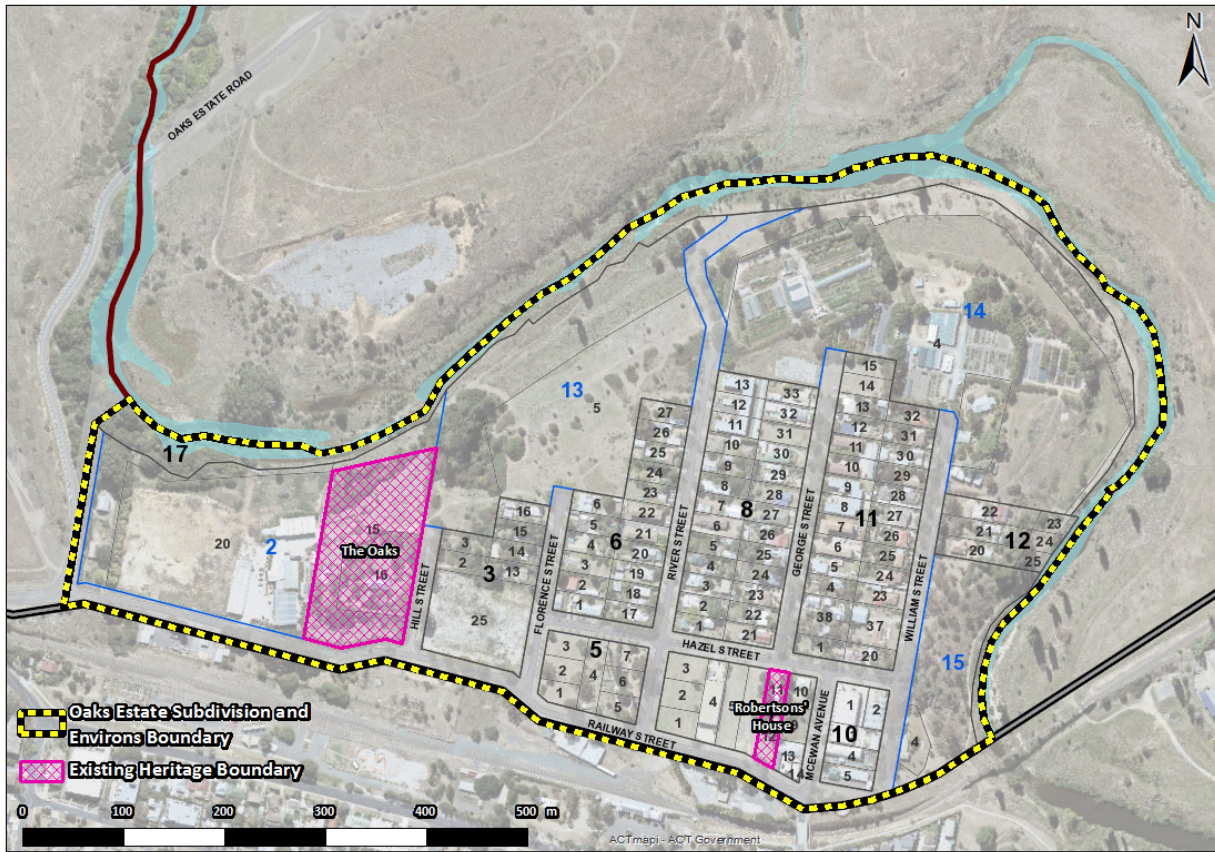


Figure 1 Oaks Estate Subdivision and Environs boundary