

Heritage (Decision about Registration for Telopea Park, Barton) Notice 2012

Notifiable Instrument NI 2012 - 96

made under the

***Heritage Act 2004* section 42 Notice of Decision about Registration**

1. Revocation

This instrument replaces NI 2011-638

2. Name of instrument

This instrument is the Heritage (Decision about Registration for Telopea Park, Barton) Notice 2012 -

3. Registration details of the place

Registration details of the place are at Attachment A: Register entry for Telopea Park, Barton.

4. Reason for decision

The ACT Heritage Council has decided that Telopea Park, Barton 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

23 February 2012

Gerhard Zatschler
Secretary
ACT Heritage Council
23 February 2012



ACT Heritage Council

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

**HERITAGE REGISTER
(Registration Details)**

For the purposes of s. 41 of the *Heritage Act 2004*, an entry to the heritage register has been prepared by the ACT Heritage Council for the following place:

Telopea Park, Telopea Park, Barton

Block 1, Section 30, Barton, Canberra Central
And adjacent road verges

DATE OF REGISTRATION

23 February 2012 Notifiable Instrument: 2012-

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

The Secretary
ACT Heritage Council
GPO Box 158, Canberra, ACT 2601

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IDENTIFICATION OF THE PLACE

Telopea Park, Telopea Park, Barton

Block 1, Section 30, Barton, Canberra Central
And adjacent road verges

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

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

Telopea Park is one of the oldest public parks in the ACT and remains testament to the early planning and design for the national capital from 1913. The Park was intended as an area of passive recreation from the earliest development of the capital, and was planted by T.C.G Weston and, later by Lindsay Pryor, for this purpose.

Telopea Park is also of significance as an expression of the Garden City ideal, on which the city was based. It is evidence of a designed landscape, and is a notable example of this type of place, given its early origins and prominent siting.

Telopea Park has an important association with the early development of Canberra as the nation's capital. The Park, together with neighbouring places in the Griffith, Kingston and Barton areas, illustrates the immediate and changing needs of the community, as it grew and established from the 1920s and through the first half of the twentieth century.

OTHER RELATED PLACES

- Telopea Park School
 - Manuka Oval and Caretaker's cottage
 - Manuka Swimming Pool
 - Former Griffith Child Welfare Centre and Old Jazz School
 - Brassey Hotel
 - Hotel Kurrajong
 - Manuka Shopping Precinct
 - Kingston Shopping Precinct
 - St Christopher's Cathedral Precinct
 - St Paul's Church
 - Garden city precincts – Barton Housing Precinct
Kingston/Griffith Housing Precinct
Red Hill Housing Precinct
Blandfordia 5 Housing Precinct
Blandfordia 4 Housing Precinct
Forrest Housing Precinct
 - Site of the former Canberra Services Club
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FEATURES INTRINSIC TO THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PLACE

The attributes listed below are assessed as features intrinsic to the heritage significance of the place and warrant conservation:

- Exotic and native tree species;
- Differing levels of tree maturity;
- Irregular patterns of planting;
- The presence of Park facilities including playground (which may evolve over time);
- Planning layout for a park in this location including longitudinal pathways; and
- Open creek line.

APPLICABLE HERITAGE GUIDELINES

The 'Heritage Guidelines: General Conservation Guidelines for Historic Heritage Places 2011' adopted under s25 of the *Heritage Act 2004* are applicable to the conservation of Telopea Park, Barton.

The guiding conservation objective is that Telopea Park, Barton, shall be conserved and appropriately managed in a manner respecting its heritage significance and the features intrinsic to that heritage significance, and consistent with a sympathetic and viable use or uses. Any works that have a potential impact on significant fabric (and / or other heritage values) shall be guided by a professionally documented assessment and conservation policy relevant to that area or component (i.e. a Statement of Heritage Effects – SHE).

REASON FOR PROVISIONAL REGISTRATION

Telopea Park, Barton has been assessed against the heritage significance criteria and been found to have heritage significance when assessed against three criteria under the *ACT Heritage Act 2004*:

- (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 practised, is in danger of being lost or is of exceptional interest;
- (g) it is a notable example of a kind of place or object and demonstrates the main characteristics of that kind;
- (h) it has strong or special associations with a person, group, event, development or cultural phase in local or national history.

ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

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. Significance has been determined by research as accessed in the references below. Future research may alter the findings of this assessment.

- (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;**

Telopea Park, Barton does not meet this criterion.

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

There is insufficient evidence to suggest that Telopea Park, Barton, meets this 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 practised, is in danger of being lost or is of exceptional interest;**

Telopea Park, Barton is important as evidence of a distinctive design of exceptional interest. The Park remains testament to the early planning and design for the national capital from 1918, as intended by Walter Burley Griffin and later adopted by the Federal Capital Advisory Committee (FCAC).

The Park was intended as an area of passive recreation from the earliest development of the capital, and was planted by T.C.G Weston and, later by Lindsay Pryor, for this purpose.

Telopea Park, Barton meets this 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;**

There is insufficient evidence to suggest that Telopea Park, Barton, meets this criterion.

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

Telopea Park does not meet this criterion.

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

Telopea Park does not meet this criterion.

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

Telopea Park is an example of a designed landscape. It is notable for having been established early in the history of the nation's capital. It is located in a prominent position, within the Manuka, Kingston and Telopea area, and adjacent to Lake Burley Griffin.

The main characteristics of this type of place, demonstrated at Telopea Park, include the form, scale and siting of various elements including plantings, pedestrian pathway, creek line, park furniture and playground facilities.

Other comparable designed landscapes in the ACT include Haig Park, Glebe Park, Commonwealth Park, and Weston Park, among others.

Telopea Park meets this criterion.

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

Telopea Park has a special association with the cultural phase of the earliest development of Canberra as the nation's capital. Together with neighbouring places within Griffith, Kingston and Barton, the area demonstrates the services required by, and provided to the new community, and demonstrates its evolution and changing needs over time during the first half of the twentieth century.

Telopea Park meets this criterion.

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

Telopea Park does not meet this 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**

Telopea Park does not meet this criterion.

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

Telopea Park does not meet this 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.**

Telopea Park does not meet this criterion.

SUMMARY OF THE PLACE HISTORY AND PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

HISTORY

Contextual background

The Manuka and Telopea areas (incorporating Griffith, Kingston, Barton and Forrest) were among the first developed as part of the emerging nation's capital in the early 1920s. Together with Civic in the north, both were identified in Walter Burley Griffin's and the Federal Capital Advisory Committee's (FCAC) plans for the new city.

Walter Burley Griffin won the competition for the design of Canberra in 1912. Griffin prepared a preliminary plan of 1913 and a revised plan in 1918 following which the Official Plan was Gazetted. Griffin's plan included housing areas planned for different socio-economic groups within the community. This reflected contemporary views. The Barton and Kingston areas were planned for middle income public servants, while Griffith and Forrest were planned for higher-income families (RNE, 17370).

Griffin's design intent for the nation's capital included twin towns in the north and south. The Manuka area was intended by Walter Burley Griffin as the initial city, with Civic Centre located to the north.

The Manuka and Telopea areas are named after features identified on Walter Burley Griffin's original plan for Canberra—Manuka Circle and Telopea Park (now the site of the Telopea Park School).



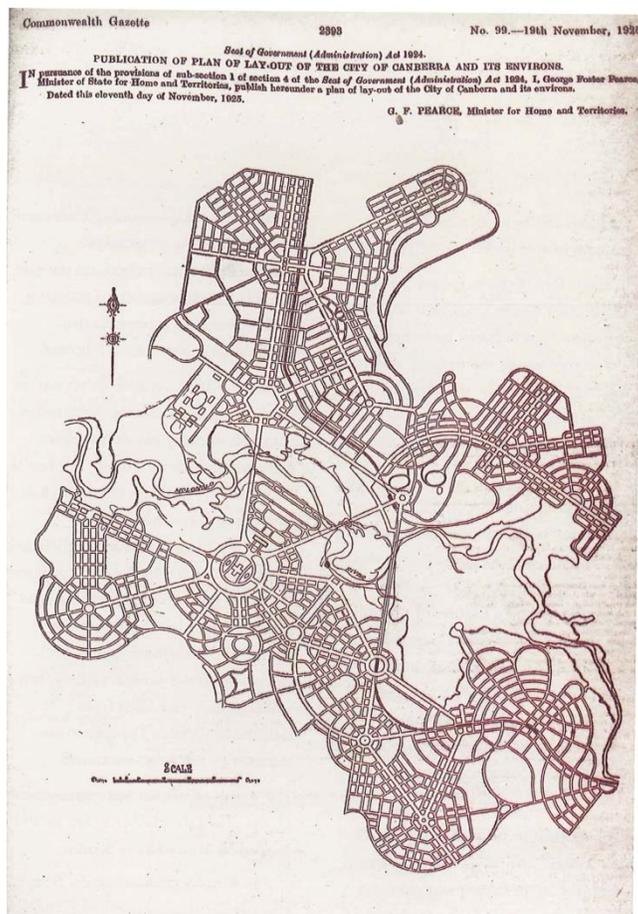
Detail of Walter Burley Griffin's final Plan of Canberra, 1918
'Canberra plan of city and environs. Walter Burley Griffin, Federal Capital Director of Design and Construction'
National Archives of Australia, A13312-8

Griffin left Canberra in 1921 leaving development under the control of the FCAC chaired by the planner, John Sulman. The Committee had been appointed to complete sufficient permanent buildings to enable Parliament to move from Melbourne to Canberra.

In the early 1920s the FCAC supported Griffin's notion of twin settlements and set about building the nation's capital. In the north, activity focused around the Civic Centre, with the adjacent suburbs of Ainslie and Braddon. In the south, work began in the areas of Manuka and Kingston, with adjacent suburbs of Kingston, Griffith, Barton and Forrest.

In the 1920s Canberra went through its first major phase of development as the National Capital. This phase was focussed on the completion of the Provisional Parliament House and the relocation of Parliament to Canberra in 1927. The Garden City movement was a very strong influence on the early planning and development of Canberra at this time.

The FCC's Gazetted Plan of 1925 provides an interesting comparison between Griffin's planning for the city, and the later version adopted by the FCC.



1925 Gazetted Plan
 Commonwealth of Australia Gazette, no.99, November 1925

The development of the Manuka and Telopea areas in the early 1920s has left a strong legacy today of a number of features that were established early in the history of the nation's capital, to support the new community. They demonstrate the services provided for the city's earliest construction workers and public servants who relocated to Canberra from Melbourne for the opening of Parliament House in 1927 and paint a picture of the community and its needs at that time.

Development in the Manuka/Telopea area can be summarised through the following timeline of key developments:

- 1920s site of the Manuka Oval being used for recreation purposes
- 1922 plantings were introduced to the then Waratah Pathway (now Telopea Park)
- 1923 Telopea Park School opened
- 1924 first land auctions for residential and commercial premises – including for the suburbs of Barton, Kingston, Griffith and Forrest
- 1926 development started at the Manuka and Kingston shopping centres
- 1927 Kurrajong Hotel opened
- 1927 Brassey House opened
- 1928 St Christopher's Convent opened
- 1931 Manuka Swimming Pool opened
- 1937 Griffith Child Welfare Centre opened
- 1937 Manuka Oval Caretaker's Cottage constructed
- 1939 St Paul's Church, Griffith opened

- 1939 St Christopher's Cathedral opened
- 1941 Canberra Services Club opened
- 1947 Kingston Post Office opened

The floodplain of the Molonglo River divided the site of Canberra into two towns. 'The real city was the southern town, centred on the shopping centres of Manuka and Kingston, and lying in the sheltered valley east of Kurrajong where departmental officers had planned the capital since they first saw the site in 1908' (Reid, 2002: 193).

Telopea Park

- Early European Settlement

Soon after the settlement in the region by Europeans, the site of today's Telopea Park was incorporated into Robert Campbell's Duntroon property. Around 1880 George Henry Rottenberry, together with his wife Eliza (nee Kaye), built their home on land that was part of the Duntroon Estate, beside a stream that is now the drain through Telopea Park (Young, 2007).

The homestead consisted of a four-room slab residence with a front verandah, a ceiling lined with hessian—as was common—and a hardwood floor. A slab kitchen, located a small distance from the home, to prevent risk of fire, had a brick chimney and baker's oven. The front of the house had a flower garden. George and Eliza raised five children here. Nearby to the homestead were a dairy, stock sheds and yards (Young, 2007).

The Rottenberrys farmed the land between Kurrajong Hill (now the site of Parliament House) and the Molonglo River. George also worked as a lime-burner and quarryman, following in his father's footsteps.

After the Commonwealth acquired Duntroon, George and his son leased several blocks and continued cropping for several years. In 1923 the house was demolished (Young, 2007).

- Walter Burley Griffin's plans

Walter Burley Griffin's Plans identified Telopea Park as the dividing line between Barton, with the intended predominance of government housing, and Kingston which was to be predominantly private housing. The subdivision of Barton was designed and completed in 1926 and some of the sites were offered for lease at this time (RNE, 17370).

Walter Burley Griffin's early plans for the design and planning of the nation's capital included 'Waratah Parkway' or 'Waratah Pathway'. This name was later changed to the Latin term for Waratah, *Telopea*, and became 'Telopea Park'.

Walter Burley Griffin incorporated into his plans aspects of garden and water vistas, a 'concerted park or garden frontage for all important structures... closes, quadrangles, terraces, common gardens... (and) irregular hill garden subdivisions' (Elliott, n.d: 4).

The Manuka and Telopea areas have a range of values related to the Garden City ideals featured in its design and its association with the early development of Canberra.

- Plantings

T.C.G. Weston, Officer in Charge, Afforestation Branch, Canberra, believed that a city was not just about buildings but also living plants. Thousands of trees and shrubs created an environment which established the aesthetic of the city before many of the buildings were constructed.

Weston commenced planting the Telopea area in 1923 (Murphy 1979 p.69 - 70) in the form of two semi-circular shaped arcs of trees about the central axis of Waratah Parkway (Telopea Park) and Manuka

Shopping Centre. It has been deduced from surveys and air photos that the most likely arrangement was several rows of exotic trees, including poplars, oak, cedars and cypresses on the outside of which was a hedge (Gray 1999 p.161). Roman cypresses were planted at the gap between the arcs opposite the Manuka Shopping Centre.

Walter Burley Griffin had not prepared a definitive planting plan for Telopea Park, enabling Weston to exercise his discretion in relation to plantings there (Elliott, n.d: 10). Weston envisaged a park of perpetual growth and expressed his visionary ideals through the use of both deciduous and evergreen plants (Elliott, n.d: 10).

In May 1923 Weston is cited as stating that he did not like 'formal straight line planting' and that he personally 'would not plan or plant a straight line except when forced to do so or by circumstances' (Elliott, n.d: 17). As a result, Weston's plantings throughout the city included straight lines for avenues, and a less regular grouping for parks and the future lake shore, to avoid monotony.

The earliest species had been planted by October 1922 at Waratah Parkway. It was in 1924 that the name of the site was changed, coinciding with the opening of the Telopea Park Public School.

Original plantings included wattles, *Eucalypts*, *Casuarinas*, Cedars, silverbirches, flowering plums, flowering peaches, ashes, tulip trees, pines, plane trees, poplars, willows, false acacias, elms, redwoods and swamp cypresses (Elliott, n.d: 17). Many of the early *Eucalypts* did not survive well.

Weston initially concentrated plantings in the northern end of the Park, in anticipation of the construction of Manuka Oval and the Manuka Swimming Pool to the south. Weston experienced some problems with his plantings, in the midst of suburban development, stating:

I shall be glad to know if permission was granted to play football in Manuka Circle (Manuka Oval) last Saturday. If such permission was granted, I cannot understand why, with preparation and planting work in full swing, I was not consulted. If such procedure is to continue, it is obvious that once the trees and shrubs are planted I cannot be held responsible for their care and maintenance. I would suggest that either these reserves should be definitely placed under my control or that at least I am given a word respecting their management' (Elliott, n.d: 11).



Kingston and Telopea Park from the air, Wentworth Avenue on the left, 1934

National Archives of Australia A3560, 7399

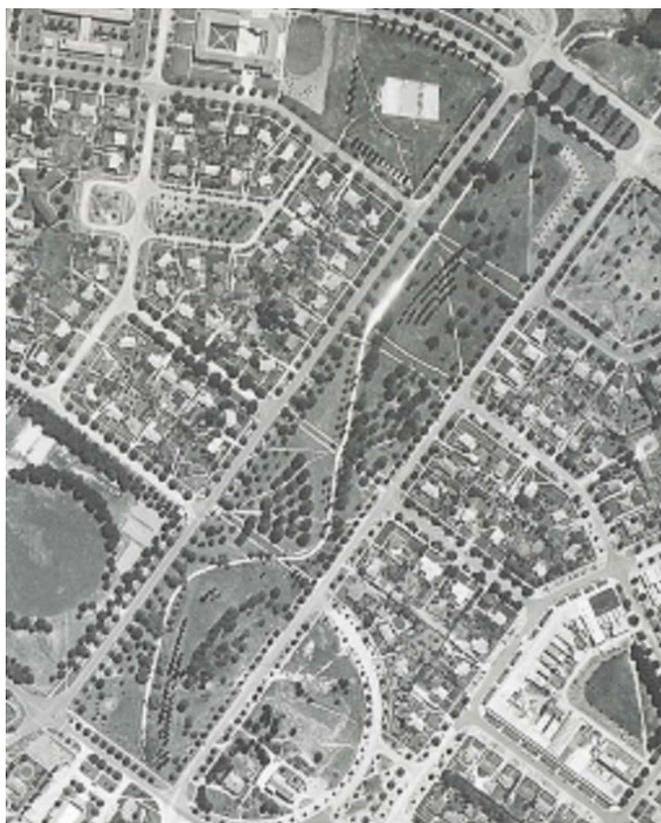
(informal arrangement of plantings in the northern area of Telopea Park can be seen to the foreground of the photo).

Following the plantings of the 1920s, little further work was carried out for some time. This was due partly to WWII and also to Weston's ideal that the landscape contain plantings of differing levels of maturity (Elliott, n.d: 11).

The natural creek was diverted into a drainage channel in 1925.

Lindsay Pryor was appointed Superintendent of Parks and Gardens from 1944 to 1958. Pryor introduced the system of irrigation, turfing and mowing, and continued the plantings in the southern end of the park (Elliott, n.d: 14). Pryor also introduced barbecue facilities and other parkland furniture, increasing the utilisation of the park and its potential as a place of recreation (Elliott, n.d: 14). He provided an upgrade to the Park at this time.

Pryor used Telopea Park as an experiment ground for some species including *Zelkova*. *Zelkova* was later used for street plantings in Mort Street and at the O'Connor shopping centre.



ACTPLA 29-11-1950, Run 5 Print 5203, ACT Government
Showing plantings of Weston and Pryor, including the irregular pattern.

DESCRIPTION

Telopea Park

Telopea Park is a mature linear park planted with a wide range of native and exotic trees including *Eucalypts*, poplars and the uncommon Californian big tree (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*). A concrete lined open stormwater channel (formerly a creek) and a bicycle/pedestrian path run the length of the Park. The Park has barbecue facilities, play grounds, toilets and carparks.

The informal arrangement of deciduous and evergreen plantings provides the Park with a variety of colours throughout the four seasons, including the Springtime pink of *Prunus*, the yellow autumnal colours provided by the Polpars, and the green throughout winter from *Eucalypts*.

The mixed planting at the park includes *Cedrus atlantica*, *Cedrus deodara*, *Eucalyptus bicostata*, *Eucalyptus cinerea*, *Eucalyptus mannifera* spp., *Maculosa*, *E. rubida*, *Fraxinus pennsylvanica*, *Platanus occidentalis* “Wrightii”, *Populus nigra* “Italica”, *Prunus cerasifera* “Nigra”, *Quercus bicolour*, *Quercus ilex*, *Robinia pseudoacacia*, *Salix babylonica*, and *Sequoiadendron gigantum* (Pryor and Banks, 1991: 205).

The character of the park is dominated by the trees, and determined by their species, age and location.

Some of the original trees planted at the northern end of the park in the 1920s remain.

Physical condition and integrity

Telopea Park has a high level of integrity as a recreational park facility, retaining trees from the original plantings of the 1920s, as well as later plantings from the 1940s and 1950s.

Because the park is a dynamic living part of Canberra’s cultural landscape, the character is constantly changing and evolving.

REFERENCES

Elliott, M., n.d., ‘Telopea Park Conservation Plan’, student report prepared for the University of Canberra Cultural Heritage Management Program.

Gibbney, J., 1988, *Canberra 1913-1953*, Aus Government Publishing Service, Canberra.

Pryor, L.D and Banks, J.C.G, 1991, *Trees and Shrubs in Canberra*, Little Hills Press Pty Ltd, NSW.

Reid, J., 2002, *Canberra Following Griffin – A Design History of Australia’s National Capital*, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

RNE, (Register of the National Estate), Place Identification: 17370, ‘Telopea Park and Barton Residential Area’, http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/ahdb/search.pl?mode=place_detail;place_id=17370, date accessed 23 August 2011.

Young, L., 2007, *The Lost Houses of the Molonglo*, Ginninderra Press, Canberra.

SITE PLAN



Place boundary indicated by solid red line

IMAGES

Images taken 31 August 2011





Picnic and playground facilities