



ACT Heritage Council

## Entry to the ACT Heritage Register

*Heritage Act 2004*

**20105. Gorman House**

Section 53 Block 1

**BRADDON**

This document has been prepared by the ACT Heritage Council.

This entry which was previously part of the old heritage places or the old heritage objects registers (as defined in the *Heritage Act 2004*), as the case may be, is taken to be registered under the *Heritage Act 2004*.

Conservation Requirements (including Specific Requirements), as defined under the *Heritage Act 2004*, that are contained within this document are taken to be Heritage Guidelines applying to this place or object, as the case may be.

Information restricted under *the old heritage places register or old heritage objects register* is restricted under the *Heritage Act 2004*.

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ACT Heritage Council

**AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY  
ENTRY TO AN INTERIM HERITAGE PLACES REGISTER FOR:**

**GORMAN HOUSE, BRADDON  
(Block 1, Section 53)**

For the purposes of s. 54 of the *Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991*, this heritage assessment for the above place has been prepared by the ACT Heritage Council as the basis for its inclusion within an interim Heritage Places Register.

Notification effective: 23 February 2005

Background material about this place and additional copies of the entry are available from:

**The Secretary  
ACT Heritage Council  
PO BOX 144  
LYNEHAM ACT 2602**

**Telephone: (02) 6207 7378  
Facsimile: (02) 6207 2200**

## GORMAN HOUSE, BRADDON

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### LOCATION OF PLACE:

Block 1, Section 53, Braddon, and extending to the kerb of this block.

Bounded by Batman Street (to the north), Ainslie Avenue (to the south), & Doonkuna Street (to the east) and Currong Street (to the west). Refer Figure 1 below.

### FEATURES INTRINSIC TO THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE OF GORMAN HOUSE

The features which contribute to the heritage significance of Gorman House, and which require conservation, comprise:

- the central building and its interior;
- the associated pavilions and garden courtyards, and
- the garden setting, including the surrounding lawns, low hedges, garden beds and the Chinese Elm street trees.

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Gorman House is significant for its role in the historical, social and architectural development of Canberra. It has achieved prominence as a local landmark, with an important contribution to the character of inner Canberra.

It is important for being the first hostel completed for the Federal Capital Advisory Committee, and contributes to the establishment of the 'FCC Style'. It is an example of the work of the prominent architect, J S Murdoch, in a Garden-City setting, on a major axis of the Griffin Plan for Canberra.

It reflects an interesting combination of traditional Georgian and Inter-War Mediterranean sentiment, with the Prairie-Style. The key elements of this combination are the horizontality of the group of buildings, the interconnected pavilions in a symmetrical layout, formation of landscaped areas between the pavilions, the use of terracotta roof tiles (since replaced), red brick details, six-pane double hung windows, and rough cast walls. The Brunswick green and cream colour scheme revives Georgian fashions.

The garden setting of Gorman House is reflective of the 1920s style of low hedges and planting against buildings. Later plantings and maintenance have continued this simple style. The plantings provide contrast with the horizontal character of the buildings. The original *Crataegus crus-galli* provide an impressive focus for each of the courtyards.

It has technical interest, which expresses the economic difficulties of its time of construction as well as the use of locally produced materials that have contributed to an identifiable local architectural fashion.

The building has social significance to a diverse range of people. This includes its role as a housing hostel for nearly fifty years, public service offices, housing a range of community groups and an arts centre, and the venue for a range of community activities.

## **SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CONSERVATION OF GORMAN HOUSE**

In accordance with s.54 of the *Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991*, the following specific requirements are identified as essential to the conservation of the heritage significance of the place. The guiding Conservation Objective is:

**The features intrinsic to the heritage significance of Gorman House and its setting shall be conserved and maintained in a manner consistent with its heritage significance.**

### **Conservation Objective 1.**

**Provide adequate conservation management planning**

#### ***Conservation Objective 1.1***

*Ensure that any actions impacting on the significance of the place are based on professional conservation planning.*

#### **Specific Requirements for Conservation Objective 1.1:**

- (a) Gorman House shall be managed in accordance with a Conservation Management Plan prepared for the place and endorsed by the ACT Heritage Council. An endorsed Plan shall remain current for a period of not more than 5 years without review.
- (b) Maintenance will be as defined in the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter, and should not involve change to significant fabric.
- (c) Conservation works identified within the Conservation Management Plan as urgent shall be implemented by the land manager.

### **CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE 2.**

**Conserve the Significant components of Gorman House**

#### ***Conservation Objective 2.1***

*Maximise the retention of the historical integrity of Gorman House by preventing demolition of the existing building.*

#### **Specific Requirements for Conservation Objective 2.1.**

- (a) The building shall be conserved. Maintenance shall retain as much original fabric as possible and where replacement is required, replace same with same.

- (b) The demolition of features intrinsic to the significance shall not be permitted except in exceptional circumstances, including:
- the building is so structurally unsound as to be beyond reasonable economic repair. The application must include a professional structural assessment in support of demolition; or
  - the existing condition of the building poses a significant health or safety risk that is beyond reasonable economic repair. The application must include a professional structural or health assessment in support of demolition, and
- (c) Where standard conservation options are found not be feasible and prudent for a place or element, demolition or removal of significant material shall be limited to minimum extent necessary, and standard conservation principles will be applied to the maximum extent possible. All fabric to be removed or modified shall be professionally recorded and the records lodged with and responsibly archived by Environment ACT.

### **Conservation Objective 2.2**

*Retain the historical form and architectural character of the existing Gorman House buildings, conserving all features intrinsic to the significance of the place.*

### **Specific Requirements for Conservation Objective 2.2**

- (a) No new development shall involve the loss, removal or damage to any features intrinsic to the significance of the place
- (b) Any new development shall fully protect features intrinsic to the significance of the place.
- (c) Additions to the existing buildings are not permitted unless the need can be clearly demonstrated.
- (d) Alterations and additions to existing buildings shall match the existing or original details, materials, finishes for all key elements including roofing and ridge capping, gutters and down pipes, fascia and eaves detail, wall finishes and details, window types, materials and sill details and door treatment. However it need not be identical in every detail provided essential details match and the character is maintained.
- (e) All additions to buildings shall be designed to minimise disturbance to the principal form of the existing building, and to ensure that the existing building remains the dominant built form, and
- (f) Original fabric shall be conserved in-situ. Any disturbance to the building fabric to be recorded before any action occurs.

### **CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE 3.**

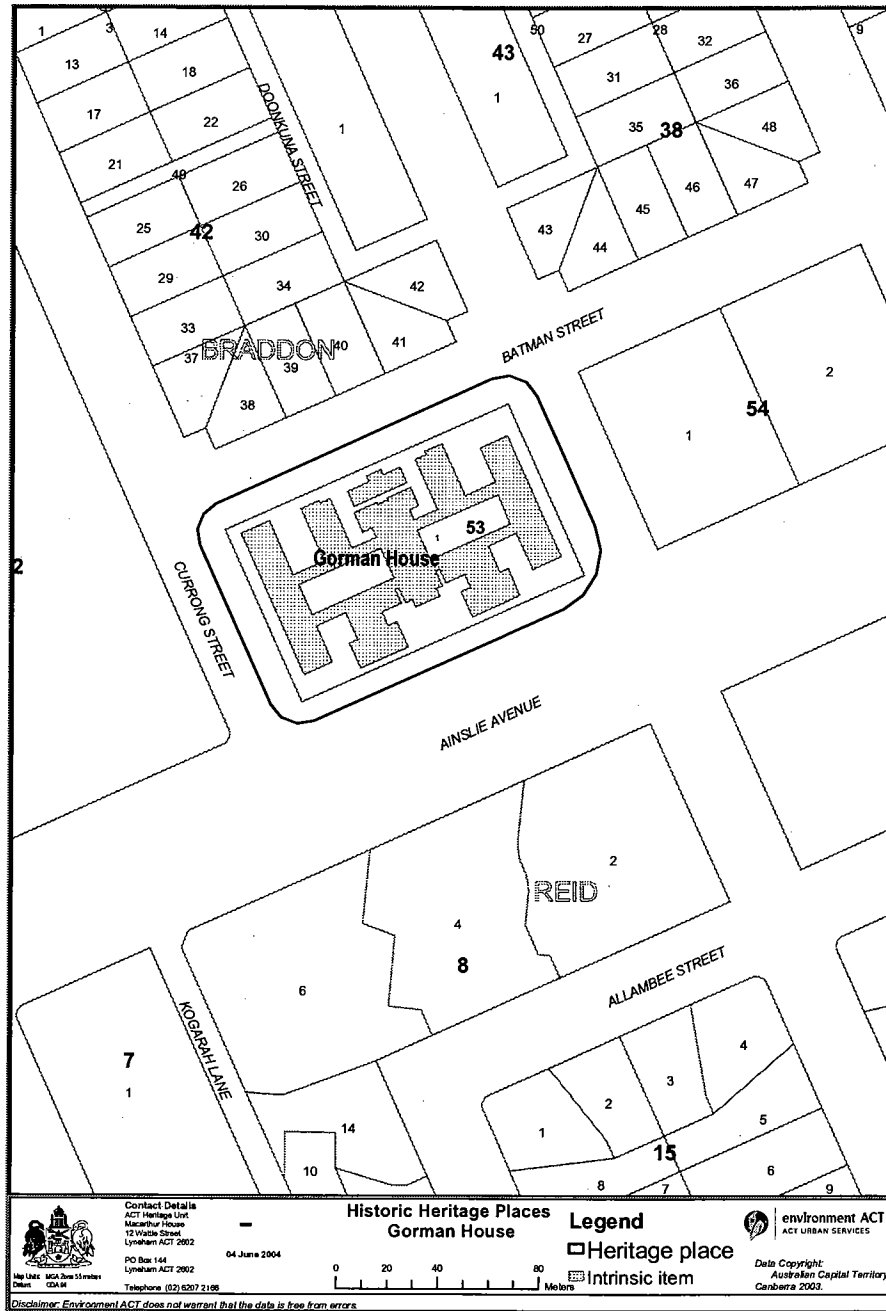
#### **Conserve the Garden setting of Gorman House**

##### ***Conservation Objective 3.1***

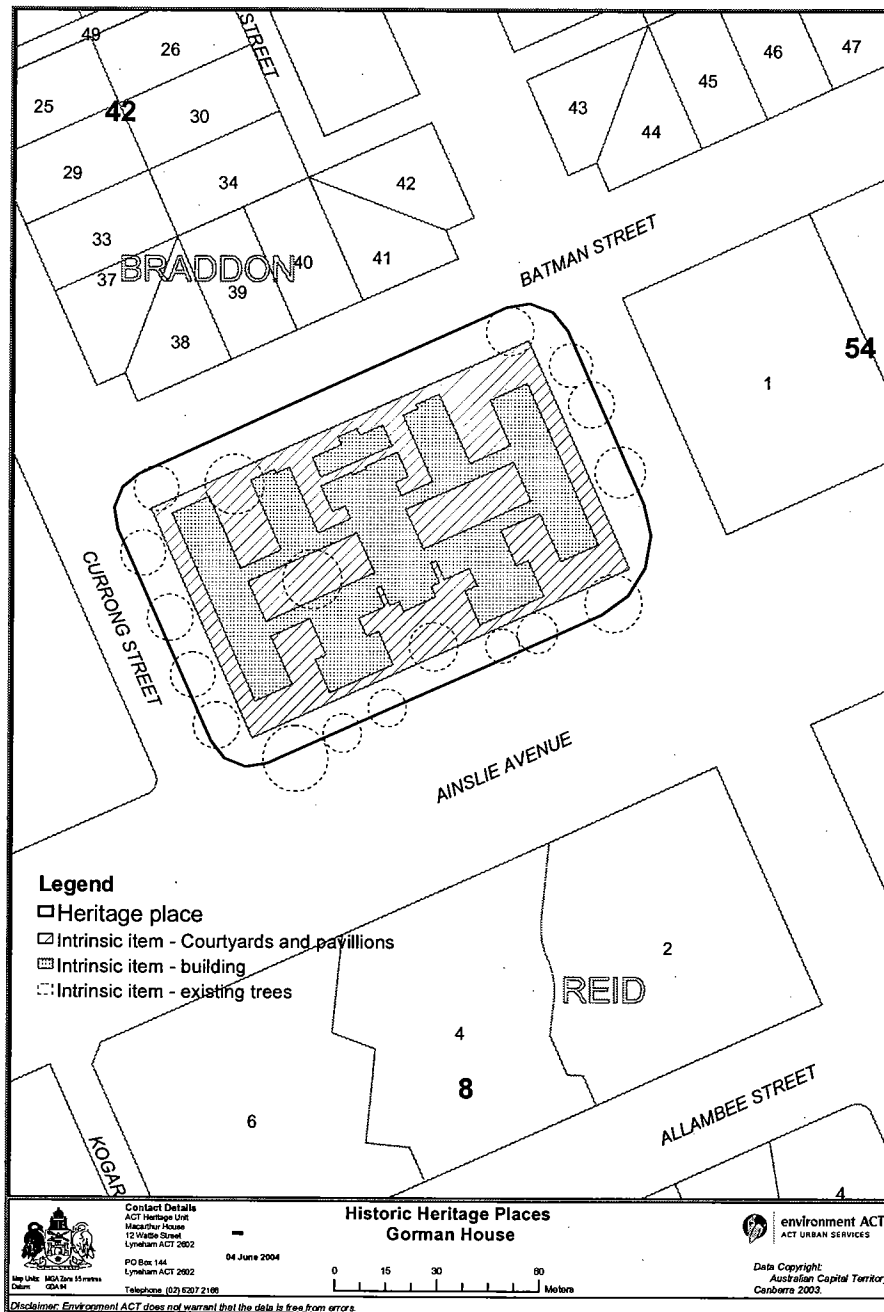
*The Garden setting of Gorman House shall be conserved, building on the original design.*

##### **Specific Requirements for Conservation Objective 3.1**

- (a) Landscape works shall be undertaken in accordance with the CMP and should be read in conjunction with the Garden Conservation Plan 1991, prepared by Firth and Taylor for the Gorman House Community Arts Centre, to conserve and build on the original garden setting.



**Figure 1**  
 Location plan for Gorman House



**Figure 2**  
 Location plan for Gorman House Intrinsic Features