

Godden Mackay Logan

Heritage Consultants



# Weston Park

## Conservation Management Plan

Report prepared for ACT Government  
Department of Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS)

July 2011

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## Report Register

The following report register documents the development and issue of the report entitled Weston Park—Conservation Management Plan (CMP), undertaken by Godden Mackay Logan Pty Ltd in accordance with its quality management system. Godden Mackay Logan operates under a quality management system which has been certified as complying with the Australian/New Zealand Standard for quality management systems AS/NZS ISO 9001:2008.

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## Executive Summary

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This Conservation Management Plan (CMP) acts as a practical guide for conserving, managing and interpreting Weston Park's heritage. It discusses factors that need to be considered when managing the site, such as its statutory context, recommendations in the 2009 draft Weston Park Masterplan and interpretation opportunities.

Weston Park, which contains the Yarralumla Nursery within its boundary, is a highly significant, designed cultural landscape with important heritage values for Canberra. Weston Park and the nursery provide physical evidence of Walter Burley and Marion Mahoney Griffin's vision for Canberra as a Federal capital city of international standing. Weston Park is a significant component of the original plan for Canberra and there are great opportunities for the promotion and interpretation of Weston Park and the Nursery in the broader historic setting of Griffin's plan.

Weston Park, and especially Yarralumla Nursery, is important as a research and benchmark site for the study of plant propagation and experimentation techniques. The Park and Nursery show evidence of significant creative innovation, including through the paper records, seed collection, pocket gardens, tree plots for trial species and eucalypt hybridisation.

The CMP aims to be consistent with existing Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS) management procedures (for design, construction and maintenance in Weston Park). It provides recommendations for TAMS in particular, for the integration of managing the heritage values of Weston Park with the existing maintenance, management and consent processes. This CMP also provides an approach to help TAMS make decisions internally and, in part, minimise the requirement for external heritage advice for some matters. It defines the complex statutory process, works approvals through the National Capital Authority (NCA) and requirements for the assessment of heritage impacts from proposed works or activities.

The CMP identifies opportunities to enhance and promote the special qualities of Weston Park and Yarralumla Nursery to the Canberra community. This includes the recommendation that Weston Park and Yarralumla Nursery are nominated to the ACT Heritage Register. Such measures will provide a statutory basis for conserving the important heritage values for the ACT community.

The CMP provides recommendations for conserving and interpreting the symbiotic relationship between Yarralumla Nursery and Weston Park. This is essential for the future recognition and management of the heritage values of Weston Park. Developing an interpretation and communication strategy will be a useful basis for several conservation and management decisions of the place.

Importantly, this CMP recommends revising and finalising the 2009 draft Weston Park Masterplan with reference to the heritage values of the Park. This will provide greater certainty in planning for the future recreation, events and nursery uses continuing there.



## 1.0 Introduction

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### 1.1 Background to the Project

Godden Mackay Logan Pty Ltd (GML) has been commissioned by the Land Management and Planning Division (LMPD) of the ACT Government Department of Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS), to prepare a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for Weston Park, Yarralumla, ACT.

Weston Park encompasses Blocks 11, 12, 13, 15 and 17, Section 117; Block 2, Section 123; and Blocks 2, 4 and 5, Section 124; of Yarralumla, at the western end of Lake Burley Griffin, between Tarcoola and Yarramundi Reaches. Weston Park (the Park), is approximately 73.35ha and consists of a peninsula extending into Lake Burley Griffin. A large portion of the site is occupied by Yarralumla Nursery (the Nursery), while the remainder is public parkland. This report refers to the overall site as Weston Park, which includes the area of Yarralumla Nursery.

Figure 1.1 identifies the location of Weston Park in proximity to the main geographical, geometrical, and cultural features of the central Canberra landscape. It also identifies the study area in the context of the lake and adjoining recreational open spaces. The major axes of the 'Griffin Plan' (see Section 2.2.2) for the design and planning of Canberra are identified to highlight the historical context and Weston Park's role in the early establishment of the National Capital.

### 1.2 Project Aims and Heritage Status

Weston Park is an important place in central Canberra and highly valued by the Canberra community for a variety of reasons. There is a strong sense of ownership of the place and its complex array of heritage values, including social, historic, aesthetic, scientific and cultural landscape values.

The CMP project brief required that a multi-disciplinary team develop a detailed, yet practical CMP to assess the heritage values and guide the management of Weston Park into the future.

This CMP explains how the place should be managed, principally in accordance with *The Heritage Act 2004* (ACT) (the Heritage Act) and other statutory obligations and legislation which govern the heritage and land management of Weston Park.

Weston Park and Yarralumla Nursery are listed as a single place on the Register of the National Estate (RNE) (refer to Appendix E for the RNE citation). Weston Park, including the Nursery, although not currently listed in the ACT Heritage Register, has heritage values (as assessed in Section 4.0) against the ACT Heritage criteria. As a result of this assessment, the place should be nominated to the ACT Heritage Register for formal assessment and listing.

In the meantime, the management of Weston Park should be in accordance with its heritage values and this CMP. This CMP has been written in accordance with the ACT Heritage Council's requirements and aims to meaningfully address the complex arrangements for managing the place. This CMP was endorsed by the ACT Heritage Council at its meeting on 7 July 2011. A copy of the endorsement letter is attached at Appendix H.

The Park is located on ACT land and is managed by TAMS on a day-to-day basis. It is a 'designated area' under the National Capital Plan and as such is also administered by the National Capital Authority (NCA). The National Capital Plan is the strategic plan for Canberra and the Territory, and it explains that planning and approval of development within designated areas is the responsibility of the NCA.

### 1.3 Using Precincts in the CMP

This CMP refers to a series of precincts (1—9 shown in Figure 1.2) in Weston Park. These have been based on the previous sub-precincts identified in the 1991 Masterplan by Strine Design. The titles of the sub-precincts have been retained to assist in the development and arrangement of the CMP. The precincts relate to current park usage patterns, landscape character, amenity, management and maintenance regimes (Table 1.1).

**Table 1.1** Weston Park precincts and sub-precincts.

Precincts	Sub-Precincts
1	Entry Zone (near Orana Bay)
2	Nursery Park (near Nursery Bay and includes the English Garden) and The Ramble
3	The Elms (Elm avenue), Weston Park Road and The Plateau (divided into two parts on either side of Weston Park Road)
4	East Bank, East Basin and The Plateau (divided into two parts on either side of Weston Park Road)
5	Yarralumla Nursery
6	West Basin
7	The Pond, The Train (also referred to as Miniature Railway) and West Bank
8	West Yarralumla Peninsula and East Yarralumla Peninsula
9	Kurrajong Point

### 1.4 Consultation for the CMP

The CMP brief requested that community and government stakeholder engagement be undertaken. Some community consultation had already been undertaken for the Weston Park Final Draft Masterplan by Oxigen in 2009. The consultation was referred to in the preparation of this CMP and in the development of a stakeholder engagement plan.

This plan was prepared to guide the consultation for the CMP. The objectives were to:

- seek information from government stakeholders, to provide a sound understanding of the opportunities and constraints to inform heritage policy development; and
- understand the social and community-held aesthetic values for Weston Park's heritage values, for assessment against the Heritage Act heritage criteria;

The government stakeholder consultation was undertaken by the GML project team on 14 May 2010, primarily with those ACT Government stakeholders with a role in the management of Weston Park. The objective of the consultation was to understand potential management issues to be considered in the CMP. The issues, questions and opportunities for Weston Park raised at the session are discussed in Section 5.5.

The second part of the consultation involved targeted community stakeholder engagement which occurred in September 2010. It was conducted by Context Pty Ltd in association with GML to identify and assess social and community-held values. The full report is included in Appendix C.

## 1.5 Previous Reports

A number of previous reports written about Weston Park were referred to as a contextual basis for this CMP (Table 1.2).

**Table 1.2** Previous reports on Weston Park

Title	Author
Weston Park Final Draft Masterplan	Oxigen Landscape Architects, November 2009, prepared for ACT Government.
Weston Park Master Plan Consultation Report	Susan Conroy, 2009, appendix to Weston Park Master Plan (Oxigen)
Weston Park Masterplan Report	Totalcare 1999, unpublished report prepared for Canberra Urban Parks and Places.
Weston Park Masterplan, Principles Plan Report	Strine Design, 1991, unpublished report prepared for ACT Landscape.

## 1.6 Authorship

The GML project team included Rachel Jackson, Associate; Anne Claoué-Long, Senior Consultant; Sarah Webeck, Research Assistant; Geoff Ashley, Senior Associate; and Sheridan Burke, Partner.

Subconsultants to GML, who undertook research, consultation and provided input into the CMP, included:

- Geoff Butler, Environmental & Horticultural Consultant;
- Chris Houghton, Michael Spackman and Elise Aldworth, Spackman Mossop Michaels (SMM);
- Geoffrey Britton, Environmental Design & Heritage Consultant; and
- Chris Johnston, Director, Context Pty Ltd.

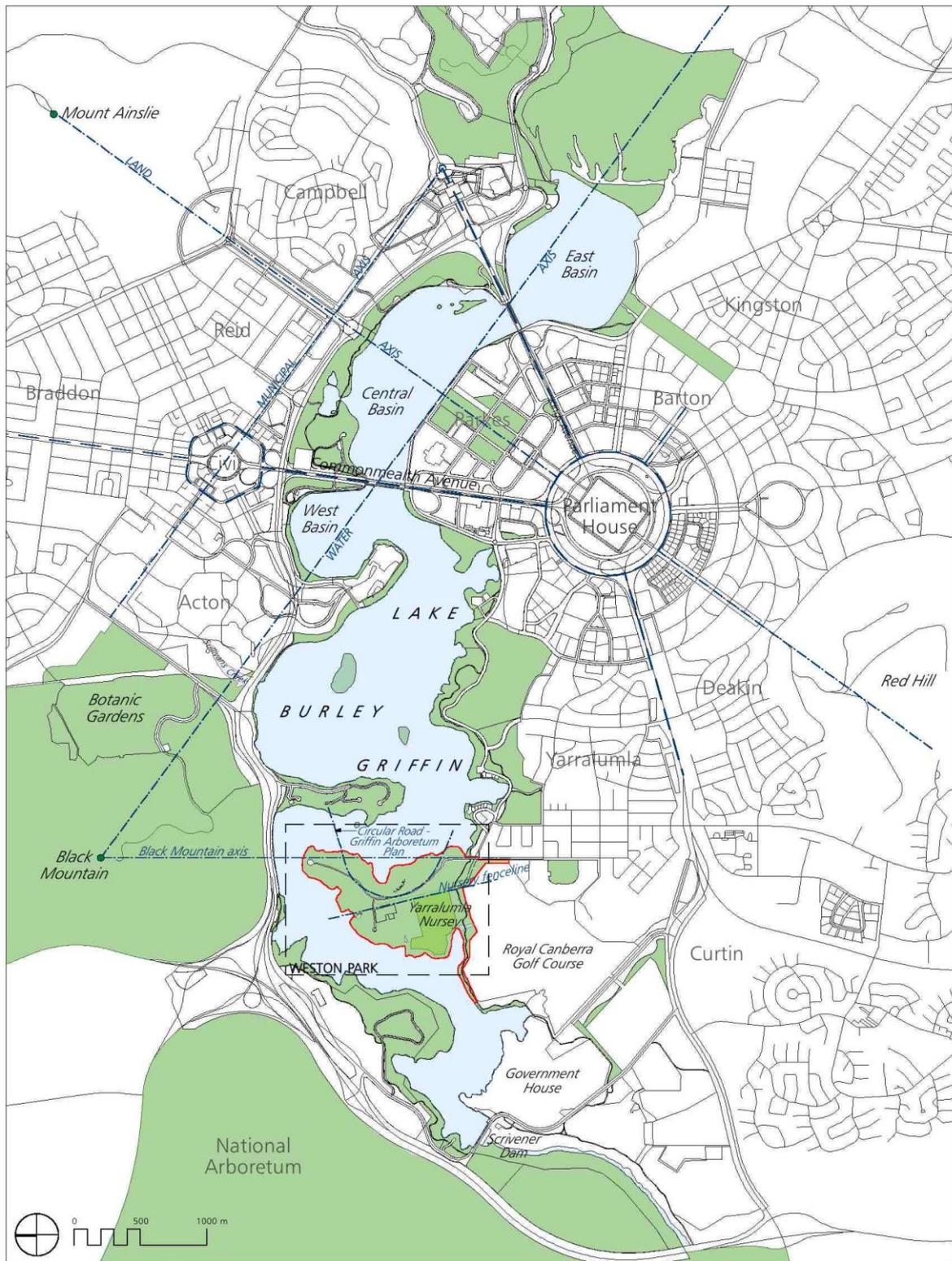
## 1.7 Acknowledgements

GML acknowledges the contribution and assistance of the following people in the preparation of this report:

- Anne Breckwoldt, TAMS;
- Michael Kidd, Manager Yarralumla Nursery;
- Sue Hearne, Production Manager, Yarralumla Nursery;
- Juliet Ramsay, Heritage Consultant;
- Duncan Marshall, Heritage Consultant; and
- Yarralumla Nursery Community Consultation Group: Michael Kidd, Sue Hearne, Frank Grossbechler (former Yarralumla Nursery Manager), Belinder Ryan (Retail Manager), Frank Byrne (Pialligo Plant Manager), Cheryl Gregory and Nerida Foster.

## **1.8 Limitations**

As yet no Indigenous sites or places of Indigenous significance have been identified within the boundaries of Weston Park. An assessment of Indigenous heritage values was not included in this CMP. A survey of potential Aboriginal sites, historic archaeology and an assessment of Aboriginal cultural values in Weston Park should be undertaken prior to any new work being proposed or implemented.



E	FOR REVIEW	13.12.10	EA	<b>SPACKMAN + MOSSOP MICHAELS</b> Pty Ltd ABN 65 015 519 981 T: 02 9361 4549 F: 02 9361 4569 www.sm2group.com.au	SCALE 1:15,000 @ A3	PROJECT WESTON PARK CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN	DRAWING TITLE CONTEXT PLAN & GRIFFIN LEGACY	NORTH 	SHEET L01
D	FOR REVIEW	20.10.10	EA						
C	FOR REVIEW	15.10.10	EA						
B	FOR REVIEW	11.10.10	EA						
A	FOR DISCUSSION	13.05.10	EA						
REV	ISSUE	DATE	BY						

**Figure 1.1** The location plan identifies the study area of Weston Park and Yarralumla Nursery, shown outlined in red. The plan also shows the context of Lake Burley Griffin and adjoining recreational open spaces, shaded in green. The blue curved dashed line through the centre of the park, to what is now the Black Mountain Peninsula, indicates the location of Griffin's proposed arc road. (Source: SMM)

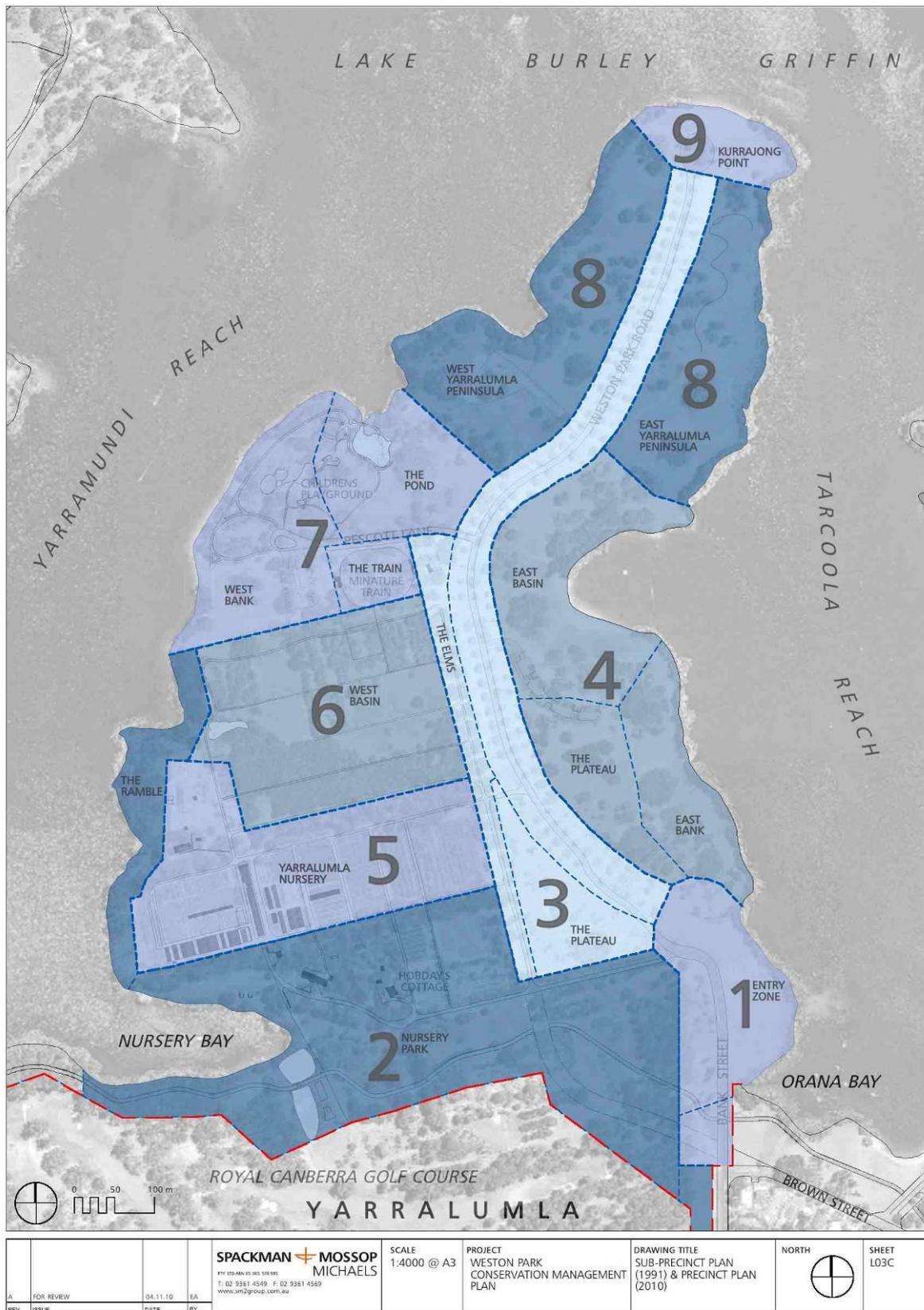


Figure 1.2 Precinct plan of Weston Park showing the nine numbered precincts and the named sub-precincts. (Source: SMM)

## **2.0 Understanding the Place: Historical Context**

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### **2.1 Land Use Prior to the Development of Canberra**

#### **2.1.1 Indigenous Land Use**

As yet no Indigenous sites at Weston Park have been included in the ACT Heritage Register. However, this does not necessarily mean Indigenous heritage values or sites do not exist in Weston Park. Consequently a cultural values assessment and survey for Indigenous sites is required in the future, in advance of any works that are planned.

The area now known as Weston Park was originally occupied by the Indigenous people of the Ngunnawal group. Several Indigenous groups, including the Ngunnawal and Ngambri, were recorded to have settled along the sandy banks of the Molonglo River near the current Weston Park. The Molonglo River corridor was an important natural resource that attracted a considerable level of hunter-gatherer occupation prior to European settlement. Up to 12 Aboriginal sites have previously been identified in the Yarramundi Reach near Weston Park; many of these sites and artefacts became submerged with the construction of Lake Burley Griffin.<sup>1</sup>

After 1820, when the first European settlers surveyed the region, the Indigenous populations in this region dwindled markedly. The onset of European diseases and the eventual transportation of many Indigenous people to nearby missions, such as those at Yass and Queanbeyan, left only small travelling populations of Indigenous people, many of whom became workers for the expanding European population.<sup>2</sup>

#### **2.1.2 Pastoral Land Use**

Colonial settlement on the land which is now Weston Park, set in the curve of the Molonglo River, was described as Portions 5 and 6 Parish of Narrabundah, as shown in Figure 2.1. Portion 5 was originally granted to Henry Donnison and then in 1836 transferred to Terence Aubrey Murray who established the Yarralumla Station. Murray left in 1856, selling his land to his brother in law, Augustus Gibbes. The land finally passed to Frederick Campbell in 1881.<sup>3</sup>

With Federation, the Commonwealth Government compulsorily purchased the Yarralumla property in 1913 to develop it as part of the new Australian capital city within the newly created Federal Capital Territory. As yet no Indigenous sites or places of Indigenous significance, or places with direct heritage association with the Yarralumla property, have been identified within the boundaries of Weston Park.

## **2.2 Implementing the Garden City Concept of Canberra**

### **2.2.1 Canberra: The Need for Afforestation**

In 1908, when the site for the Federal capital was recommended by the Commonwealth surveyor, Charles Scrivener, the Limestone Plains landscape was an undulating grassland with a few scattered local native trees, and some conifer and exotic species used as wind breaks and site markers around the Church of St John the Baptist and local homesteads. The hills retained more natural tree cover, but not the extensive woodlands seen today. This paucity of tree cover in relation to that which exists today was due as much to the local climate (hot, dry summers; cold, frosty and wet winters, with cold air draining into low-lying areas; and an overall low annual rainfall) as to pastoral clearing and grazing. Climatically the Limestone Plain was not a promising location to establish the new Garden City, and the infertile soils and local rabbit infestation contributed further disadvantages to a horticultural vision of a

landscaped city.<sup>4</sup> Notwithstanding, the new city site plans required plantings for streets and parks to make an attractive landscape according to the ambitious designs of the Griffins. This was necessary not only to produce a capital city for Australians to be proud of, but also to provide an attractive environment to encourage people to populate the city. During the early years of the city development there was little real civic infrastructure to encourage people to settle there.

Despite these plans, little was actually known about the performance of many trees and shrubs in the challenging local climatic and soil conditions. A consequence of this need for specific horticultural information was the appointment of the horticulturalist Thomas Charles George (TCG) Weston. Weston had previously been employed at the NSW State Government nursery at Campbelltown and was working as head gardener at the Federal Government House, Sydney (now NSW Government House). He was recruited in 1913 to a government position as Officer-in-Charge of the Afforestation Branch in Canberra, where he could test and choose suitable tree and shrub species for landscaping the city. To do this, Weston set out to create an arboretum, or botanic garden of trees, to research botanical performance in Canberra. Many of the trees subsequently grown in Canberra's streets and parks were chosen because of their success in Weston's experimental plantings. The effect on the local landscape was a transformation from bare plains to modern city, with the urban forest and surrounding treed hills a distinctive feature of Canberra today.

The area of Weston Park was one part of this larger created and managed cultural landscape to test horticultural performance at Canberra and its propagation nursery provided plants for Canberra's streets and gardens. Weston Park, with its productive Yarralumla Nursery area, was both physically and functionally attached to the area now known as Westbourne Woods where many tree groupings from the horticultural testing and research still thrive. The establishment of the Australian Forestry School headquarters (also referred to as the Forestry School building) in 1926, on a 5ha site within the eastern part of Westbourne Woods in Yarralumla, complemented the Nursery and arboretum, and further boosted horticultural and forestry research.

Charles Lane Poole was appointed Commonwealth Forestry Adviser in 1925 and immediately recommended that the Commonwealth establish a national school to train professional foresters. Cabinet approved the establishment of the Australian Forestry School in the same year. The Forestry School building remains a landmark on Banks Street, Yarralumla, on the approach to Weston Park.

### **2.2.2 The Griffin Plan for Canberra—1913–1920**

In 1911 the Commonwealth Government held an international competition for the design of the newly appointed Federal Capital, with specific instructions to include ornamental waters, parks and gardens as the centrepiece of the proposed new city. The following year, Chicago architect Walter Burley Griffin was announced as the winning entrant out of 137 submissions.<sup>5</sup>

Walter Burley Griffin was appointed Federal Capital Director of Design and Construction in 1913 and continued to pursue his landscape vision for Canberra, actively participating in the design and construction of the city plan until he left Canberra in 1920. During this time, Griffin was Weston's supervisor for landscape projects and it seems that Weston carried out Griffin's overall landscape directions, even when they made little horticultural sense in relation to particular plant needs in the local climate. Some of Weston's major projects, such as the Redwood Plantation at Pialligo which had limited success, were purely Griffin's initiative. Professor Lindsay Pryor considered that while Griffin was an idealist and visionary who had some impractical ideas, Weston was more practical and pragmatic and influenced the actual arrangement of plantings to a high degree.<sup>6</sup>

The area of Weston Park was part of an extensive area of recreation parks and gardens planned for the western section of the proposed lake system, shown in the final 1918 plan developed by Griffin and based on the competition drawings he had conceived together with his wife Marion. The plan for Canberra included the concept of a central formal lake area with less formal 'natural' areas in the eastern and western lake basins. The western lake area was to contain a Continental Arboretum containing plantations of trees grouped as to the continent of their origin. Griffin's 1918 plan identifies the entire peninsula of the current day Weston Park as the Australasian sections of the Continental Arboretum, with trees from Australia and New Zealand. A curved avenue, the Garden Gate Drive, is shown down the central ridge leading to a bridge across the proposed lake to what would become the Black Mountain Peninsula. While the topography of the chosen site allowed for the surrounding lake and ridge road, trees were needed to complete the project.

Griffin's design plans for Canberra primarily include the 1912 competition drawing, 1913 preliminary plan and a 1915 plan of the Arboretum. Eventually the 1918 Griffin plan became the basis of the gazetted city plan of 1925 by the Federal Capital Commission (FCC), after Griffin had resigned in 1920 (Figures 2.2 to 2.6).

The city plan of 1925 effectively set the agenda for city planning until the 1950s when Sir William Holford introduced various revisions and planning schemes to revitalise Canberra's stalled development. Holford, a British town planner, was invited to Canberra by the Prime Minister Robert Menzies. From Holford's recommendations, the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC) was created for the development of the city and its landscape.<sup>7</sup>

## **2.3 Canberra's Government Nursery**

### **2.3.1 First Government Nursery—Acton 1911**

From 1910 to 1913, Canberra planning, development and landscaping was undertaken by the Commonwealth Department of Works. On Weston's advice the first government testing and experimental nursery was started in 1911 on an area of sandy alluvial soil at Acton. It is believed that Weston visited the new Territory in late 1911 to view the Acton site and again in 1912 to examine the ploughed site and irrigation provisions, and commence the process of ordering buildings, plants and staff appointments. The Acton Estate, one of the first colonial settlements in the locality, was the first land resumed by the Commonwealth from its lessee Arthur Brassey, and a shelter belt was immediately planted to protect the nursery area.<sup>8</sup>

This first nursery occupied the area now under the carpark of the National Museum of Australia, the former site of the Royal Canberra Hospital. As well as acting as a test ground for suitable trees and shrubs for the city, it also supplied fresh vegetables to the hospital and public service accommodation at the Bachelors' Quarters (later Lennox House) until 1915. Weston was appointed to the position of Officer-in-Charge, Afforestation Branch, Canberra, moving from Sydney to take up the post in May 1913. The nursery stock at Acton was transferred to the permanent nursery at Yarralumla in 1915. None of Weston's shelter and boundary tree plantings at the Acton site survive, but there are said to be some extant remnant road-side hedge plantings from the Acton nursery.<sup>9</sup>

### **2.3.2 Second Government Nursery—Yarralumla 1915**

By May 1913 Weston had chosen a site for a permanent nursery, northeast of Yarralumla Homestead and on the western edge of the planned city site. In 1915 stock raised at the experimental nursery at Acton was transferred to the permanent nursery, which became the hub of landscape operations. It was the establishment of this second government nursery at Yarralumla that allowed the production of tree

seedlings in quantity to landscape Canberra (including the Weston Park area), according to the original Griffin plans and then to Weston's designs.

The new nursery site was larger than the Acton site, with better soil and permanent water, and it also allowed for extension as required for experiments and plant testing. The site of 400 acres (162ha) between Shale Hill (near the present entrance to the Royal Canberra Golf Club) to the shores of the planned lake was proposed to be divided equally into four areas: for nursery work proper, the permanent planting of Australian trees and shrubs (corresponding to the Australian section of Griffin's Continental Arboretum), an arboretum, and a pinetum to test the tree species' suitability for Canberra. The site was on the edge of the city, and Weston's unusual and distinctive planting pattern of setting out trees in circular groupings, which gave a more decorative effect than the more usual arboretum straight lines, was perhaps deliberate with the view of the area becoming a public park in the future.<sup>10</sup>

The original landscape intentions for the area, as shown in Griffin's Continental Arboretum plan (Figure 2.4), can still be read in the landscape of Weston Park and its immediate surrounds. Weston's permanent plantings of Australian trees still exist either side of the central gently curving Weston Park peninsula road—the former Golden Gate Road, now the Weston Park Road. Weston's arboretum and pinetum is now mainly held in the Westbourne Woods area of the Royal Canberra Golf Club, with a smaller area to the east of the Woods, around the buildings of the old forestry school, now CSIRO. Other shelter belt plantings and testing areas associated with the nursery remain within the Weston Park boundary at Yarralumla Nursery. The remains of Weston's nursery now cover only approximately 10ha within the Weston Park boundary. Today's smaller contemporary nursery is operated by the ACT Government with a new 21ha annexe at Pialligo near Griffin's Redwood Plantation.

The Yarralumla Nursery was central to the propagation and raising of tree seedlings used in the Federal Capital. Most obvious were trees and shrubs, used for ornamental purposes to provide shade, seasonal colour and mark out major avenues and public parks in the city. Trees were also used to clothe the bare or semi-bare hillsides, and provide a backdrop of bush setting to the city—the native trees on Mount Mugga and Russell Hill, for example. Trees were also important to provide shelter from the strong and dusty winds of the district; Haig Park, planted in 1917, at the then extent of suburban development, is the best known example of such a shelter belt, although many other less substantial shelter belts were also planted. Trees raised at Yarralumla Nursery were also planted to stabilise the water catchment for the new city dam at the Cotter, and they contributed to the water security of the city. In addition, the Nursery played a part in the development of food security for the new Federal Territory, which suddenly imposed a large demand for supplies in what was then a relatively remote location—with the main transport link for supplies being the secondary rail link from the Goulburn-Yass line. Productive fruit trees were tested and an experimental orchard was planted at Yarralumla Nursery in 1915-1917, including apples, almonds, apricots, cherry, currents, fig, nectarines, nuts, olive, peach, pear, persimmon, plum, quince and grapes. Urban planning provisions of large backyards and free tree handouts encouraged home orchards and a contribution to local food production. A local government fruit inspector patrolled to check that residents were spraying fruit trees against horticultural pests.

Trees were also part of the strategy of providing local industries. Griffin's Glenloch cork plantation was one such venture, but did not lead to a local cork industry. More successful were the forest plantations to the west of the city. In 1927, 1,350 acres at Mount Stromlo were planted with Monterey Pine specifically as a forestry crop, and to the east of the city area the Kowen Forest was planted with firewood and softwood species for future cropping.<sup>11</sup>

Trees were not the only plant material which was trialled at Yarralumla Nursery. Trial sowings of wheat and other food crops were made, with 29 varieties of wheat, nine varieties of barley and seven varieties of oats. Weston also experimented with Australian fodder grasses.<sup>12</sup>

For his horticulture experiments and landscape ventures, Weston sourced plants and seeds from Melbourne, Ballarat, Goulbourn, Sydney, and even the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, England, and the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa.<sup>13</sup> He also obtained seed from Cooper Brothers in New Zealand and visited Melbourne and Ballarat in May 1913 to inspect the ornamental use of street trees in those cities.<sup>14</sup>

Work progressed in establishing the permanent nursery through late 1914 and in February 1915 Weston reported that the buildings were nearly complete. These original research office buildings, cutting, potting and seed storage sheds, and equipment store room still exist at the Nursery (Figures 2.7 and 2.8). The stables to house horses used to pull a dray cart has now been converted to the labels store. Early brick and glass greenhouses were also erected at some time before the end of the 1920s (Glasshouses 21 and 24, refer to Appendix A). More early glasshouses were built in the 1930s. The nursery site was protected with a mixed species tree shelter belt set out between 1915 and 1920.

Eucalypt seedlings were raised at the Nursery and by August 1914 a further 10,000 trees were planted adjacent to it. Early hybridisation experiments were also carried out to explore suitable tree varieties for the local region. Plantations of Monterey or Radiata Pine (*Pinus insignis/Pinus radiata*) and Cootamundra Wattle (*Acacia baileyana*) were made near the permanent nursery. The area now known as the English Garden was originally planted as a shelter belt at the southern boundary of the nursery in 1920. In 1921 Haig Park was planted out, including Monterey Pine and an understorey of Cootamundra Wattle.<sup>15</sup> Weston also planted the Queanbeyan Road (now Canberra Avenue) with Cootamundra Wattle and it was known locally as the 'Golden Mile'.<sup>16</sup>

The numbers of plants raised at Yarralumla is indicated by an official report of May 1916 which recorded 220,000 Radiata Pine seedlings transplanted at the Nursery.<sup>17</sup> The cork oak (*Quercus suber*) and redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*) seedlings which have grown to form the Glenloch Oak Plantation and Redwood Grove at Pialligo were all germinated and grown at Yarralumla Nursery.<sup>18</sup> In May 1918 Weston recorded that the nursery held stocks of trees around the 300,000 mark, including many cedars (*Cedrus Deodar atlantica*) which are a major landscape tree lining the main roads in the central city area.<sup>19</sup>

In July 1917, 4,500 trees were planted in Westbourne Woods and 9,000 plantings of 50 species of eucalypts in the 'Australian Area' (Griffin's Australasian Arboretum, now Weston Park).<sup>20</sup> In August 1917 Weston confirmed the planting of 5,240 trees at Westbourne Woods and 19,642 in the Australian Area.<sup>21</sup>

### 2.3.3 Nursery Plants for Canberrans

The nursery was the primary source of trees and shrubs for Canberra's public and domestic places, and also disseminated information about their care. A free plant issue scheme to lessees of new land subdivisions began in 1930—by controlling the species available to homeowners, the planners wanted to create a link between private gardens and public landscapes. The scheme was halted in 1979 but reinstated in 1981. The free plant issue comprised as much as 10 trees, 40 shrubs and additional hedging plants. The importance of the Nursery in enabling Canberrans to establish gardens is immense. Over the years, as plant fashions changed, the influence of the free plant issue on the different character of individual suburbs has been marked—in particular those suburbs settled during the break in plant issue. Canberra's free plant issue scheme was such a success in establishing an attractive urban landscape that it was used as a model for the development of Albury/Wodonga.<sup>22</sup>

In 1929 two-thirds of the Nursery area was transferred to what has become known as Weston Park, taking many of the former research plots and specimen plants out of direct nursery control. Over the years other sections of the Nursery have been ceded into public park ownership at Weston Park, notably the English Garden in 1993.

Despite reduced acreage, Yarralumla Nursery continued its research functions both for the Canberra region and for research institutions and government nurseries outside Canberra. Potted plants and cut flowers were provided to Canberra institutions for years, and since 1988 the Nursery has also provided plants for Canberra's annual Floriade festival. In the 1970s the Nursery pioneered the method of sowing seed from eucalyptus and other native plants directly into tubes for better root growth. It now produces about 80 species by this technique, many for Landcare groups and rural plantings. After bushfires extensively damaged Griffin's Roman Cypress Hill plantation in December 2001, the Nursery propagated seeds collected by the NCA and grew over 500 replacement Roman Cypress trees, retaining a direct genetic link to the past plantings.<sup>23</sup>

From the 1950s to the early 1970s, the nursery hosted the Department of Health plant quarantine service and the Parks and Gardens' research department. It was home to Greening Australia in Canberra for some years until 1996. In addition to its other functions, the Nursery is an important training venue for horticultural apprentices. It is now the largest wholesale nursery in the Southern Tablelands, it produces about half a million plants each year, and estimates that it provided 50 million plants in its first 90 years. Approximately 1,500 species are propagated and about half are Australian natives, mostly from the local region, including endangered species. It also raises and distributes seedlings from the Lone Pine at the Australian War Memorial for schools across Australia to help celebrate Anzac Day.<sup>24</sup>

## 2.4 Weston Park—TCG Weston 1912–1926

Weston's planting aims in Canberra were primarily: to moderate the local harsh climate of summer heat, winter frosts and strong dusty winds; to provide seasonal effects to the aesthetics of the landscape with both regionally indigenous trees and exotic trees most likely to succeed, and to do so within the shortest possible time; and to continue experimentation with trees likely to succeed in the locality. Weston was a horticulturalist with a good botanical background and an eye for aesthetic effect. He was interested in native plants as well as exotics and was happy to grow whatever species performed well to contribute to his plant compositions.

He was primarily concerned with the Nursery and the experimental arboretum (later Westbourne Woods), but also planted parts of the future Weston Park. The development of the Weston Park landscape can be divided between several periods each overseen by historically important personalities who are identified in the following subsections. The first of these was the landscape development under the supervision of TCG Weston, the Officer-in-Charge of Afforestation from 1912 until 1926 (Figure 2.9). Griffin's Continental Arboretum proposal was not pursued as initially conceived, although some circular planting plots of eucalypts (a single tree surrounded by six others in an evenly spaced circle, a growing pattern favoured by Weston and used extensively in the Westbourne Woods area), were made either side of the line of the Golden Gate Drive, which was itself lined with alternating Atlantic Cedars and Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*).<sup>25</sup> These circular plots, which are placed on the slightly lower ground below the ridge, emphasise the flow of the cedar avenue.<sup>26</sup> In addition Weston planted an avenue of English Elms (*Ulmus procera*) along the eastern part of the nursery growing area in line with part of Garden Gate Drive (now Weston Park Road). The Elm avenue also appears to run along the old boundary between Portions 5 and

6, Parish of Narrabundah, of the original land grants, which became a fence line between two large paddocks, Plain Paddock and Sheedy's Paddock. This is clearly shown in a map produced as part of the valuations for Commonwealth resumption of lands. The Sheedy who one of the paddocks is named after was probably one of the Irish Catholic Sheedy family who worked as tenant farmers in this area (Figure 2.10).

Weston also planted a conifer windbreak of pine and cypress species just above the 1,825ft contour (which was to be the high water level for the lake) along the proposed western lake shore. The style of the planting helped to establish the wild character Griffin proposed for West Lake, and the deliberate density of the planting differentiated this lake edge from others at the shore line—it is a key element of the landscape character of this area. Specimen shrubs in the southern area of Weston Park were also planted.

The Shale Hill Reserve, now part of the grounds of CSIRO Division of Forest Research (Forestry School) and Royal Canberra Golf Club, and adjacent to Weston Park, was also planted. More than 200 different species of conifers, exotic hardwoods and native Australian trees were planted at Shale Hill/Westbourne Woods, mostly between 1914 and 1918, with additional plantings in 1949. In 1983 Westbourne Woods contained one of the largest and oldest collections of tree species outside traditional botanical gardens in Australia. Two months of preparation began on 13 July 1914, with the dynamiting of planting holes in the rocky soil. Plans of the Yarralumla Nursery show a small magazine building where explosives were stored. It is no longer in existence.

In 1916 the demonstration orchard was planted in the area now covered by the main glasshouses of Yarralumla Nursery.<sup>27</sup> (Refer to Figure 2.11 for an image of TCG Weston photographed beside plum trees in the nursery.) Spraying and pruning techniques were demonstrated to assist home gardeners and the orchard proved so successful in its fruit production that it became necessary to establish accommodation for a nursery watchman on the site. This is the origin of the cottage called Hobday's, which provided accommodation to Weston's assistant of that name. Weston himself lived in Ainslie, which was nearer to the Afforestation head office, still located in Acton.

By 1927 the arboretum now known as Westbourne Woods was being shown on plans as Yarralumla Plantation and the Weston Park area as a site for a zoo. Two years later the zoo area was redesignated as a public park by the Federal Capital Commission, but the Weston Park area continued mainly for the nursery function and its use as a public recreation space really dates from the 1970s.

Weston's greatest landscape achievements, according to one of his successors, Lindsay Pryor, were Westbourne Woods, Haig Park, the southwest end of Telopea Park, the grounds around Provisional Parliament House and the older suburbs of Reid and Barton.<sup>28</sup> None of these major landscape projects would have been possible without the infrastructure of the Yarralumla Nursery. Weston is particularly important historically for the layout design and implementation of the tree planting around Provisional Parliament House for the official opening in 1927. The Yarralumla Nursery grew the plants to an advanced stage and developed a machine to transport them from Yarralumla to Parkes.<sup>29</sup>

Weston also planted some more unusual and relatively rare plants at Yarralumla Nursery. For example, there are some good avenues of Torrey pine (*Pinus torreyana*) at Yarralumla Nursery and in Westbourne Woods planted by Weston.<sup>30</sup>

**Table 2.1** Weston Period Planting at Yarralumla Nursery and Weston Park 1912–1929. (Source: Yarralumla planting plan held at Yarralumla Nursery, undated but from 1970s and showing earlier plantings.)

Common name shown on 1970s Yarralumla Nursery plan	Species name and notes interpreting the significance of species choice made by TCG Weston <sup>31</sup>
River oak	<i>Casuarina spp</i> Australian native that occurs naturally near Canberra.
Southern nettle tree	<i>Celtis</i> Exotic well suited to Canberra.
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus</i> Exotic – <i>Crataegus</i> ‘Smithiana’ or Red Mexican hawthorn arose at the Nursery in the 1920s as a spontaneous hybrid of <i>C. Mexicana</i> and <i>C. azarolus</i> . Used in Canberra street plantings. <sup>32</sup>
Cypress	<i>Cupressus</i> Exotic. <i>C. arizonica</i> or Arizona cypress was widely used in early Canberra landscaping. <i>C. lusitanica</i> or Portuguese cypress and <i>C. macrocarpa</i> or Monterey cypress are planted in Westbourne Woods. <i>C. torulosa</i> the Bhutan or Himalayan cypress is used for hedging in Canberra. A good specimen is near the office of Yarralumla Nursery. <sup>33</sup> <i>C. sempervirens</i> or Roman cypress is widely planted in Canberra for formal street tree use and on Roman Cypress Hill on the western end of Lake Burley Griffin. This was one of the three hills Walter Burley Griffin designated as a forest backdrop to the city and Weston established the plantation between 1918 and 1920 raising the trees in the Yarralumla Nursery. <sup>34</sup>
Eurabbie or blue gum	<i>E. bicostata</i> Occurs naturally near Canberra at Burrinjuck. One of the easiest eucalypts to grow from seed and grows very rapidly when young. <sup>35</sup>
Argyle apple	<i>E. cinerea</i> Native growing naturally near Canberra at Marulan and Tumut. Used as a street tree in Braddon and Red Hill. <sup>36</sup>
Maiden’s gum	<i>E. maidenii</i> Planted in Canberra on either side of the old Parliament House and along Queen Victoria and King George Terraces, suburb of Parkes. <sup>37</sup>
White brittle gum	<i>E. mannifera ssp. maculosa</i> Native to the dry sclerophyll forest of the Canberra district and a most attractive native tree for ornamental purposes due to its striking white trunk which turns pink in late spring/summer. Also a good shade tree. Planted as a street tree in Forrest and along Mugga Way, Red Hill. <sup>38</sup>
Yellow box	<i>E. melliodora</i> Native which occurs naturally in the Canberra area. Old specimens are found near the Prime Minister’s Lodge. <sup>39</sup>
Red box	<i>E. polyanthemos</i>
Bundy	<i>E. elacophora</i> (perhaps <i>E. elaeophora sny. E goniocalyx</i> ) Naturally occurring on the slopes of Mount Majura. <sup>40</sup>
Ribbon or manna gum	<i>E. viminalis</i> Native to the Canberra district and was found along the sandbanks along the Molonglo River near Acton. It was planted in Ainslie and in the Australian National University (ANU) Acton campus. <sup>41</sup>

Common name shown on 1970s Yarralumla Nursery plan	Species name and notes interpreting the significance of species choice made by TCG Weston <sup>31</sup>
Monterey pine	<i>Pinus radiata</i> Exotic widely used in Australia as a fast growing forest tree. Used extensively for windbreaks and screening in Canberra landscaping. Good specimens at St John's Church in Reid and in Haig Park. <sup>42</sup> Haig Park was planted in 1921 as a windbreak plantation to protect the early suburbs in the vicinity of the Civic Centre from wind and dust. It was known as the 'East-West Shelter Break'.
False acacia or black locust	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i> Exotic from the USA which was first introduced to the Canberra region with colonial settlement. <sup>43</sup> Used in Reid, Braddon and also in Weston circle plantings at Telopea Park School oval. Weston planted <i>R. pseudoacacia</i> along the curved avenue on the ridge through the middle of the Australasian plantation, now Weston Park.
English Elm	<i>Ulmus procera</i> Exotic. Weston established an Elm avenue along the western boundary of the Yarralumla Nursery.
Atlas cedar	<i>Cedrus atlantica</i> Weston planted <i>Cedrus atlantica</i> along the curved avenue on the ridge through the middle of the Australasian plantation, now Weston Park. Atlas cedars were also used for landscaping at the Albert Hall, in Reid, Westbourne Woods and Telopea Park.
Lawson cypress	<i>Chamaecyparis spp.</i> Exotic. Good specimens survive at Yarralumla Nursery but the species is not really suited to Canberra due to the dry climate. <sup>44</sup>
Robertson's or narrow leaved peppermint	<i>E. radiata ssp. robertsonii</i> Naturally occurring in wetter parts of the ACT, and found as paddock trees on Brindabella. A good specimen is at the former CSIRO HQ in Banks Street, Yarralumla. <sup>45</sup>
Golden rain tree	<i>Koelreuteria paniculata</i> Exotic from Asia which grows well in Canberra to give autumn colour.
Undefined Pines	<i>Pinus spp.</i>
Undefined Eucalypts	<i>Eucalyptus spp.</i>

## 2.5 Alexander Bruce 1927–1937

Alexander Bruce was successor to Weston in 1927 and had worked closely with him during the preceding years especially on the development of the grounds around the Provisional Parliament House. He held the position of Superintendent of Parks and Gardens during the difficult time of the Depression and Second World War. The loss of tight planning controls and early impetus from the period of the Federal Capital Commission—together with economic crises and a growing military, rather than urban, focus in government—resulted in reduced funding for landscape development despite the unemployed being made available for relief work on landscape projects. Operations undertaken at Weston Park under Bruce's period of supervision were mainly general maintenance and thinning of earlier plantings, completing planning initiated under Weston with some additional planting done above what would be the level of the lake on the western side of the proposed peninsula.

Bruce also had a wider role in the development of the Canberra city landscape and was involved with the care of the rose gardens in front of the Provisional Parliament House, as well as with the surrounding plantings, ready for the official opening of Parliament in 1927. Bruce was interested in flowering trees and shrubs in a way which contrasted with Weston's approach to landscape and he promoted Canberra as a tourist destination based on the aesthetics of Canberra garden, street and park displays in spring and autumn. One of his favourite trees was the Purple Cherry Plum (*Prunus cerasifera* 'Atropurpurea'). His role as president of the Canberra Horticultural Society is also historically important and pertinent in that Yarralumla Nursery provided most of the plants used in Canberra at that time.<sup>46</sup> Bruce left the Nursery in 1937 to take up a position in Sydney.<sup>47</sup>

Some new building works were undertaken at the Yarralumla Nursery with a new glass house being erected in 1935 for the cost of £569.<sup>48</sup> The only substantial new planting undertaken by Bruce was at the Canberra Cemetery in Woden, with plants supplied from the Yarralumla Nursery.<sup>49</sup> Some 1,750 trees were raised at the Nursery for the cemetery landscaping and included a variety of coniferous and deciduous species. Of note is the planting of the rare weeping form of *Cedrus atlantica* 'Glauca Pendula' which contributes an aesthetic associated with mourning.<sup>50</sup>

## 2.6 John Peace Hobday 1937–1944

John Peace Hobday originally worked with Weston at the Campbelltown Nursery in Sydney. He was recruited to the position of Head Nurseryman at the Acton Nursery by Weston in 1913 to assist in horticultural and landscape projects in Canberra. Hobday became Superintendent of Parks when Bruce retired and held the position until 1944. Hobday lived in the cottage within the grounds which was built to provide night-time security at the Nursery, especially for the orchards whose prolific production attracted pilfering. The cottage was built in 1923 and the Hobday family lived there until 1954.<sup>51</sup>

During Hobday's period in charge, as under the stewardship of Bruce, landscaping was mainly consolidated with little major expansion or innovation because of World War II, and in addition the years 1941 to 1944 were severely drought affected.<sup>52</sup> Hobday's main work was concentrated on cleaning up overgrown areas and dealing with dense overplanting. In the mid-1940s there was a second phase of fruit tree growing at the Nursery. The earlier orchard established by Weston had become derelict and abandoned by then. The new orchard was situated to the east of the site near the Elm avenue in Weston Park. This research work was initiated by JE Morrow of the Stock and Agriculture Section but was less important than Weston's initial evaluation of suitable orchard tree varieties.<sup>53</sup>

During his career Hobday also worked at hedge assessments, producing a list of the twelve best species for hedge planting in Canberra. Use of hedges was an important part of the Canberra landscape aesthetic dating from the earliest days of Griffin and Weston's guidance of landscape development.<sup>54</sup> Further emphasis on hedges came from the Federal Capital Advisory Committee chaired by John Sulman. Fences in front of the building line were not permitted but hedges were. John Hobday's most notable tree planting was along Melbourne Avenue.<sup>55</sup>

## 2.7 Percy Moore, Jack Moore, Tom Sharp 1920–1950s

After Hobday's retirement and through the 1950s the person in charge of propagation at the Nursery, Percy Moore, Chief Nurseryman, lived in Hobday's Cottage with his family (Figure 2.12). At the Yarralumla Nursery he planted a tree and shrub bed to provide vegetative material for propagation and a range of species new to Canberra. Percy's brother Jack Moore also worked at the Nursery as assistant Chief Nurseryman. It was Jack who planted the understorey for the

existing 1920 'English Garden' adding to tree plantings by Weston. Jack later became gardener in charge of the grounds at ANU.<sup>56</sup>

Tom Sharp was another long-term nursery employee. From a local Canberra family, Sharp worked initially at the Acton nursery and then with Hobday as his chief nurseryman. Sharp also worked with Moore and was involved in seed collecting for both Weston and Pryor.<sup>57</sup>

## 2.8 Lindsay Pryor 1944–1958

Lindsay Pryor was appointed Superintendent of Parks and Gardens in 1944 and soon after the office of Park and Gardens moved from Acton to Manuka. Weston had been in charge of both Canberra's parks and gardens and its forests from 1911 until 1926, but with the establishment of the Forestry School, the Forestry Section was split off from the Parks and Gardens Section. It was under Lindsay Pryor, who was a forester, that the two disciplines were again rejoined with his appointment as 'Director of Parks and Gardens' in the mid-1950s.

Pryor (who later became Professor of Botany at ANU in 1958) continued landscaping in the central Canberra area, adapting the planting direction from Weston's earlier geometric designs to more informal massed schemes, but still utilising most of the species Weston had used, tested and raised in Yarralumla Nursery, Weston Park and Westbourne Woods. Pryor also continued tree testing programs for the introduction of new species. Street tree planting was used as part of this tree testing program and the Yarralumla Nursery was used to raise and issue the saplings used in nature strip and avenue plantings in new inner Canberra suburbs. In addition, Pryor continued the issue of free plants raised at the Nursery to new residents; the landscaping of private household blocks of land being an integral part of the Garden City concept. This also had the effect of controlling the species planted, resulting in a unified plant palette in the city and ensuring that planting was carried out on new land subdivisions, and also generating gardening interest among the population. These policies, in which the Yarralumla Nursery was a central component, achieved Weston's vision of desired changes in the microclimate and improved the aesthetic character of the new suburbs in the garden city.<sup>58</sup>

In 1947, as part of the post-war recovery, piped water connection was established to the Yarralumla Nursery and new flower beds were created to supply Government hotels, buildings and offices.<sup>59</sup> Tree planting in suburban areas started again with mature plum trees, white cedars and wattles from the Nursery being transplanted into Narrabundah, to screen houses from Canberra Avenue.<sup>60</sup>

Pryor also carried on hybridisation and research work with the assistance of Robert Boden, establishing trial plots in the southwest corner of the nursery precinct (south of Nursery Bay) to contain trees bred from seeds collected from international suppliers such as: Herbst Brothers, New York, Vilmorin in Paris, and Hilliers in England.<sup>61</sup> Eucalyptus hybrids were bred and planted out near the main Nursery in east/west grids. Lindsay Pryor commented in an oral history interview that many trial plantings were made near the Nursery because that was a convenient location where the trees could be observed, rather than the trees being planted for any particular landscape purpose. Of course, many of these trees succeeded and have grown into mature specimens.<sup>62</sup> These hybridisation trials were the first in this scientific field.

During the 1940s and 1950s more circular plots of eucalypts were added outside the boundary areas of the nursery in what is now Weston Park, particularly on the eastern side of the peninsula. During this period the area was not a park in the sense that it was used for recreation. Instead it was used for cattle grazing.<sup>63</sup> During Pryor's time another trial orchard was established southeast of the main Nursery.

Yarralumla Nursery continued in plant production. The year of 1952 was reported as having the highest amount of tree and shrub planting in the capital since 1926.<sup>64</sup> Around 96,000 plants were distributed in 1954.<sup>65</sup>

## **2.9 NCDC Lakeside Parkland/Lakeshore 1960s–Present**

### **2.9.1 Lakeside Parkland**

The development of Weston Park should be considered in relation to its broader landscape setting. Even before the lake was filled, the Molonglo flood plains offered the Canberra community a variety of recreational opportunities with swimming holes, grassy flats for the pursuit of sports and picturesque picnic spots. There were fording points at various locations on the river, with tracks giving access from north Canberra to Weston Park. This close recreational association and interaction of Weston Park with its river valley setting continued once the lake was flooded with the provision of sandy lake-side beaches for swimming and fishing in the 1960s, and water sports facilities allowing sailing and rowing on the lake around the peninsula. The provisions for a range of water recreation, and the specific design requirements for their construction, are important planning aspects undertaken by the NCDC, which was also responsible for establishing the legislative framework for the development of the National Capital. Picnic areas were also developed within the new park and gave opportunity for leisurely appreciation of its landscape and lake setting.

### **2.9.2 Development of the Landscape Aesthetic and the Role of the NCDC**

During the 1950s, a Garden City inspired overhaul of the City Beautiful/Beaux-Arts planning of the Griffin scheme for Canberra was undertaken by the newly formed NCDC, with Lord William Holford, the renowned British town planner as principle advisor. In 1955 the then Sir William Holford was commissioned by the Government following the 1955 Senate Enquiry to advise on the future of Canberra. The building of the lake was one of his key recommendations. The NCDC's involvement relates to implementing the Federal government's desire to develop and implement the idea of landscape and open space in central Canberra, especially around the newly filled Lake Burley Griffin. Lord William Holford's 1961 'Advisory Report on the Landscape of the Canberra Lake Scheme' to the NCDC set the precedent for recreational parks and landscaping around the lake and in developing the character of the lake parklands.

In 1959 Richard Clough was appointed at the NCDC, initially as an architect and later as a landscape architect, and he set about implementing a naturalistic landscape aesthetic in Canberra outside of the central formal Parliamentary Triangle area. In particular, the lake margins to the east and west of the central area were deliberately designed in an informal naturalistic style, which can be seen at Weston Park. Richard Clough continued to be one of a number of internationally-trained landscape architects to assume responsibility for the landscape planning and design of Canberra during the 1950s to 1970s. Under Clough's management the growing ideas of environmentalism, 'bush-school' architecture, adventure-play and nature-play were combined with modernist ideals of functional form and mass-production. The nature park at Weston Park was gradually developed to also be a recreation park.

Another important landscape architect working for the NCDC at this time (1963-1973) was Margaret Hendry. She worked on the play structures at Weston Park and may also have had input into the landscape development. Adventure play for children was one of her special interests.<sup>66</sup>

Clumps of deciduous trees were employed in parklands surrounding the newly formed lake, creating a new aesthetic combination of autumn colour and dry Eucalypt. This approach was also evident at Weston Park; however, many native trees were also used, as demonstrated in the experimentation

employed at Yarralumla Nursery. This combination of native and exotic plants, laid out in formal and informal arrangements, had not been seen before in Australia at this scale, and Canberra itself became a new urban experiment, resulting in a new 'bush-capital' aesthetic.

This bush-capital aesthetic relies upon an Australian pastoral canvas of the surrounding mixed open grasslands dotted with clumps of large Eucalypts. Integrated with this is the civic nature of the landscape, where deciduous clumps gradually exhibit more structure, until ultimately achieving formality along planned avenues of Canberra.

During the 1960s, the NCDC transformed Weston Park through the creation of several 'precincts' or landscape 'rooms', defined through the addition of picnic facilities, play elements and play-scapes, amenities, and furniture. Through definition of these precincts, the park took on a new vitality, and became a favourite destination for young families who had settled in Canberra.

Some 40-50 years later, the landscape has not benefited from any similar level of attention or funding, and has received only minor modifications and repairs. For example, some of the 1960s elements—including the adventure play-scape features—have been removed, while other elements—such as park furniture—have been 'made-good'. The overall condition of the park can only be described as fair to reasonable.

The NCDC, and its advisory committee, the National Capital Planning Committee, were abolished in 1989 when the ACT Government was established. After 1989 the National Capital Planning Authority (now the NCA) became responsible for the National Capital Plan under which the Territory Plan sits. The National Capital Plan provides the guidance for the development of the national capital.<sup>67</sup>

### **2.9.3 Development of the English Garden, Kurrajong Point and Aquatics**

In the late 1950s the area now known as the English Garden, which had been planted with exotic tree cover, was further developed by the Moore brothers, Percy and Jack, with under plants of azaleas and rhododendrons. Thereafter it continued to be managed as an English woodland garden theme with trial plantings. However, the area does not show the same level of organisation as seen in other trial areas within Weston Park.<sup>68</sup>

The tip of the Yarralumla Peninsula was named Kurrajong Point and a group of advanced Kurrajongs (*Brachychiton populneus*) were transplanted to the site. The lakeshore of inlets and small peninsulas was landscaped. Ponds were constructed near the shore at Nursery Bay to trial aquatic plants under experiments conducted by Dr Betty Phillips, Botanist with Parks and Gardens. Grasses and sedges were also trialled. Water tolerant trees were planted in the littoral zone around the lake shore. These included varieties of Alder including Black Alder (*Alnus spp and Alnus glutinosa*), Poplar (*Populus*), Willow (*Salix*) and Bald or Swamp Cypress (*Taxodium distichum*). Some of these species have spread to become pest species. Within Weston Park further plantings of exotics were conducted in the 1960s under the supervision of David Shoobridge, the Director of Parks and Gardens, with botanical research being furthered by Dr Robert Boden.<sup>69</sup>

### **2.9.4 Recreational Facilities**

Shoobridge's management also saw infilling planting of open spaces within the Park, the establishment of playgrounds and irrigation after the filling of the lake.<sup>70</sup>

As the park landscape developed through time it evolved into a functional ecosystem providing a variety of habitats with abundant fauna, now greatly appreciated by the urban population. Developing views

and vistas created by the maturing landscape, and recreational features installed into the park, provide further amenity for the many park users who now visit.

The playground, despite being modified since its original inception, still largely demonstrates what was probably one of the first designed play areas of its kind in Australia. It was based on the prevalent Scandinavian ideas of the post-war years where an adventure playground was meant to excite the imagination of children and allow a considerable amount of 'free' play (ie without structuring or being too suggestive of 'play programs'). It was also distinguished by specifically designed elements, as 'off-the-shelf' components were either non-existent or of a very dubious quality.<sup>71</sup>

The early playground areas, dating from 1968, included several climbing structures, a block form three-dimensional 'mouse house' (Figure 2.13), tree houses in at least two established trees located along the lake shore (Figure 2.14), and a shallow wading pool with islands connected by timber bridges, located near a stream and waterfall. Another climbing structure—a tall fort-like tower with palisades—was built nearby the pond, and a rock cave feature was established for further exploration.<sup>72</sup>

A children's maze was also constructed in timber paling and was located behind the miniature railway. The white 'Henry Moore'-style play sculpture, which dates from 1970, was designed by David Tolley and is similar to his fibreglass play sculpture at Commonwealth Park (refer to Figure 2.15).

In 1982, a large playground area—designed to be accessible to children of all abilities—was constructed between the pond and the miniature railway. The project, completed to mark the International Year of Disabled Persons (IYPD) in 1981, was built for the NCDC in collaboration with local schools and organisations associated with the education and nurturing of disabled children. A major element of the playground was a water feature, raised on a concrete platform for wheelchair access. It operated on an automatic timer, flowing fresh water down through a system of waterfalls and manually controlled dam blocks. Another water feature, also designed for wheelchair access, included a shallow pond equipped with a traditional village pump, allowing water to flow over a collection of rocks.<sup>73</sup>

Many parts of the playground were designed for children with disabilities in mind, with sound bells, chimes and musical triangles hanging alongside the water feature for the blind and partially sighted. The retaining wall surrounding the swing incorporated 'speaking tubes' and the original mural on the wall was painted with the assistance of children with disabilities.<sup>74</sup>

Other elements included two spring-based riding vehicles, a small stainless-steel slide built into a rock-decorated concrete base, a swing and a 'circular whirl' (Figure 2.16). Sandpits were also constructed, with one enabling children to play with sand and water, and the other dry sandpit with two mechanical sand excavators.

The research undertaken for this report describes the nostalgic recollections of Weston Park users. Commonly and most fondly described are the memories from childhood experiences of recreation, discussed further in Appendix C (see also Figure 2.17, an image from 1972 of early lake-side recreation at Weston Park). The items which feature in people's memories are the 'lakes-within-a-lake' of the ponds (the play pond); tall, totemic structure of treated pine logs at one end of the ponds; and a 'space-ship-like' building painted in Mondrian colours with tunnels, ramps and railings.

The tree houses, mouse house and other climbing equipment have been incrementally removed over the past two decades and replaced with a climbing spider web and swing set to meet current Australian Standards for playgrounds. Parts of the main water play space area have also been removed and/or upgraded, with major work done recently in 2008/2009, including repainting. The renewal has retained the original focus of the design for accessibility inclusion, restoring the hand pump and constructing a

water filtration system. The maze no longer exists, although there is a remnant outline of its location and a section of timber paling remaining.

The miniature railway, called the Weston Park Railway and Station Stop Café, remains and is located to the east of the Pescott Lane carpark. It first opened in 1971 and is now privately run by Max Mele and his family on land leased from the government.<sup>75</sup>

The recreational facilities of Weston Park continue to be well used for both informal family visits and community gatherings, such as the annual Union Picnic Day and Father's Day events. Union membership was far more prevalent within the Canberra workforce than it is now and employees at the Yarralumla Nursery remember that there was no choice or discussion regarding this aspect of their terms of engagement.<sup>76</sup>

### 2.9.5 SIEV X Memorial

As well as the many recreational facilities a large memorial is located within Weston Park. The SIEV X (Suspected Illegal Entry Vessel X) Memorial is located within the East Yarralumla Peninsula precinct and was established as a memorial for the 353 asylum seekers, mainly women and children, who drowned when their Indonesian fishing boat, the SIEV X, sank *en route* from Sumatra to Christmas Island on 19 October 2001. The boat was within an Australian border protection surveillance area and was a politically controversial event in Australia at the time.<sup>77</sup> Another SIEV X memorial is located in the Smith Point Historic Area on Christmas Island, Indian Ocean Territories.

In 2002 the design for the proposed memorial was announced as a student art competition in Canberra and the winning entry was submitted by 14 year old Brisbane schoolboy Mitchell Donaldson.<sup>78</sup> The final design consists of timber poles, decorated by community groups, schools and individuals from all over Australia, positioned as a winding path from the shore of Lake Burley Griffin (Figure 2.18). Each pole represents an individual who died in the incident, a small one for children, and a large one for adults. It was erected on the site by a team of volunteers in September 2007.

It was initially proposed as a temporary exhibition, to be erected on the fifth anniversary of the sinking of the SIEV X; however, complications with approval from the NCA and the ACT Government meant that the poles were hand raised by people on the day but not dug into the ground.<sup>79</sup> In 2007, on the sixth anniversary, permission was granted by the ACT Government and the NCA to erect the memorial for 6 weeks. Requests have been made by the SIEV X National Memorial Project Group to extend the exhibition period as a permanent fixture in the Park. The NCA has approved an extended lease period and the installation is still standing in Weston Park.<sup>80</sup>

While the memorial does not have a direct relevance to the historic development of Weston Park as a cultural landscape, the social values assessment undertaken for this CMP (refer to Appendix C) identifies contemporary public interest and emotional association with the memorial and the horrific events that it symbolises.

The sculptural form of the memorial is a dominating feature in the East Yarralumla Precinct of Weston Park. It does not bear an aesthetic or design relationship to the cultural landscape of the Park. The memorial extends through a large area of the Park and is inconsistent with its cultural heritage character of open grass, few trees and no under storey plantings.

## **2.10 Yarralumla Nursery as a Workplace 1950s/1960s–Present**

### **2.10.1 Postwar to Modern Times**

Within horticulture circles the Yarralumla Nursery has provided important trainee opportunities to those wanting to work in the field of plant propagation and care ever since its foundation. The Nursery offered important employment opportunities, especially to migrant workers arriving in Canberra from the 1950s to 1970s—the nature of horticultural work requiring skills other than high level proficiency in English. During these decades the Yarralumla Nursery had a diverse multicultural workforce, at first composed mainly of men but increasingly with women workers. A mess house was established with gender segregated tea rooms and shower facilities—the men having the larger spaces and lake views. The Nursery has also offered work opportunities for many years to other less advantaged sections of the Canberra community, providing employment and therapeutic occupation to those with mental and physical injury and disability. For example the Canberra Koomarri organisation arranges regular placements at the Yarralumla Nursery and one notable character who worked at the Nursery in the past (and one of their best seed sorters) was also blind.

### **2.10.2 Yarralumla Nursery since the 1960s**

With the filling of Lake Burley Griffin in 1964, the lake shore windbreaks came into their own as defining landscape features and Weston Park became a peninsula. A display greenhouse (number 6) was established with exotic species and tropical plants. It was landscaped internally with an artificial creek in the form of the new lake. Unfortunately this quirky construction no longer exists. More glasshouses were added progressively and the nursery public plant outlet moved from an area west of the main office to the location east of Hobday's Cottage. The new public garden centre plant outlet office was set up in a recycled building salvaged from the Parks and Gardens depot in Kingston. In the 1970s new potting sheds were set up in the yard to the northwest of the main site and diesel fuel and poisons sheds were also established. At some point during this period (it is not known when) a depot office was constructed in the area southwest of the English Garden. It was demolished in the 1990s.

### **2.10.3 Yarralumla Nursery in the Twenty-First Century**

The continuity of use and function at the Yarralumla Nursery persists to the present day where all areas are still inter-related in the purposeful operation of the place. Most of the original and early buildings still exist on site. Some retain original and early use, such as the office and potting shed, while the stables are now used as the label store. The tools store and outlet is now a general storage facility. Hobday's Cottage is no longer residential but a commercial outlet.

The Nursery is still a significant and important place demonstrating horticultural excellence, producing large numbers of plants for Canberra's landscaping, and illustrating, in its internal pocket garden plots, the potential of many plant species trialled as suitable for Canberra. One of the larger projects at the Yarralumla Nursery is the production of the sapling stock for the new National Arboretum located within view across Lake Burley Griffin. In addition, the Nursery continues to contribute to horticultural research, developments and the continuity of the historical Canberra cultural landscape. It does this through its horticultural services to propagate clones of historic plantings, such as the Australian War Memorial Lone Pine, in its seed bank (which dates from 1948) and the wealth of documentary records in the seed bank ledgers and card index files (which date back to the days of Weston). The oldest glasshouses are still in operation and are being conserved for ongoing use.

The Nursery still offers employment opportunities for trainee apprentices and the disadvantaged in a therapeutic environment rich in plant variety and in close proximity to nature. The current workforce

includes several members who have associations with the place reaching back over 20 years—some followed in the steps of parents who worked there. This aspect is a modern-day reflection of long-term associations of Hobday, the Moore brothers and Tom Sharp with the Nursery.

## 2.11 Endnotes

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- 27 Ramsay, J 1989, Appendix A, p 9.
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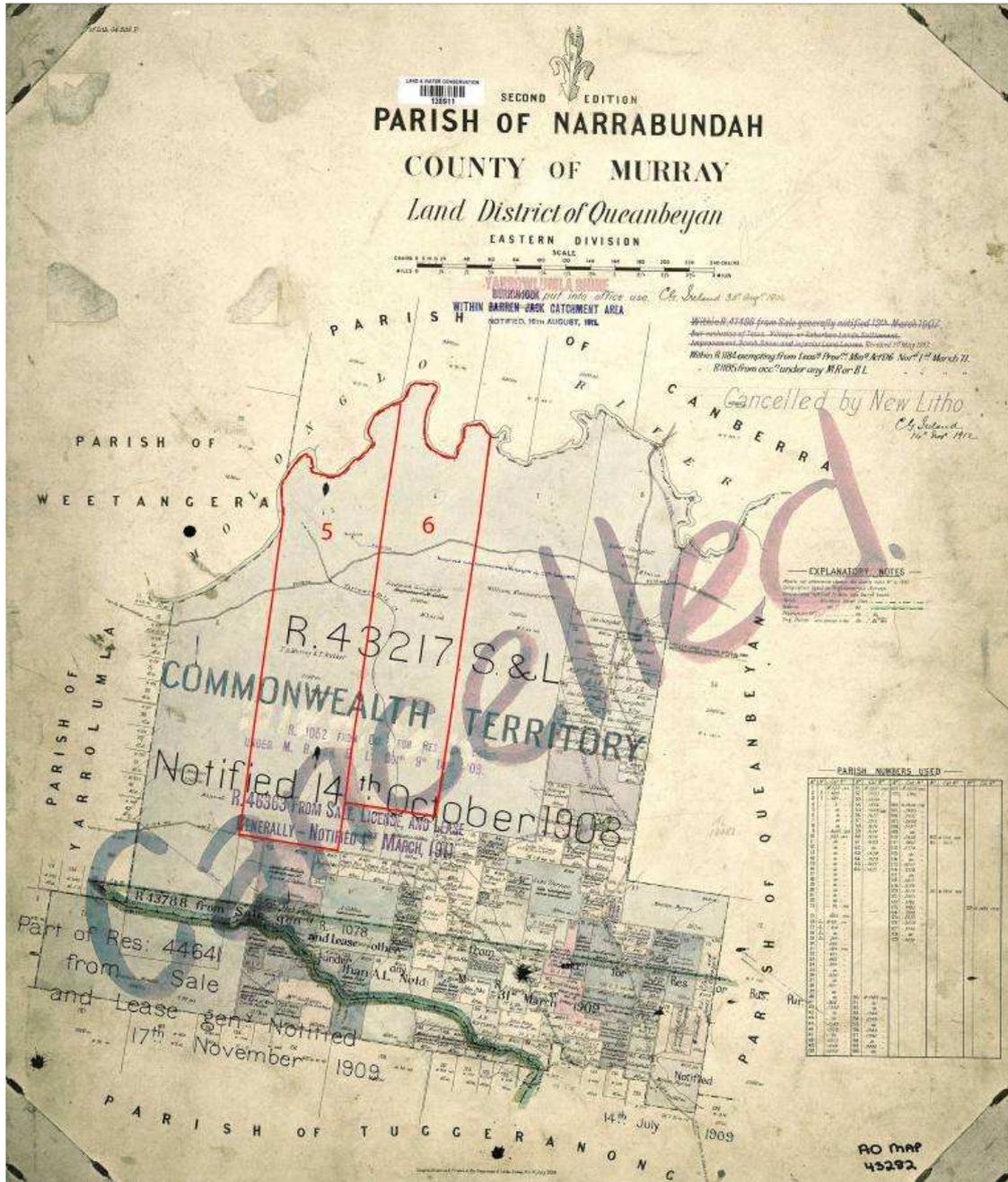
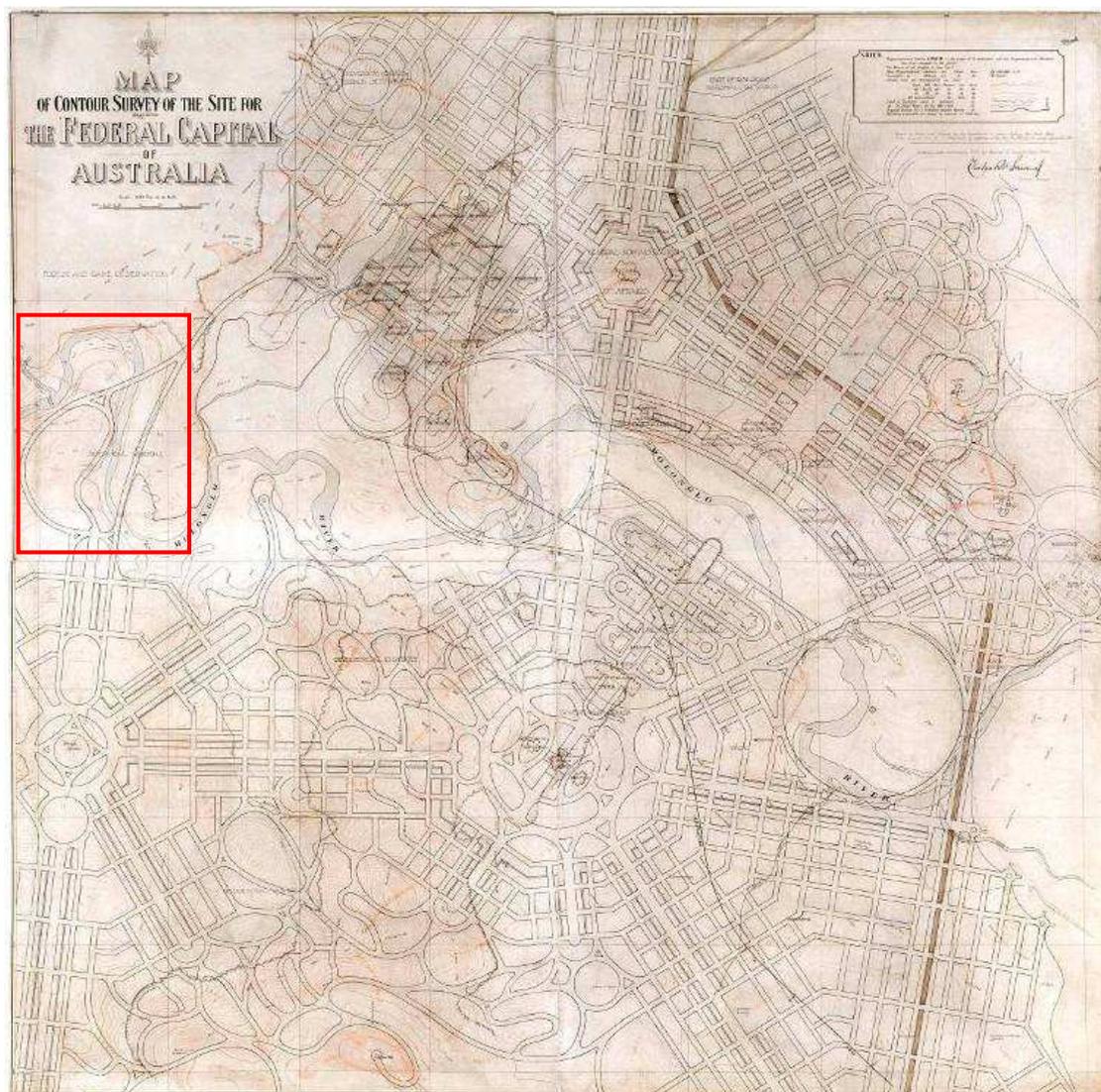
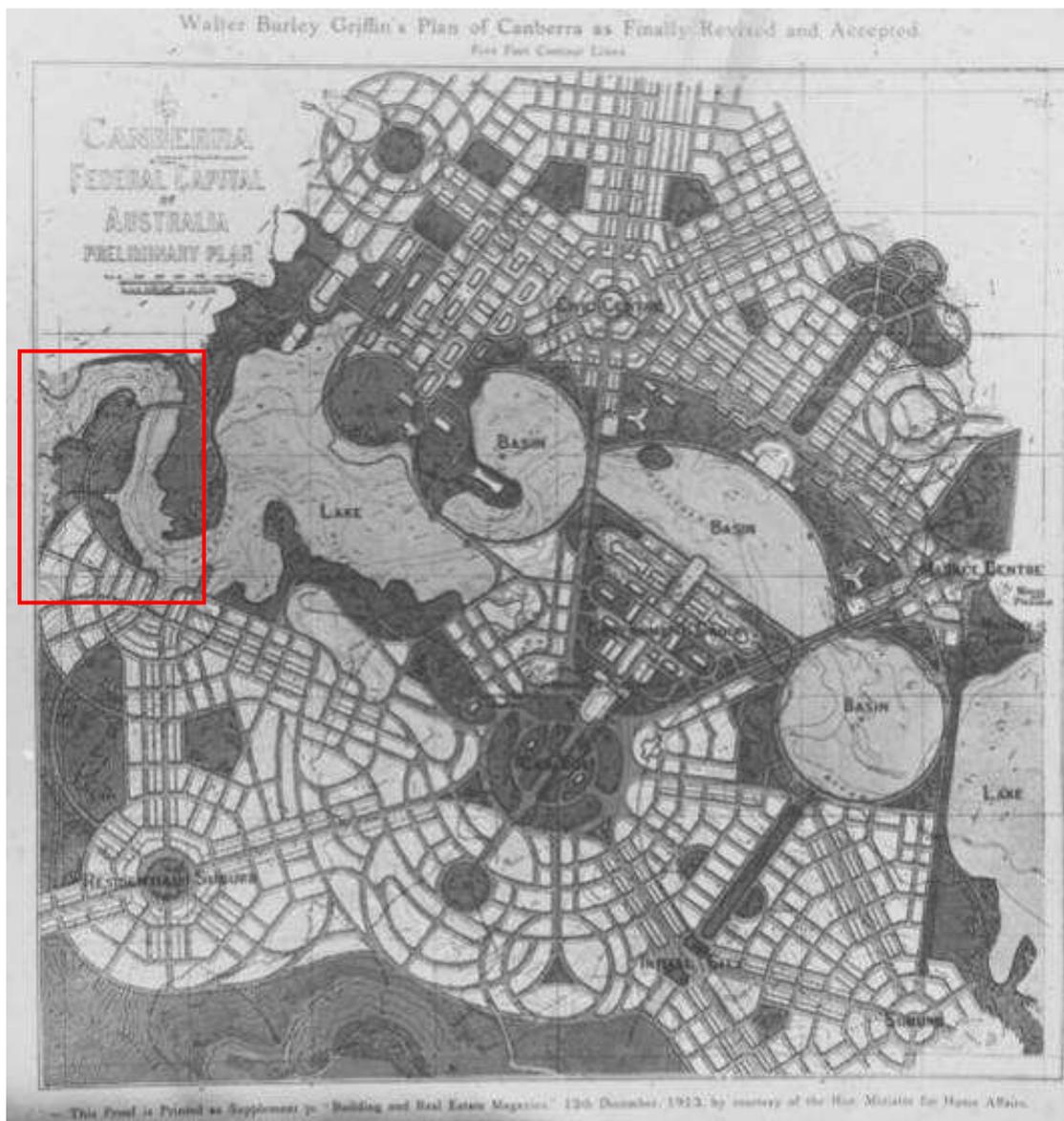


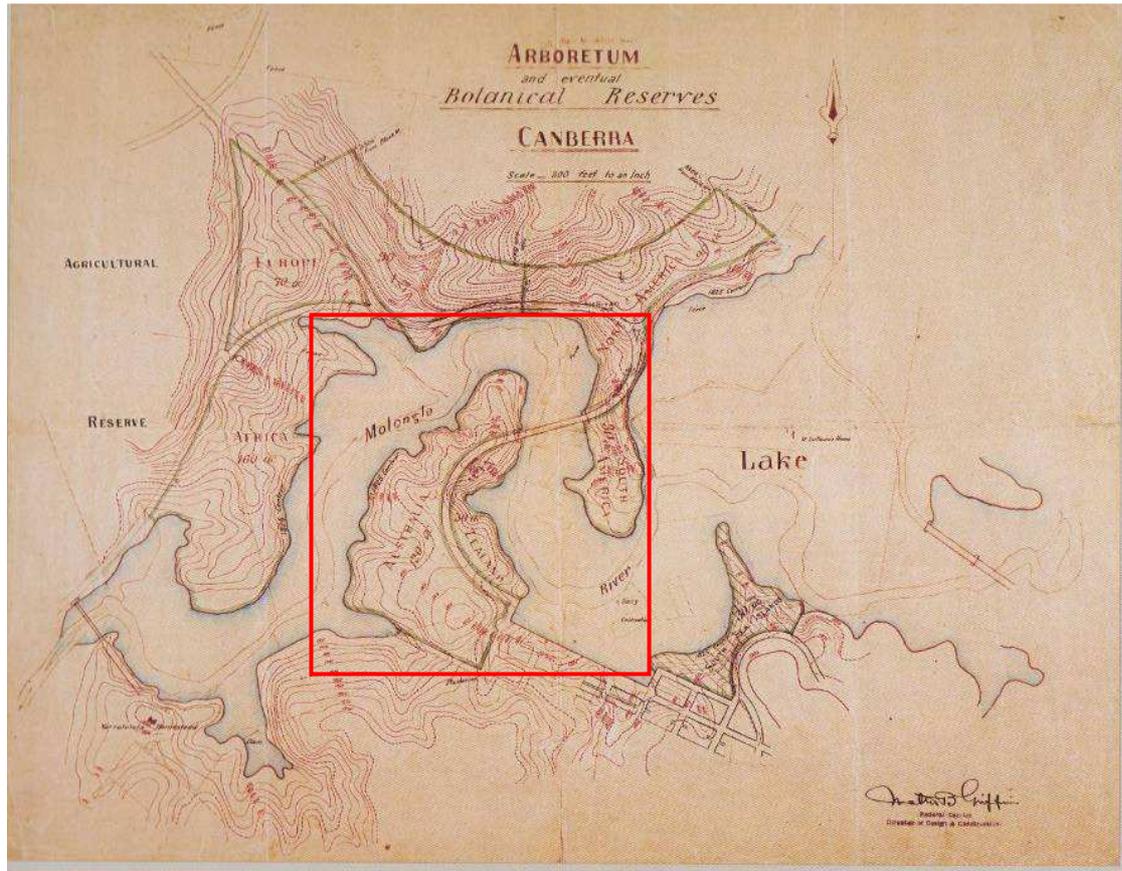
Figure 2.1 Parish map showing Portions 5 and 6, Parish of Narrabundah (in red), current location of Weston Park. (Source: NSW Land and Property Management Authority, NSW Lands Parish Maps Preservation Project.)



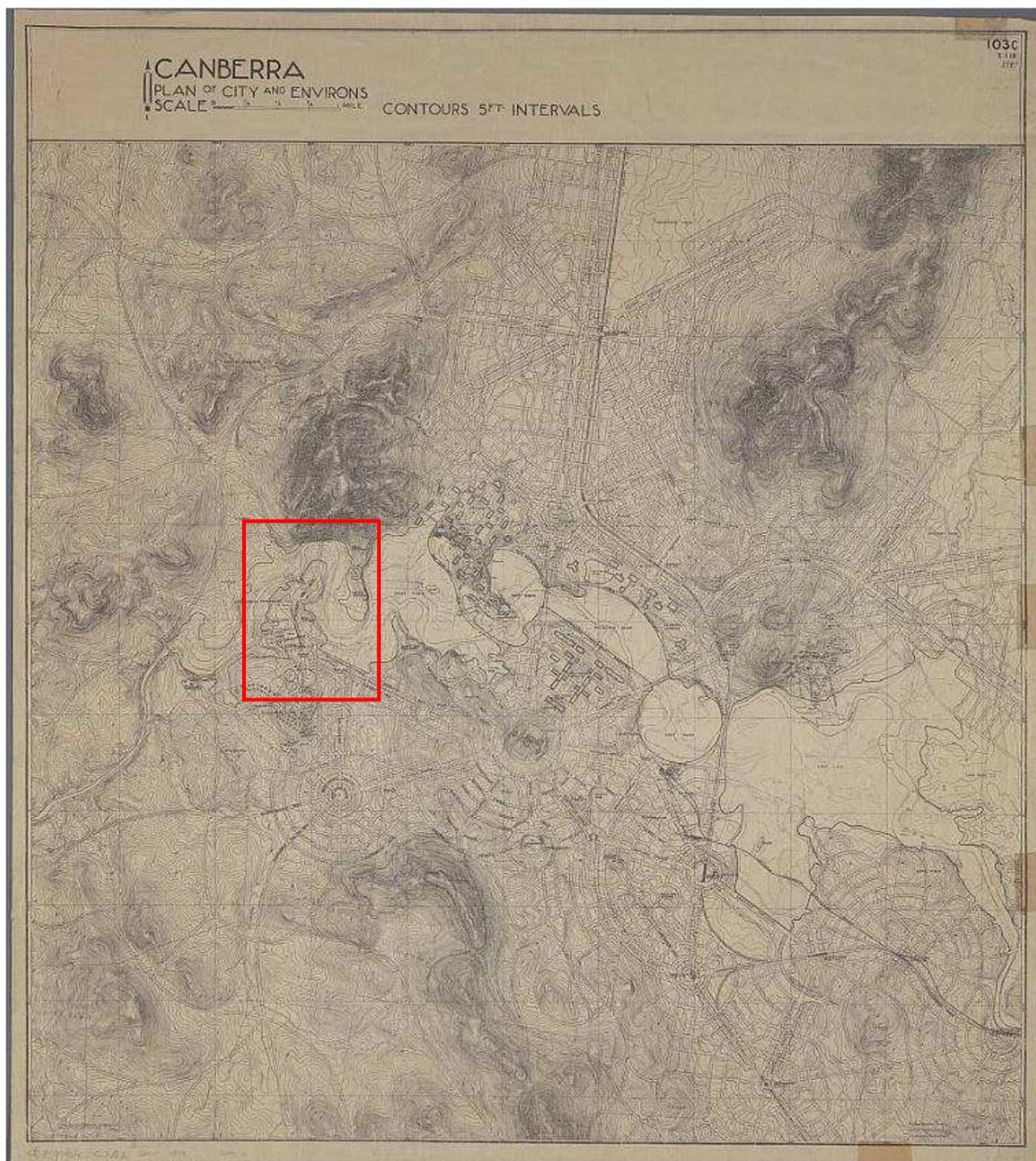
**Figure 2.2** 1912 Griffin Competition Plan. Contour Survey of the Site. Weston Park shown in red. (Source: NCA. The Griffin Legacy. 2004)



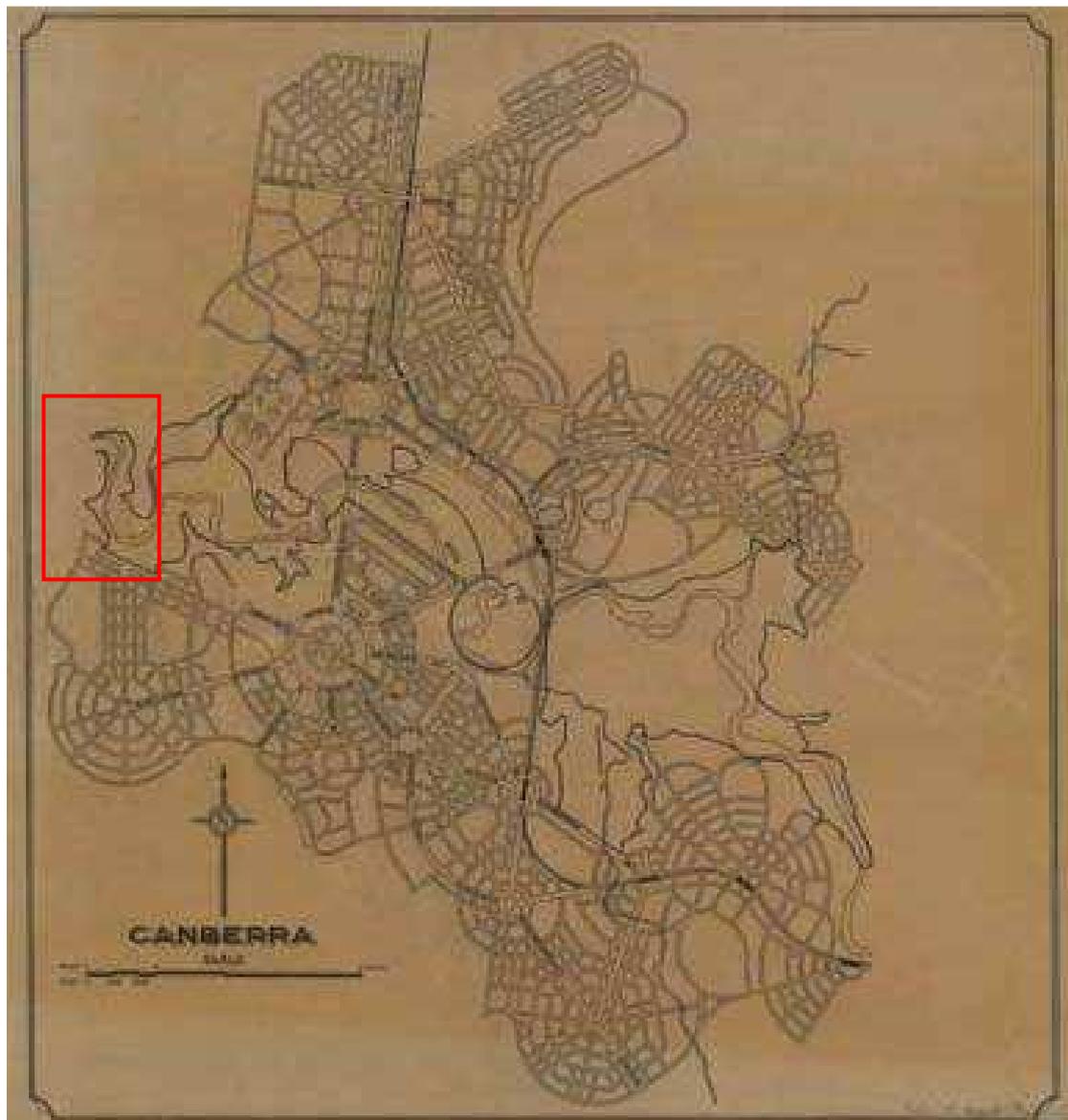
**Figure 2.3** 1913 Griffin preliminary plan, Weston Park shown in red. (Source: National Library of Australia)



**Figure 2.4** Griffin's 1915 Plan of the Continental Arboretum. Weston Park shown in red. Also note the concept of a bridge link across the lake between Weston Park and Black Mountain Peninsula. (Source: NCA. The Griffin Legacy. 2004.)



**Figure 2.5** 1918 Griffin Plan. Weston Park shown in red. Note change in bridge location from earlier plans—the road is now the full length of the peninsula and Griffin's proposed bridge crosses the lake to the northern shore parallel to Black Mountain Peninsula. (Source: NCA. The Griffin Legacy. 2004.)



**Figure 2.6** 1925 Gazetted City Plan. Approximate location of Weston Park shown in red. Note that the bridge from Weston Park to the north shore of the lake is now deleted. (Source: National Archives of Australia Record Search Series Number A12707.)



**Figure 2.7** TCG Weston and his family in front of Dispatch Office at Yarralumla Nursery. 1920. (Source: Yarralumla Nursery Archives.)



**Figure 2.8** Dispatch Office as it is today. (Source: GML 2010.)



Figure 2.9 TCG Weston at Yarralumla Nursery 1921. (Source National Archives of Australia.)

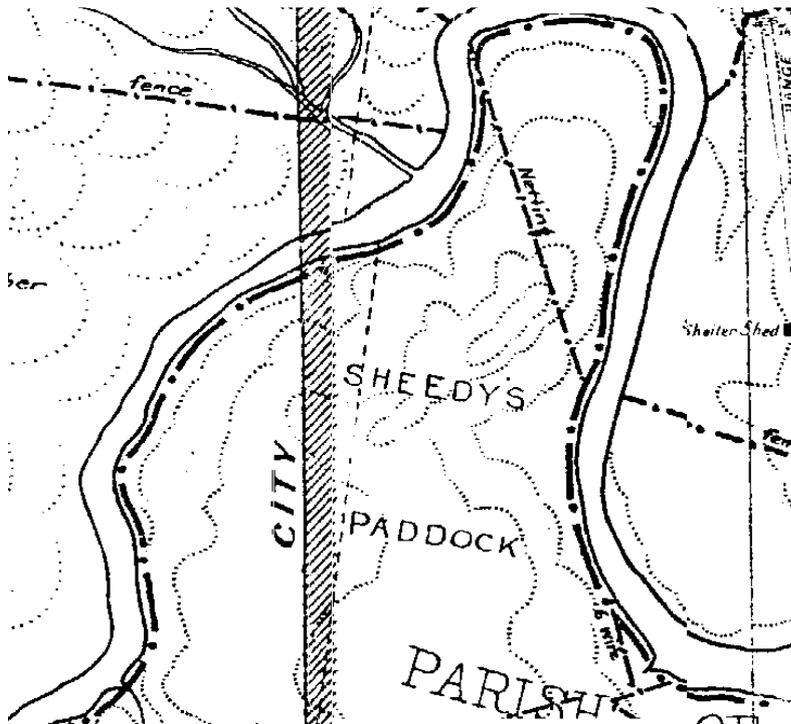


Figure 2.10 The area of Weston Park, Molonglo River and the old paddock lines and fences. The vertical dotted line (between the S and H of 'SHEEDY'S') runs along the border of the early Portions 5 and 6, Parish of Narrabundah (refer to Figure 1.2). This line is the location of the current Elm avenue. The 'new' Federal City limit boundary is shown hatched. Federal Territory feature map scale 20 chains to an inch [Australian Capital Territory, Counties of Murray and Cowley]. (Source: National Library of Australia.)



**Figure 2.11** A man believed to be TCG Weston in an avenue of flowering plum trees at Yarralumla Nursery 1934. This photo was taken during the period when Alexander Bruce was Superintendent of Parks and Gardens and showed his predecessor over his new developments at Yarralumla Nursery. (Source: National Archives of Australia.)



**Figure 2.12** The Moore family outside Hobday's Cottage when they were residents during the 1950s. (Source: <http://www.yarralumlagallery.itgo.com/custom.html>)



**Figure 2.13** Play area 'mouse house' structure at West Bank precinct. (Source: Meg Blackman c1982.)



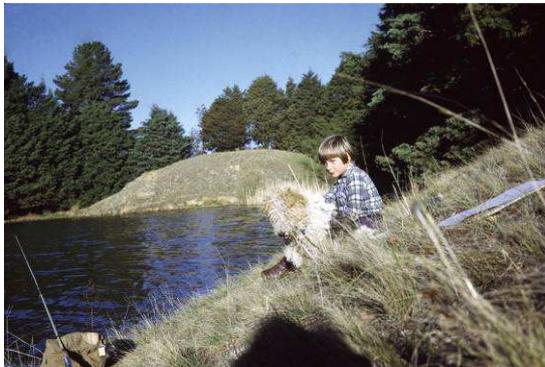
**Figure 2.14** Tree house at West Bank precinct. (Source: Meg Blackman c1982.)



**Figure 2.15** White 'Henry Moore' style play sculpture, designed by David Tolley, at Weston Park. (Source: GML 2010.)



**Figure 2.16** Playground area showing 'circular whirl', spring-mounted riding vehicle, rock-based slide and water feature in background. (Source: Carol Webeck c1994.)



**Figure 2.17** Fishing on the lake shore at Weston Park in 1972— lake-side recreation at Weston Park. (Source: Geoff Ashley.)



**Figure 2.18** SIEV X Memorial, depicting artworks by individuals, schools and community groups. (Source: [www.sievxmemorial.com](http://www.sievxmemorial.com).)

## 3.0 Understanding the Place: Historic & Physical Analysis

### 3.1 Historic Phases of Development

#### 3.1.1 Background

The development of Weston Park and the extant physical evidence relating to particular historic phases is discussed in this section. The detailed analysis of the cultural landscape is discussed further in Appendix B.

The different historic phases are evidenced in distinctive development periods of Yarralumla Nursery and later to the implementation of Weston Park as a recreational area combined with the Nursery.

The phases are as follows:

- Phase 1: Up to and including the TCG Weston Period (pre1912–1926);
- Phase 2: Post TCG Weston (1927–1958, including Bruce, Hobday, Moore and Pryor);
- Phase 3: Post Pryor, the NCDC Period (1958–1960s, including Boden, Clough); and
- Phase 4: 1970s–Present (contemporary amenity as a recreational park and nursery).

#### 3.1.2 Phase 1: Up to and including the TCG Weston Period

##### *Nineteenth-Century Pastoral Estate*

- Open, grassy areas within the Weston Park peninsula continue to reflect the broadly cleared character of the site prior to the concentrated plantings of the 1927–1958 Phase 2.

Weston Park retains references to its nineteenth-century use as a pastoral landscape. The Elm avenue aligns with the 1830s estate portion division, early fence line and paddock boundary, refer to Figure 3.1 for the graphic representation of this phase. Yarralumla homestead, now the site of Government House and commonly known as 'Yarralumla', remains a close neighbour. It is also possible that the existing dam to the south of Yarralumla Nursery pre-dates the land resumption for the FCC. The location of the dam is shown as the 'early dam' in Figure 3.1.

##### *Manifestation of Griffin Planning*

There are recognisable elements of the original Griffin planning for Canberra under the FCC encapsulated in Weston Park. At least four elements of the 1910s landscape planning intent of the Griffins are still manifest on the Weston Park peninsula. These are summarised below:

- The intention of a major public landscape in this location, forming important greenspace at the western flank of the city, is realised in Weston Park.

In Griffin's design plans for Canberra, Weston Park is consistently indicated to function as a major landscape elements, either as an arboretum, botanic garden or zoological park.

Weston Park is the realisation of Griffin's intention for a landscape transition between the pervading Black Mountain precinct to the north and the suburbs to the south, as well as a large area of greenspace to flank the western side of the city centre.

- The planned 'Continental Arboretum' concept with 'Australia' located at Weston Park was partly realised.

The intended international arboretum concept, with 'Australia' and 'New Zealand' flora within the present area of Weston Park (refer to Figure 2.4 for the 1915 arboretum concept), has been partly realised in the extant circular plantations of Australian tree species.

- The central ridge road and avenue interprets the original circular access road on the 1913 city plan as well as conforms to the Weston Park Road shown, but not named, on Griffin's 1918 city plan.
- The remaining evidence of the former southern access road's oblique alignment interprets the early proposed Griffin street layout (as does Brown Street) (refer to Griffin's 1913, 1918 and 1925 plans—Figures 2.3, 2.5 and 2.6).
- Evidence of the former southern entry drive remains and directly interprets some of the street layout shown on the 1912, 1913, 1915, 1918 and 1925 plans.

Weston Park Road along the ridge is an interpretation of the original circular access road of the 1913 Griffin plan but closely follows the proposed alignment of the 1918 Griffin plan. The entry layout appears to reflect the intended alignment of residential streets and subdivisions from the Griffin plans and roughly accords with the present Brown Street and western part of Alexandrina Drive. While the road was planned early (a track follows this route by 1923—refer to Figure 3.5), the actual avenue planting was undertaken after 1923.

#### *Establishment of Yarralumla Nursery*

Since 1915, the nursery site has been intimately connected with the transformation of the Canberra landscape from a degraded pastoral area to an internationally recognised 'Garden City'. The Nursery provided material for much of Canberra's formative plantations and gardens over many decades—a function which remains today, albeit to a lesser extent.

As part of TCG Weston's innovative and groundbreaking work in Canberra from 1912 to 1926 the establishment of Yarralumla Nursery was paramount and substantial components remain of the early site including:

- the nursery buildings, including the Dispatch Office, Dispatch and Propagation Facility;
- the windbreaks and avenue/access road plantings in the Nursery and Park;
- the experimental circular plots throughout the Park. It is possible these were planted in the late 1920s and at least before World War II;
- Hobday's Cottage and immediate grounds (ie the rectilinear area defined by substantial planting, refer to Figure 3.5);
- the early pastoral use, including the defining 'block' plantation of the Elm avenue and the early dam, near Nursery Bay; and
- the early access road layout (there are 'tracks' from the nursery area, along the double-curved section west of Hobday's Cottage, then straight to the south towards the existing boundary fence with the Royal Canberra Golf Course and ground formations reveal the position of the old road).

The Nursery also holds valuable archival resources and reference material accumulated over many years regarding the early phase of its history and that of Weston Park.

### **3.1.3 Phase 2: Post TCG Weston (1927–1958)**

This phase 1927–1958, includes the work of a number of chief nurserymen such as Bruce, Hobday, Moore and Pryor (refer to Figure 3.2 for the graphic representation of this phase). However, Pryor is the most well-known for his longevity and innovation at Weston Park, akin to the work of Weston.

Up until Pryor's leadership in 1944 the overall site of Weston Park remained largely pastoral with the nursery area well defined and enclosed by plantations as it was in the 1920s under Weston. Based on the photographic evidence, the Weston Park peninsula did not develop substantially from 1927 until around 1944, which may have been due to a difficult period of time which saw the great depression, World War II and a period of drought.

The 1944 photographic evidence indicates that the:

- cedar and robinia plantings along the curvilinear 'ridgetop' avenue, which later became Weston Park Road, had been planted by this stage;
- the line of plantings, presumably mixed species, were beginning to become established to following the future lake edge contour around the northern section of the site; and
- further circular experimental plantations (presumably these species are the same as those older ones that remain today; however, they had become well advanced by 1944) either side of the Weston Park Road, in a 'designed' manner.

Generally during this period, prior to the construction of Lake Burley Griffin, Canberra was in 'a holding pattern' until the NCDC was formed in Canberra—very little development or planning occurred.

### **3.1.4 Phase 3: Post Pryor, the NCDC Period (1958–1960s)**

At this time the Nursery was at its peak, as Canberra really started to grow and had expanded into the north area of Weston Park (Figure 3.6). However, as Canberra's population steadily increased from the late 1950s onwards, Weston Park assumed greater importance as a recreational destination. Beyond the Nursery and horticultural functions within the peninsula, the most important phase in the formation of Weston Park for passive recreation was the impetus provided by the creation of Lake Burley Griffin in the early to mid-1960s (refer to Figure 3.3 for the graphic representation of this phase).

Today the evidence of recreational planning from the NCDC period within the Weston Park peninsula exists around the recreational area of West Basin near Pescott Lane.

The remaining site-specific elements of the parks expansion and use during this period include:

- remnant plantations of Southern Blue Gums (*Eucalyptus bicostata*) from a dense plantation in the location of the present miniature railway;
- numerous glass houses, demonstrating the importance and considerable scale of nursery operations;
- the nursery dams used for aquatic plant research;
- road access, the Weston Park Road and Elm avenue planting (dating from Phase 1 and 2);

- circular experimental plantations (dating from 1944, Phase 2);
- lake edge planting (dating from 1944, Phase 2);
- four artificial beaches created (dating from the filling of Lake Burley Griffin in 1964);
- general plantings of European origin in the area which became known as the 'English Garden';
- walking and cycle tracks;
- play features, innovative water play activities (c1960–1970s, including the David Tolley 'Henry Moore'-like climbing sculpture and recently upgraded features); and
- ornamental play pond with willows, timber bridges and 'waterfall'.
- Some of the play features developed in the 1960s/70s—including a climbing 'mouse-house' and treehouses in large trees on the lake edge—have since been removed.

### 3.1.5 Phase 4: 1970s–Present

While the implementation of landscape aspects of the Griffin design for Canberra and the important work of Weston and Pryor are evident today, the landscape of Weston Park had undergone a transformation from Nursery function to recreational park (refer to Figure 3.4 for the graphic representation of this phase).

In the late 1970s the Yarralumla Nursery pioneered the direct sowing of Australian tree species (principally eucalypts) into specially designed tubes. Yarralumla Nursery still continues an important service in providing a range of plant material for use in Canberra gardens that was commenced by Weston in 1915. However, from around the 1970s the nursery functions were retracting and the recreational area, principally the miniature railway and children's timber maze, expanded into the nursery plantation of the northern part of the Nursery.

A transition was occurring at Weston Park where there seemed to be a neat balance between a significant experimentation and propagation nursery and a successful recreational park. Both served a vital public amenity for the Canberra community (refer to Appendix C for the social and community-held assessment).

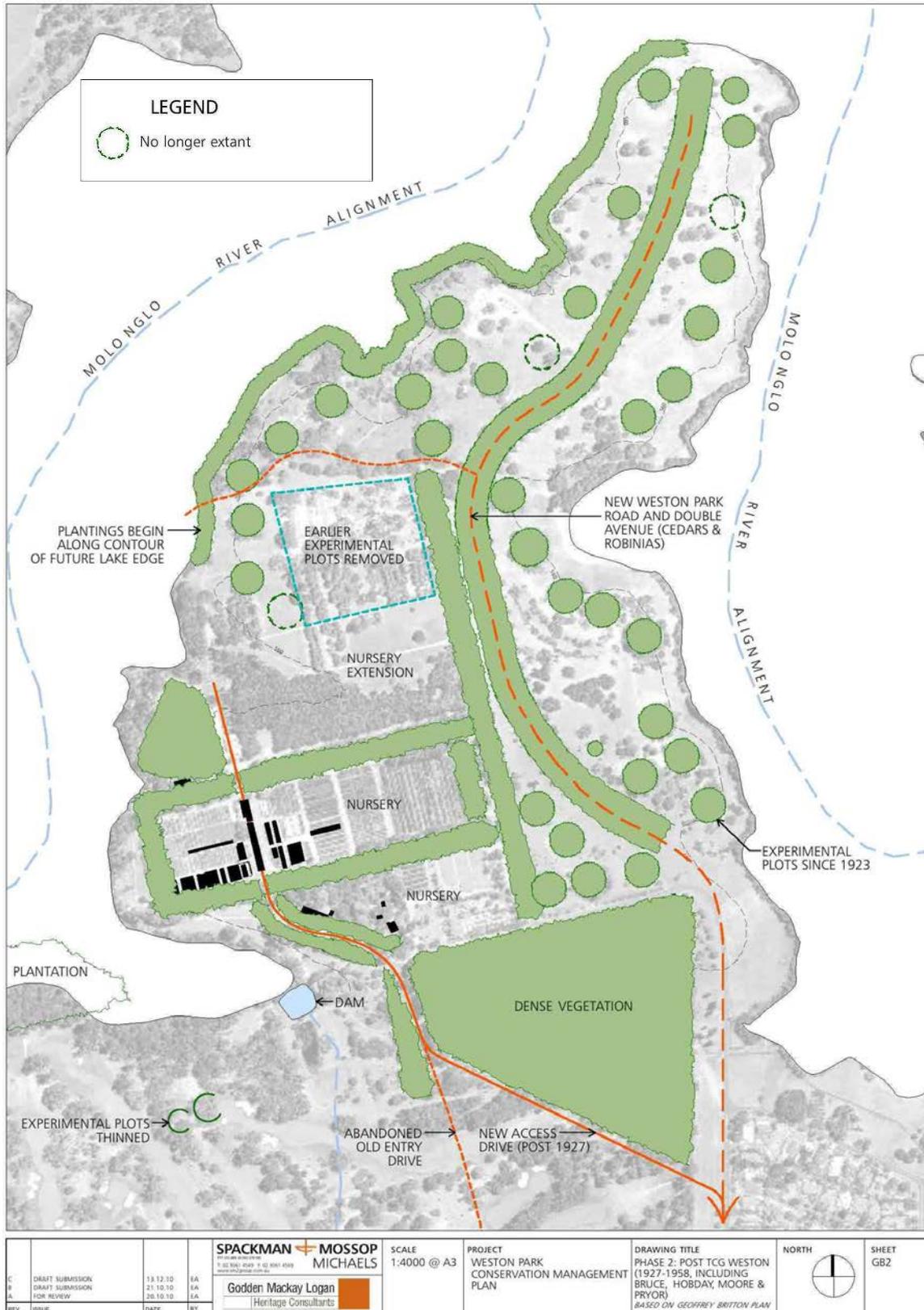
The NCDC was abolished in 1989 when the ACT Government was established, and now both Weston Park and Yarralumla Nursery are managed by TAMS. The retail nursery operates on a commercial basis; however, continuing Charles Weston's practice, the issue of free plants continues for certain qualifying Canberra ratepayers. The pioneering status of the Nursery continues.<sup>1</sup>

Physical evidence of the cultural landscape which remains from this phase includes:

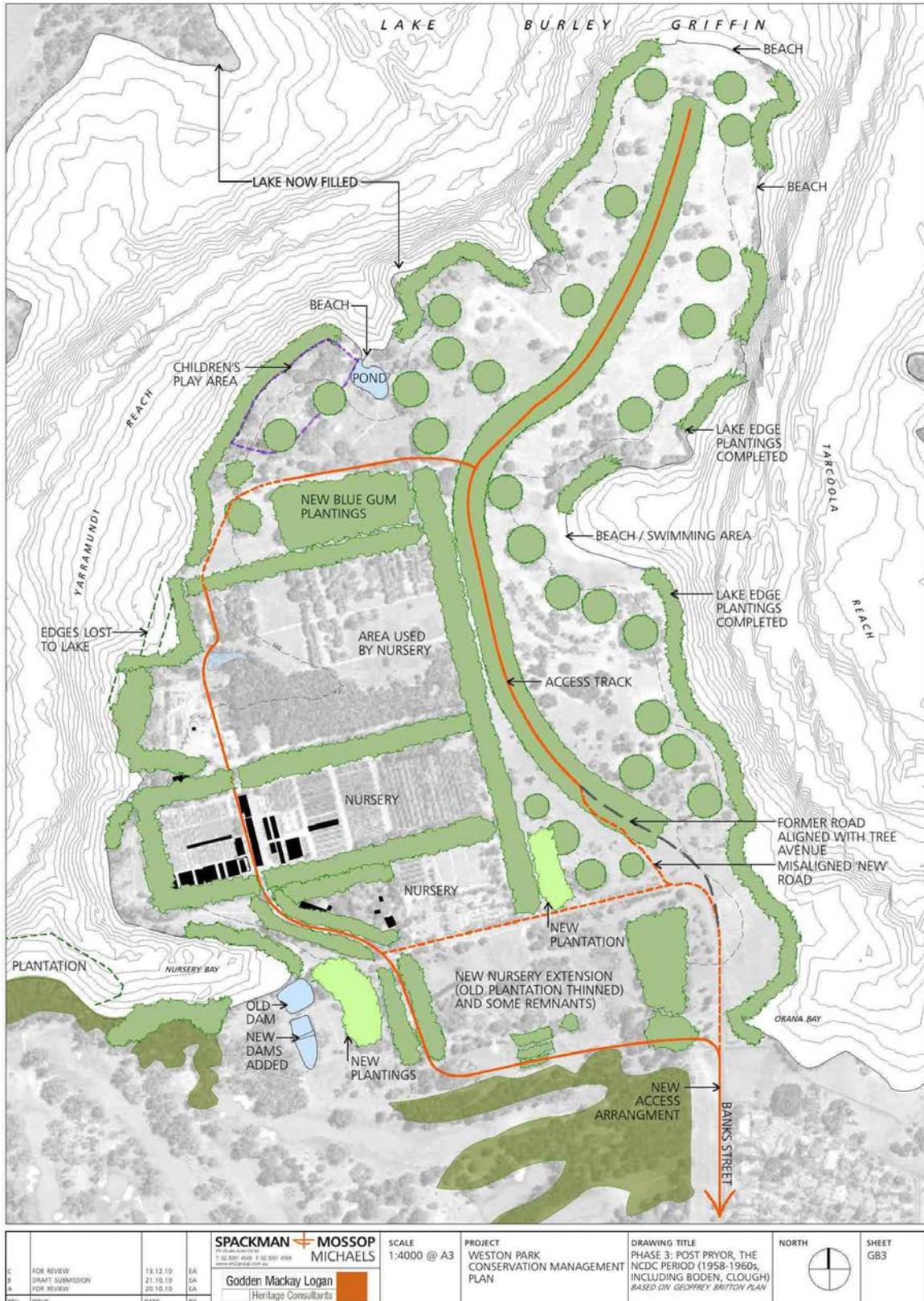
- the features listed in Phase 3 above;
- miniature railway, in the location of former nursery plantations, including the Southern Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus bicostata*); and
- remnants of the maze in the ground and the timber palings.



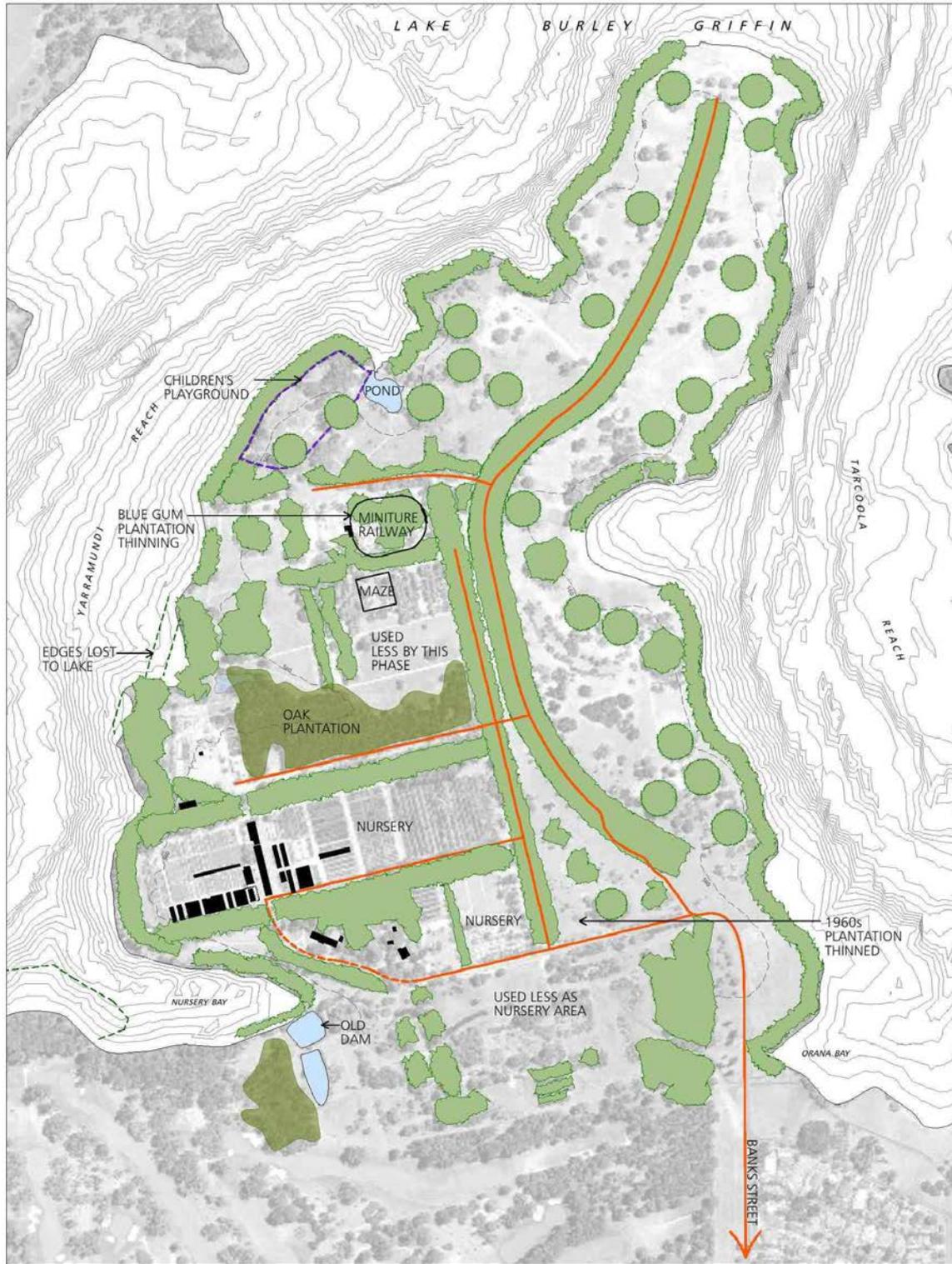
**Figure 3.1** Phase 1: Up to and including TCG Weston Period (Pre 1912–1926). This plan is indicative and shows the location of the important features of the historic Phase 1 period of Weston Park’s development. Not all these features are evident today. (Source: Spackman Mossop Michaels (SMM) based on Geoffrey Britton’s cultural landscape analysis in Appendix B)



**Figure 3.2** Phase 2: Post TCG Weston (1927–1958 including Bruce, Hobday, Moore and Pryor). This plan is indicative and shows the location of the important features of the historic Phase 2 period of Weston Park’s development. Not all these features are evident today; for example the dotted circles show the location of a group of eucalypts which are no longer evident. (Source: SMM, based on Geoffrey Britton’s cultural landscape analysis in Appendix B).

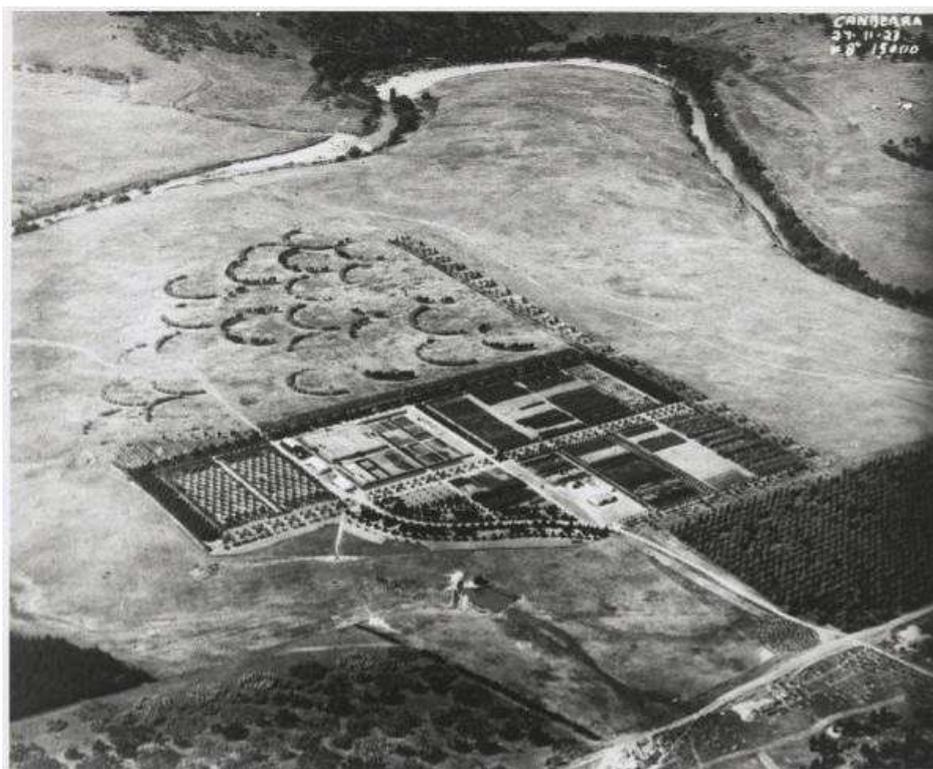


**Figure 3.3** Phase 3: Post Pryor. The NCDC period (1958–1960s). This plan is indicative and shows the location of the important features of the historic Phase 3 period of Weston Park’s development. Not all these features are evident today. Note the new road which is misaligned and outside of the original tree avenue. (Source: SMM based on Geoffrey Britton’s cultural landscape analysis in Appendix B).



A DRAFT SUBMISSION FOR REVIEW 21.10.10 20.10.10 DATE BY	<b>SPACKMAN</b>  <b>MOSSOP</b> <b>MICHAELS</b> Godden Mackay Logan Heritage Consultants	SCALE 1:4000 @ A3	PROJECT WESTON PARK CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN	DRAWING TITLE PHASE 4: 1970s-PRESENT (CONTEMPORARY AMENITY AS A RECREATIONAL PARK & NURSERY) BASED ON GEOFFREY BRITTON PLAN	NORTH 	SHEET GB4

**Figure 3.4** Phase 4: 1970s–Present (Contemporary amenity as a recreational park and nursery). This plan is indicative and shows the location of the important features of the historic Phase 4 period of Weston Park’s development. Not all these features are evident today. (Source: SMM based on Geoffrey Britton’s cultural landscape analysis in Appendix B).



**Figure 3.5** This photograph from 1923, shows an important early image clearly indicating the extent and characteristic orthogonal layout of Weston's 'first class Forest and General Nursery'. (Source: Charles Mildenhall Collection, 27 Nov 1923, National Library of Australia nla.pic-an11030057-79-v)



**Figure 3.6** 1968 Oblique Aerial, showing a view over Yarralumla Nursery. A section of Weston Park Road can be seen on the left-hand side of image. (Source: National Archives of Australia A7973 INT 1015/38)

## **3.2 Overview Description of Weston Park Today**

### **3.2.1 Climate and Topography**

The climate of Canberra has an enormous impact on parks due to the expense and difficulties of irrigating large vegetated areas. Therefore parks, including Weston Park, rely heavily on rainwater absorbed during the typically wetter months of spring. However, the rainfall pattern in Canberra can generally be described as evenly spread throughout the year when compared with Sydney, the nearest capital city, which has larger and more varied rain patterns.

The biggest impact felt in landscape terms is the rate of evaporation through the course of a year. Evaporation rates are five times greater in the summer months of January and December (250mm/month) than June and July (50mm/month). This causes a large reduction in water available to plants during the summer months. The ramifications of this climate data are that planting and turfing works should not be carried out between December to February, as new plants are far more susceptible to water availability than established plants.

The construction of Scrivener Dam in 1962 and subsequent flooding of Lake Burley Griffin in 1964 over the former Molonglo River, both determined the extent of the Park. Weston Park appears as a 'topographical intrusion' into this lake system, the remnant peninsula being a function of the interaction between land mass and lake water levels.

The land size of the park ranges from 300m wide in the north, to 800m wide in the south. The Park is comparable in size to the adjacent Royal Canberra Golf Course and slightly larger than the area of State Circle around Parliament House.

The shoreline is generally the most topographically active, rising relatively steeply out of the water from RL556.0 to RL560.0 at grades of 1 in 2 through to 1 in 20. Weston Park Road follows the main ridgeline running north-south through the peninsula in an ascending fashion and reaching a maximum height of approximately 9m above water level, before dropping away from the ridgeline towards Orana Bay and the Park entry precinct.

### **3.2.2 Landform and Micro-Climate**

Refer to Figure 3.7 for a graphic analysis of the landform and micro-climate of the Park. Weston Park forms a peninsula reaching into Lake Burley Griffin, and its unstructured edge, was formed by the interaction between lake water levels and topography when Scrivener Dam was built in 1962 and the associated lake levels achieved in 1964. The dominant north-running ridgeline, followed by Weston Park Road, divides the Park into two broad areas, with differing micro-climates due to the effect of aspect, vegetation, and prevailing winds. A number of shallow valleys create both northerly and southerly aspects and contribute to the pattern of land use across the site.

Topography tends to be steeper towards the shoreline of the Park. The slopes are gentler towards the centre of the park and afford more opportunities for passive recreation and potentially event usage.

### **3.2.3 Existing Vegetation**

Refer to Figure 3.8 for a graphic representation of the existing vegetation at Weston Park. The tree species include a mix of evergreen and deciduous, native and exotic, for both aesthetic and functional reasons and they originate from different phases of the Park's development. These tree planting typologies include avenue planting, circular plots, experimental planting, wind breaks (shelterbelts),

forestry and shade trees. Self-sown species, particularly along the shoreline, are also present in the landscape.

Of equal importance to the avenue tree planting (on Weston Park Road and the Elm avenue) are the circular tree plots planted in the Post TCG Weston period (Phase 2) and in the last decade. The circular tree beds have a strong visual presence in the landscape because of their unusual formation and reveal a historic link to the development of the park.

Clusters of deciduous and evergreen trees have a significant visual impact on the Park by creating vistas, screening both views and wind, while reinforcing important geometry and the seasonal patterns expressed during certain times of the year. This complements many of the aspirations of the Canberra landscape generally as is evident in other parks and streetscapes throughout Canberra. This ties Weston Park to the broader Canberra landscape as an important example of this type of landscape design philosophy.

### **3.2.4 Landscape Condition**

This section discusses select elements within Weston Park where there are specific issues with the condition.

#### *Individual Trees and Tree Groups*

The condition of individual trees and tree groups are described in detail in Appendix D, the Tree and Ecological Assets Report.

#### *Grassed Surfaces*

The predominant surface type is introduced grass, which is typical in parks of this nature. Its current condition is varied, due to lack of irrigation, weed and native grass colonisation, and varying maintenance. This is a common condition in local government parks, especially in parks of this size, due to the significant cost of irrigation and maintenance over such a large area. Drought conditions have prevailed for almost a decade, resulting in long periods of water restrictions in Canberra which also influence the variable quality of the grass.

There are areas within Weston Park that exhibit a more Australian pastoral landscape aesthetic, such as Precinct 8 (refer to Figure 1.2 for a map and Section 3.3 for discussion about the precincts), where the open landscape of scattered mixed native and exotic trees, in combination with introduced and native grass, results in colours and textures more suited to the Australian landscape.

#### *Roads*

The park roads are narrow (rather than a standard residential road width), with little or no line marking, regulatory signage or kerb and guttering. Some line marking is present along the entry road, but elsewhere is rare. Some roads have been formalised with flush concrete kerbs, a treatment which retains the road edge. However, for the most part, the road edges are unformed and rural in character, with resultant breaking down in some edge sections. The overall visual character of the roads is rural and well suited to Weston Park, which itself is a combination of pastoral and designed landscapes with historic features—a common theme throughout Canberra.

One side effect of the lack of kerb and guttering is water run-off into adjacent areas rather than into the stormwater system. While this retains water on site and suits the informal landscape character it can

also mean that pollutants such as petrol and oil leakages from cars and carried sediment can be deposited into the adjacent landscape and potentially travel as far as Lake Burley Griffin.

### *Paths*

The few pathways at Weston Park service specific precincts rather than being a larger general network of pathways throughout the whole park. The path styles are generally suited to the Park's rural character. In Precinct 7 (described in Section 3.3) and also near Hobday's Cottage, pathways are mostly stabilised decomposed granite<sup>2</sup>, occasionally with a paved edge course present. This style of path requires periodic maintenance as the compacted granitic infill erodes with foot-worn traffic and surface run-off, while the edge course breaks down when mortar haunching and bedding is undermined by run-off or suffers from vehicle damage.

Roads and compacted verges are also used as pedestrian paths, including unsealed former access roads. In addition there are formal asphalt paths and foot-worn desire lines across grassland.

### *Toilets*

The condition of existing toilets is poor, and the blocks are outdated when assessed against current public expectations and accessibility standards. Architecturally two styles appear to have been used. An amenities block located to the east of the miniature railway employs a simple mid-century modern style (1960s) and is in fair condition. Although small and not designed to current standards it could potentially be refurbished, as the style (although commonly installed during that time period), is rare in Weston Park. The toilet amenity located in the West Bank sub-precinct near the play space was constructed in a 'log cabin' style commonly used in National Parks, and possibly themed to the early play space elements and associated structures. The log-style toilet block was in poor condition and recently demolished.

### *Furniture*

The public furniture in Weston Park consists of barbeques, picnic settings, water faucets, and park benches. These are spread across the site, but more commonly found in Precincts 4 and 7 (described in Section 3.3). The relatively few rubbish bins located in the park are mainly near public amenities.

In Precinct 7, the barbeques are constructed from brick on slab, with precast top and stainless steel hot plates. While the appearance is quite dated, they are practical and fit for purpose until such time as a coordinated upgrade to site-wide furniture can be undertaken. Operational performance and safety guidelines did not form part of this assessment.

Picnic table settings appear to be an older proprietary furniture system of unknown origin and their colour is mostly 'brown'. Some newer examples, painted green, were found among the older ones indicating there had been a period of replacement undertaken. Of the older style witnessed, most were in poor condition generally, with timber rotting and missing. Steelwork appears to have failed in some cases with welded sections visible. The paint finish is deteriorating, cracking and peeling.

Seating benches are evident in both proprietary and custom-designed forms. The proprietary version seems to correlate with the picnic table settings and they are in reasonable condition. The custom-designed version is possibly an in-house c1960s NCDC design. This seating is based on a traditional form of tree-seat, with a square form. Four piers are located around the base of tree trunks constructed of brickwork matching the barbeques. Timber planks are placed over and fixed to the brick piers—the

planks are painted brown consistent with the other furniture, which indicates they were most likely installed as a suite of furniture around the same time.

In Precinct 4, picnic settings comprise precast concrete tops on painted steel frames. In one cluster, these are set on rough concrete slabs, which appear to have been part of an old pathway system. Barbeques are constructed from brick on slab with stainless steel hot plates. In this precinct the brick barbeques are painted green, similar to the furniture in Precinct 7. Bins are mounted to basic steel racks commonly associated with council sports fields and similar municipal facilities.

Appendix A provides an analysis of the built elements within Weston Park.

### **3.2.5 Movement through the Park**

Weston Park Road is the dominant access route through the Park and is an important urban planning feature as designed by Griffin. The original Griffin scheme and its subsequent revisions, placed importance on the road's alignment and it was originally proposed to lead to a lake crossing point at the base of Black Mountain, although this was never realised.

The simplicity of the alignment of Weston Park Road responds to the natural form of the peninsula's ridgeline. This main spine channels visitors from the entry precinct to the end of the road at Kurrajong Point and strongly influences vehicle and bicycle circulation and how visitors experience the Park. This contrasts with circulation into and around Yarralumla Nursery which is less organic and follows a more grid-like planning form.

There are several carpark locations throughout the Park, generally where other amenities such as picnic tables, toilet blocks and barbeques are located, as well as near recreational features, like the play spaces, miniature train, Yarralumla Nursery, Hobday's Cottage and at Kurrajong Point.

All visitors—pedestrian, cyclists and vehicles—are directed to follow the main access route through the Park. Other side roads are not signed and lead to carparks and recreation areas. There are very few directional signs in the Park; these point mainly to the Yarralumla Nursery and the Miniature Railway. Timber bollards are located the length of Weston Park Road to prevent parking along this important circulation spine of the Park and tracking across the grasslands.

Refer to Figure 3.9 for a graphic analysis of the access routes, circulation and views (discussed below).

### **3.2.6 View Analysis**

At its starting point, Weston Park Road runs due north and aligns itself with a significant view corridor towards Black Mountain. The road follows the central ridgeline, and is reminiscent of Griffin's proposed circular 'Arboretum Road', until its termination at Kurrajong Point, affording tree-framed vistas of the park and Lake Burley Griffin along its route.

A series of viewpoints along the eastern shore provide views across the lake towards Black Mountain and the Black Mountain Peninsula, while views from the western shore are generally more closed due to dense plantings located to buffer the strong southerly winds.

Views to the park from the water and opposite shorelines are important in order to assess the visual sensitivity of certain precincts. The eastern shore is particularly more open and visible, whereas the more closed nature of the western shore makes that view of the site visually inaccessible. Views into the Park from the south are virtually non-existent due to the dense vegetation of Westbourne Woods and the

Royal Canberra Golf Course. The central ridgeline or spine of Weston Park Road forms a visible edge from many viewpoints, and is therefore sensitive to landscape intervention.

### 3.2.7 Natural Values Analysis

#### *Tree Analysis*

A Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) has been undertaken by Geoff Butler & Associates (GBA) for this CMP to assess the various types of trees in Weston Park and their condition. The assessment also includes vegetation patterns across the site. Due to the volume of work involved in a tree assessment, this was seen as an efficient and productive methodology and the one most easily reassessed and updated in the future. The VTA report is included in Appendix D.

The reporting utilises the precinct descriptions identified in the 1991 Masterplan Report by Strine Design, which have been incorporated as sub-precincts within a new precinct system defined in this CMP. The trees have also been assembled into historical phases described in this report.

The trees are numbered to assist with identification, and these numbers often represent clusters of trees as opposed to individual trees where dense thickets exist or access is limited. A table has been prepared for each tree assessed and is populated with the field data procured during the site inspections.

The tree data is mapped for each precinct using aerial photography and summarised into tables. Heritage values of the park in relation to aboriginal and horticultural achievements have been assessed against ACT Heritage criteria and are included in the heritage assessment in Section 4.0.

The VTA also identifies a series of strategies and actions, from which the conservation policies are derived (included in Sections 6.0 and 7.0). The strategies relate to how best to maintain, replace, or remove trees on the site based primarily on their heritage significance, condition and safety.

#### *Threatened Species Analysis*

GBA also assessed the park for vulnerable and endangered species listed under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) (refer to Section 5.0 for the list) and the Nature Conservation Act. Habitat availability in Weston Park is poor and from the visual inspections none of the species which had potential to be present in the park were confirmed to be present.

The threatened fauna species, which could potentially inhabit grassland/woodland and which may have been present in Weston Park originally, are:

- Swift Parrot (*Lathamus discolor*), endangered;
- Painted Honeyeater (*Grantiella picta*), vulnerable;
- Regent Honeyeater (*Anthochaera phrygia*), endangered;
- Superb Parrot (*Polytelis swainsonii*), vulnerable;
- Striped Legless Lizard (*Delma impar*), vulnerable;
- Golden Sun Moth (*Synemon plana*), critically endangered;
- Grassland Earless Dragon (*Tympanocryptis pinguicolla*), endangered;
- Pink-Tailed Worm-lizard (*Aprasia parapulchella*), vulnerable;

- Grey-Headed Flying-fox (*Pteropus poliocephalus*) vulnerable;
- Perunga Grasshopper (*Perunga ochracea*), vulnerable;
- Hooded Robin (*Melanodryas cucullata*), vulnerable;
- Brown Treecreeper (*Climateris picumnus*) vulnerable;
- White Winged Triller (*Laiage sueurii*), vulnerable; and
- Varied Sitella (*Daphoenositta Chrysoptera*), vulnerable.

Section 2.4 of Appendix D explains the likelihood of these species being sighted in Weston Park and whether further inspection needs to be planned for different times of the year. Generally Weston Park does not have the habitat or ecological values for the species to exist in the park. If any do inhabit the area, even temporarily, suitable habitat is unlikely to be created while Weston Park remains as a recreational park. Also, it is unlikely that any of the listed bird species would find suitable habitat within Weston Park; three of the bird species are very rarely seen in urban zones in any case.

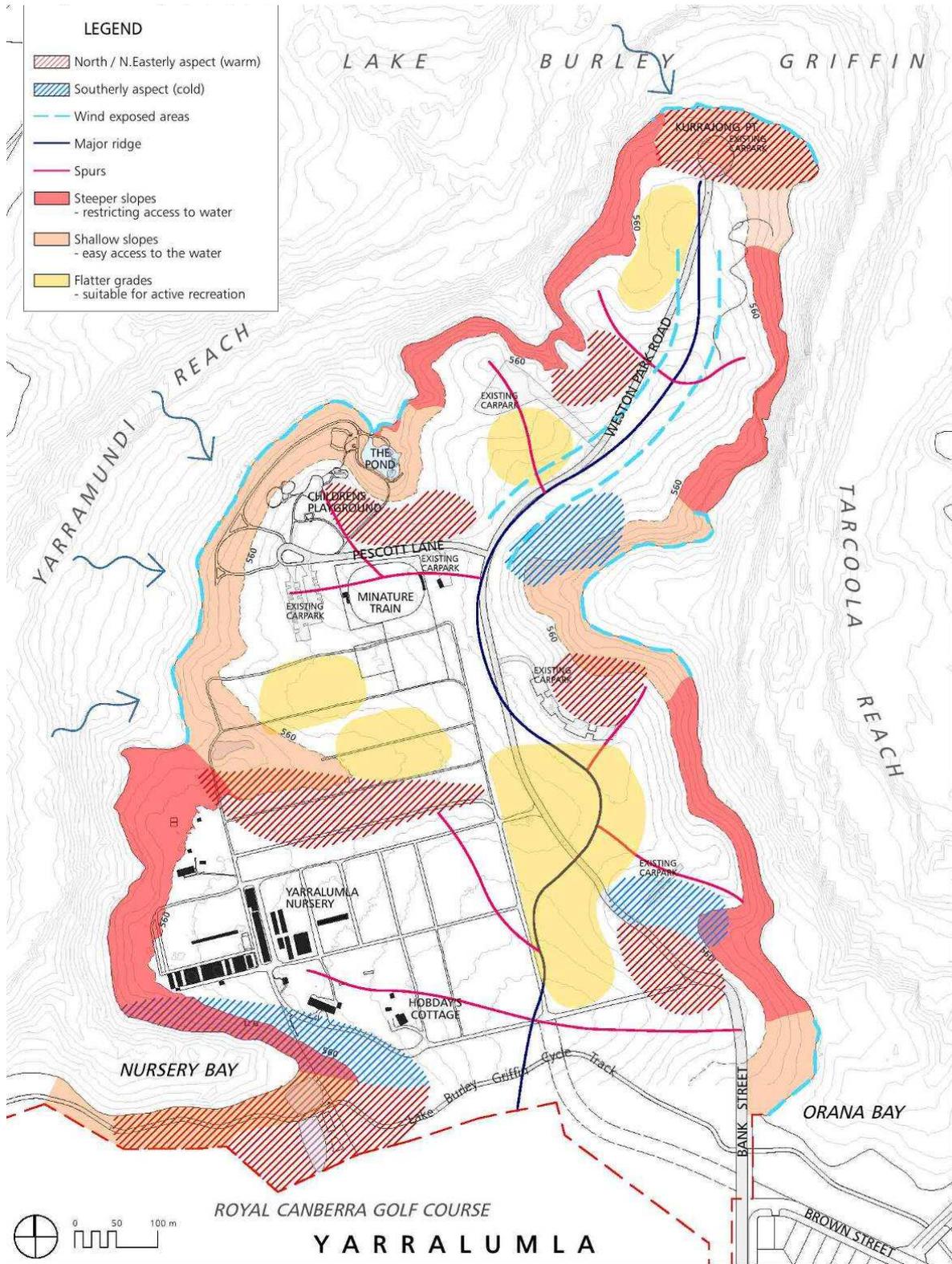


Figure 3.7 Landscape site analysis which shows the landform and microclimate. (Source: SMM)

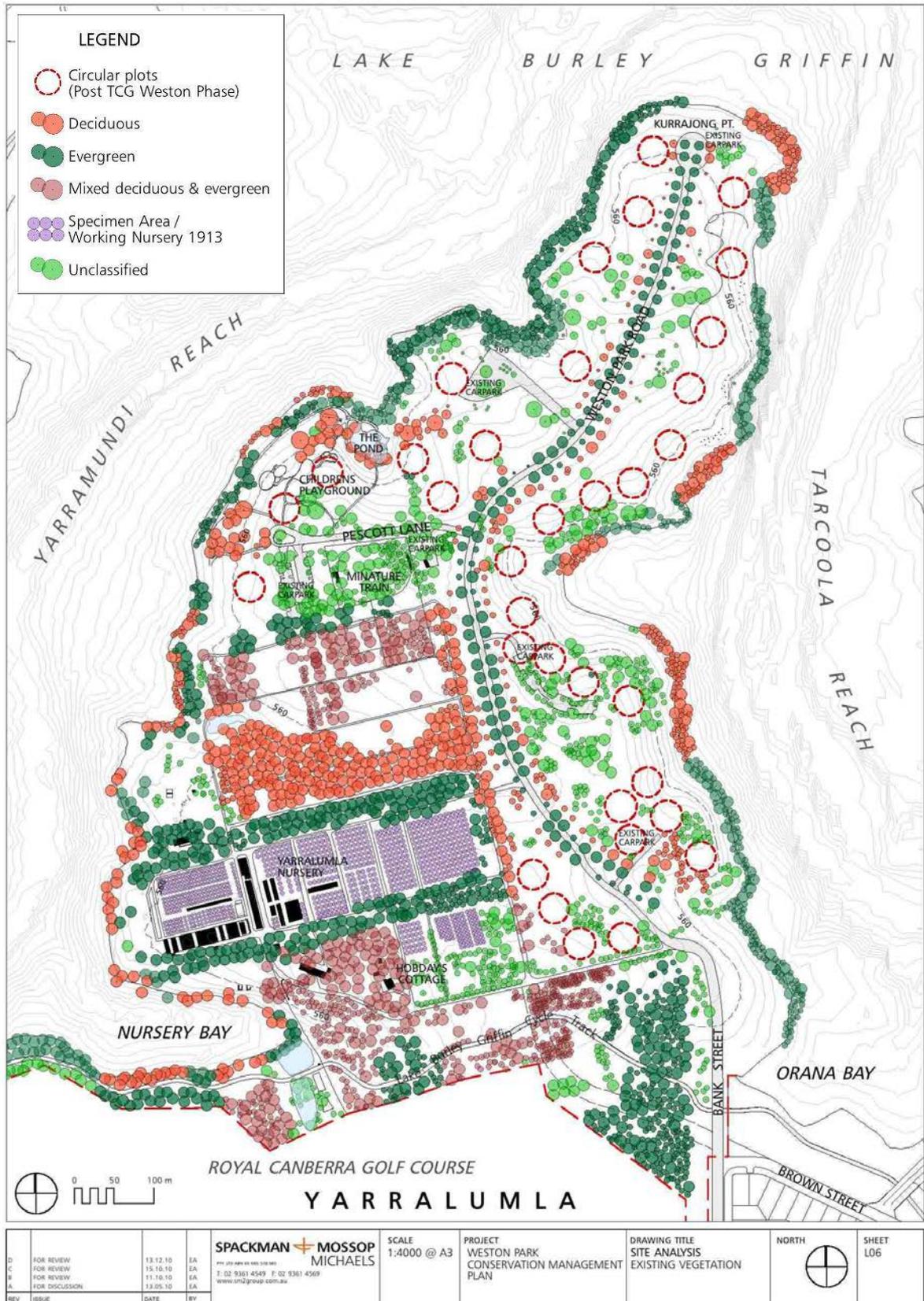


Figure 3.8 Landscape site analysis showing the existing vegetation. Refer to the legend included in the plan. (Source: SMM)

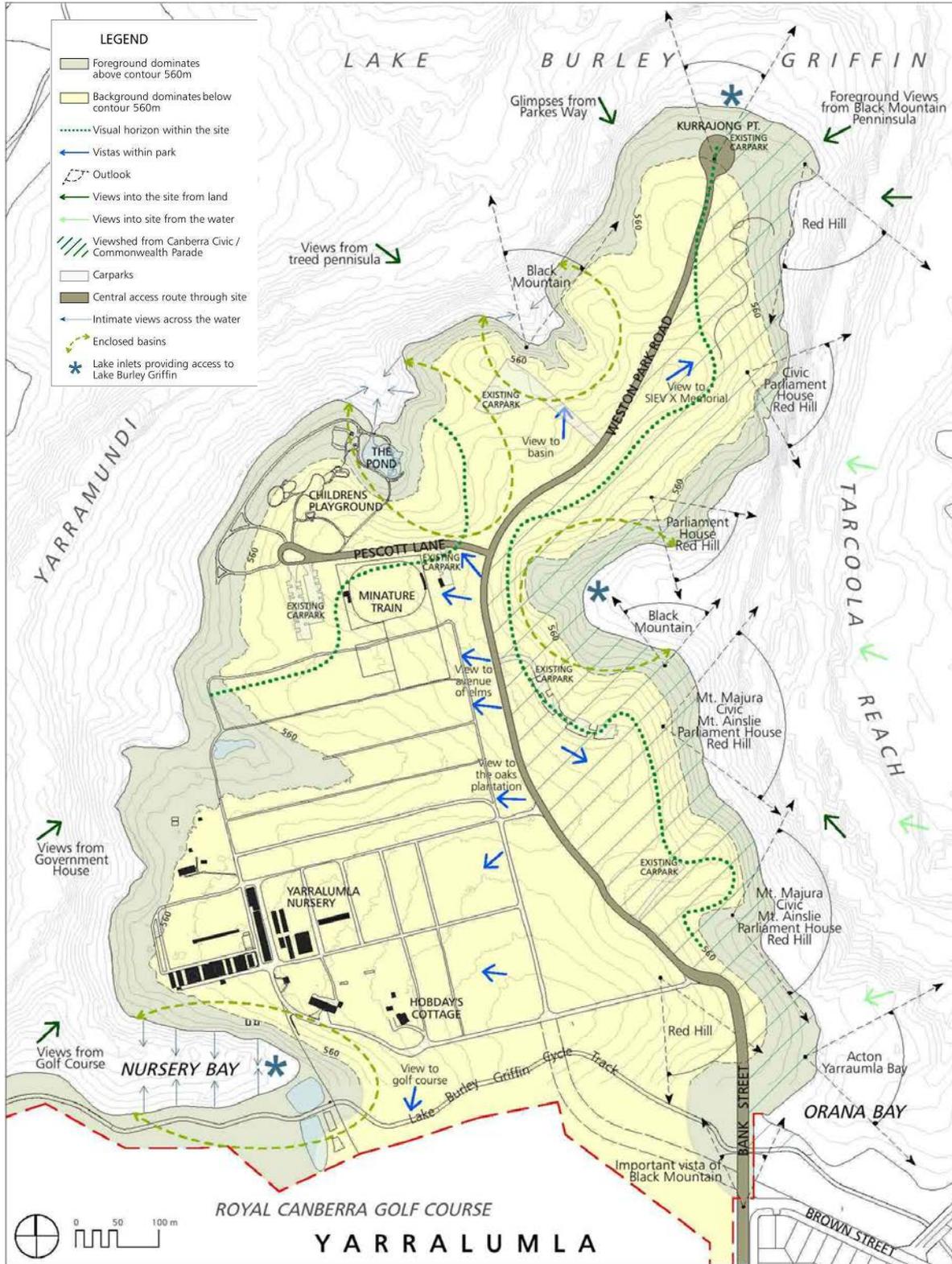


Figure 3.9 Landscape site analysis showing vehicle and pedestrian access, important views and current circulation patterns. (Source: SMM)

### 3.3 Contemporary Amenity of the Park

The following section provides a description and analysis of the contemporary natural and planted landscape, landscape features and amenity of Weston Park. It is described in terms of the nine precincts discussed in Section 1.5. The sub-precinct names are listed after the precinct number heading. Refer to the precinct plan at Figure 1.2.

#### 3.3.1 Precinct 1: Sub-Precinct—Entry Zone

##### Description

The entry to Weston Park is located at the end of Brown Street in the southeast of the site. The alignment of the road upon entering the park sets up a major vista through to Black Mountain in the north. Westbourne Woods lies to the west of the entry, while to the east is a large open grassed area lined with indigenous tree species along the Lake Burley Griffin edge. The setting is pastoral in nature and characterised by broad open grass areas.

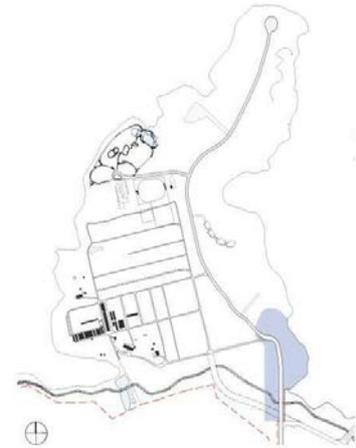
##### Existing Character & Condition

This precinct is typified by the contrast between the dense vegetation of Westbourne Woods and the vast, flat grassed area that affords views to Black Mountain and out across the lake to the east.

The openness experienced along the entry route is at once both a positive and negative experience. The unobstructed view corridor is a dominant feature of the visual landscape, while also contributing to a distinctly underwhelming 'sense of arrival'.

The road has a 'rural parkway' feel due to the lack of kerb and guttering, linemarking and fencing, and the growth of grass up to the dilapidated edge of the road. Vehicles are able to drive across grassland uninhibited, which is a potential danger to other park users and potential for turf and tree damage. Parking areas have been increased on the side of the road near the entry for the dog exercise park, which degrades the entry experience.

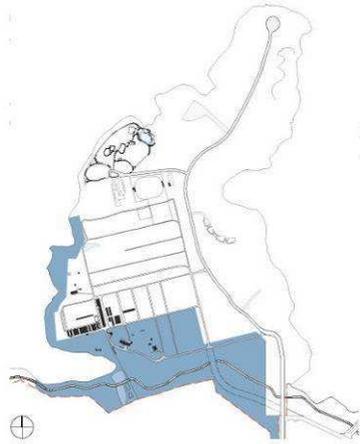
The road alignment becomes twisted after the initial straight section, and deviates from the intended boulevard alignment reinforced by the avenue tree plantings further ahead. This deviation from the intended route is likely the result of additional earthworks required to achieve the alignment. There is seemingly little gain from a civil works perspective.



**Figure 3.10** Precinct 1—Location Plan. (Source: SMM)



**Figure 3.11** Precinct 1—View looking north from Brown Street towards Black Mountain. (Source: SMM)



**Figure 3.12** Precinct 2—Location Plan. (Source: SMM)



**Figure 3.13** Precinct 2—Intimate views across tree lined waterscape of Nursery Bay. (Source: Google images)



**Figure 3.14** Precinct 2—View looking west along the Lake Burley Griffin Cycle Track. (Source: SMM)



**Figure 3.15** Precinct 2—People relaxing at the Oaks Brasserie (Hobday's Cottage). (Source: Google images)

Key features are the:

- entry precinct, which lacks a 'sense of arrival' and is very open and sparse;
- dominant visual corridor along Weston Park Road to Black Mountain; and
- Weston Park Road down to the lake edge is an important visible edge when viewed from the east or from the lake via watercraft.

### 3.3.2 Precinct 2: Sub-Precinct—Nursery Park (English Garden), part of Westbourne Woods and The Ramble

#### Description

Precinct 2 comprises the English Garden, the northern section of Westbourne Woods, and the Ramble, forming a vegetated buffer around Yarralumla Nursery on two sides, separating it from the Royal Canberra Golf Course and Lake Burley Griffin. Access is mainly via the Hobday Cottage access road and carpark, existing Lake Burley Griffin cycle track and some smaller, less formal trails in the vicinity of Hobday's Cottage. The garden is located on lower slopes to the southwest of Hobday's Cottage and visually screens the extant experimental ponds.

#### Existing Character & Condition

Vegetation consists of a mixture of deciduous and evergreen planting in a 'park-like' environment. The English Garden consists of remnant arboretum style planting designed to demonstrate and experiment with the types of plant species that could be used, while Westbourne Woods is more 'naturalistic' due to the informality of its original woodland style of planting now merged with natural regeneration. Denser still are the remnant 'shelterbelt' plantings comprising rows of Pine trees, which contribute to an overall sense of shelter and enclosure.

The English Garden is of horticultural significance and provides a link to the horticultural history of the park. The garden is planted in association with the nearby Hobday's Cottage, currently the 'Oak's Brasserie', and consists of a mixture of exotic tree and shrub species planted in two distinct phases of the Weston era and the 1960s.

Elsewhere in Nursery Park there are rare examples of exotic species, grafted Eucalypt species and special cultivars

originally laid out for the purpose of trialling street trees in Canberra. It is therefore important for this reason.

The Ramble is enclosed woodland hugging the western edge of the park. Access through this area is physically restricted due to the dense nature of the vegetation, much of which consists of self-sown *Pinus radiata* and self-suckering and sown deciduous trees originally planted as wind breaks.

The northern section of Westbourne Woods is broadly defined as the area separating the Royal Canberra Golf Course from Weston Park and is partially visible to the left when driving into the park via Weston Park Road. It can be accessed via the Lake Burley Griffin cycle track. Tree coverage is varied with a combination of densely vegetated and open areas providing vistas into the golf course. Recently, part of this part of Westbourne Woods has been incorporated into a dog exercise facility. The boundary or 'edge condition' is poorly defined in this area.

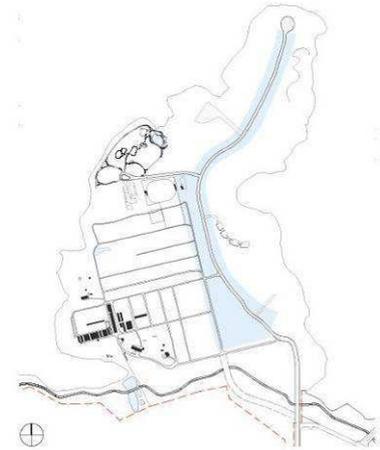
Key features of this sub-precinct of Precinct 2 are the:

- area around Hobday's Cottage, the cottage itself and associated facilities;
- the heavily planted shelterbelts to the north and southeast give the precinct a distinct character;
- the intimate views across Nursery Bay;
- the Lake Burley Griffin cycle track which runs through the south of the precinct;
- enclosed tree-lined basin of Nursery Bay has a rare north-northeasterly aspect across the water;
- existing ponds (1950s-60s), originally used for experimental lake edge planting and have historical significance and contribute to visual amenity;
- dog exercise area in the southeast of the precinct adjacent to Banks Street and Precinct 1<sup>3</sup>; and
- dense inaccessible lake edge with minimal access and few vantage points.

### 3.3.3 Precinct 3: Sub-Precincts—The Plateau, The Elms (Elm avenue) & Weston Park Road

#### Description

Weston Park Road is a long avenue following the Park's central ridgeline, with formal mature tree plantings planted in



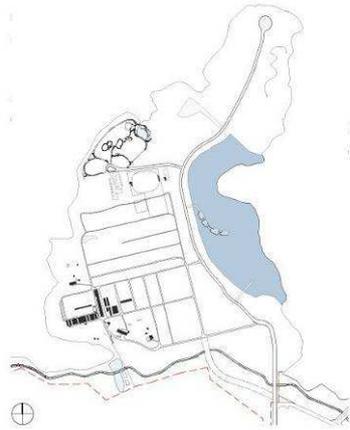
**Figure 3.16** Precinct 3—Location Plan.  
(Source: SMM)



**Figure 3.17** Precinct 3—Formal tree planting of *Cedrus atlantica* and *Robinia pseudoacacia* along Weston Park Road.  
(Source: SMM)



**Figure 3.18** Precinct 3—View looking north through 'The Elms' sub-precinct.  
(Source: Google images)



**Figure 3.19** Precinct 4—Location Plan.  
(Source: SMM)



**Figure 3.20** Precinct 4—View of the enclosed basin surrounding the beach and pontoon. (Source: SMM)

symmetrical rows either side of the road. The road surface has no kerb and guttering present, which contributes to the informal and 'picturesque' character of the park. 'The Elms' sub-precinct, which refers to the Elm avenue, exhibits similar qualities and straddles the entry to Yarralumla Nursery. The Elm avenue is believed to mark a historic field boundary. The major function of Weston Park Road is for access; to distribute vehicular traffic, bicycle and pedestrian access through the park to its termination at Kurrajong Point and the lake edge.

### Existing Character & Condition

A long tree-lined avenue reveals a relaxed rural character; however, at ground level a series of timber barrier rails and bollards creates a more intense rhythm. The barriers, while rudimentary, are effective at defining the road, preventing vehicular access to the grassed surfaces, and prevent parking under the tree canopies.

The roads have been built without kerb and guttering, and the Elm avenue is unformed, which contributes to the 'rural parkway' character.

Key features are the:

- informal 'rural parkway' character;
- formal tree planting along Weston Park Road consists of two rows either side, one of evergreen trees and one row of deciduous trees;
- intermittent views through park;
- central ridge line (Weston Park Road) as a dominant feature through the site; and
- 'green tunnel' effect of the Elm avenue and Weston Park Road combined with a sense of scale and enclosure.

### 3.3.4 Precinct 4: Sub-Precincts—The Plateau, East Bank & East Basin

#### Description

Precinct 4 lies to the east of Weston Park Road and is centrally positioned along the eastern shore. It comprises an upper zone adjacent to the road, and a steeply rising natural bowl formation. A carpark, beach and barbeque facilities distinguish this precinct from other areas of the park.

## Existing Character & Condition

This precinct is defined by a strong focus on the beach and lake connection adjacent to the bay in the east. Spaces formed by the circular tree plots and other clusters of trees, create both shade and sun-exposed options, which make this a desirable recreation precinct within the park.

Picnic facilities are provided in clusters near the beach and further to the south. In these locations, exotic trees such as *Pinus* and *Malus* contrast with the dominant plantings of Eucalypts.

Swimming facilities have been provided in the beach area and consist of a floating net to define the swimming area and a floating pontoon in the middle of the swimming area. The depth of the water was not measured and the effect of lake siltation is not known. An existing carpark provides vehicular access to the precinct ensuring it is well patronised by park users.

Key features are the:

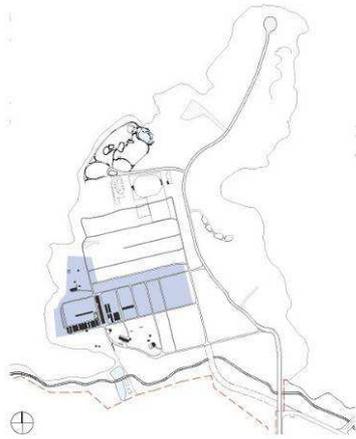
- exotic tree plantings such as *Pinus* and *Malus* are interspersed around informal picnic settings and set among Weston Phase circular plots and other clusters of Eucalyptus;
- parking, picnic and park information facilities;
- beach and associated water infrastructure items;
- views to Black Mountain from the south of the basin;
- views to Red Hill and Parliament House from north of precinct;
- views to Mt Majura, Civic, Mt Ainslie, Parliament House and Red Hill;
- shoreline up towards major ridge line is largely visible from lake surface;
- generous grade and amphitheatre form allows for active recreation and events; and
- wind exposed shoreline although reduced exposure to southerly storm fronts.



**Figure 3.21** Precinct 4—Kayaks coming to rest on the beach during pole raising ceremony of the SIEV X Memorial. (Source: Flickr)



**Figure 3.22** Precinct 4—View from Precinct 4 looking towards the formal tree planting on Weston Park Road. (Source: Google images)



**Figure 3.23** Precinct 5—Location Plan.  
(Source: SMM)



**Figure 3.24** Precinct 5—Aerial showing plant rows in Yarralumla Nursery. (Source: Google images)

### 3.3.5 Precinct 5: Sub-Precinct—Yarralumla Nursery

#### Description

Yarralumla Nursery is an ACT Government-run commercial facility and is an integral component of Weston Park and the development of Canberra. Its important contribution results from the influence of passionate directors and staff, and their desire in the tradition of the Griffin scheme, to bring horticulture, arboriculture, and landscape design to the forefront of thinking during Canberra's development. In recognition of this, the Nursery is listed alongside Weston Park on the RNE.

The nursery is enclosed by perimeter shelterbelt planting and security fencing, and its frontage is defined by the Elm avenue. The precinct contains an administration building, service yards, carparking, access roads, specimen, stock and display plants, a demonstration garden, and outlying functional yards and storage sheds.

#### Existing Character & Condition

The active functional zones of the Nursery have been modified and moved over the years, resulting in varying degrees of utilisation, serviceability, and repair.

Public and commercial access is limited to certain areas, and way finding is complex and often lengthy and unclear in places.

Key features are the:

- operating commercial nursery facility with various buildings, sheds, and yards;
- fencing and access roads;
- arrayed nursery stock in various stages of potting; and
- the historic 'shelterbelt' tree rows, copses of trees and specimen trees.

### 3.3.6 Precinct 6: Sub-Precinct—West Basin

#### Description

Precinct 6 is defined by the large dense stand of mature oak trees to the south, open areas of grass, and a westerly foreshore that is heavily vegetated with self-sown exotic plants.

Further inland is a vast, overgrown area, formerly used by the nursery for trial plots and shelterbelt planting.

The Maze play feature was located in the precinct. The Maze was constructed of timber palings, of which only a few palings, overgrown with weeds, remain.

### Existing Character and Condition

The character of this precinct generally comprises a plantation of mature oak and conifer trees that form both a shelterbelt and urban forest. This shelterbelt provides protection from prevailing winds and defines a series of grassland rooms. The trees appear to have been planted on a very tight grid of centres and as a result many of them have not reached their full potential due to competition with adjacent trees. Many of these trees have significant dieback and in some areas appear more as thickets of vegetation, and are unsuitable for a parkland environment for this reason.

Large grassland areas are formed between the stands of trees and if access is maintained regularly would be suitable for recreation, picnicking of large family groups, and outdoor events.

Key features are the:

- large stand of oak trees in the south of the precinct;
- large enclosed areas of grassland;
- historic shelterbelts to the north and south;
- exotic and densely vegetated near the west foreshore (of Precinct 2: The Ramble); and
- small pond/wetland.

### 3.3.7 Precinct 7: Sub-Precincts—The Pond, West Bank & The Train (Miniature Railway)

#### Description

This precinct is dominated by various facilities, including children's play spaces, amenities blocks, carparking, a miniature train and a small kiosk, most of which were originally developed in the 1960s. The existing play space was originally designed and constructed in 1981–82 for children of all abilities and is a much-loved feature of this precinct. It has been added to and modified since the original design by the NCDC.

The northern area of the precinct has a natural amphitheatre form leading down to a formalised pond, and with the addition

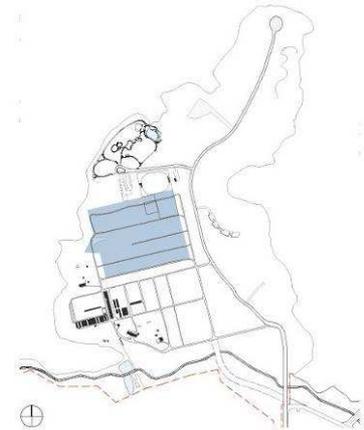


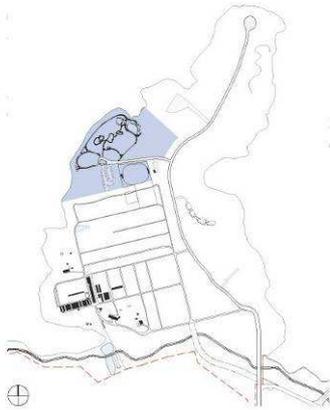
Figure 3.25 Precinct 6—Location Plan. (Source: SMM)



Figure 3.26 Precinct 6—Deciduous trees in autumn. (Source: Google)



Figure 3.27 Precinct 6—Kangaroo relaxing in the Oaks Plantation. (Source: Google)



**Figure 3.28** Precinct 7—Location Plan. (Source: SMM)



**Figure 3.29** Precinct 7—Children’s Play space. (Source: SMM)



**Figure 3.30** Precinct 7—Miniature Railway. (Source: SMM)



**Figure 3.31** Precinct 7—Tree-lined view across bay to Black Mountain. (Source: SMM)

of sporadic picnic benches and barbeques, and its northerly aspect, provides a pleasant picnic area. The Pond was originally designed as part of the play space for children with disabilities and was less formalised, with softer edges and cascades. This area attracts the most visitation within the park due to the facilities and landscape setting with a corresponding higher level of maintenance.

The miniature railway is operational and privately managed. It continues to be a popular element of the park, but in recent times is in varying states of repair. Its immediate surrounds are separated from the remainder of the precinct with a low-height fence, and consist of eucalypts and other native trees set into a grassed area.

### Existing Character & Condition

This precinct was originally developed in the 1960s with the play space recently upgraded in 2008/09. The grounds are reasonably well maintained and suitable for the high numbers of park users that frequent the space.

Key features are the:

- wind-exposed shoreline with some shelterbelt planting;
- partial views into the site from Parkes Way, Cork Plantation near Stromlo Forest and Government House;
- 1:10 gradient at the lake edge restricting water access;
- 1:50 gradient adjacent the pond suitable for active recreation;
- northwesterly aspect at play space and north / north-easterly aspect adjacent the pond;
- intimate views across the inlet;
- enclosed tree-lined pond and enclosed basin;
- children’s play space involving water-play and other play elements;
- amenities blocks, a kiosk, and carparking; and
- miniature railway, with its ride-on train, tunnel and enclosed area.

### 3.3.8 Precinct 8: Sub-Precincts—West Yarralumla Peninsula & East Yarralumla Peninsula

#### Description

This precinct is located at the northern end of the park and on either side of Weston Park Road. The landscape comprises clusters of trees and circular plots in an open parkland setting.

The shoreline on either side is more densely vegetated, with the steeper western edge being the most heavily vegetated with conifer windbreak planting. The more gently sloped eastern shore is vegetated mainly with exotic species such as *Salix* and *Taxodium*, which over time have regenerated and overpopulated the shoreline.

Kangaroos are regularly found in this precinct, perhaps due to the savannah-like character with associated sun/shade and enclosed zones and the lower number of visitors to this end of the park.

#### Existing Character and Condition

Most of the trees in this precinct are mature, with the exception of a number of new plantings of various species and recent circular plot of *Brachychiton populneus* (Kurrajong)—refer to Appendix D Tree and Ecological Assets Report. There is generally no understorey planting, and the grassland is a mixture of native grasses and weed. The condition of the grass is mixed, with areas of herbaceous plants forming bare areas at certain times of the year. The overall character is one of a native savannah meadow set on a wind-exposed plateau surrounded by water on three sides.

Key features are the:

- views to Parkes Way, Black Mountain, Civic, Red Hill, Parliament House;
- views to Civic, Red Hill, Parliament House;
- substantial north-northeasterly aspect;
- large area at 1:50 gradient;
- enclosed west-facing basin;
- savannah-like landscape with areas of sun/shade, open and enclosed spaces;
- Weston Phase circular plots (remnant);
- sporadic picnic seats and barbeques in poor condition;

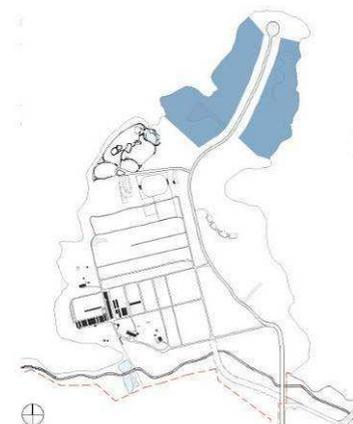


Figure 3.31 Precinct 8—Location Plan. (Source: SMM)



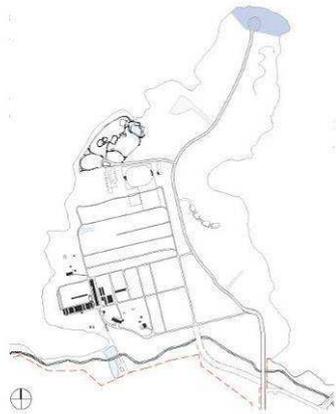
Figure 3.32 Precinct 8—Circular tree plots introduced in the last decade. (Source: SMM)



Figure 3.33 Precinct 8—View of SIEV X Memorial from Weston Park Road. (Source: Google images)



Figure 3.34 Precinct 8—View of SIEV X Memorial 'Pole Raising Ceremony' 2006. (Source: www.sievxmemorial.com)



**Figure 3.35** Precinct 9—Location Plan. (Source: SMM)



**Figure 3.36** Precinct 9—View north across the lake to Black Mountain with carparking area in foreground. (Source: SMM)



**Figure 3.37** Precinct 9—View showing beach area and netted swimming zone. (Source: Google images.)

- densely vegetated shoreline;
- unsealed carparking; and
- SIEV X Memorial.

### 3.3.9 Precinct 9: Sub-Precincts—Kurrajong Point

#### Description

Precinct 9 is a well-utilised precinct due its position at the termination of Weston Park Road. Lake access is possible via a beach wrapping around the northern shoreline and behind this significant views across to Parkes Way and up to Black Mountain are afforded from the circular carpark, which terminates Weston Park Road.

The precinct is either the last, or one of the first precincts in the park that a visitor may stop at, depending on how they negotiate the central spine access of Weston Park Road. Either way, it is an important termination to the original concept of the boulevard, and was envisaged as a gateway to potential lake crossing points proposed since the creation of the Lake in 1964, and earlier, following the Griffin scheme of 1913.

An important divergence from the Griffin scheme is revealed here, whereby Griffin’s intended bridge connection was made further south across to Black Mountain Peninsula to the east. Although it is now unlikely that any bridge connection will ever be made, it is important to recognise that this termination was originally considered to be a bridge connection point, which may explain why little has been done to reinforce the ‘sense of arrival’.

#### Existing Character & Condition

The precinct is similar in character and condition to Precinct 8. The sense of arrival is similar to the Entry Precinct in that it is fairly underwhelming, due in part to the low quality landscape finishes. The space is dominated by ‘borrowed landscape’ (ie the view of Black Mountain and Parkes Way), due to the closeness at this narrow body of water.

Key features are the:

- views to Parkes Way and Black Mountain;
- glimpses of Black Mountain Peninsula, Civic, Red Hill, Parliament House;
- sandy beach area;

- carparking at termination of Weston Park Road; and
- north-northeasterly aspect.

### 3.4 Cultural Landscape Analysis

#### 3.4.1 Cultural Landscape: A Definition

The following section provides a broad analysis of Weston Park as a 'designed' cultural landscape.

The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention defines 'cultural landscapes' as follows:

*Cultural landscapes are cultural properties and represent the 'combined works of nature and of man' designated in Article 1 of the Convention. They are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and internal.<sup>4</sup>*

Heritage Victoria, an equivalent organisation to the ACT Heritage Unit/Council, has developed Landscape Assessment Guidelines which have been referred to in this report in lieu of local guidelines for the ACT. The Victorian guidelines, updated in January 2009, describe the meaning of a cultural landscape or a culturally significant landscape as 'a geographical area that reflects the interaction between humans and the natural environment'.<sup>5</sup>

#### 3.4.2 The Evolution of the Landscape Aesthetic

The wider Weston Park setting planted by TCG Weston for scientific research attributes and aesthetic design qualities has grown into a substantial park of mature tree planting with dominant visual themes, such as geometric generic tree groups, the strong use of cedars and eucalypts in ornamental plantings.

Weston Park has evolved into a series of landscape 'rooms'—a result of the influences from its early inception and function as a government nursery, but also due to the formalisation of the central access route and the creation of Lake Burley Griffin, both major interventions resulting from the Griffin urban planning scheme for Canberra.

The Park differs from many 'drive-through' parks in that it has only the central road and not a series of roads designed to a grid or curvilinear system. While this reduces vehicle access to a significant portion of the Park, it creates a relatively unique structure, and directs the way the landscape is designed to be experienced by a visitor. In the Griffins' plans, the park was to have a bridge link to the northern shore of the Lake and later, in the adopted plan, a bridge to Black Mountain Peninsula to the east. Although neither of these bridge links were realised, the direct funnelling of Weston Park Road to the terminus at Kurrajong Point is a direct link to these early planning ideas.

Several significant phases of development have occurred at Weston Park since its inception. Aside from the formation of the Park itself, and in terms of landscape elements, the most significant period of intervention was during the NCDC period in the early 1960s. During this time, landscape architecture as a profession was in its formative years in Australia, and practitioners were keen to express philosophies applied to parks in North America and Europe in a local context.

#### 3.4.3 Cultural and Associative Importance of the Landscape

The Weston Park site holds considerable cultural importance or 'value' as it is able to demonstrate important aspects of Canberra's early history (Yarralumla farm and Griffin planning); it retains,

substantially intact, the nursery set up by Charles Weston in 1915 that had an unparalleled influence on the development and character of Canberra as an Internationally-recognised Garden City (nursery, propagation, experimentation); the site remains as a prominent element of Canberra's lakeside scenery; it continues as a key part of Canberra's integrated open space system and a favoured recreational focus; and it constitutes part of an important wildlife corridor within the ACT.

Weston Park began as an experiment of both the application of plant species to the local climate and to the Griffin design for Canberra—Yarralumla Nursery, and its personalities, facilitated this experiment. It has important associations with numerous individuals who directly influenced the emerging form and landscape character of Canberra as a major city of international standing, including: Walter Burley and Marion Mahony Griffin, TCG Weston, Lindsay Pryor, David Shoobridge, Richard Clough and Robert Boden.

Weston Park retains considerable evidence of the layout and fabric from the 1910s and 1920s and thus demonstrates aspects of the formative period of Canberra.

#### **3.4.4 Scientific Associations**

Weston Park is important for its contribution to scientific endeavours and has the potential for further research activities.

Historically, Yarralumla Nursery and the Weston Park peninsula share an early and vital relationship with Westbourne Woods in crucial experimentation prior to the broadscale planting of Canberra. Yarralumla Nursery, together with the area known as Westbourne Woods, was the centre of considerable horticultural and forestry experimentation that directly served the purposes of trialling plant species for the reforestation, and later structural and ornamental plantings throughout Canberra.

Crucial to the Weston Park cultural landscape are vestiges of TCG Weston's single, integrated plan of the entire precinct featuring the 40ha nursery/experimental area of Yarralumla Nursery and the 120ha demonstration arboretum (Westbourne Woods). These include plantings, structures, layout and early access roads still present. While the present ownership and management of this combined area now rests with various agencies, the surviving early components still hold value as part of the original integrated plan.

Evidence also remains of later experimental areas initiated by Pryor and Dr Robert Boden. There are survivors of tree species which were probably part of the plantings around the aquatic area (eg *Taxodium* and *Salix* sp.) near the Royal Canberra Golf Course. However, there is little evidence of any horticultural specimens in the aquatic plantings dating from the 1963 aquatic plant trial ponds of Dr Betty Phillip.

Yarralumla Nursery is a place where considerable plant hybridisation research has been undertaken, including early research on eucalypts by Weston. The significance of Weston's research was recognised by Joseph Henry Maiden, Director of the Botanic Gardens, Sydney (1896–1924), who thought it to be of national importance.<sup>6</sup>

Yarralumla Nursery remains an important centre of horticultural expertise within Australia with, for example, continued research into species selection for landscape use and the accumulation of propagation skills built-up over many decades.

At Weston Park there are many species and plantings that are either rare or uncommon in cultivation. The Park is also important as part of Canberra's urban ecology and functions as a wildlife corridor. It is

possible that both Aboriginal and early European archaeological resources may remain on the peninsula.

### **3.4.5 Setting and Aesthetic Appreciation**

Many aspects of Weston Park's setting augment its aesthetic appeal and appreciation. The overall setting is defined by Lake Burley Griffin surrounding the Weston Park peninsula and the dominant, pervading backdrop and form of adjacent Black Mountain.

The impressive avenues of older trees, such as the Elm avenue, the mixed species that line the old entry drive, the avenue of cedars and robinias of Weston Park Road and the remaining lines of shelterbelt plantings, provide a strong lineal and designed structure. This contrasts to other pockets in the Park that have a sense of informality; they are open spaces and rambling plantings along the lake edge and many areas offer intimate spatial scale with water vistas.

The contrasting combination of informal and formal landscape, views and vistas makes for strong iconic Canberra scenery.

### **3.4.6 Vegetation Patterns of the Landscape**

Vegetation patterns across the site are defined as a series of spaces and 'landscape rooms'—the vegetation being a result of designed planting combined with regeneration and self-sown weed species. The historic aerial photography reveals that remnant species were all but completely removed from the site during pastoral activities in the early twentieth century.

Weston Park is dominated by a framework of tree plantings undertaken during the various phases of landscape development. The tree species include a mix of evergreen and deciduous, native and exotic, for both aesthetic and functional reasons. These tree-planting typologies include avenue planting, circular plots, experimental planting, wind-break planting (shelterbelts), urban forestry and shade trees. Self-sown species, particularly along the shoreline, are also present in the landscape.

The trees are at various life-cycle stages, with those planted in the earlier phases beginning to show signs of senescence. Managing trees in a deteriorating condition is one of the major challenges faced at Weston Park and is experienced in many other parts of Canberra. This is due to the age of planting and the intense periods of planting at similar times, meaning a large number of trees reach senescence at similar times.

Generally speaking, there is very little in the way of planted shrub material or understorey planting, which is common in public landscapes due to a perceived safety threat to park visitors caused by poor visual sightlines. In Precincts 2 and 6 regeneration and 'suckering' has occurred, resulting in dense screens of vegetation being formed.

## **3.5 Comparative Analysis**

### **3.5.1 Introduction**

In order to understand its heritage values, Weston Park can be compared and contrasted with several other urban parks and designed, cultural landscapes found in Canberra.

### **3.5.2 Lakeshore Parks in Canberra**

#### **Commonwealth Park**

The lakeside Commonwealth Park located on western side of the central northern shore of Lake Burley Griffin is particularly an important reference.

As was the case with Weston Park, planting at Commonwealth Park was initiated under the direction of TCG Weston in 1922 to a concept plan devised by Walter Burley Griffin. As at Weston Park many exotic conifers were planted to give an evergreen effect, although further development during the years of the 1930s economic depression and World War II were slow.

Lindsay Pryor created a new plan for the park in 1949 and an ambitious horticultural masterplan drawn up by the acclaimed British landscape designer Dame Sylvia Crowe in 1964-65. Over the years the development of the park focused on the needs of recreation and community events set in the treed landscape setting, as evidenced by the children's water play area, play spaces and public events focused on the Stage '88.

Richard Clough, the NCDL Landscape Architect, developed more tree plantings during the 1960s and 70s with a focus on informal and native plantings. The water gardens and Rhododendron Glade were also established in the 1970s.

Weston Park is less formal than Commonwealth Park as reflected in the greater degree of formality of the plantings and the higher number of commemorative plantings, memorials and artworks present in the Commonwealth Park landscape.

#### **Kings Park**

Kings Park is another lakeside park in central Canberra and immediately adjacent to Commonwealth Park along the northeastern shore of Lake Burley Griffin. Kings Park displays a greater informality than either Commonwealth or Weston Park. It was designed by Richard Clough to reflect the character of rural Australia with open, lower areas; deciduous exotic willow, elm and poplar plantings near the lake; denser, dark-coloured plantings of native species up the hill; and informal screening of eucalypts in a dryland grass landscape to screen the major road of Parkes Way.

#### **Other Lakeside Parks**

The three other parks adjacent to Lake Burley Griffin that bear comparison with Weston Park are Lennox Gardens, Black Mountain Peninsula and Yarramundi Reach, which contains the Lindsay Pryor Arboretum.

##### *Lennox Gardens*

The Lennox Gardens District Park was created after the filling of Lake Burley Griffin in the early 1960s. It is located on land which was part of the original Royal Canberra Golf Course, established in the 1920s on the Molonglo River floodplain downstream of Lennox Crossing. Lennox Crossing was the name given to a low-level bridge linking Acton with South Canberra. The filling of Lake Burley Griffin in the 1960s submerged the golf course and the crossing. Remaining above lake level was a portion of one fairway, the clubhouse (destroyed by fire in 1965) and associated tree planting, and this area was named Lennox Gardens.

The design for the gardens, which are bounded by Flynn Drive and the lakeshore, was inspired by the formal exotic character of gardens created in the 1920s around the Hotel Canberra and Albert Hall.

Charles Weston's original plantings of coniferous species for the golf course have been integrated into the design. Planting proceeded in the 1960s, while a major development program was commenced in the 1980s. Several memorials are included in the park, including one to 'Australians in the Spanish Civil War 1936 to 1939' erected in 1993, and the Canberra-Nara Park.

While Lennox Gardens District Park contains some remnant original Weston plantings, they are minor elements of the park, which itself is essentially a modern formal design with different aesthetic and historic values to those found at Weston Park.

#### *Black Mountain Peninsula*

Black Mountain Peninsula is an informal parkland of regenerated native vegetation on the northern shore of Lake Burley Griffin. It dates from the NCDC's lake and foreshore recreational developments of the 1960s. Like Weston Park, the area originally featured as a part of Walter Burley Griffin's continental/international arboretum design. However, unlike Weston Park, it was never developed as such, but instead was used as a rubbish dump. With the development of the lake foreshores the NCDC expanded the indigenous native eucalypt plantings of the peninsula with exotic deciduous species and natives for aesthetic purposes. Black Mountain Peninsula is now a major Canberra recreation reserve and the main backdrop and view focus from the eastern part of Weston Park. Black Mountain Peninsula District Park is informal in character and less planned than Weston Park with its horticultural variety and purpose-built recreational facilities.

#### *Lindsay Pryor Arboretum, Yarramundi Reach*

The Lindsay Pryor Arboretum on Yarramundi Reach, on the shore of Lake Burley Griffin, is a 26ha site originally planted by Professor Lindsay Pryor between 1954 and 1957 to provide an improved northerly view from Government House. The plantings suffered fire damage in December 2001 and the area is being upgraded by the NCA to provide recreational and scientific research facilities.

#### *National Arboretum Canberra*

The National Arboretum Canberra is located close to the northern shore of Lake Burley Griffin on the slopes of Dairy Farmers Hill and overlooks Weston Park. It is managed by the ACT Government. The concept of the National Arboretum developed from Griffin's arboreta plans in his 1915 map of Canberra. However the new National Arboretum Canberra is not an experimental arboretum such as Weston Park and is yet to become a major recreational amenity for the Canberra community.

### **3.5.3 Other Weston Plantings and Parks in Canberra**

#### **Haig Park**

Haig Park, planted by Weston in 1921, and located at the northern edge of Civic, is a plantation of densely planted, predominantly exotic coniferous trees in formal parallel rows. Its design arises from its function as a shelterbelt to protect the early suburbs of Canberra from wind and dust. The main species used by Weston in the park is the fast growing Monterey Pine (*Pinus radiata*). In addition to cedars, another tree heavily planted was Roman cypress (*Cupressus sempervirens 'Stricta'*); perhaps a reflection to the many Australians who had not returned from World War I; in western society this latter tree has been traditionally recognised as a symbol of death and immortality. The park was named in 1928, referencing Earl Douglas Haig who commanded the British Empire Forces during World War I.

Haig Park retains the character of a windbreak rather than a recreational park and lacks the horticultural interest of the experimental plantings that Weston Park provides. Weston also planted windbreaks around the Yarralumla Nursery site at Weston Park.

### **City Hill, Civic**

City Hill is one of the focal points in Walter Burley Griffin's Parliamentary Triangle design for Canberra. The hill was planted out by Weston in 1921 in a symmetrical design using Roman cypresses and Monterey pines, which emphasises its strategic symbolism in the city design. Of note is that on City Hill Weston used oval plantings of similar species, whereas in Westbourne Woods and Weston Park he used circular plantings.

### **Other Parks and Landscapes**

Additionally, there are other important landscape places within the city that testify to the formative stages of Canberra's development.

As part of Charles Weston's considerable accomplishments, between 1921 and 1926 almost 50, mostly public domain, landscape projects within nine different city zones had been undertaken. Of these, a substantial number remain recognisably intact or retain substantial components from the 1920s development. These include Haig Park (1921), City Hill (1921), Telopea Park and High School (1922), Casuarina Park (1922), Government House (1923), Manuka Oval (1924), Capital Hill (1924), Gorman House (1925), Corroboree Park (1926), Reid (1926), The Lodge (1926) and Sydney Avenue (1926).

#### **3.5.4 NSW Nurseries**

Other early nurseries where substantial evidence is still to be found include the former Government Nursery site at Campbelltown, off Badgally Road (where Charles Weston was in charge immediately before assuming the Canberra role) and near Camden, next to the Nepean River, Sydney (Ferguson's or Australia Nursery), both from the nineteenth century.

As important as the Campbelltown site was, and even though its rectangular boundaries are partly still discernible and some mature plantings remain, it is presently in the process of being redeveloped. A recently built cul-de-sac makes passing reference to the place as 'Nursery Road'. Although this was arguably as important a site as the Nursery at Weston Park, unfortunately a comparison in the near future will no longer be possible.

The former Ferguson's Nursery site, off Ferguson Road, was set up for this purpose in the late 1850s by Francis Ferguson who had trained at Chatsworth and had latterly been employed by William Macarthur at Camden Park. While its earlier buildings have been removed towards the end of the twentieth century there remains substantial evidence of the nursery through its traditional visual connections to, and from, Camden, particularly St John's church access ways, boundaries, paddock divisions and, most noticeably, a collection of mature plantings including Queensland Bottle Tree (*Brachychiton rupestris*), Bunya Pine (*Araucaria bidwillii*), Hoop Pine (*A. cunninghamii*), Kauri (*Agathis robusta*), Chilean Wine Palm (*Jubaea chilensis*), Loblolly Pine (*Pinus taeda*), Giant Bamboo (*Bambusa balcooa*) and *Cupressus funebris*.

It remains a rare example of an important and influential colonial nursery site where its many contemporaries—the nurseries of Guilfoyle, Baptist, Shepherd, Henderson and Purchase—have all been removed long ago. Owing to its age and rarity it was recommended in 2000 that the former Ferguson's Nursery site be listed on the NSW State Heritage Register. As the 'engine room' that

enabled the greening of Canberra as an internationally recognised Garden City, Weston Park' Nursery is of comparable importance even though it was established much later.

### 3.5.5 Summary of Comparative Analysis

Weston Park occupies a physically prominent and symbolically special place within central Canberra. The Park is physical evidence of the realisation of Griffin's design for Canberra. Together with the other early parks landscape sites, the 1910s planning and development of Yarralumla Nursery and Weston Park is an important source of plant material for the broader city and has influenced the development of Canberra.

Weston Park has similar design and aesthetic qualities to Commonwealth Park because it has large open areas and smaller-scale landscaped areas, water features, play areas, sculptures throughout, water vistas and the lake as the backdrop.

Weston Park has attributes that continue to set it apart from other landscape sites and parks in Canberra. In particular, Yarralumla Nursery for the scientific endeavours and horticultural experimentation, and the 'secluded' nature of Weston Park for recreation.

Historically the Nursery was both the source of the material that equipped the developing city of Canberra and other parks with the landscape infrastructure, and it was at the centre of horticultural experimentation that enabled the bold and assured plantings.

The Nursery and Park are a highly significant example of the early formation of Canberra, the National Capital.

### 3.6 Endnotes

- 1 [http://www.tams.act.gov.au/live/yarralumla\\_nursery/nursery\\_history](http://www.tams.act.gov.au/live/yarralumla_nursery/nursery_history)
- 2 The granite paths around Hobday's Cottage were paved after the site assessment for this CMP.
- 3 Inner South Off-leash Dog Park, ACT PCL, 2009.
- 4 World Heritage Centre, 2005, Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, II.A Definition of World Heritage, Article 47, Annex 3.
- 5 Heritage Victoria, July 2002 updated 2009, Landscape Assessment Guidelines for Cultural Heritage Significance, p.3.
- 6 John Gray, *TCG Weston (1866-1935) Horticulturist and Arboriculturist*, Unpublished D. Env. Des. Thesis, University of Canberra, July 1999, pp. 74-76 and p. 193



## 4.0 Heritage Values of Weston Park

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### 4.1 Assessment Methodology

The criteria of the Heritage Act have been used to identify and assess the heritage values of Weston Park. Heritage values under the Heritage Act take into account values which relate to historic, aesthetic, social, technical or creative achievement, natural landscapes, place, objects and notable examples of a type of place.

To undertake the assessment against the criteria (listed below), a thorough process of historic research, physical and cultural landscape analysis, researching and gathering information from the community through surveys, and analysing the consultation data about Weston Park was undertaken (it is discussed in Sections 2.0 and 3.0).

#### 4.1.1 Social and Community-Held Aesthetic Values Assessment

Heritage sites are not simply places, but exist as meanings, memories and knowledge shared by communities. Social heritage value is a measure of the special meanings and associations a place may have for particular groups of people. The investigation of social value is based on the identification of relevant groups, consultation with those people and analysis of the values expressed.

Understanding the social and community-held values is critical in the assessment of the Heritage Act criterion (b) and (d), aesthetic and social significance; these criteria place a specific emphasis on community associations and values. Criteria (b) and (d) refer to 'the community or a cultural group'.

The research and consultation undertaken for the assessment was done by using targeted surveys of Park users groups and local residents, exploration of the Park as a place of artistic inspiration, and a focus group with long-term employees of the Nursery. The detailed results of community consultation, community-based research and the analysis of the results undertaken by Context Pty Ltd for this report are included in Appendix C, 'the Social Values Assessment and Survey Results'.

The assessment of the emerging social value has provided an indication of the array of social heritage values attached to Weston Park. Together with all forms of heritage value, the social value assessment is included in Section 4.2.

Engagement with the community was undertaken following a stakeholder engagement plan to scope and guide consultation with key community groups. The stakeholder engagement plan was approved by TAMS in September 2010. The groups who provided input to the assessment for the report include:

- Yarralumla Residents Association;
- Yarralumla Nursery staff;
- National Trust of Australia (ACT);
- Australian Garden History Society; and
- Lake Users Group.

The method used to understand the social and community-held values was based on a range of sources, including face-to-face research on the values held by specific communities and previous heritage studies. In addition, the social and community-held aesthetic values assessment builds on, rather than repeats, previous investigations.

#### **4.1.2 Cultural Landscape Assessment**

To assist with the assessment of cultural landscapes—their significance and comparative analysis—Heritage Victoria’s landscape guidelines, discussed previously in Section 3.4.1, describes them by type.

There are three general landscape types based on World Heritage guidelines for cultural landscape types; these include (a) designed landscapes, (b) organically evolved landscapes, and (c) associative landscapes. Some cultural landscapes may reflect more than one type.

Weston Park is assessed against the criteria in Section 4.2 and has characteristics of a designed landscape. Designed, cultural landscapes typically include trees, avenues, parks, gardens, cemeteries, plazas, etc, and places constructed and planted for aesthetic reasons, often designed or implemented at a distinct point or points in time.<sup>1</sup>

#### **4.1.3 Tree Assessment**

The assessment of trees and groups of trees in Weston Park is provided in detail in Appendix D, the Tree Assets Report, prepared by GBA, September 2010. Weston Park contains a diverse variety of tree species which reflect the various historic phases, varying degrees of significance, and tree selection and cultivation used in the ACT. The objective of the tree assessment for this CMP was to:

- assess the horticultural condition of individual and groups of trees;
- identify or confirm those trees that are significant to the various phases of plantings; and
- provide management and maintenance actions and information to inform the CMP.

The criteria used for the assessment of trees are explained in detail in the tree report. For example it describes the useful life expectancy (ULE) and the ‘significance’ of the trees and groups of trees. The significance criteria for trees are different to the ranking of significance for spaces and elements of Weston Park and are described as follows:<sup>2</sup>

- ‘High’—this is used for trees where there is strong evidence that they were part of early site plantings especially those associated with the Weston and Pryor/Boden phases (Phases 1, 2 and 3).
- ‘Moderate’—this is used for trees where they are symbolic of other, later planting phases, or are younger replanting of earlier historic plantings; and
- ‘Low’—this is used for trees of low historic and cultural landscape association.

These levels of significance are applied to individual trees and tree groups in Appendix D. GBA identifies surviving original tree plantings and dates other tree plantings to Pryor, Boden and other horticulturalists where this is known. GBA ranks individual trees and groups of trees from the first three historic phases as having ‘High’ significance, whereas, the CMP further differentiates the three historic phases into an ‘Exceptional’ and ‘High’. The Exceptional level relates to the historic

period under Weston and the 'High' level relates to the later two historic phases 2 and 3 (Table 4.1). Furthermore the ranking of significance used in the CMP, reflected in Table 4.2 and Figure 4.1, extends beyond trees assessed in detail by GBA and is applied to elements, precincts of the Park, cultural landscape and with park planning.

## 4.2 Application of ACT Heritage Criteria

### 4.2.1 Assessment Against Criterion (a)

*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.*

Weston Park is evidence of the implementation of parts of Griffin's design for Canberra as a 'garden city'. In particular for the lakeside plantings established prior to Lake Burley Griffin being formally created and TCG Weston's earlier implementation of Griffin's plan with the planting of cedars along the formal curved ridgetop road of Weston Park Road.

There is also a high degree of technical achievement for the landscape character and the implementation of recreational furnishing of Weston Park, under the NCDC from the 1960s. The landscape designers of the NCDC re-engaged with Griffin's plan which had languished until the Lake Burley Griffin project was undertaken. The lake-side parks benefited from this project and each had distinct characteristics; for example, Commonwealth Park is very formal in comparison to Weston Park. Weston Park has formal characteristics as a result of the planting trials by Weston and Pryor; however, the NCDC introduced intentional recreational characteristics such as the adventure play areas, the play pond, informal lake edges, and beaches.

Also, a high degree of technical achievement and qualities of innovation are shown in the development of the large-scale functioning of Yarralumla Nursery and the associated Weston Park arboretum test plots. These were part of the planned and systematic reforestation of ACT after Federation, and ornamental landscaping of the National Capital throughout most of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century as a response to the development of Griffin's garden city concept for Canberra. These plant experiments were also a response to the vision of Canberra as the location for scientific advances in addition to general government administration.

Qualities of invention in horticultural experimentation are evident at the Yarralumla Nursery in pocket gardens, pond area, original horticultural work places in the old original cutting and potting sheds, in the old greenhouses and in the seed collection, documentation regarding horticultural experiments and historic objects collections held on site. Technical achievement and innovation are evident in the circular plots and linear plantings of eucalypt hybridisation experiments within the Park.

Weston Park meets criterion (a).

#### **Intrinsic Features—Attributes of Criterion (a)**

Circular trial planting plots and trial/propagation plots from the Weston era. The cedar plantings along Weston Park Road. The adventure play areas, the play pond, informal lake edges, and beaches.

The original and early buildings and features of the Nursery, including the office buildings, cutting and potting shed, seed store and equipment supply office. The old greenhouses and mid-twentieth-

century plant issue office. The pocket gardens within the Nursery, old aquatic experimentation areas and the windbreaks marking the boundaries. Old and original plantings associated with the Nursery, plant experimentation and ornamentation of the Weston Park site. The documentary collection held at the seed store and Nursery offices. The Nursery's seed store collection.

#### **4.2.2 Assessment Against Criterion (b)**

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

Weston Park is a designed cultural landscape with aesthetic significance for its design qualities in terms of the layout, plant specimens, planted groups of trees, ponds, avenues and views surrounding the Park. The open grassland spaces also add to the recreational landscape character of the Park.

Weston Park exhibits outstanding design and aesthetic qualities highly valued by the workforce at the Yarralumla Nursery and by the Canberra community, who use the park for its recreational amenities. Defined by Lake Burley Griffin, the Weston Park peninsula draws largely from the lake with both open views across the water and glimpses of the lake through the shoreline tree cover. The dominant form of Black Mountain on the northern shore and the Dairy Farmers Hill are important views from the Park. These lake and hill views, together with the Atlas cedars along Weston Park Road, which marks the central line of the park, create an iconic and strongly recognisable Canberra landscape. The aesthetic qualities of the Park comprise large open spaces and smaller more intimate areas providing for a range of activities and gatherings; a mixture of deciduous, coniferous and native eucalypt species attracting a large range of bird, animal and insect species highly valued in the urban environment. The varied park landscape is unified with strong lines of plantings and the repetitive use of certain species in clear groupings.

#### **Community-Held Values**

More specifically the community-held aesthetic qualities that are recognised and valued by the Canberra community and the Nursery staff are as follows:

- Weston Park is regarded as a beautiful place. The views of the lake from many parts of the Park contribute to its aesthetic quality.
- Weston Park has been enjoyed by generations for the open, park-like and informal landscape character—as a place to be experienced and to relax.
- Yarralumla Nursery, especially for Nursery staff, has particular aesthetic qualities associated with the creative processes of growing plants and the ability to closely observe seasonal change in the landscape.
- The large and mature trees throughout the Park and the Nursery have particular aesthetic values associated with their age and the sense that they bear witness to the passing of time. They are also seen as a gift from the past and to the future.

Weston Park meets criterion (b).

#### **Intrinsic Features—Attributes of Criterion (b)**

The impressive avenues of older trees, such as the Elm avenue; the mixed species that line the old entry drive, which is to the south east of Hobday's Cottage and is shown in Figure 3.2; the Atlas

Cedars of Weston Park Road and the remaining lines of shelterbelt plantings around the Nursery (which include a mixture of species). The balance of open and enclosed spaces within the Park. Views terminating in trees and views to lake and hills beyond. Different habitats including reed beds for water birds. A broad range of native and exotic trees, shrubs and groundcovers.

### **Community-Held Attributes of Criterion (b)**

- A sense of naturalness (rather than formality), including the ability to see wildlife.
- Openness and space—a sense of a spacious, uncrowded landscape (not crowded with buildings nor with people).
- Views to water and many opportunities to be close to water.
- Large trees.

### **4.2.3 Assessment Against Criterion (c)**

*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.*

The Nursery within Weston Park demonstrates important evidence of the function of large-scale propagation, experimentation and recording of plant materials tested for suitability for reforestation, structural and ornamental plantings throughout the ACT. The planning and planting of the central city area in such an organised and consistent manner from the facilities of the Nursery is of exceptional interest and is an ongoing process in the continued conservation of the historic Canberra cultural landscape. Weston Park, located on a peninsula of Lake Burley Griffin, is evidence of the provision of large city parks integral to the original planning of Griffin's garden city concept.

Weston Park meets criterion (c).

### **Intrinsic Features—Attributes of Criterion (c)**

The Yarralumla Nursery original and early features as described under criterion (a) maintained as a functioning propagation and experimentation facility used to conserve and continue the planting of the cultural landscape of Canberra.

### **4.2.4 Assessment Against Criterion (d)**

*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.*

Weston Park, as shaped by the NCDC for a recreational use, fulfils Griffin's concept for a large civic park. It is strongly linked to the growth of the parks amenities under the NCDC from the 1960s. The consistent recreational use at Weston Park demonstrates the success of developing Lake Burley Griffin and lakeside parks for recreation.

The cultural landscape of Weston Park is valued by the community for its history and recreational values—especially by the planning, landscape, historical, horticultural and botanical interest groups related to the character of the landscape and plantings, and the combination of formal planting along the avenues, with open park-like grasslands gently sloping to the lake edge.

The site has been used over many years for official gatherings, community events and private functions. As Canberra's population has grown, Weston Park has assumed increased importance as a recreational destination. Continued evidence of recreational planning within the peninsula has been the provision of a site-specific children's play space, recreational beaches, walking and cycle tracks and a miniature railway layout and facilities. The Nursery has a special place in Canberra community consciousness for its provision of plant material through many decades and for the employment opportunities it provides to a variety of special needs groups within the Canberra community.

### **Community-Held Values**

Weston Park is a much loved and popular park, used by the Canberra community for over 50 years. It has hosted, and continues to host many family and community events that both express and build a strong sense of connection to this place across the Canberra community, and similarly for the local Yarralumla community.

Weston Park represents an aspect of community identity that is connected to family and community. The Park is very much a place where people go with family, friends and colleagues to relax, enjoy the outdoors and each other's company. The train and the play equipment are the only 'attractors' within the park, and they are quite low key.

Weston Park is valued as a place chosen for special personal and family events (as well as larger community events) where meanings and memories are important (eg weddings, birthdays, commemorative events). It is important as a regularly chosen gathering place, described as 'expected to form part of the childhood memories of people who grew up' in Canberra, and also because Weston Park is the site of the SIEV X memorial and several other smaller memorials.<sup>3</sup>

For Yarralumla Nursery staff, past and present, Weston Park has important social value because it represents the work of generations of staff in helping create Canberra's landscape. It contributes to their strong sense of shared identity with, and pride in, the place. The social values assessment undertaken for this project (Appendix C) identifies the Nursery Staff as an associated community whose deeply felt connection to this place also extends to the wider landscape/horticulture industry and to the broader Canberra community because of the role of the Nursery within the development of Canberra.

Weston Park meets criterion (d).

### **Intrinsic Features—Attributes of Criterion (d)**

The recreational landscape character of Weston Park; dedicated play spaces, the combination of open space with formal and informal plantings throughout, views to the lake and access to the informal lake edge.

Early cultural plantings, including strong tree groupings, the range of plant material and the range of fauna habitats. The historic Yarralumla Nursery and Hobday's Cottage, including the original and older built structures and pocket gardens and the English Garden. The purpose-built children's play space for its unique play features, pond and recreation beach areas on the lake shore which fit seamlessly into the park-like characteristics of open grasslands and views through the established trees to the lake and beyond to Black Mountain.

### Community-Held Attributes

- Play as a use, an activity and an area within the park—as well as the specific play features that evoke memories (with the loss of several much loved play features mentioned often in the survey results).
- Built and landscape elements that form part of Yarralumla Nursery and that are important for their meanings and associations for Nursery staff.
- Large and specific trees.
- For particular individuals, parts of the park may have specific meanings, associations and memories.

#### 4.2.5 Assessment Against Criterion (e)

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

Weston Park has not been formally assessed against this criterion. For this CMP there is no indication that Weston Park has importance as part of local Aboriginal tradition. However, it is important that potential Aboriginal sites be investigated and cultural values be tested as part of a future heritage study.

#### 4.2.6 Assessment Against Criterion (f)

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

While Weston Park shares a similar history and aesthetic qualities with other parks in Canberra and contains some rare plants, the park as a whole is not rare.

Lake Burley Griffin has several shoreline park areas, including Weston Park, Commonwealth Park, Kings Park, Lindsay Pryor Arboretum and Black Mountain Peninsula District Park. Weston Park contains features in common with Commonwealth Park, because of its shared history with the NCDC in creating the recreational landscape of horticultural variety, large open and intimate spaces and designated children's play areas. The difference offered by Weston Park is its popularity and success as a large civic park for the people of Canberra, as well as its topography and location on the lakeside where recreational swimming and adventure play have been highlights in the past. It continues to display evidence of the NCDC's role and relatively intact example of the 1960s period of civic and landscape planning in Canberra.

The Yarralumla Nursery component and its connection to the broader site of Weston Park is rare and relatively intact. The Nursery contains physical and historical evidence, including extensive documentary records of the trial plantings and horticultural experiments to be found in the card indexes, ledgers and seed collections housed in the Yarralumla Nursery. The living record of these experiments, the trees themselves, is also unique as a research source for how the National Capital was systematic planted.

Yarralumla Nursery is significant in its comparative intactness and meets criterion (f).

### **Intrinsic Features—Attributes of Criterion (f)**

The location of the park along side Lake Burley Griffin, the planted avenues and features of Weston Park and the Yarralumla Nursery's original and early features—including the office buildings, cutting and potting shed, seed store and equipment supply office. The old greenhouses and mid-twentieth-century plant issue office. The pocket gardens within the Nursery, old aquatic experimentation areas and the windbreaks marking the boundaries. Old and original plantings associated with the Nursery, plant experimentation and ornamentation of the Weston Park site. The documentary collection held at the seed store and Nursery offices. The Nursery's seed store collection. The whole maintained as a functioning propagation and experimentation facility used to conserve and continue the cultural landscape of Canberra.

#### **4.2.7 Assessment Against Criterion (g)**

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

Weston Park is an important cultural landscape in Canberra, especially as a park in the central area of the city and its historic relationship and physical connection to Yarralumla Nursery. It is strongly associated with, and integral to, the designed landscape of Lake Burley Griffin and Griffin's plan for Canberra.

Weston Park contains all the elements required of a designed landscape and notable city park: a wide horticultural range, formal and informal areas, vistas, wildlife interest, provision of recreational amenity and play equipment. It is highly valued by the Canberra community as documented under criteria (b) and (d). Weston Park contains notable examples of TCG Weston's style of circular trial plantings and nursery trial/propagation plot plantings. The Weston Park Road has a notable example of a formal Weston-planned avenue using cedar species, which are Weston's central Canberra signature planting choice and evidence of his implementation of Griffin's plan. The Elm avenue marking the boundary of the Yarralumla Nursery is a notable example of a mature elm avenue in the ACT. The Nursery itself is a notable example of an experimental and propagation facility and retains all the important elements of this function in its original cutting and potting sheds, office and stores, glasshouses, pocket gardens, trial plots, shelterbelts, planting out areas and plant issue building.

Weston Park meets criterion (g).

### **Intrinsic Features—Attributes to Criterion (g)**

Circular trial planting plots and trial/propagation plots from the Weston era. The cedar plantings along Weston Park Road and the Elm avenue plantings at the eastern boundary of the Nursery. The original and early buildings on the site associated with the Nursery, propagation and experimentation functions. The documentary collections and seed collection held by the Nursery.

#### **4.2.8 Assessment Against Criterion (h)**

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

The development and implementation of the various planting phases in Weston Park and the Yarralumla Nursery have close associations with many important landscape architects, horticulturalists and botanists, including Walter Burley Griffin, Thomas Weston, Lindsay Pryor,

Robert Boden, David Shoobridge, John Peace Hobday, the Moore brothers Percy and Jack, and the landscape architects of the NCDC including Richard Clough and Margaret Hendry.

Weston Park and Yarralumla Nursery are also important for the array of features from Canberra's different cultural phases of historic development, including the pre-Federation pastoral period in the alignment of the Elm avenue along the old paddock boundary line, early Federal Capital planning by Walter Burley Griffin in the siting of the park and use of many native trees, evidence of early Federation plant propagation and experimentation, and provision of park recreational facilities from the second half of the twentieth century. The Yarralumla Nursery also has important historical associations with the early consolidation of water and food security within the Federal Capital Territory through the early plant propagation facilities which still exist at the Nursery.

Weston Park meets criterion (h).

### **Intrinsic Features—Attributes to Criterion (h)**

Circular trial planting plots and trial/propagation plots from the Weston era. The cedar plantings along Weston Park Road and the Elm avenue at the eastern boundary of the Nursery. The original and early buildings on the site associated with the Nursery, propagation and experimentation functions. The documentary Nursery collections and seed collection.

#### **4.2.9 Assessment Against Criterion (i)**

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

The natural landscape and vegetation of the area now known as Weston Park has undergone significant modification since the nineteenth century. This includes the clearing of much of its original vegetation, considerable replanting, changes to its topography and setting through use of gelignite for establishing tree test plots, and the creation of Lake Burley Griffin—which turned the park area into a lake peninsula.

Weston Park does not pass the threshold for this criterion.

#### **4.2.10 Assessment Against Criterion (j)**

*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.*

Together with the area known as Westbourne Woods, and with Yarralumla Nursery as its hub, Weston Park was the site of considerable horticultural and forestry experimentation that directly served the purposes of trialling plant species for the reforestation and later structural and ornamental plantings throughout Canberra.

The documentary collections and seed collections at the Yarralumla Nursery and the plantings in both the Nursery and Weston Park have the potential to contribute significantly to a wider understanding of the natural and the cultural history of the ACT, both for research and as benchmarks.

Weston Park has considerable educational value related to early hybridisation and grafting of eucalypts, stands of trees from original trial and functional plantings, trees for amenity use and some uncommon tree species.<sup>4</sup>

Weston Park meets criterion (j).

#### **Intrinsic Features—Attributes of Criterion (j)**

Circular trial planting plots (of mixed eucalypt species) and trial/propagation plots from the Weston era. The cedar plantings along Weston Park Road and the Elm avenue at the eastern boundary of the Nursery. The original and early buildings on the site associated with the Nursery, propagation and experimentation functions. The documentary Nursery collections and seed collection.

#### **4.2.11 Assessment Against Criterion (k)**

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

Weston Park does not exhibit an unusual richness in its native flora, fauna or natural landscape features, but does sustain a diversity of the more commonly found Canberra wildlife species and is important locally. The culturally created wide diversity of introduced evergreen and deciduous trees provides protective and browsing habitat for resident wildlife species, and protection during seasonal migrations.

The lake foreshore caters for a diversity of waterbirds, particularly where reed beds exist. Little remains of the original flora which would have been heavily modified prior to the establishment of Canberra. Occasional patches of native grasses remain. Its more important role is as part of a wildlife movement corridor through the city from the lower Molonglo River corridor through to the Majura/Kowen district. Weston Park is therefore not significant under this criterion but passes threshold under criterion I below.

Weston Park does not meet criterion (k).

#### **Intrinsic Features—Attributes of Criterion k**

The wide diversity of evergreen and deciduous trees (exotic and native) provides protective and browsing habitat for resident wildlife species, including Eastern Grey Kangaroos.

#### **4.2.12 Assessment Against Criterion (l)**

*Criterion (l) for a place—it is a significant ecological community, habitat or locality.*

The significant ecological communities in the ACT are Natural Temperate Grasslands and Yellow Box/Blakely's Red Gum Woodland. Neither of these communities now exist within Weston Park. The Park is primarily introduced native and exotic plantings which are not part of a significant vegetation community. Much of the indigenous vegetation in this location disappeared in the nineteenth century. There are some uncommon species of trees present, including three planted specimens of Hillgrove Gum (*Eucalyptus michaeliana*), a threatened species, although it is not a local native species.

The introduced park and arboreta plantings provide ample browsing and breeding habitat for local wildlife, but only for the more common species. The more important aspect is the role of Weston

Park as part of an almost contiguous open space corridor through the city. This is important for some migratory species in particular.

Weston Park, in conjunction with other lakeside parks and the wider Canberra Nature Park reserves, provides a wildlife corridor through the urban heart of Canberra from the lower Molonglo River corridor through to the Majura/Kowen district.

Weston Park meets the threshold for criterion (I).

### **Intrinsic Features—Attributes of Criterion (I)**

The combination of high vegetation cover with a diversity of species at the park, combined with open spaces, allowing a range of habitats and a migration corridor through the modern city of Canberra.

## **4.3 Summary Statement of Significance Against ACT Criteria**

Weston Park, which contains the Yarralumla Nursery within its boundaries, is a highly significant designed cultural landscape with important heritage values for Canberra, including an integral historic connection to the development of Canberra—the capital of Australia and a place of national importance.

Weston Park is unique as evidence of the implementation of parts of Walter Burley Griffin's concept for Canberra and for a large civic park in this location. Weston Park demonstrates the foresight and accomplishments of horticulturalist TCG Weston in Canberra's early landscape planning, especially with the planting of cedars along the central ridge of Weston Park Road; evidence of implementing Griffin's planning.

The Park has exceptional design and aesthetic qualities arising from its location on a peninsula within Lake Burley Griffin, its layout and also the broad range of its plantings. The plantings exemplify the plantings style of TCG Weston and have now matured into magnificent avenues and groups of trees and shrubs.

The landscape character is revered by the local community and the consistent recreational use demonstrates the success of the NCDL's involvement in developing Lake Burley Griffin and its recreational lakeside parks.

The community's appreciation of the Park's aesthetics, and their attachment to it, arises from long-term organised community and informal private use of the amenities provided in the Park, and from the abundant park fauna which is attracted to the diversity of habitats.

Weston Park is also appreciated and important for its historic associations. Different elements within the park reflect multiple phases of the development of the area, from colonial times to the present. It has strong and special associations with many important landscape architects, horticulturalists and botanists, all influential in creating the Canberra landscape as it presently exists. TCG Weston is foremost among these, but Walter Burley and Marion Mahony Griffin, Lindsay Pryor, Robert Boden, David Shoobridge, John Hobday, Percy and Jack Moore and landscape architects of the NCDL, including Richard Clough, also have important associations with the historic development of the park.

Weston Park, and especially the Nursery, is also extremely important as a research and benchmark site for the study of plant propagation and experimentation techniques; exhibiting evidence of

significant creative innovation in the paper records, seed collection, pocket gardens and test pools at the Nursery, and in the tree plots for trialling tree species and eucalypt hybridisation within Weston Park itself. The Yarralumla Nursery within Weston Park is of importance for its community links with special needs groups and for providing the Canberra community with landscaping plant material over many decades.

Weston Park provides a variety of important habitats for non-endangered animals, birds and insects in the urban environment and contributes to a key wildlife migration corridor across the ACT. The presence of wildlife contributes to the community's appreciation of the park.

#### **4.4 HERCON Heritage Criteria**

In April 2008 the National Environment Protection and Heritage Council adopted a consistent set of criteria to identify and manage heritage in Australia. HERCON criteria and responses are as follows:

***(1) Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history.***

Weston Park retains references to its nineteenth-century phase as a pastoral landscape, with the Elm avenue interpreting an 1830s estate portion division, early fence line and paddock boundary from the Yarralumla estate. The main early plantings at the park and the Yarralumla Nursery represent the earliest decades of the Federal Capital Territory when the propagation and experimentation of plant materials was a priority for reforestation, structural and ornamental plantings throughout the ACT. Weston Park, located on a peninsula of Lake Burley Griffin, is evidence of the provision of large city parks integral to the original planning of Griffin's design for Canberra and its furnishing with dedicated play areas is linked to the growth of the parks' amenities under the NCDC from the 1960s.

***(2) Possession of uncommon rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history.***

The dominant landscape features of Weston Park in its tree avenues and circular planting plots are not particularly uncommon, rare or endangered in the ACT. While the cedar avenue of Weston Park Road, designed and planted by TCG Weston, is particularly fine, other quality cedar avenues are present in other Canberra locations such as Captain Cook Crescent and Canberra Avenue. Weston's circular tree trial plots are also present within the Westbourne Woods area. While Weston Park contains some rare plants in the park areas and within the Yarralumla Nursery site, the park as a whole is neither rare nor unique. Lake Burley Griffin has several shoreline park areas, including Weston Park, Commonwealth Park, Kings Park, Lindsay Pryor Arboretum and Black Mountain Peninsula District Park.

The aspects of Weston Park which are uncommon, rare and require care are the extensive documentary record of the trial plantings and horticultural experiments to be found in the card indexes, ledgers and seed collections housed in the Yarralumla Nursery. The planted landscape of trees produced out of the experimentation at Weston Park and Yarralumla Nursery are rare as a collection and an important research resource.

***(3) Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history.***

Together with the area known as Westbourne Woods, Weston Park, with Yarralumla Nursery as its hub, was the site of considerable horticultural and forestry experimentation that directly served the

purposes of trialling plant species for the reforestation, and later structural and ornamental plantings throughout Canberra. The surviving experimental tree plantings in both the Nursery and Weston Park, and the accompanying documentation and seed collections held at the Nursery, have the potential to contribute significantly to a wider understanding of the natural and the cultural history of the ACT, both for research and as benchmarks.

***(4) Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments.***

Weston Park is a classic Canberra park exhibiting rich plantings of exotic and native species laid out in both formal and informal arrangements. The park contains notable examples of plantings, especially Weston's style of circular trial plantings and nursery trial/propagation plots. The Weston Park Road has a notable example of a formal Weston-planned avenue using cedar species which are Weston's central Canberra signature planting choice. The Yarralumla Nursery is a notable example of an experimental and propagation facility and retains all the important elements of its function in its original cutting and potting sheds, office and stores, glasshouses, pocket gardens, trial plots, shelterbelts, planting out areas and plant issue building.

***(5) Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.***

Weston Park exhibits outstanding design and aesthetic qualities highly valued by the workforce at the Yarralumla Nursery and by the wider Canberra community, who utilise the park for its recreational amenities. Defined by Lake Burley Griffin, the Weston Park peninsula draws largely from the lake with open views across the water and glimpses of the lake through the shoreline tree cover. The dominant form of Black Mountain on the northern shore and the Dairy Farmers Hill are important views from the Park. These lake and hill views, together with the Atlas cedars along flowing curves of Weston Park Road, which marks the central line of the park, create an iconic and strongly recognisable Canberra landscape. The aesthetic qualities of Weston Park comprise: large open spaces and smaller more intimate areas, providing for a range of activities and gatherings; and a mixture of deciduous, coniferous and native eucalypt species which attract a large range of bird, animal and insect species highly valued in the urban environment. The varied park landscape is unified, with strong lines of plantings and the repetitive use of certain species in clear groupings.

***(6) Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.***

A high degree of creative and technical achievement is shown in the development of the large-scale functioning of Yarralumla Nursery and the associated Weston Park arboretum test plots. These were part of the planned and systematic afforestation of ACT and landscaping of the National Capital throughout most of the twentieth and into the twenty-first century, responding to the development of Griffin's planned city and vision for Canberra as the location for scientific advance as well as general government administration. Qualities of technical achievement in horticultural experimentation are evident at the Nursery, in pocket gardens to trial species, original places of horticultural labour in the original cutting and potting sheds, in the old greenhouses, and in the seed collection and documentation regarding horticultural experiments held on site. High technical achievement and innovation in the plant hybridisation experiments are evident in the circular plots and linear plantings of eucalypt hybrids within the park. Creative and technical achievement is evident in the lakeside plantings at Weston Park, which were established before the lakebed was inundated, and in the siting of the main park road along the ridge to emphasise the topography.

***(7) Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions.***

The cultural landscape of Weston Park is valued by the community for its history and recreational values, and especially by planning, landscape, historical, horticultural and botanical interest groups related to the landscape and plantings. The site has been used over many years for official gatherings, community events and private functions. As Canberra’s population has grown, Weston Park has assumed increased importance as a recreational destination. Continued evidence of recreational planning within the peninsula has been the provision of a site-specific children’s play space, recreational beaches, walking and cycle tracks and a miniature railway layout and facilities.

***(8) Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history.***

There are clearly identifiable elements within Weston Park which have strong and special association with many of the important landscape architects, horticulturalists and botanists influential in the development of the Canberra landscape, including Walter Burley Griffin, Thomas Weston, Lindsay Pryor, Robert Boden, Richard Clough, David Shoobridge and John Peace Hobday and the Moore brothers Percy and Jack.

## 4.5 Heritage Value—Grades of Significance

### 4.5.1 Explanation of Grades of Significance

‘Heritage value’ or ‘heritage significance’ refers to both Weston Park as a whole and to individual elements of the site (including the various buildings, landscape features and natural areas). Heritage significance is graded in this CMP according to the following Table 4.1. Refer to Figure 4.1 for a plan showing the grades of significance for the overall precincts.

**Table 4.1** Grades of Significance rankings.

Grade of Significance	Explanation
<b>Exceptional</b>	<p>Elements of Exceptional significance or heritage value embody ACT Heritage values in their own right and make an irreplaceable contribution to the heritage values of the place as a whole. At Weston Park elements of exceptional significance are generally associated with the historic Phase 1: ‘Up to and including the TCG Weston Period (pre1912–1926)’ described in Section 3.1.1.</p> <p>Elements of Exceptional heritage value or significance must be retained and conserved. They require the highest level of care in their management. Such elements are particularly sensitive to change and can be compromised by inappropriate development or impacts.</p>
<b>High</b>	<p>Elements of High significance or heritage value embody ACT Heritage values in their own right and make a significant contribution to the values of the place as a whole. At Weston Park elements of high significance are generally associated with the historic Phases 2: ‘Post TCG Weston (1927–1958, including Bruce, Hobday, Moore and Pryor) and Phase 3: ‘Phase 3: Post Pryor, the NCDC Period (1958–1960s, including Boden, Clough)’ (phases described in Section 3.1.1).</p> <p>Elements of High heritage significance should be retained and conserved. They require a high level of care in their management.</p>

Grade of Significance	Explanation
<b>Moderate</b>	Elements embodying Moderate heritage values demonstrate a moderate level of significance and make a contribution to the overall heritage significance of Weston Park. Generally this relates to elements of the later historic phases. Elements of Moderate heritage significance should be retained and conserved. They require care in their management.
<b>Low</b>	These elements are of relatively Low heritage significance to the place as a whole and generally do not make a contribution to the overall heritage values of Weston Park. These elements are more robust and can tolerate a high degree of change, removal or replacement.
<b>Intrusive</b>	Intrusive elements detract from the significance of the place.

**Table 4.2** Grades of significance for the site as a whole, by precinct and elements of Weston Park.

Whole Site of Weston Park	Grade of significance
Overall Site	High
Continuing function within the park of horticulture in some form	High
Weston Park as a continuing major landscape component within Canberra's open space system	High
Weston Park as a publicly accessible lakeside (chiefly passive) recreation venue	High
Weston Park as a wildlife corridor	High
Rare/uncommon plantings	Exceptional/High
Extant plantings from 1910s to 1960s	High
Remaining plantings from 1960s	Moderate
Introduced sandy beaches at inlets	High
Early lakeside plantings	High
Eastern Grey Kangaroos (community-held values)	Moderate
<b>Intrinsic attributes to the whole site:</b>	
All the attributes listed in Section 4.2	

Precinct 1 (Entry Zone)	Grade of significance
Overall Precinct	Moderate
Weston Park Road	Exceptional
Current misalignment of Weston Park Road	Intrusive

**Intrinsic cultural landscape attributes:**

- Dominant visual corridor along Weston Park Road to Black Mountain.
- Weston Park Road to the lake edge is an important visible edge when viewed from the east or from the Lake via watercraft.

**Features which detract from the significance:**

- Entry of precinct lacks a 'sense of arrival', is very open and sparse.
- Current misalignment of Weston Park Road.

Precinct 2 (Nursery Park, The Ramble)	Grade of significance
Overall Precinct	Moderate
Hobday's Cottage and surrounds (English Garden)	Exceptional
New work to Hobday's Cottage grounds and carpark to Hobday's Cottage and Yarralumla Nursery outlets	Intrusive
Yarralumla Nursery (retail outlets)	Moderate
Timber Cart	High (is movable)
Toilet block (red brick located in English Garden)	High
Remnant entry drive from south	High
Early dams x 2	Exceptional
Remnant pine edges which form the windbreak to Nursery Park	High
Edge treatment between junction of golf course and site	Intrusive

**Intrinsic cultural landscape attributes:**

- the English Garden and Hobday's Cottage;
- heavily planted shelterbelts to the north and southeast which contribute to the landscape character;
- intimate views across Nursery Bay;
- enclosed tree-lined basin of Nursery Bay which has a rare north-northeasterly aspect across the lake; and
- existing ponds, originally used for experimental lake edge planting.

**Features which do not contribute to the significance:**

- dense inaccessible lake edge with minimal access and vantage points;
- inadequate access and carparking to the retail Nursery outlets and Hobday's Cottage;
- marquee in the rear yard and paving around Hobday's Cottage; and
- poor legibility of golf course boundary due to inconsistent vegetation density and/or lack of fencing.

Precinct 3 (The Elms, Weston Park Road and The Plateau)	Grade of significance
Overall Precinct	Exceptional
Toilet block (located to east of Train Tunnel)	Moderate
Elm avenue (The Elms)	Exceptional

**Intrinsic cultural landscape attributes:**

- informal 'rural parkway' character;
- the Elm avenue along the eastern Yarralumla Nursery boundary;
- Weston Park Road which follows the central ridge line and is a dominant feature through the site, with its formal tree planting that consists of a row of evergreen trees and one row of deciduous trees either side;
- intermittent views throughout the park; and
- 'Green tunnel' effect combined with a sense of scale and enclosure.

Precinct 4 (East Bank, East Basin and The Plateau)	Grade of significance
Overall Precinct	High

Precinct 4 (East Bank, East Basin and The Plateau)	Grade of significance
Toilet block (located adjacent to carpark in East Basin)	Low
Circular experimental plots	High

**Intrinsic cultural landscape attributes:**

- circular tree plantings repeated through the landscape;
- beach and swimming area;
- views to Black Mountain from the south of the basin;
- views to Red Hill and Parliament House from north of precinct;
- views to Mt Majura, Civic, Mt Ainslie, Parliament House and Red Hill;
- lake shoreline up towards major ridge line is largely visible from lake surface; and
- generous grade and amphitheatre form allows for active recreation and events.

**Features which detract from the significance:**

- wind-exposed shoreline.

Precinct 5 (Yarralumla Nursery)	Grade of significance
Overall Precinct	Exceptional
Dispatch Office, including objects collection, photographs, maps and card index collection	Exceptional
Propagation Facility	Exceptional
Potting Shed	Exceptional
Dispatch Preparation, including seed store collection and ledgers	Exceptional
Glasshouse 6 (Display House)	High
Glasshouses 20, 21 and 24	High
Glasshouses 22 and 23	Moderate
Glasshouses 25-32	Moderate
Glasshouses 33-34	High
Mess Hall	High
Original plant issue building	High
Aquatic plants pond	High
Contemporary sheds at north of precinct	Low
Fuel store	Low
Orthogonal nursery layout	Exceptional
Remnant parallel nursery windbreaks	Exceptional

**Intrinsic cultural landscape attributes:**

- operating commercial Nursery facility with various buildings, sheds, and yards;
- fencing and access roads; and
- historic tree rows, pocket gardens and trial plots.

Precinct 6 (West Basin)	Grade of significance
Overall Precinct	High
Evidence of the Nursery use and regular formation of plantings	High

**Intrinsic cultural landscape attributes:**

- evidence of the Nursery use—the regular formation of plantings;
- large stand of oak trees in the south of the precinct;
- large enclosed areas of grassland;
- historic shelterbelts to the north and south; and
- small pond/wetland.

Precinct 7 (The Pond, The Train and West Bank)	Grade of significance
Overall Precinct	High
Play space (c1981 for special needs children)	High
The play pond	High
White play sculpture (David Tolley)	High
Spider Web Climbing Frame and Swing Set	Low
The miniature railway	Moderate
Barbeque shelter (log style)	Moderate
Toilet Block (log style)	Demolished (October 2010)

**Intrinsic cultural landscape attributes:**

- children's play space (c1981);
- tree-lined play pond and enclosed basin;
- northwesterly aspect at the playground and north-northeasterly aspect adjacent the pond;
- partial views into site from Parkes Way, Cork Plantation & Government House;
- 1:50 grade adjacent the pond; and
- intimate views across the inlet.

Precinct 8 (West Yarralumla Peninsula and East Yarralumla Peninsula)	Grade of significance
Overall Precinct	High
Eastern Grey Kangaroos (community-held values)	Moderate
Scattered picnic tables and benches	Low
SIEV X memorial (community-held values)	Low

Precinct 8 (West Yarralumla Peninsula and East Yarralumla Peninsula)	Grade of significance
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**Intrinsic cultural landscape attributes:**

- enclosed tree-lined waterscape and enclosed basin, with open areas of grassland;
- views to Parkes Way, Black Mountain, Civic, Red Hill, Parliament House;
- substantial north-northeasterly aspect; and
- large open grass area at 1:50 grade.

**Features which detract from the significance:**

- Sporadic picnic seats and barbeques in poor condition.

Precinct 9 (Kurrajong Point)	Grade of significance
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Overall Precinct	High
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Sandy beach—accessible for recreational use	High
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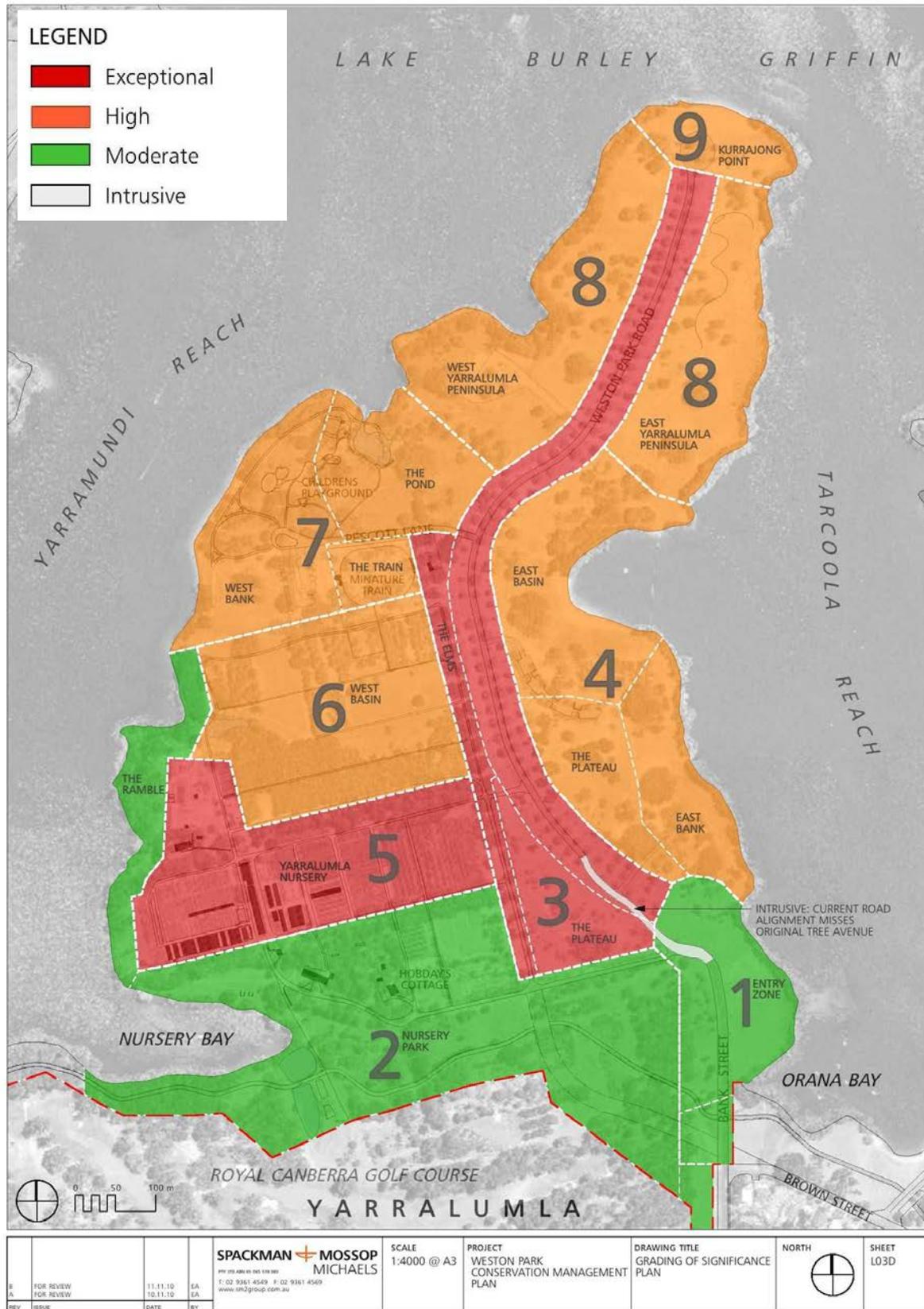
Carpark at the point/termination of Weston Park Road	Intrusive
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**Intrinsic cultural landscape attributes:**

- sandy beach area;
- glimpses of Black Mountain Peninsula, Civic, Red Hill, Parliament House; and
- north-northeasterly aspect.

**Features which detract from the significance:**

- carparking on the point at the termination of Weston Park Road.



**Figure 4.1** Grades of Significance for the overall precincts of Weston Park. (Source: SMM) Note: the grades of significance for individual elements are listed in Table 4.2. The location and significance ranking applied to trees and tree groups in Weston Park are included in Appendix D.

## 4.6 Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Heritage Victoria, July 2002 updated 2009, Landscape Assessment Guidelines for Cultural Heritage Significance, p.4.
- <sup>2</sup> Refer to the definitions included in Appendix 2 for a 'Dictionary for Data Sheets Code' of the Tree Assets Report, prepared by Geoff Butler & Associates Environmental & Horticultural Consultancy, September 2010—found in Appendix D of this CMP.
- <sup>3</sup> Appendix C: Social Values Assessment & Survey Results, Section C.4.2.
- <sup>4</sup> Documentary information about historic research is held by Yarralumla Nursery.



## 5.0 Constraints and Opportunities

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### 5.1 Introduction

This section discusses the key attributes of heritage significance, the condition of the cultural landscape and the statutory and management framework relevant to Weston Park which gives rise to constraints and opportunities affecting the future conservation, management and interpretation of the identified heritage values of the park. The issues arising from these factors provide focus and direction for the development of conservation and management policies in Sections 6.0 and 7.0.

The key issues constraining and/or providing opportunity for the conservation and management of Weston Park derive from the:

- identified heritage values, which are embodied in elements and attributes of the cultural landscape of Weston Park and their condition;
- statutory obligations and legislation which govern the management of the place, principally the Heritage Act, EPBC Act, Planning and Development Act 2007 and the ACT Nature Conservation Act 1980;
- requirement for 'Works Approvals' from the NCA;
- requirements and future aspirations arising from the 2009 draft Weston Park Masterplan (draft WP MP);
- management of the Yarralumla Nursery for its heritage significance, important scientific history and its present horticultural operations; and
- horticultural and recreational use of the site, with regard to its heritage significance, contemporary landscape amenity and functional requirements of the site.

### 5.2 Identified Heritage Values

#### 5.2.1 Key Heritage Values

The identified heritage values of Weston Park and their current condition give rise to a range of constraints and opportunities. Opportunities to retain, enhance, conserve and interpret these heritage values should be investigated, implemented and integrated into the ongoing management of the place.

The key heritage values and attributes of the site to be considered include:

- evidence of Weston Park's nineteenth-century history as a pastoral landscape, which includes the original form of the Molonglo River around the Weston Park peninsula, the boundary with Yarralumla homestead (now Government House), the early dam at Nursery Bay to the south of Yarralumla Nursery, and the Elm avenue which marks the location of an early fence line between pastoral paddocks;
- evidence of the manifestation of Griffin planning—the Weston Park peninsula as a major landscape feature within the central Canberra area, its Australian-themed plantings as a means of interpreting the intended 'Continental Arboretum', the arc of Weston Park Road and remaining evidence of the early entry drive at the south end of Weston Park;

- the historic connection to the national importance of Canberra, the national capital of Australia; its layers, views, vistas and setting which make up the cultural landscape of Weston Park (including Yarralumla Nursery) derived from the Griffins' plans for Canberra; their execution by TCG Weston and later by other important Canberra forestry, landscape and horticultural practitioners;
- establishment of Yarralumla Nursery, which includes all archival resources and reference materials, the early orthogonal layout and traditional elements that remain from the early nursery development such as:
  - original and early nursery buildings, including the Dispatch Office, Propagation Facility, Potting Shed, Dispatch Preparation Shed (old stables), Seed Store, Tools store and early glass houses;
  - windbreaks, lakeside plantings and avenue/access road plantings in the nursery and within Weston Park;
  - test plot, pocket gardens within the Yarralumla Nursery;
  - experimental circular plots throughout Weston Park;
  - Hobday's Cottage and immediate grounds (ie the rectilinear area defined by substantial planting, refer to c1923 figure); and
  - early access road layout.
- the Yarralumla Nursery as a source of plants; tested, propagated and issued locally to Canberra residents, since its inception to the present, and as part of the broader establishment of Canberra as a 'garden city';
- Weston Park as a place visited and appreciated because of the special and important associations it holds for the Canberra community and especially people who grew up in Canberra from the late 1960s; and
- the long-established children's play spaces associated with the completion of Lake Burley Griffin and the NCDC's landscape development of recreational parks in central Canberra and around the lake.

### **5.2.2 Constraints Arising from Physical Condition**

Notwithstanding community-held values and an appreciation of the amenity and quality of Weston Park, the physical condition of the Park as a whole is poor. Its condition is the result of the impacts from a sustained period of drought and the need for renewal which is consistent with the heritage values. While some areas of the park are well maintained, there are areas of the park which have no specific use or function and the vegetation appears neglected.

The current condition of the Park may also be due to the absence of guiding documents such as a CMP and a finalised masterplan, and is reflected in the changing approaches to management and maintenance over time.

## 5.3 Land Ownership and Management

### 5.3.1 Introduction

Weston Park is located on ACT land and managed by TAMS as public park land. This management is governed by and contained within a complex matrix of statutory instruments; for example, the *Territory Plan 2008* and *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988*. The legislative constraints are discussed further below.

Other key constraints for the management of Weston Park are:

- competition for limited resources to manage the high heritage values of Weston Park; particularly for a place with heritage values key to the formation of the national capital;
- the need to integrate heritage management requirements related to Weston Park's 'designated area' status under the Commonwealth, together with ACT legislative requirements for day to day management, discussed further in this section; and
- the lack of a clear guiding document, such as a CMP and MP, in regard to managing heritage values at Weston Park. To date, there has not been a comprehensive historic and landscape analysis, heritage assessment or CMP to guide and direct appropriate and consistent management of Weston Park.

### 5.3.2 Planning and Development Act 2007 and the ACT Territory Plan

The *Planning and Development Act 2007* (the P&D Act) provides a planning and land development framework for the ACT.<sup>1</sup> The P&D Act stipulates and regulates the functions of the ACTPLA and the Land Development Agency (LDA).

The P&D Act provides guidance for the development of high-level planning strategies for the ACT, stipulates the processes for assessing development applications in the ACT and outlines the leasing and licensing regulations of ACT property and land. It also sets out the requirements for 'plans of management' for ACT Government assets, including requirements for public consultation and the management objective for public land (including heritage places) and is therefore relevant to Weston Park.

The *Territory Plan 2008* is the key statutory planning document in the ACT, providing the policy framework for the administration of planning in the ACT. The purpose of the Territory Plan is to manage land-use change and development in a manner consistent with strategic directions set by the ACT Government, Legislative Assembly and the community. It must be consistent with the National Capital Plan (described below).<sup>2</sup>

### 5.3.3 The ACT Planning and Land Authority

ACTPLA is the primary authority for planning and development in the ACT, with statutory roles performed under the P&D Act and the *Territory Plan 2008*. ACTPLA advises the ACT Government on land, planning and building policy.<sup>3</sup> In regard to listed heritage places and objects in the ACT, which may be impacted by planning developments, ACTPLA seeks advice from the ACT Heritage Council under the provisions of the Heritage Act. It also gives development approval, except for development in designated areas. As Weston Park is within a designated area, works/development approval for the site is given by the NCA, rather than by ACTPLA, and with the absence of a Territory development application process advice from the ACT Heritage Council is not automatically sought.

### 5.3.4 Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988

#### National Capital Plan—Role of the National Capital Authority

Weston Park is a 'designated area' under the National Capital Plan (NCP). Works approvals for development within designated areas are the responsibility of the NCA.

The *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988* (the P&L Act) sets out the planning principles and policies for Canberra and the Territory, including the objectives of the NCP.

The NCA administers the NCP 'to ensure that Canberra and the territory are planned and developed in accordance with their national significance'. More specifically it sets out the detailed conditions of planning, design and development for designated areas because of their particular importance to the special character of the national capital.

The status of designated area means that Weston Park is in the category of 'parkland recreation' under the NCP and the Park is to be made available for public recreation with free public access and with beachside swimming, special playgrounds and barbecue areas.

NCA referral of proposed actions is controlled under the NCP, not the Heritage Act, and it is outside ACT Heritage Council control.

#### Development and Works within Designated Areas

Within designated areas, the NCA determines the 'Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development' and 'works approval'. The NCA's role is to assist applicants, which includes any ACT Government department or section proposing works at the Park, through a process of negotiation and design development to achieve outcomes appropriate to those areas which embody the special characteristics of the national capital.

The status of Weston Park as a designated area for recreation means that 'development' is limited to small-scale items that help recreation and tourism. They may include commercial concessions for kiosks, refreshment rooms, restaurants, and other entertainment and hire facilities as appropriate to the area. This will not include the development of private licensed clubs or the extension of facilities such as those that already exist nearby at the Canberra Yacht Club.

In summary, any works that change the landscape (eg earthworks, tree removal and replanting) require works approval from the NCA, also referred to as 'development approval'.<sup>4</sup> Any development works that may have an impact on threatened species and communities must be addressed under both the EPBC Act and the *ACT Nature Conservation Act (1980)* and subsequent amendments. As active everyday managers, TAMS must also conform to the heritage requirements of relevant ACT legislation.

### 5.3.5 Heritage Listing—ACT Heritage Act 2004

Weston Park is not yet listed on the ACT Heritage Register—an instrument of the Heritage Act. However, Weston Park is listed on the RNE. As a result of amendments to the EPBC Act and the abolition of the *Australian Heritage Council Act 1975* at the end of 2006, the RNE will cease to be a statutory list in February 2012. Nonetheless, the statutory constraints attached to the RNE listing for Weston Park are limited to actions implemented by Commonwealth agencies that own or control RNE places.

Given that the ACT Government manages Weston Park and Yarralumla Nursery, rather than a Commonwealth agency, the formal listing of Weston Park in the ACT Heritage Register is critical for the

protection of the heritage values of the place. The Commonwealth's role in Weston Park relates only to works approvals by the NCA, because of its status as a designated area, as discussed previously.

### **Explanation of the Act and Heritage Registration**

The ACT Heritage Register is established under Section 20 of the Heritage Act. Weston Park has been accepted as a nomination to, but not yet listed on, the ACT Heritage Register. Many nominated 'designated area' places have not been processed for full listing because of the legislative and management complexities arising from land ownership and management responsibilities. Weston Park falls in this category.

This CMP identifies that Weston Park, including Yarralumla Nursery, could be accepted into the ACT Heritage Register as it meets criteria a, b, c, d, f, g, h, j and l (refer to Section 4.0).

Listing in the ACT Heritage Register means that a place or object:

- is of heritage significance to the people of the ACT through enriching our understanding of the ACT's history and identity;
- is legally protected under the Heritage Act, including the application of heritage guidelines; and
- requires advice by the ACT Heritage Council on development issues to improve conservation outcomes. It should be noted that as Weston Park is within a designated area, automatic notification of proposed actions to the Heritage Council is limited and may not occur.

### **Heritage Guidelines**

Places listed on the ACT Heritage Register may have directions about their conservation outlined in a heritage guideline. Heritage guidelines determine how development is governed in an area which is a heritage place, or which contains a heritage object, and they directly affect the advice given by the ACT Heritage Council to the NCA (for works approval) and ACTPLA (about the impact of development applications on heritage significance), particularly in relation to ways of avoiding or minimising the effect of a development on the heritage significance of a place or object.

Heritage guidelines may address matters such as: the demolition of registered structures, or alterations and additions to registered structures; Aboriginal heritage places and objects; natural heritage places; non-Aboriginal objects; and undertaking development affecting the heritage significance of a place (including development not requiring approval under the P&D Act).

### **Heritage Advice for Proposed Works**

The NCA grants works approvals, while ACT Heritage provides assessment advice to the NCA and ACTPLA as to whether a proposed development has the potential to affect heritage values. This advice can be provided informally from the ACT Heritage Unit or formally as part of their associated professional heritage advisory service (a TAMS initiative, referred to as the ACT Heritage Advisory Service), which provides free heritage and architectural advice and is supported by the ACT Government.

At Weston Park, seeking the advice of the ACT Heritage Advisory Service could be of assistance to TAMS managers, whereby building development has the potential to affect the heritage values. Building development or major works may include:

- works such as demolition, new buildings of any size or function (eg toilet blocks, barbeques, sheds or larger facilities, etc);
- changing the appearance of a building (eg Dispatch Offices, Nursery buildings, Hobday's Cottage);
- renewal or upgrading of play spaces;
- earthworks, removal of mature plantings, re-landscaping, unapproved burning or land clearing;
- constructing fences, bollards, walls, paving, temporary structures;
- variation to leases on the land (eg the 'Heritage Nursery', the Oaks Brasserie, miniature railway, SIEV X memorial);
- a change in use of the land for an activity not authorised by the lease; or
- use of unleased land that is not authorised by a permit or licence.

### **5.3.6 Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999**

The desktop study and visual site analysis for this CMP did not identify any threatened or endangered species in Weston Park. However, the flora and fauna species and ecological communities occurring in the ACT that are declared threatened under the EPBC Act are discussed in Section 2.4, Ecological Value and in further detail in Appendix D. There is potential for these to be present or identified in the future within Weston Park and the following legislative constraints apply to their conservation and management.

#### **Commonwealth declared threatened species/ecological communities**

The EPBC Act is the primary Commonwealth legislation for environmental protection. The EPBC Act provides for the declaration of threatened species and ecological communities and includes these as matters of national environmental significance (NES matters), for which there are special provisions in the EPBC Act in relation to the assessment of environmental impact/s.

The EPBC Act provides for the preparation of recovery plans for threatened fauna and flora (other than conservation-dependent species) and threatened ecological communities listed under the Act. The aim of a recovery plan is to maximise the long-term survival in the wild of a threatened species or ecological community. Recovery plans are binding on the Australian Government.

Once a recovery plan is in place, Australian Government agencies must act in accordance with that plan. Current recovery plans for EPBC Act listed species and ecological communities are located on the website of the Department of the Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities: <<http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/recovery-list-common.html>>. <sup>5</sup>

### **5.3.7 Nature Conservation Act 1980**

#### **ACT declared threatened species/ecological communities**

The *Nature Conservation Act 1980* is the primary legislation for nature conservation in the ACT. Action Plans have been prepared for threatened ecological communities and plant and animal species of ACT lowland grassy ecosystems (ACT Government 2004, 2005).

In the ACT, plant and animal species, as well as ecological communities, may be declared threatened under the ACT *Nature Conservation Act 1980* and/or the Commonwealth EPBC Act. Action plans (ACT)

and recovery plans (Commonwealth) are required for declared species and ecological communities. Similar provisions, including preparation of recovery plans, apply under the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995 (NSW)*. All these plans are statutory documents within their jurisdictional context. They provide a formal basis for actions directed to the conservation of species and ecological communities, including dealing with threatening processes.<sup>6</sup>

### **Strategies for managing ACT declared threatened species/ecological communities**

About 30 plant and animal species and two ecological communities have been declared as vulnerable or endangered under the *Nature Conservation Act 1980*. With the intention of integrating the conservation of threatened species with the ecological communities of which they are a part, three nature conservation strategies have been prepared for the ACT. Two of the strategies are based around the ecological communities that are declared endangered: yellow box—red gum grassy woodland and natural temperate grassland. The third strategy, which is for ACT aquatic species and the riparian zone, includes two terrestrial species declared threatened under ACT legislation.<sup>7</sup>

#### **5.3.8 Species with Cultural Heritage Value**

There are exotic and native flora and fauna species in Weston Park (namely Robinia (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) and Eastern Grey Kangaroos) which are neither threatened nor endangered but do give rise to restrictive constraints for managing their cultural heritage values. These are discussed below.

##### **Robinias—Use in the ACT**

Robinia are a listed weed species in the ACT. The ACT Weeds Advisory Group (WAG) is seeking to resolve the contentious issue of the species which has cultural heritage value in many circumstances in Canberra, including at Weston Park.

The continued protection and use of species like Robinia in formal planting, such as at Weston Park, is acceptable if appropriately managed to ensure it does not spread—allowing for recognition of its contribution to the cultural heritage values of the Park. However, until the conflict between cultural plantings and noxious weeds is resolved in the ACT (probably through an amendment to the weed regulations), the replanting of Robinia is unlawful.

##### **Grey Kangaroos—A Native Species**

The Eastern Grey Kangaroos are considered to contribute to the Park's social and cultural aspects by some employees at the Yarralumla Nursery, as well as some visitors. As a native animal, but not an endangered species, the Eastern Grey Kangaroo is protected by the provisions of the *Nature Conservation Act 1980*. There are several activities associated with the protection of native animals that are controlled and may not be undertaken without a licence from the 'Conservator' (a role specified under the Act). The activities include interference with a nest; killing; taking; keeping; selling; importing/exporting; and release from captivity.

The Eastern Grey Kangaroo population in Weston Park may need to be controlled at some point in the future. The *ACT Kangaroo Management Plan*, recently prepared in 2010 for the ACT Government, presents a holistic approach to management of wild kangaroo populations in the ACT, providing guidance to relevant land managers.<sup>8</sup>

The kangaroos at Weston Park should be recognised and managed for their community-held, cultural heritage value and contribution to the Park, rather than being removed or eradicated, because in this case they do not pose a threat to natural heritage values.<sup>9</sup>

## 5.4 Current Weston Park Management

### 5.4.1 Parks Management

TAMS manage and maintain Weston Park and Yarralumla Nursery. Consultation with government stakeholders was undertaken for this CMP to understand potential management issues at the Park. Issues, questions and opportunities for Weston Park were raised at a government stakeholder meeting in May 2010.

The broad issues raised at the meeting are included in Appendix C under C.3.6 Use and Users of Weston Park. The statements made at the consultation meeting by various participants have been transcribed as directly as possible to capture the intent of the individual participants' views. Key issues included maintenance requirements, tree management, visitor use, parking in relation to events, and a need for greater understanding of the significance of cultural plantings.

Responses that address the stakeholder issues, together with managing the heritage values of Weston Park and relevant conservation policies, are integrated throughout Sections 6.0 and 7.0 of this CMP.

### 5.4.2 Weston Park Masterplans: Past and Current

To date three masterplans have been prepared for Weston Park. These are:

- 1991 Weston Park Master Plan, Principles Plan Report, prepared by Strine Design. This report was commissioned by ACT Landscape and includes a 'Heritage Study of Weston Park Landscape' which is a report commissioned by the NCDC in 1989.
- 1999 Weston Park Master Plan Report. This report was undertaken by a former department called 'ACT Landscape', a division of 'Totalcare Industries' and is largely based on the 1991 report noted above.
- 2009 Weston Park Draft Master Plan (draft WP MP) prepared by Oxigen Landscape and Master Planners. This was commissioned by TAMS to inform the management of the Park over the next 5 to 10 years.

This CMP refers to all three masterplans; however, only the 2009 draft WP MP is discussed in detail below.

### 5.4.3 Analysis of the Draft Weston Park Masterplan (Oxigen 2009)

The 2009 draft WP MP has been reviewed to examine its recommendations and to indicate the constraints and opportunities arising, with consideration of Weston Park's heritage values established in this CMP. The draft WP MP is discussed in further detail at Appendix F of this report.

TAMS has provided a statement about the status of the draft WP MP on their website; whereby they recognise:

*that the site will require the preparation of a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) to ensure that the heritage significance of Weston Park and important components are well understood, respected and conserved in the context of known aspirations and constraints. A CMP will be required prior to*

*commencement of capital works involving new developments (not including the upgrade of existing infrastructure).*

The CMP was commissioned by TAMS to meet the obligation expressed above.

The draft WP MP provides several proposals and some provide opportunities to augment and develop the heritage values of Weston Park. However, some of the recommendations have the potential to impact upon the heritage values of Weston Park and the draft WP MP recommends that ‘further investigation as to their feasibility and economic and environmental sustainability will need to be prepared.’

The draft WP MP is a document providing the framework for ongoing management of the Park. It is the most logical planning document for community consultation and feedback to be incorporated. However, at the time the draft WP MP was prepared it did not have the benefit of a heritage assessment or conservation policies for the place. A more detailed analysis of the proposals and their viability from a heritage point of view are included in Appendix F. The information provided in this CMP could guide the revised draft WP MP so that the heritage values of Weston Park are incorporated.

Similarly, the major works infrastructure proposed in the document may need to be altered based on the recommendations of this CMP, to ensure they do not have an adverse impact on the heritage values of Weston Park. This would also involve undertaking an Aboriginal heritage assessment and archaeological survey of Weston Park (see Section 5.5).

Proposed new facilities, refurbishment and/or demolition of existing facilities should be assessed on a case by case basis to ensure heritage values of the individual elements and of the Park as a whole are not impacted.

#### **5.4.4 Masterplan Recreational Development Opportunities**

##### **Community Suggestions Included in the Masterplan**

During community consultation in 2008 for the 2009 draft WP MP, the invited community groups were asked to nominate the three most important improvements for them or their organisation to be made in Weston Park. This is outlined in the section of the draft WP MP called ‘Looking to the Future’, and it indicates several opportunities for the Park.

The common responses recorded were largely about the recreational amenity of the place. Those consistent with the heritage values of Weston Park include:

- improving park/picnic facilities such as toilets, shelter, barbecues, seating;
- maintaining the park character and amenity;
- reintroduction of play equipment and play spaces, and access to nature-based play;
- improvements to and management of movement and circulation for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles;
- (cars/coaches) in the park, including review of road alignment, parking, traffic control;
- assessing heritage values and providing multiple opportunities for interpretation and ‘reading’ the history of the park;
- improving park amenity and appearance through judicious planting and maintenance;

- improving water edge access and maintaining the informal lake edge; and
- improving accessibility and mobility.

Other community suggestions for improving infrastructure at Weston Park which are consistent with the heritage values of the Park included:

- provision of event infrastructure—natural amphitheatres with power supply;
- improvement to the amenity of the miniature railway;
- improve the underdeveloped area between the nursery and the miniature railway;
- opportunities for more commercial developments, including cafés;
- regatta facilities;
- earlier opening times;
- marketing and advertising;
- improved connectivity between the recreation path through Westbourne Woods and Weston Park; and
- removal of weed species and cleaning the shoreline.

## **5.5 Site Management Opportunities for Weston Park**

Several opportunities exist at Weston Park which support the management and conservation of the heritage values of the place. These are described below.

### **Vegetation and Tree Management**

Appropriate vegetation and tree management is vital to the conservation and maintenance of the heritage values of Weston Park. Striking the correct balance between managing cultural plantings, natural values and biodiversity interest is important and appropriate management tools are needed for the managers of the Park. The following opportunities could be considered:

- Consolidation and updating of the location and condition information for all tree plantings in Weston Park and Yarralumla Nursery. This would guide tree management and maintain records of changes to tree stock arising from loss and replanting.
- Development of strategic tree advice by developing a tree management plan and development of a detailed tree revitalisation and replacement program for tree avenues, circular plantings and individual specimen trees. This would help to plan for dying and senescent trees and would specify best-practice methodology to achieve replacement plantings and the retention of historic tree planting patterns in areas of high heritage significance.
- The continuation of tree propagation at Yarralumla Nursery to service the tree replacement program for senescent and inappropriate tree plantings.
- Development of guidelines for new tree plantings complementary to the existing landscape character and heritage values of Weston Park.

### **Operation of the Yarralumla Nursery**

The operation of Yarralumla Nursery is a key component of the heritage values of Weston Park. There are several opportunities to ensure the survival and continuation of its function; serving both the Nursery use and acting as an extension of the recreational use of Weston Park. The following opportunities could be considered:

- Retain the historic original built fabric and early layout of the Nursery (Precinct 5) and continue to operate within it, retaining the open spaces.
- The early layout extends into Precinct 6 and this should be given equal level of importance in interpretation or when examining reuse opportunities, either for recreational purposes as an extension to Weston Park or for use by the Nursery. A possible combination of recreation and nursery use and interpretation could be achieved. For example, by 'reopening' the currently unused area as a 'real-life' nursery teaching facility and/or a sustainable garden for the community.
- Continue and encourage horticultural propagation, experimentation and excellence at Yarralumla Nursery, including the maintenance and interpretation of historic test plots and pocket gardens within, and adjacent to, the Nursery (in Precinct 6).
- Continue a commercial seedling and plant outlet facility to provide the Canberra community with locally produced plants, in conjunction with the promotion of Yarralumla Nursery produce as a superior 'brand' product.
- Reinstate the existing pool area for aquatic plants and as a research facility within the Nursery.
- Continue on-site propagation and experimentation at Yarralumla Nursery, which includes an education and/or employment program for special needs individuals within the Canberra community.
- Develop a propagation program for early Canberra strains of particular species for heritage garden restoration and plant conservation projects.
- Consolidate the management and conservation of the historic planting records and seed collection at Yarralumla Nursery so that they may be easily used for landscape conservation and management at Weston Park and throughout the wider Canberra landscape.
- Continue to record, collate and keep archival records of plant propagation and experimentation results at Yarralumla Nursery and continue the collection of significant seed resources.
- Maintain the commercial leases of the Oaks Brasserie within Hobdays Cottage and the Nursery, provided the heritage values of the Weston Park are conserved.

### **Land and Habitat Management**

The retention and management of the following land and habitat aspects of Weston Park are important to the heritage values. The following opportunities could be considered:

- Maintain the diversity of wildlife habitats through landscape management, including the migration pathways.

- Maintain the informal lake edge in a variety of styles suited to wildlife and visitor amenity.
- Develop water conservation, runoff and irrigation strategies to meet water quality objectives and Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) methods in line with the Lake Burley Griffin Water Quality Management Plan, prepared by the NCA in 2004.
- Develop and implement landscape maintenance and weed management strategies, with monitoring as appropriate.
- Integrate clear and functional decision-making strategies for managing the heritage values with existing maintenance procedures at Weston Park.

### **Aboriginal Heritage Assessment and Non-Aboriginal Archaeology**

A holistic survey across Weston Park for potential Aboriginal sites, Aboriginal cultural heritage values and non-Aboriginal archaeology would assist TAMS in all future project planning, especially prior to any new work being proposed and seeking works approvals from the NCA.

Heritage advice should be sought early when planning for future new works that involve ground disturbance, including those identified in the draft WP MP. This would enable sensitive archaeological areas to be identified and mitigation strategies to be put in place as needed.

### **Revision and Finalisation of the Masterplan**

Ensure the draft WP MP is revised, finalised and implemented with reference to the heritage values of Weston Park. The following opportunities for planning and development could be considered for inclusion in the revised document:

- Develop interpretation, recreational facilities, new development, provision of improved, consistent and informally integrated visitor facilities such as toilets, barbecues, picnic tables, benches and shelters. They should be consistent across the site and complementary to the heritage values of the park.
- Conserve the park character and heritage values while delivering innovative improvements to the horticultural and recreational amenity of the Nursery and Weston Park.
- Maintain and interpret the symbiotic relationship (physical and historic) and landscape character that connects the Yarralumla Nursery and the recreational opportunities of Weston Park.
- Avoid a commercial or overdeveloped character, by minimising carparking, new development or permanent event structures.
- Develop an interpretation centre which is relevant to and in keeping with the landscape character and the heritage values of Weston Park, and can be supportive of the commercial operation of Yarralumla Nursery.
- Provide a variety of 'low-key' areas to cater for community gatherings and recreation.
- Revitalise the innovative recreational amenity—further enhancing the children's play spaces and play pond, encouraging nature, water and adventure play, and including the upgrade of existing beaches for swimming.

- Revitalise the former nursery area (near the miniature railway) and former maze for recreational 'spaces'. Combine these with interpretation of the nursery, such as community education programs or use as a sustainable garden by the community.
- Review the car traffic flow and parking provisions to ensure they are in keeping with the heritage values of the site. For example, this could include small parking nodes off Weston Park Road rather than single large parking areas, thus avoiding intrusive parking patterns along the road—the ad hoc parking currently compacts the tree root zone of trees.
- Upgrade / introduce new facilities for formal recreation use. Have defined event spaces, access roads and parking provision consistent with heritage values.
- Extend access hours to Weston Park while maintaining security and safety for public amenities and the landscape.
- Introduce passive recreational functions of Weston Park which provide interpretation opportunity—secluded areas and informal walking / cycle tracks consistent with the heritage values of the park and.
- Introduce opportunities for artworks in Weston Park which complement (are not intrusive) to the heritage values of the park. These could be similar to those commissioned sculptures by Australian artists and located in Commonwealth Park and the ANU at Acton Peninsula. Artworks could be associated with an interpretation and communication strategy.
- Memorials should be consistent with the TAMS Memorials Policy (March 2005). Memorials can include fountains, statues, sculptures, plaques, murals, public artworks and plants.

## 5.6 Landscape Opportunities in the Individual Precincts

### Precinct 1—the Entry Zone

In Precinct 1, the entry to Weston Park is in close proximity to adjacent residential areas. In its current form the entry to the site is not performing well, yet its location is ideal for orienting visitors and increasing the awareness of the heritage values of Weston Park. A dog exercise area has also been recently introduced adjacent to Banks Street and car parking has become random and intrusive to the entry to Weston Park.

There is an opportunity to formalise and design a complementary 'entry' which achieves a more defined entry route through the Park and the Nursery. For example, the entry road requires adjustment to align it with the commencement of the double avenue of cedars (currently the road misses the start of the avenue of trees, shown as intrusive on Figure 4.1). Provided the realignment of the road does not adversely impact the trees, a new entry road will remove the difficult and unsafe junction into the Nursery and improve pedestrian safety for local residents wishing to enter the park by foot.

### Precinct 2—Nursery Park and The Ramble

In Precinct 2, with an increase in park visitation and a focus on interpretation in the precinct, there is an opportunity to upgrade the facilities and provide interpretation of the English Garden's cultural and horticultural heritage.

The area is currently underutilised, yet provides the ideal location to connect pedestrian and cycle paths from the English Garden through to The Ramble. The connection via The Ramble to the West Basin

should be addressed in the short term to facilitate access, and to link with the proposed picnic areas located around Nursery Bay (which incidentally is one of the more sheltered areas of the Park).

### **Precinct 3—The Plateau, The Elms (Elm avenue) and Weston Park Road**

In Precinct 3, the importance of Weston Park Road as the central spine is crucial to retaining the historic structure of the Park. Currently the carparking in the outer row of the avenue is impacting tree roots by compaction. Any additional cross-links and loop roads will erode the importance of the avenue. The Elm avenue in its current unformed and unsealed state is characteristic of the rural character of the early pastoral phase, prior to Canberra's establishment. There is an opportunity to maintain and interpret this character and to provide a pedestrian and cycle thoroughfare.

The re-alignment of Weston Park Road and the trees at the boundary of Precinct 3 and Precinct 1 should be considered if resources allows. This would smooth out the several bends in the road, realign the side road to Hobday's Cottage (making this intersection safer), and perhaps most significantly will restore the original vision for the road, improving the arrival experience for visitors.

### **Precinct 4—The Plateau, East Bank and East Basin**

Precinct 4 is a well-utilised area within Weston Park for its beach and water-based recreational facilities. It is important to provide updated facilities to maintain visitor interest.

### **Precinct 5—Yarralumla Nursery**

In Precinct 5 the Yarralumla Nursery is a key element of the heritage values of the Park. It is a historically important facility within Weston Park, as a primary source of trees for both public and private plantings across Canberra, and it has strong physical and research connections to Weston Park. These heritage values provide ample opportunities for interpretation. An efficient, successful and visible nursery will maintain the public perception of Weston Park as a vibrant and interesting destination.

### **Precinct 6—West Basin**

Precinct 6 is a large precinct characterised in part by the exotic/wild character of the lake edge around Nursery Bay and a large tract of under-utilised woodland and grassland. The larger expanse of the precinct is the location of former nursery plots and stands of experimental plantings. The area is ideal for further expansion of the Nursery for complementary uses, interpretation for public appreciation or opportunities for recreation and events (discussed in Section 5.5, operation of the Yarralumla Nursery).

The oak and conifer stands are dense and require thinning, and the foreshore, basin, and wetland area in this precinct require some maintenance in order to create a useable park environment. Access routes between Weston Park Road and the lake edge through to The Ramble would also increase the useability of this part of the Park.

### **Precinct 7—The Pond, West Bank and The Train (Miniature Railway)**

Precinct 7 is a highly used precinct of the park with a multitude of picnic areas, children's play facilities and other park elements. The miniature railway in this precinct offers opportunities to consolidate the precinct as a central focus of recreation. As part of an ongoing visitation improvement program at Weston Park, this precinct would need to be upgraded in advance of other precincts to restore its role as the central tourist amenity hub of Weston Park.

## **Precinct 8—West Yarralumla Peninsula and East Yarralumla Peninsula & Precinct 9: Sub-Precincts—Kurrajong Point**

In Precincts 8 and 9 there are many facilities and park elements as well as the central focus of Weston Park Road ending at Kurrajong Point. The groups of kangaroos, open space for recreation, beach areas for swimming, natural foreshore areas for fishing, vistas to Black Mountain, grassland and circular plantings provide a special place for visitors, as well as an 'end' to the park. The area's maintenance is critical to the park's heritage values.

### **5.7 Interpretation and Management Opportunities at Weston Park**

Developing a detailed interpretation and communication strategy would help to identify timing for the interpretation and actions for implementation. Provided resources were available, a strategy could be linked with the broader conservation management of the park, funding opportunities and development timetables. There are many opportunities for interpretation at Weston Park and the possible directions are listed below:

- Grow existing stakeholder commitment and support for the conservation of Weston Park's heritage values through stakeholder involvement in planning and implementation of upgraded facilities and special events. Refer to the consultation undertaken for this CMP (Appendix C) and the draft WP MP.
- Involve the wider community in planning for Weston Park so that their understanding of the heritage values at Weston Park is increased, and they are encouraged to conserve and celebrate those values.
- Develop new audiences and client groups for the opportunities and facilities that Weston Park offers to the Canberra community. This could include upgrading existing facilities, in keeping with heritage values and as indicated by consumer research.
- Commemorate the achievements of Canberra's landscape planners, foresters, botanists and horticulturalists—continue naming parts of the Park after important people associated with the area (eg Hobday's Cottage). The late Robert Boden is a possible choice for commemoration at the park where he conducted horticultural experiments.
- The Yarralumla Nursery could celebrate the research potential of the horticultural collections in the Park and at Yarralumla Nursery. This could include conservation and interpretation of nursery records, seed banks (and their continued use in the landscaping of Canberra), Nursery and garden test and hybridization plots, as well as developing and supporting new research initiatives.
- Provide opportunities to educate the community about the different aesthetic approaches to landscape design used in Canberra and the effective use and purpose of different plants in the landscape—compare and contrast approaches taken by Griffins, Weston, Pryor, Clough and others who have shaped our city and the changing fashions through time (eg style of the Cedar and Elm avenues, English Garden, Kurrajong Point, etc).
- Integrate with existing Healthy Parks Healthy People initiatives and promote the healing qualities of nature and working with plants, as demonstrated through the special employment opportunities offered at the Yarralumla Nursery over many years.

- Integrate with existing water conservation programs through a study of the importance of Yarralumla Nursery in the afforestation of the water catchment of the ACT.
- Integrate with existing eco-conservation/green strategies by providing a living example of how a cleared landscape can be rehabilitated and provide both an aesthetically pleasing amenity and multiple habitats—school curriculum links.
- Form links with existing nature conservation groups and initiatives for the study of wildlife in Canberra—for example ornithologists, weed control groups, ranger-led night-time bush walks for possum/owl spotting.
- Create links with existing groups, such as the Friends of the Arboreta, who operate walks through Westbourne Woods with a wide range of tree appreciation themes, and link to street tree issues.
- Forge links with the National Arboretum which is clearly in view of Weston Park.
- Develop links with and support from (for example) the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) Horticulture Department, University of Canberra's Landscape Architecture faculty, the Donald Horne Institute for Cultural Heritage, ANU Australian Forestry School and the Australian National Botanic Gardens.
- Use Weston Park to stimulate collection of stories about the importance of the lake and lakeshore parks to the Canberra community.
- Develop an interpretative centre/education facility, possibly within an existing building. Implement a program of interpretation and events to celebrate the importance of Weston Park and Yarralumla Nursery in the development of Canberra's urban landscape and bush setting.
- Develop a comprehensive heritage conservation and interpretation program to secure, retain, enhance and celebrate the identified heritage values of the whole site.

## 5.8 Vision for the Future

The historical continuity of Yarralumla Nursery for horticultural uses and Weston Park as an open space for recreation has been constant in Canberra's history—this site has retained a high degree of integrity since its establishment. The early pastoral use, the implementation of Weston's plantings following Griffins plans for Canberra, the role of the Nursery and the recreational use at the time the lake was filled are all important factors in the development of Weston Park and physical evidence of all phases remains today. These factors give rise to a range of constraints and opportunities for the future conservation and interpretation of Weston Park. The next two sections provide the policies which will guide an appropriate direction for conserving, maintaining and interpreting the key heritage values and landscape characteristics of the place.

## 5.9 Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> ACT Legislation Register, *Planning and Development Act*, <http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2007-24/current/pdf/2007-24.pdf>  
Accessed 25 September 2009.
- <sup>2</sup> ACT dual Planning System 2009, <http://www.actpla.act.gov.au/>
- <sup>3</sup> ACTPLA 2009, <http://www.actpla.act.gov.au>.
- <sup>4</sup> NCAs Application for Works/Development Approval, <http://www.nationalcapital.gov.au/>
- <sup>5</sup> ACT Kangaroo Management Plan, 2010, p.23.
- <sup>6</sup> ACT Kangaroo Management Plan, 2010, p.21.
- <sup>7</sup> ACT Kangaroo Management Plan, 2010, p.21-22.
- <sup>8</sup> ACT Kangaroo Management Plan, 2010, p.16
- <sup>9</sup> Advice from Geoff Butler + Associates for this CMP.



## **6.0 Conservation Policies for Weston Park**

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### **6.1 Introduction**

#### **6.1.1 Conservation Policy Discussion**

The development of conservation policy for a heritage place starts with the identification of its heritage significance and the obligations that arise from that significance. The key issues and opportunities relating to the future management of that place are then considered in stating conservation policy.

The overall conservation policy contained in this CMP ensures that an appropriate management regime is in place to conserve and interpret the heritage values of Weston Park. These individual policies and actions are recommendations rather than prescriptions and it is recognised that their implementation is dependant on the extent of resources available to the relevant land managers. This is also reflected in the identified timing explained below in Section 6.1.3.

The many steps and recommendations included in the policy will lead to the complete protection and conservation of Weston Park. The key conservation principles underpinning all the policies are:

- The nomination and registration of Weston Park and Yarralumla Nursery on the ACT Heritage Register. This will help provide a statutory basis for conservation of the heritage values important to the ACT community.
- Conservation and interpretation of the symbiotic relationship between Yarralumla Nursery and Weston Park, which is critical to the future recognition and management of the heritage values of the Park. The development of an interpretation and communication strategy will be the basis for several conservation and management decisions of the place.
- Conservation of the landscape character, the buildings, character of the precincts and elements of Exceptional, High and Moderate significance throughout Weston Park, including Yarralumla Nursery, Hobday's Cottage and the English Garden.
- To develop and maintain a consistent approach for architectural elements, including the park benches, barbeque areas, picnic tables, signage, and toilet amenities.
- To integrate heritage management with the existing approval processes within TAMS. An approach which is consistent with existing TAMS management procedures (for design, construction and maintenance in Weston Park) and this CMP would help to define the statutory process, works approvals through the NCA and the assessment of heritage impacts from proposed works or activities. This would also help TAMS make decisions internally and in part minimise the requirement for external heritage advice for some matters.
- To revise and finalise the 2009 draft WP MP so that there is greater certainty for recreation, events and nursery uses to continue in the future at Weston Park.

#### **6.1.2 Broad Conservation Policies**

The purpose of the conservation policies set out in this section is to provide guidance for the future management and conservation of the heritage values of Weston Park, as described in Section 4.0.

The following tables include broad conservation policies and actions for the whole of Weston Park. The implementation of the policies and actions will ensure that TAMS is able to effectively conserve the identified heritage values of Weston Park and manage change in a positive way for future generations.

The key responsibility for implementation, review and monitoring of the CMP lies with TAMS.

The tables are divided into eight key policy areas:

1. Conservation of Heritage Values;
2. Management Process (Decision-Making Procedures);
3. Interpretation;
4. Use and Access;
5. Planning and Approvals;
6. Documentation, Monitoring and Review;
7. Stakeholder Consultation and Involvement; and
8. Research and Training.

Specific policies and actions for the individual precincts of the Park are discussed in detail in Section 7.0.

### 6.1.3 Timing of Actions

The actions are listed in three main timing categories of conservation actions and include short-, medium- and long-term time frames intended to provide a priority hierarchy for actions to be implemented. Additional timing parameters include an 'as required' category and an 'ongoing basis' category. Many of the conservation actions included in this section have resourcing implications for TAMS, so the recommended timing of actions will be dependant upon planning for, and seeking resources in, the future budget cycles. The tables below provide the ideal timing in relation to the relative importance of the conservation action.

The main categories are as follows:

- **Short term:** These include the urgent conservation and maintenance actions that should be undertaken within a 12-month timeframe. Other actions which are less urgent but are required to ensure the heritage values are conserved and improve the amenity of Weston Park should be undertaken within 24 months.
- **Medium term:** Actions in the medium-term category of a 2–5-year timeframe. Forward planning to secure resources would enable implementation of these actions within the medium-term timeframe. For example, the revision and finalisation of the site Masterplan would be required in this timeframe.
- **Long term:** These actions require implementation within a 5–10-year timeframe and may involve the implementation of items of a lower priority or larger proposals or actions outlined in a final Masterplan.

The policies take into account the relevant constraints and opportunities detailed in Section 5.0. Burra Charter terminology and principles have been used in formulating the policies.<sup>1</sup> The management and maintenance of individual trees and tree groups are described in detail in Appendix D, the Tree Asset Report.

For Weston Park, the key obligations arising from its significance include recognising the first value of the Yarralumla Nursery horticultural and research function, together with the cultural landscape and recreational use of Weston Park as a whole.

The key management issues facing Weston Park and the objective of the future management of the place is to ensure the survival of the Nursery and the Park as physical evidence of the establishment and implementation of Griffin's plan for Canberra.

## 6.2 Conservation Policies and Actions

### 6.2.1 Conservation of Heritage Values

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
1. Conserve, retain and manage all the identified heritage values and key attributes which are embodied in the cultural landscape of Weston Park	Weston Park is a place of heritage value to the ACT. This CMP provides guidance about how the heritage values should be conserved, retained, managed and interpreted.	Ongoing & Short term: within 12 months.
	The sum of all heritage values—attributes and elements within Weston Park, including the planned, built and landscape elements—form the important cultural landscape and should be conserved.	Ongoing
	Refer to the specific conservation policies in Section 7.0 for management of the precincts.	Refer to Section 7.0
2. Conserve and interpret the different phases of Weston Park's history.	Conserve the important historic layers, different phases of development and the extant physical evidence of the Weston Park.	Ongoing
	Identify and conserve Aboriginal and early European archaeological cultural heritage if these remain within Weston Park	Ongoing
	Conserve and retain the elements of the most distinctive early historic layer of the Weston Park landscape which includes: the older tree plantations, such as the Elm avenue, the mixed species that line the old entry drive, the ridgetop avenue of cedars and robinias along Weston Park Road, the remaining lines of shelterbelt plantings and the experimental eucalypt circles.	Ongoing
3. Conserve and retain the landscape character and built elements of Weston Park.	Continue to manage the landscape form and character with lake edge cultural plantings, protected inlets, including Nursery Bay, mature plantings of experimental circular eucalypt groups, avenues and windbreaks, historic access ways and contrasts of grassed areas and plantations.	Ongoing
	Conserve, retain and upgrade the landscape areas and precincts of Weston Park for passive recreational use and support events in accordance with the policies in Section 7.0.	Ongoing
	Conserve, retain and upgrade the built facilities of Weston Park with reference to general conservation policies for	As required.

**6.2.1 Conservation of Heritage Values**

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
	their level of significance. Refer to Appendix A for an inventory of built elements in Weston Park.	
4. Conserve the buildings and elements of Exceptional, High and Moderate significance and maintain a consistent approach for architectural elements in the precincts (and the whole of Weston Park).	The buildings and elements of Exceptional, High and Moderate significance require conservation and management planning to ensure appropriate uses are maintained.	Ongoing
	The architectural elements, including furniture, fencing and signage, should be in accordance with a designed and consistent Weston Park palette.	Short term: within 24 months.
5. Conserve the historic, culturally important, rare and uncommon surviving plantings and their seeds.	Conserve, retain, reconstruct and maintain the significant cultivated tree features of Weston Park with a focus on the influence of Griffin and Thomas Weston.	Ongoing
	Make a record and conserve the existing seed collection and seed types.	Ongoing
	Implement a program for the conservation of the seed collection, recording, storage and propagation.	Short term: within 24 months.
	List the culturally significant and commonly occurring species at Weston Park from which future seed selections and propagation can be made.	Short term: within 24 months.
6. Continue to use plant species consistent with the heritage values of Weston Park.	Where possible use propagated seeds and relevant species for future planting in the Park. Refer to Appendix D for relevant plant species	Short term: within 24 months.
	Plan for succession planting using propagules from the parent plants. Where necessary/possible, the same genetic stock of trees of high heritage and cultural value should be used in Weston Park.	Ongoing
	New plantings that are introduced should be the same as the original cultural planting species, and augment or enhance the historic phases and aesthetic landscape character of the Weston Park.	Ongoing
	Where new plantings are introduced they should reinforce the historic phases and complement the existing landscape character, main planting periods and heritage values of Weston Park.	Ongoing
7. Prepare a tree management plan for Weston Park.	Prepare a tree management plan which includes a tree replacement program for senescent trees. A tree management plan should use best-practice methodology to achieve replacement plantings for old and dying trees and include guidelines for new tree plantings complementary to the existing landscape character and heritage values.	Short term: within 24 months
	Refer to the Tree and Ecological Assets Report included in Appendix D and take into account the Burra Charter for conservation of heritage values when preparing a tree	As required

### 6.2.1 Conservation of Heritage Values

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
	management plan.	
	Use plant species relevant or the same as those used in the main planting periods, taking into account the original trial and research focus of Yarralumla Nursery and Weston Park.	Ongoing
	Any new plantings or replacement plantings should reinforce, rather than detract from the cultural heritage values of Weston Park.	Ongoing
8. Remove and replace dead, dying or inappropriate trees based on the tree management plan.	Remove and replace dead, dying or inappropriate trees, either because of their location or species. Note: if an original species of cultural planting cannot be replanted for some reason that has been thoroughly investigated, consider alternative trees which reflect the form and design intent of the original species.	Ongoing
9. Avoid inappropriate infill plantings and remove weeds from the lake edge.	Avoid inappropriate infill plantings in the avenues. Where it is appropriate ensure maintenance and removal weeds, regrowth and suckers from the lake edge (refer to Appendix D for guidance about maintaining habitats).	Ongoing
10. Continue to keep records of all tree removals and replacement programs.	Maintain and keep records for all tree removals and replacements, including precise locations (refer also to policies for Documentation, Monitoring and Review).	Ongoing
11. Conserve the ecological values in Weston Park, so these are balanced with the cultural heritage values of the landscape.	Seek technical advice for management activities that may affect existing native vegetation and use ecological and/or heritage advisory services where there is any uncertainty in management decisions.	Ongoing
	Undertake weed monitoring and removals programs on an annual basis, especially for any potential weed species, suckers and regrowth within the riparian zone of Lake Burley Griffin.	Ongoing on an annual basis.
12. Undertake regular maintenance of Weston Park; the built and landscape elements.	Regular cyclical maintenance programs, consistent with the heritage values of Weston Park, should be developed and implemented as resources are available.	Short term: within 24 months

### 6.2.2 Management Process (Decision-Making Procedures)

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
13. Comply with any legislative requirements for managing a place with heritage values in the ACT.	Weston Park and Yarralumla Nursery should be nominated to the ACT Heritage Register by TAMS, as the managers of the place. The nomination should be based on the assessment in this CMP.	Short term: within 12 months
	If/when the place is included on the ACT Heritage Register then management of Weston Park should comply with the <i>Heritage Act 2004</i> (ACT).	Ongoing.

**6.2.2 Management Process (Decision-Making Procedures)**

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
	Manage and conserve Weston Park's specified land use as 'open space' in accordance with the National Capital Plan's Land Use Policy which states that 'Weston Park will continue to be predominantly an urban recreation park with beachside swimming, special playgrounds, and barbecue areas. <sup>2</sup>	Ongoing.
	All CMPs, including this one for Weston Park, should be reviewed regularly—at least every 5-10 years, or if there are any major changes to the place or to reflect any future amendments to relevant legislation.	As required (every 5-10 years)
14. Integrate heritage management with existing TAMS approval processes at Weston Park.	Integrate heritage management and decisions about heritage values with the existing TAMS procedures and processes. Refer to Appendix G for a sample heritage management and decision-making process flowchart.	Ongoing
	Retain documents and other records about management decisions and actions relating to the heritage values of Weston Park.	Ongoing
15. Include a guideline in TAMS processes and procedures for consistent decision making about identifying and managing the heritage values of Weston Park.	Continue to develop, integrate and implement a process and guidelines for consistent decision making about activities and works that have potential to affect heritage values in Weston Park, including for managing, consultation, approvals as well as internal and external agency coordination.	Short term: within 24 months & Ongoing
16. Include heritage management tools in TAMS processes, procedures and guidelines.	<p>Develop a flowchart and checklist as a heritage management decision-making tool with reference to Policy 15 above.</p> <p>Review and continue to develop existing approval forms that can be signed off to show the process has been followed.</p> <p>Include the 'activity consent form' in works and management records and documentation.</p> <p>The consent information would not replace the existing standard legislative requirements to seek ACTPLA or NCA works approval.</p>	Short term: within 24 months

### 6.2.2 Management Process (Decision-Making Procedures)

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
	<p>A revised or new consent form which addresses the management requirements for the heritage values could include instructions and space for proponents to complete the following key requirements and questions about heritage issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify potential heritage values and possible heritage impacts arising from the proposed action.</li> <li>Outline all alternatives that have been explored.</li> <li>Indicate mitigative actions for activities that may have an adverse impact on heritage values.</li> <li>Have key stakeholders been identified and consulted?</li> <li>Is professional heritage advice needed to help make a decision?</li> </ul>	Short term: within 24 months
17. Engage experts from a range of specialised disciplines to provide heritage advice.	Seek expert advice if required and as resources permit when a decision is needed, but cannot be made internally, about potential effect of works or management on heritage values.	As required
	If necessary, seek the advice of the ACT Heritage Unit, ACT Heritage Advisory Service and/or the NCA for heritage and cultural landscape advice, including advice about potential impacts on historic and Aboriginal heritage values at Weston Park.	As required
	Maintain a list of experienced heritage and landscape specialists who can assist with conservation, management planning and interpretation of Weston Park.	Short term: within 24 months.
	Seek heritage advice early in the development of complex or difficult projects at Weston Park.	As required
18. Integrate appropriate management procedures with existing procedures at Weston Park to conserve the heritage values in Weston Park.	Integrated procedures for cyclical maintenance and management will ensure Weston Park's heritage values are conserved. Subject to availability, secure funding for projects which includes the management of historic and Aboriginal heritage values, and where possible make resources available on an ongoing basis.	Ongoing
	The heritage value of newly discovered landscape or built evidence, such as an unforeseen survival of early building fabric or archaeological remnants, should be assessed prior to making decisions about its future management.	As required
	The CMP may need to be reviewed should new research or physical evidence be discovered which has implications upon the heritage values of Weston Park.	As required
19. Ensure existing and future leases and associated functions within Weston Park and Yarralumla Nursery are	Existing and future leases in Weston Park should be consistent with the heritage values and this CMP, and should involve a use which complements the heritage values of the place.	As required

### 6.2.2 Management Process (Decision-Making Procedures)

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
consistent with the heritage values.	A lease agreement for any part of Weston Park or Yarralumla Nursery should include provisions to ensure that the management by the lessee is in keeping with the heritage values of the place and this CMP.	As required
	Proposed alterations, changes to the landscape or building works to suit the needs of the lessee should be treated cautiously to avoid make decisions about proposals which may be for relatively short-term benefits, could be incrementally damaging and could adversely impact the heritage values of Weston Park.	As required
	Any proposed changes should not adversely impact the heritage values of Weston Park. Proposed changes could include new development, alterations to the landscape, introducing new plantings, event infrastructure, changes to the traffic pattern or lease arrangements.	As required
20. Revise and finalise the 2009 draft WP MP.	The draft WP MP should be revised so that the heritage values and policy identified in this CMP are reflected in the finalised masterplan.	Short term: within 24 months
21. Conserve the heritage values of Weston Park in accordance with the policies in the CMP.	A consistent approach to the management of the heritage values of the whole site of Weston Park should be applied, based on the policies in this section and with the specific policies included in Section 7.0.	As required
	Refer to graded level of significance for elements of Weston Park and for their tolerance for change to guide appropriate decision making.	As required
22. Assess the heritage impacts of all future proposals for development and/or changes to the landscape character.	Refer to the consent/activity proposal process above and seek professional heritage and cultural landscape advice if necessary. Undertake heritage impact assessments early for proposed actions at Weston Park and Yarralumla Nursery, including proposals in the revised draft WP MP or event planning or infrastructure.	As required
23. Events in Weston Park should be encouraged.	Continue to allow events in Weston Park that are in keeping with the heritage values and do not impact on the heritage values of the place.  Event infrastructure should be kept to a minimum and may involve improvements to access, carparking and public transport.	As required
24. Maintain and augment social and community-held values of Weston Park.	The social values and community-held heritage values of Weston Park (refer to Section 4.0 and the analysis included in Appendix C), should be maintained.  The conservation policies which address the community-held values are included in Section 7.0. Generally, the policies seek to improve the park amenity by proposing to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• renew park/picnic facilities such as toilets, shelter, barbeques and seating;</li> <li>• restore and reintroduce play equipment, play spaces and access to nature-based play. This should be guided by Australian Standards and Codes for safety current at the time of installation.</li> </ul>	As required

### 6.2.2 Management Process (Decision-Making Procedures)

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>address the road alignment, parking, traffic control;</li> <li>provide improved access to the lake edge; and</li> <li>retain the informal lake edge.</li> </ul>	
25. Continue to undertake and foster horticultural and historic research.	Continue to encourage research into the horticultural heritage values and propagation potential at Weston Park and Yarralumla Nursery.	Ongoing

### 6.2.3 Interpretation

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
26. Prepare an interpretation and communication strategy for Weston Park.	An interpretation and communication strategy—to investigate methods of interpreting and presenting the heritage values of Weston Park to visitors and to the people of the ACT generally—should be prepared, subject to funding, as a valuable management tool.	Short term: within 24 months
	A strategy for interpretation and communication should help to identify the key roles and process for consultation and actions for implementation, such as signage and walking trails. Use a range of media, including published material, online material and signage as part of the strategy.	Short term: within 24 months
	Consult and involve stakeholders in the development of the interpretation and communication strategy and specific interpretation initiatives.	As required
27. Include key interpretation strategies which demonstrate links to the historic phases of Weston Park and to the establishment of Canberra.	<p>Key messages in the interpretation and communication strategy should explain or demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the historic phases and development of Weston Park, Yarralumla Nursery and links to the establishment of Canberra based on Griffin's plans;</li> <li>the relationship between Yarralumla Nursery and Weston Park and the focus of horticultural and forestry experimentation work as well as the plant hybridisation research;</li> <li>research into the contribution of numerous influential individuals to Weston Park's establishment;</li> <li>interpreting aspects of the significant cultivated trees and plantings and include appropriate signage at vantage points near trees;</li> <li>the collective value of Weston Park as a surviving early landscape demonstrating Canberra's establishment and formative period; and</li> <li>the development of the NCDC and filling of Lake Burley Griffin as a formative component of the development of Weston Park for its recreational function.</li> </ul>	Short term: within 24 months

**6.2.3 Interpretation**

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
28. Interpretation of Weston Park should seek opportunities to link with the interpretation of other Canberra institutions and Griffin's planning ideals.	<p>The research association with other Canberra institutions and their links to Weston Park and Yarralumla Nursery should be interpreted. Interpretation opportunities could include links to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Westbourne Woods, the Forestry School site and the Royal Canberra Golf Course;</li> <li>horticultural and educational institutions such as the Australian National Botanic Gardens and the ANU (the Australian Forestry School);</li> <li>Griffin's planning for Canberra and TCG Weston's implementation at Weston Park (eg plant trialling, hybridisation, production, establishment and maintenance); and</li> <li>wider ACT events such as Heritage Week should be investigated.</li> </ul>	Short term: within 24 months
29. Investigate opportunities for an interpretation centre which could present the heritage values of Weston Park and links to other Canberra parks and gardens.	<p>Investigate the need and benefits for developing an interpretation centre in, or near, Weston Park which has a broader scope for informing the public about Canberra's Parks and Gardens.</p> <p>This may include investigating or adapting existing facilities at Weston Park or the Nursery.</p>	Medium term: 2-5 years
30. Showcase the heritage values of Weston Park.	Update the TAMS website as an important means of showcasing the heritage values of Weston Park.	Medium term: 2-5 years
	Prepare interpretation, promotional material and/or an exhibition about the heritage values of Weston Park, primarily its important historic connection to the establishment of Canberra.	Medium term: 2-5 years

**6.2.4 Use and Access**

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
31. Conserve and maintain the combination of the use and function of Weston Park for recreation and the Yarralumla Nursery as a government nursery.	Maintain the experimental and horticultural research function of Yarralumla Nursery and continue to link the historic layout of the nursery with the open space areas of Weston Park (refer to Research and Training policies below).	Ongoing
32. Conserve and retain the passive recreational areas of Weston Park.	Maintain the informal leisure and passive recreation use as the primary function of Weston Park and continue to respect the landscape qualities of the place as a whole.	Ongoing
	Ensure Weston Park is retained as a place for family and social gatherings, a place for play, a place for informal leisure (walking, viewing, art, etc), a place for special occasions, for family celebrations (including weddings), and commemorations.	Ongoing

### 6.2.4 Use and Access

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
33. Infrastructure for recreation should be in keeping with the heritage values of Weston Park.	Introduce new infrastructure which is in keeping with the heritage values and supports the recreational function of Weston Park, such as creative, adventure-play features—the play spaces designed to capture the imagination of children to enable them to create their own forms of play.	Medium term: 2-5 years.
	Retain dedicated play spaces within Weston Park and the open spaces suited to informal games and play as well as constructed play spaces.	Medium term: 2-5 years.
	New infrastructure should be complementary to the heritage values of its landscape character and not dominate the landscape or detract from the experience of Weston Park as a free, equitable and accessible public landscape resource.	As required.
34. Continue to provide free public access to Weston Park and Yarralumla Nursery.	Free, public and equitable access to the place and the collection should be maintained as integral to the conservation of the heritage values of the place.	Ongoing.
	Ensure that parking and traffic arrangements do not have an adverse impact on the landscape character of Weston Park.	Ongoing.
	Encourage pedestrian and public transport access to Weston Park.	Ongoing.
35. Maintain and manage event planning in accordance with the heritage values of Weston Park	Ensure events continue in Weston Park and that new facilities do not adversely impact the heritage values of the place.	Ongoing
	Development of sustainable event infrastructure, such as appropriate parking locations, toilet and power facilities, should be planned for in the revised draft WP MP.	Short term: within 24 months.
36. Undertake a traffic study.	<p>A traffic study should be developed to investigate solutions to traffic access to the park, public transport, carparking, event transport and reducing possible traffic issues during peak event usage.</p> <p>A traffic study should be undertaken to inform the revised draft WP MP, prior to its completion.</p> <p>Potential sites for carparking should be investigated to ensure they do not conflict with existing trees and potential sites for replacement trees to ensure the heritage values of Weston Park are retained.</p>	Medium term: 2-5 years.
37. Protect and monitor native flora and fauna species in Weston Park.	Protect the habitat for locally indigenous flora and fauna. Should threatened or endangered species be discovered in Weston Park ecological advice should be sought about conservation and protection.	Ongoing
	Maintain Weston Park as a wildlife corridor for native species.	Ongoing
	Continue to manage a controlled population of kangaroos in Weston Park. Refer to the ACT Kangaroo Management Plan (TAMS, 2008) for guidance.	Ongoing

**6.2.4 Use and Access**

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
38. The introduction of memorials at Weston Park should be consistent with the TAMS Memorial Policy as well as relevant to maintaining the heritage values of Weston Park.	Any proposed future memorials for Weston Park should be consistent with the TAMS Memorial Policy.	As required.
	The SIEV X memorial has gained public support for retention in Weston Park; however, it is not consistent with the TAMS Memorial Policy and does not have a direct association with Weston Park.  Ideally an alternative location should be found for the memorial. However, if a decision is made to extend the lease, given the contemporary social values of the memorial, it should be contained and not extend beyond its existing layout.	As required.
39. Allow limited art installations where they complement or are consistent with the heritage values of Weston Park.	Art installations and commissioned sculptures could be introduced in Weston Park where they complement or are consistent with the heritage values. For example, there are art installations and commissioned art works in Commonwealth Park and the Australian National University's sculpture park at the Acton peninsula.	As required.
	Appropriate locations should be examined and selected (with heritage advice) for new installations so they are complementary to and do not adversely impact the heritage values.	As required.

**6.2.5 Planning and Approvals**

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
40. Seek endorsement of the CMP from the ACT Heritage Council.	The ACT Heritage Council should formally adopt this CMP for the management of heritage values at Weston Park.	Short term: within 12 months
41. TAMS should adopt the CMP for management decisions.	The CMP should be adopted by TAMS and the endorsed CMP included on the TAMS website.	Short term: within 12 months
	Once the CMP is adopted by TAMS, specify the document as part of the internal quality assurance and management procedures for Weston Park (in accordance with usual processes).	As required
42. Monitor the condition of Weston Park and review the CMP when major changes occur.	The condition of the identified heritage values at Weston Park should be monitored and re-evaluated as part of the CMP reviews (see policy below).	Ongoing
43. Implement appropriate assessment and approvals processes.	Proposals for works, major landscape works or development need to be submitted to ACTPLA and/or the NCA for consideration (depending on the type of work proposed).  The ACT Heritage Unit, ACT Heritage Council and the ACT Heritage Advisory Service can provide heritage advice prior to or as part of the approvals process.	As required
	If necessary, advice should be sought from ACT Heritage. In general this includes landscape, road works, infrastructure, new development and building works which	As required

### 6.2.5 Planning and Approvals

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
	need NCA works approvals.	
	Promote a holistic and consistent management approach with existing TAMS procedures; to ensure all proposals are assessed in terms of their potential to impact on the heritage values of Weston Park as a whole.	As required
44. Undertake a survey of Aboriginal heritage values, archaeology and non-Aboriginal archaeology at Weston Park.	A survey of Weston Park for potential Aboriginal sites, non-Aboriginal archaeology and an assessment of Aboriginal cultural values should be undertaken prior to any new work being proposed.	Short term: within 24 months
45. Ensure the potential impacts on Aboriginal and historic heritage have been identified prior to NCA works approval being sought.	Ensure that the potential impacts on Aboriginal and historic heritage are identified when NCA works approval is being sought.  In particular, heritage advice to be sought early when planning for future new works that involve ground disturbance, including those identified in the draft WP MP, to enable sensitive archaeological areas to be identified and mitigation strategies to be put in place as needed.	As required
46. Engage relevant expertise for proposed new works and heritage impact assessments where TAMS requires specialist advice to assist in project development.	When a specialist is required and resources are available, relevant expertise should be engaged. This may be for assistance in the development of any works proposals (eg refurbishment, adaptive re-use and/or new development), and when seeking advice for assessments or approvals.	As required
	Engage relevant expertise early for timely assessment and advice on where there may be potential for heritage impacts on historic archaeological or Aboriginal cultural heritage values associated with any proposed works at Weston Park.	As required
	Refer TAMS managers to the CMP to guide decision making about regular and/or daily functions being carried out by contractors at Weston Park.	Ongoing
	Refer all proponents of proposed works/activities, apart from standard and approved cyclical maintenance programs, to the TAMS consent/activity proposal process.	As required
47. The revised Weston Park Masterplan should inform future changes	A revised WP MP should reflect the values and overall policy identified in this CMP to inform future changes, events and/or new works in the Park.	As required.

### 6.2.6 Documentation, Monitoring and Review

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
48. Review and update the CMP every 5-10 years.	Review and update the CMP every 5-10 years or following any major change in circumstance, including changes to the management structure, or impacts from natural disasters, or to take account of significant new information or research.	Long term: every 5-10 years.

### 6.2.6 Documentation, Monitoring and Review

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
49. Conserve the existing Yarralumla Nursery archival resource.	The Yarralumla Nursery archival resource and reference material should be conserved either on site in appropriate storage conditions or in a public records repository such as archives or library.	Medium term: 2-5 years.
	Ensure appropriate funds are set aside to conserve and digitise the archival resource.	Medium term: 2-5 years.
50. Integrate record keeping of works, management plans and other heritage-related documentation for Weston Park with the existing electronic records management.	Develop and implement an electronic database for keeping records of all significant works undertaken at Weston Park and make them available for managers of Weston Park and Yarralumla Nursery.	Medium term: 2-5 years and then on an ongoing basis.
	Make digital records and files of works proposals, implemented documentation and any other relevant documentation related to Weston Park for ease of future reference and management.	Ongoing
	Make the records available for research generally, especially where they relate to the ongoing heritage management and research undertaken at Yarralumla Nursery and Weston Park.	Ongoing
51. Continue to monitor the condition of the heritage values of Weston Park as resources permit.	Continue to monitor the condition of the heritage values at Weston Park..	Ongoing
	Incorporate the material gathered from monitoring the condition of the heritage values into the CMP during its 5-10 year review.	Long Term: every 5-10 years.
	Record any repair/maintenance works which contribute to the conservation of the heritage values of Weston Park.	Ongoing
	Check and re-assess priorities for works and maintenance in the annual reviews—that is, the highest priority should be attributed to actions which alleviate or mitigate key risks to the heritage values.	Medium term: 2-5 years.
52. Maintain records of works, intervention and maintenance.	Where there may be intervention or major works that will alter the place or elements of heritage value, the existing element should be recorded (for example, digital photography and drawings) prior to the proposed change. Records should be included in the existing TAMS electronic database.	As required.

### 6.2.7 Stakeholder Consultation and Involvement

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
53. Recognise the strong community attachment to the heritage values of the Park through regular liaison and information.	Recognise and consult with individuals who have a significant role in caring for, managing and working at Weston Park and Yarralumla Nursery.  Consult with relevant stakeholders about proposals affecting future developments, interpretation and management of the heritage values of the place.	As required

### 6.2.7 Stakeholder Consultation and Involvement

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
	Consult the local Canberra community regularly on the management of Weston Park, through public notices, forums and/or the TAMS website.	As required
	Provide relevant updates for the community (visitors, various relevant organisations and volunteers) on changes or proposals affecting Weston Park.	As required
54. Maintain regular liaison between TAMS, ACT Heritage and the NCA on the management of the heritage values of Weston Park.	Continue to maintain a collaborative approach between the ACT Government (TAMS and ACT Heritage) and NCA officials for management of cultural landscape and heritage values of Weston Park.	Medium term: 2-5 years
	Implement opportunities, subject to resources, to develop a formal agenda for collaborative management of the heritage values at Weston Park.	Medium term: 2-5 years

### 6.2.8 Research and Training

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
55. Provide training opportunities for TAMS staff and contractors about managing the heritage values of Weston Park.	Build capacity to identify and manage the heritage values of Weston Park by conducting information sessions for TAMS staff and contractors.	Ongoing
56. Continue to foster and promote research on the heritage values of Weston Park and Yarralumla Nursery	Continue to undertake and foster research into the heritage values of Weston Park, as a basis for refining future understanding and management for the benefit of the community.	Ongoing

## 6.3 Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Australia ICOMOS 1999, *The Illustrated Burra Charter*. <http://www.icomos.org/australia/burra.html>

<sup>2</sup> National Capital Authority, gazetted 1990, *National Capital Plan*. Pg 69. Available to download from National Capital Authority website; <http://www.nationalcapital.gov.au/>



## 7.0 Conservation Policies for Weston Park Precincts

### 7.1 Introduction

#### 7.1.1 Specific Conservation Policies

The following tables include conservation policies and actions for the precincts of Weston Park. These follow on from the broad conservation policies for managing the whole of Weston Park included in Section 6.0.

As with the policies in Section 6.0 many of the conservation actions included in this section have resource implications for TAMS, so the recommended timing of actions will be dependant upon planning for, seeking and obtaining resources in future budget cycles. The tables below provide the ideal timing in relation to the relative importance of the conservation action.

The effective implementation of the policies and actions will ensure that TAMS is able to conserve the identified heritage values of Weston Park and appropriately manage change for future generations.

#### 7.1.2 Policies Applied to the Grades of Heritage Significance

Conservation processes and policies appropriate for elements of Weston Park should be based upon the graded level of significance and their identified tolerance for change (refer to Table 7.3).

The term 'element' in this context refers to either landscape or built components of the park and is described throughout the report as spaces, areas or buildings. Generally the policies for each grade of significance are listed below.

Table 7.1 Appropriate Conservation Process for the graded level of Significance

Grade of Significance	Appropriate Conservation Process for the Element
<b>Exceptional significance</b>	Must be retained and conserved. These elements—landscape and built—require the highest level of care in their management. Such elements are sensitive to change and can be compromised by inappropriate development, works or impacts. Conservation should be undertaken with heritage advice.
<b>High significance</b>	Should be retained and conserved. These elements require a high level of care in their management, but can tolerate change when it is undertaken in accordance with the CMP and with heritage advice.
<b>Moderate significance</b>	Should be retained and conserved. These elements require care in their management, but can tolerate change when it is undertaken in accordance with the CMP.
<b>Low significance</b>	These elements can generally tolerate development and more robust works and changes than items of higher significance. If required, they can be removed without loss to the overall heritage significance of Weston Park.
<b>Intrusive elements</b>	These elements detract from the significance of the place and when the opportunity arises they should be removed or modified.

Note: The levels of significance applied to individual trees and tree groups and their appropriate management and maintenance recommendations are included in Appendix D, the Tree Asset Report.

### 7.1.3 Explanation of Tolerance for Change

The analysis of Weston Park's cultural landscape in this report assists with managing any proposed change to the site's landscape and built character. Generally, the layers of the historic cultural landscape should be respected and maintained in new development, site works and/or interpretation opportunities. While the whole site is of High significance, the heritage value of individual elements varies. Therefore the level of 'tolerance for change' across the whole site also varies.

Each key attribute, precinct and element of Weston Park has been assessed for its tolerance for change against its grade of significance. This approach is a management tool which helps identify the extent to which the element is able to tolerate change without adversely affecting the nature or degree of its heritage significance and to the site overall.

### 7.1.4 Application of Tolerance for Change to Weston Park

Table 7.2, below, sets out the rankings for tolerance for change used in this report and explains their application to Weston Park. In the following sections, the tolerance for change rankings are applied to elements to identify the extent to which they retain and/or provide important evidence of the site's significance in their existing form, fabric, function and/or location.

**Table 7.2** Tolerance for change and the application to Weston Park.

<b>Tolerance for Change</b>	<b>Application to Weston Park</b>
<b>Low tolerance</b>	The key attribute (form, fabric, function and/or location) embodies the heritage significance of the component and its contribution to Weston Park. It retains a high degree of intactness with only very minor alterations that do not detract from significance. The key attribute should be retained and conserved through maintenance and restoration.
<b>Some tolerance</b>	The key attribute (form, fabric, function and/or location) embodies the heritage significance of the component and its contribution to the site. It has undergone some alteration which does not detract from its significance. The key attribute should generally be retained and conserved. However, it may be altered to some degree without adverse impact on heritage significance.
<b>Moderately changeable</b>	The key attribute (form, fabric, function and/or location) only partly embodies the heritage significance of the component and the site, or has been considerably modified. The key attribute should be retained and conserved. There is greater opportunity for change with less adverse impact.
<b>Reasonably changeable</b>	The key attribute (form, fabric, function and/or location) has relatively little heritage significance, but contributes to the overall significance of the component and/or the site. Alterations detract from significance or the original attribute is difficult to interpret.
<b>Substantial change possible</b>	The key attribute (form, fabric, function and/or location) has little or negligible heritage significance to the component or the overall site.

**Table 7.3** Grades of significance and tolerance for change by precinct and element of Weston Park.

<b>Whole Site of Weston Park</b>	<b>Grade of Significance</b>	<b>Tolerance for Change</b>
Overall Site	High	Low
Continuing function within the park of horticulture	High	Some
Weston Park as a continuing major landscape component within Canberra's open-space system	High	Some

<b>Whole Site of Weston Park</b>	<b>Grade of Significance</b>	<b>Tolerance for Change</b>
Weston Park as a publicly accessible lakeside (chiefly passive) recreation venue	High	Some
Weston Park as a wildlife corridor	High	Low
Rare/uncommon plantings	Exceptional/High	Low
Extant plantings from 1910s to 1960s	High	Some
Remaining plantings from 1960s	Moderate	Some
Introduced sandy beaches at inlets	High	Some
Early lakeside plantings	High	Some
Eastern Grey Kangaroos (community-held values)	Moderate	Moderate

<b>Precinct 1 (Entry Zone)</b>	<b>Grade of Significance</b>	<b>Tolerance for Change</b>
Overall Precinct	Moderate	Moderate
Weston Park Road	Exceptional	Low
Current misalignment of Weston Park Road	Intrusive	Substantial change possible (with care not to impact existing trees)

<b>Precinct 2 (Nursery Park, The Ramble)</b>	<b>Grade of Significance</b>	<b>Tolerance for Change</b>
Overall Precinct	High	Moderate
Hobday's Cottage and grounds	Exceptional	Some
New work to Hobday's Cottage grounds and carpark to Hobday's Cottage and Yarralumla Nursery outlets.	Intrusive	Substantial change possible for improvements
Yarralumla Nursery (shop building)	Moderate	Moderate
Timber Cart	High (is movable)	Some
Toilet block (red brick located in English Garden)	High	Some
Remnant entry drive from south	High	Some
Early dams x 2	Exceptional	Low
Remnant pine edges which form the windbreak to Nursery Park	High	Some
Edge treatment between golf course and site. The boundary edge definition is currently poorly formed with the boundary to golf course relatively unclear.	Intrusive	Substantial change possible

<b>Precinct 3 (The Elms, Weston Park Road and The Plateau)</b>	<b>Grade of Significance</b>	<b>Tolerance for Change</b>
Overall Precinct	Exceptional	Low
Toilet block (located to east of Train Tunnel)	Moderate	Reasonably changeable
Elm avenue (The Elms)	Exceptional	Low

<b>Precinct 4 (East Bank, East Basin and The Plateau)</b>	<b>Grade of Significance</b>	<b>Tolerance for Change</b>
Overall Precinct	High	Some
Toilet block (located adjacent to carpark in East Basin)	Low	Substantial change possible
Circular experimental plots	High	Some

<b>Precinct 5 (Yarralumla Nursery)</b>	<b>Grade of Significance</b>	<b>Tolerance for Change</b>
Overall Precinct	Exceptional	Low
Dispatch Office, including objects collection, photographs, maps and card index collection	Exceptional	Some
Propagation Facility	Exceptional	Some
Potting Shed	Exceptional	Some
Dispatch Preparation, including seed store collection and ledgers	Exceptional	Some
Glasshouse 6 (Display House)	High	Moderate
Glasshouses 20, 21 and 24	High	Moderate
Glasshouses 22 and 23	Moderate	Reasonably changeable
Glasshouses 25-32	Moderate	Reasonably changeable
Glasshouses 33-34	High	Moderate
Mess Hall	High	Moderate
Original plant issue building	High	Moderate
Aquatic plants pond	High	Moderate
Contemporary sheds at north of precinct	Low	Substantial change possible
Fuel store	Low	Substantial change possible
Orthogonal nursery layout	Exceptional	Low
Remnant parallel nursery windbreaks	Exceptional	Low

<b>Precinct 6 (West Basin)</b>	<b>Grade of Significance</b>	<b>Tolerance for Change</b>
Overall Precinct	High	Moderate
Evidence of the Nursery use and regular formation of plantings	High	Moderate

<b>Precinct 7 (The Pond, The Train and West Bank)</b>	<b>Grade of Significance</b>	<b>Tolerance for Change</b>
Overall Precinct	High	Moderate
Play area (c1981 for special needs children)	High	Some

Precinct 7 (The Pond, The Train and West Bank)	Grade of Significance	Tolerance for Change
The play pond	High	Low
White play sculpture (David Tolley)	High	Low
Spider Web Climbing Frame and Swing Set	Low	Substantial change possible
The miniature railway	Moderate	Moderate
Barbeque shelter (log style)	Moderate	Moderate
Toilet Block (log style)	Demolished (October 2010)	Appropriate rebuilding needed.

Precinct 8 (West Yarralumla Peninsula and East Yarralumla Peninsula)	Grade of Significance	Tolerance for Change
Overall Precinct	High	Moderate
Eastern Grey Kangaroos (community-held values)	Moderate	Moderate
Scattered picnic tables and benches	Low	Substantial change possible
SIEV X memorial (community-held values)	Low	Substantial change possible

Precinct 9 (Kurrajong Point)	Grade of Significance	Tolerance for Change
Overall Precinct	High	Some
Sandy beach – accessible for recreational use	High	Some
Carpark at the Point/termination of Weston Park Road	Intrusive	Substantial change possible

## 7.2 Specific Precinct Conservation Policies

### 7.2.1 Precinct 1: Sub-Precinct—Entry Zone

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
1. Improve the entrance into Weston Park so that it complements the high heritage value of the whole site.	<p>Design and implement a new arrival into Weston Park, one that complements the heritage values and formal avenue of Weston Park Road.</p> <p>A new landscape treatment should signal the entry to Weston Park. The design should respond to the heritage values and incorporate consideration of views, landscape character, traffic and pedestrian access.</p> <p>To be in accordance with the heritage values, improvements to the entry road should be correctly aligned with the original cedar tree avenue, if funding is available and subject to impact on existing trees. The parking near the leash-free dog zone should be formalised or preferably removed from the park entry</p>	Medium term: 2-5 years.

**7.2.1 Precinct 1: Sub-Precinct—Entry Zone**

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
2. Emphasise the open space of the precinct through a design which creates a landscape feature of the entry zone.	Emphasising the entry zone through landscape design will provide a better definition of the road. Whereby, the approach to the formalised avenue is made clearer and there is a more structured road junction.	Medium term: 2-5 years.
3. Interpret and integrate the symbiotic relationship between Yarralumla Nursery and recreational uses of Weston Park.	Install directional and interpretive signage at the road junction between Yarralumla Nursery in one direction, and to Weston Park in the other, where the historic cedar avenue of Weston Park Road commences.	Short term: within 24 months.
4. Implement a more defined entry route and improve pedestrian safety.	Reconfigure and define the entry road to align with the original cedar tree avenue, to improve pedestrian safety and complement the heritage values of the park. This would be subject to avoiding impacting existing significant trees, and funding. In the short term, provide a barrier device along road existing alignment and ensure traffic and pedestrian safety at the junction.	Medium term: 2-5 years.
5. Introduce a vegetative transition between Orana Bay and Weston Park.	Plant supplementary native trees adjacent to the Orana Bay foreshore to contrast with formalised exotic avenue planting eg <i>Casuarina</i> species.  These species will visually buffer the bay from the avenue, provide additional habitat, and will continue the tradition of native tree planting on the site.	Medium term: 2-5 years.

**7.2.2 Precinct 2: Sub-Precincts—Nursery Park & The Ramble**

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
6. Upgrade the English Garden/ Hobday's Cottage facilities and amenities.	The existing, and any future, commercial enterprises or leases should be cognisant of the heritage values.  The leases in Weston Park and Yarralumla Nursery should ideally have functions which are sympathetic to the heritage values of the place, and expand or highlight the historic experimental horticultural activities of the Park and the Nursery.	Ongoing.
7. Conserve and retain the existing Yarralumla Nursery function and commercial activity.	Conserve and develop the existing nursery service areas to ensure the viability of both the horticultural research capacity and the commercial requirements.	Ongoing.
	Allow some additional limited forms of commercial or community and interpretation activities within the Nursery or unused nursery areas, such as garden or plant fairs on an occasional basis.  Any new activities should be in keeping with the heritage values of the place, such as community gardens or plots in the unused nursery areas.	As required.
8. Rationalise unused nursery areas into the open space of Weston Park or properly incorporate into the Nursery.	Incorporate nursery areas deemed no longer required by the nursery into the open space system of Weston Park or conversely return the unused areas into viable nursery land.	Medium term: 2-5 years

### 7.2.2 Precinct 2: Sub-Precincts—Nursery Park & The Ramble

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
	Ensure the historic use of the former nursery areas are interpreted—included in the interpretation and communication strategy.	Medium term: 2-5 years.
9. Reinforce habitat connections and canopy links across the precinct.	Provide supplementary planting or allow the regeneration of existing forest areas.  Supplementary planting would help to form a continuation of the canopy with Westbourne Woods in accordance with Tree and Ecological Assets Report (Geoff Butler & Associates, September 2010). This will have the added benefit of reinforcing the Park's boundary planting, thus strengthening the definition of the Park along the southern edge.	Medium term: 2-5 years.
10. Improve cycle and pedestrian access across the precinct, and link to new picnic facilities.	Design and implement additional pathways in key locations to encourage Lake Burley Griffin 'Cycle Track' users into Weston Park.  A shared path access through The Ramble could be created as an important link between the English Garden and West Basin, and to improve safety.	Medium term: 2-5 years.
11. Enhance passive recreational opportunities areas in the precinct.	Increase passive recreational areas that have a north-northeasterly aspect, which are valuable in winter.	Short term: within 24 months.
	Install a Nursery Bay picnic area linked to the West Basin facilities via new pathway connections. These will provide vantage points along the shoreline with views of the lake and Government House to the west and rest points with suitable seating.	Short term: within 24 months.
12. Maintain the controlled dog exercise facility in the precinct.	Maintain the newly introduced dog exercise facility within the identified area. Improve the ad hoc parking arrangements related to this function, which is currently intrusive at the entrance to Weston Park.	As required.
13. Conserve the buildings and elements of Exceptional, High and Moderate significance and maintain a consistent approach for architectural elements in the precinct (and the whole of Weston Park).	The buildings and elements of Exceptional, High and Moderate significance require conservation and management planning to ensure appropriate uses are maintained.	Ongoing
	The architectural elements, including furniture, fencing and signage, should be in accordance with designs consistent with Weston Park heritage values.	Medium term: 2-5 years.
14. Conservation of the heritage values in this precinct is required through removal of intrusive elements or their redesign to be sympathetic to and complement heritage values. Expert assistance may be required.	The conservation within this precinct involves the removal or adjustment to the intrusive elements. Intrusive elements in this precinct could be softened or improved by seeking landscape advice consistent with heritage values. For example, the pavement around Hobday's Cottage, the alignment of the brick wall containing the English Garden sign and the poorly defined boundary between Westbourne Woods and the Royal Canberra Golf Course, could be reassessed.  The inconsistent boundary vegetation should be reinforced with additional tree planting.	Medium term: 2-5 years.

**7.2.3 Precinct 3: Sub-Precincts—The Plateau, The Elms and Weston Park Road**

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
15. Retain the importance of the ridgetop avenue—Weston Park Road—as the dominant access through the Park.	Weston Park Road is the main central access through the Park precincts and its alignment, as originally planned and delineated by plantings, should be retained as the major access route for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists, in addition to appropriate tree management (refer to policies in Section 6.0).  The traffic and parking arrangements should be investigated and the amenity improved to ensure the conservation of this exceptional element.	Ongoing.
16. The Elm avenue should be conserved and interpreted.	Conservation, continued use and interpretation of this avenue should be considered. Continued use for light Nursery traffic, pedestrian and cycle access will help ensure its survival in addition to appropriate tree management (refer to policies in Section 6.0).  The unsealed surface should be retained both for character and to limit vehicle speed.	Short term: within 24 months.
17. Improve the entry to Weston Park by reinstating and realigning the original entry road through the cedar tree avenue.	Reinstate and realign the original entry to correspond to the original double avenue alignment of Weston Park Road—based on the physical evidence of the existing cedar trees and the photographic evidence (refer to Figure B.11 in Appendix B).	Medium term: 2-5 years.
	Locate the entry point at the Banks Street entrance and widen Weston Park Road to enable parallel on-street car parking (that does not extend beyond Brown Street).	Medium term: 2-5 years.
18. Plan for replacement tree planting to ensure the survival of the formal avenues (Weston Park Road and the Elm avenue).	Commence planning for replacement of senescent trees along Weston Park Road and the Elm avenue.	Medium term: 2-5 years.
	Undertake replacement in accordance with Tree Asset Report (refer to Appendix D), the heritage values, this CMP and subject to further arboricultural assessment and the tree management plan which is to be developed.	Medium term: 2-5 years..
19. Conserve the views and vistas through and out from Weston Park Road.	The views and vistas along the ridge top avenue of Weston Park Road should be conserved (refer to Figure 3.9).	As required
	Any future tree planting required should ensure that vistas to the lake and Black Mountain are retained.	As required
20. Manage vehicle access and parking to protect the park's tree assets.	Facilitate safe travel along Weston Park Road by limiting parking adjacent to the avenue corridor and prevent parking among the avenue trees.  Prevent carparking in the outer row of the avenue to protect tree roots from compaction.  Refer to Policy 36 in Section 6.0 to undertake a traffic study.	Short term: within 12 months.
21. Maintain the clarity and simplicity of vehicle and pedestrian movement through Weston Park.	Maintain the natural perimeter edge of the park and avoid cross links or loops, or if they are necessary, keep these to a minimum and design them in a way that does not detract from the heritage value and primary role of the central road spine and informal character of the lake edge.	As required

**7.2.3 Precinct 3: Sub-Precincts—The Plateau, The Elms and Weston Park Road**

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
22. Investigate the possibility of interpretation centre.	As per Policy 29 in Section 6.0, investigate the need and benefits for developing an interpretation centre in, or near, Weston Park which has a broader scope for creating a connection between Yarralumla Nursery and Weston Park, to interpret and reinforce the symbiotic relationship.  This may include investigating or adapting existing facilities at Weston Park or the Nursery or be incorporated into signage.	Long term: 5-10 years.
23. Retain and upgrade the toilet block located adjacent to Weston Park Road.	The 1960s toilet block structure should be retained and upgraded; its architectural character should be retained.	Medium term: 2-5 years.

**7.2.4 Precinct 4: Sub-Precincts—The Plateau, East Bank and East Basin**

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
24. Conserve the landscape character of the precinct.	The precinct should be conserved, retained, managed and interpreted.	Ongoing.
25. Manage and maintain circular experimental plots of trees.	Manage and maintain Weston experimental plots planted in circular fashion according to a tree management plan (to be developed).	Ongoing.
26. Upgrade beach and water-based recreational facilities eg swimming/beach areas.	Upgrade swimming facilities as part of on-going maintenance regime to service water-based recreation and needs.	Medium term: 2-5 years
27. Remove lake edge weed species to enhance views and improve the 'natural' shoreline and access to the lake edge.	Consider removal of weeds to restore important views. Remove the intrusive weed species from the lake edge, taking care to maintain the cultural plantings on the lake edge.	Short term: within 24 months
	Weed removal should be undertaken to maintain and retain access and views to the lake. It should be undertaken in accordance with horticultural advice to ensure weed removal does not impact upon the heritage values of Weston Park, including exotic cultural plantings along parts of the lakeshore.	Ongoing.
28. Ensure event infrastructure does not adversely impact the heritage values.	Ensure that any future event infrastructure which caters to outdoor events is temporary (permanent power outlets and toilet facilities can be managed through the revised draft WP MP) and does not impact on the heritage values of the Park nor impact on the views from the lake to the Park.	As required.
	Utilise the natural amphitheatre for outdoor events.	As required
29. Improve vehicle circulation and assess current carparking viability.	Refer to previous policies for improving traffic and parking arrangements. This should be investigated and the amenity improved. Complex loop roads and large car parks are inappropriate.	Short term: within 24 months
30. Maintain native grassland character.	Manage and maintain the native grassland in this precinct, so that it continues into the northern area (Precinct 8) and for visual continuity. Avoid planting with 'infill' trees or	Ongoing

**7.2.4 Precinct 4: Sub-Precincts—The Plateau, East Bank and East Basin**

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
	replacing the historic planting pattern with a new one.	
	Maintain and manage grassland to increase recreational usage.	Short term: within 12 months
31. Upgrade amenities and barbeque/picnic facilities.	Upgrade the barbeque facilities in accordance with Weston Park furniture palette (to be developed) with a final location dependant on further detailed studies.	Medium term: 2-5 years.
	The new toilet block is unsympathetic, yet provides a useful amenity. Consider alterations to ensure the appearance of the toilet block is sympathetic to the surrounding landscape environment (eg repaint in subdued natural colours).	Long term: 5-10 years.

**7.2.5 Precinct 5: Sub-Precinct—Yarralumla Nursery**

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
32. The important physical and historic connection between Yarralumla Nursery and Weston Park should be conserved and interpreted.	Conserve and interpret the important connection to the history and establishment of Yarralumla Nursery and Weston Park. The whole of Weston Park is important because of the establishment of Yarralumla Nursery.	Ongoing
33. Conserve and retain the nursery or horticulture-related functions as intrinsic elements at Weston Park	The Yarralumla Nursery site should continue as a nursery and be conserved as a key component of Weston Park, including the following elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• nursery buildings, including the Dispatch Office, Dispatch Preparation, Potting Shed Propagation Facility workshops and glasshouses;</li> <li>• the nursery function as primary source of trees for both public and private plantings across Canberra;</li> <li>• windbreaks and avenue/access road plantings in the Nursery and Weston Park;</li> <li>• experimental pocket gardens within the Nursery;</li> <li>• early pastoral use, including the defining 'block' plantation of the Elm avenue and the early dam, near Nursery Bay; and</li> <li>• early access road layout.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
34. Retain, augment and consolidate public access to both the Nursery and Weston Park.	Document the operating procedures and access requirements of the Nursery. Determine how the Nursery functions in association with Weston Park and develop strategies for integrating and increasing visitors to both the Park and the Nursery. For example, community education programs for sustainable gardens, with garden plots for access by the community.	Medium term: 2-5 years.
	Upgrade way-finding signage to ensure logical pathway connections to and from the Nursery.	Short term: within 24 months.

### 7.2.5 Precinct 5: Sub-Precinct—Yarralumla Nursery

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
35. Improve public awareness of nursery operations, and restore public interaction.	Define and rationalise operational uses and the physical areas for future Nursery or Park use. Nursery operations could be expanded to gain greater awareness by including (for example) demonstration gardens, public programs involving Nursery visitation or overflow event carparking.	Medium term: 2-5 years.
36. Conserve and replant major structural plantations where they have become depleted, such as the eastern and western windbreaks.	Conserve shelterbelt planting which provides a strong contrast with the rest of the park. Supplementary and replacement trees could be introduced to the structural plantations of the windbreaks, to maintain the heritage values and provide an ongoing buffer protection from the prevailing winds. These include the eastern and western windbreaks around the original rectangular area of the Nursery site where they are depleted, displaying senescence or missing. (In accordance with Tree Assets Report, Appendix D and subject to a future tree management plan.)	Short term: within 12 months.

### 7.2.6 Precinct 6: Sub-Precinct—West Basin

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
37. Conserve and reinforce the landscape character, with particular reference to the NCDC phase of recreational landscape overlay.	Conserve and reinforce the area for its important connection to the NCDC phase of landscape improvements—the formalising of Weston Park for recreation.	Ongoing.
38. Retain the informal park character.	Retain and develop the exotic/wild character of the lake edge in this precinct and utilise lake foreshore vantage points.	Ongoing.
	Avoid construction of large and dominant event infrastructure.	Ongoing.
39. Increase access to the lake edge from within the West Basin precinct.	The windbreak along the foreshore should be retained and enhanced. Maintenance and removal of suckering weed species and thickets should be undertaken, to open up access and views to lake. Provide secluded vantage points to observe/experience sunsets along the vegetated foreshore.	Ongoing.
40. Provide alternative pedestrian and cycle access routes to make links to other parts of Weston Park.	Provide shared access route to accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists from the Lake Burley Griffin Cycle Track via Precincts 2 (through the English Garden), along lake edge of Precinct 6 (The Ramble) to Precinct 7 (the children's playground area and Pescott Lane).	Short term: within 24 months.
41. Regenerate existing vegetation in the north of the precinct.	Allow the Oak & Conifer plantation to regenerate (perhaps by fencing off the area from public access for a period of time). Continue to maintain the vegetation and remove dead trees to prevent fire and safety hazards. Investigate the viability of use of the area to create outdoor 'recreation rooms', for passive recreation in accordance	Short term: within 24 months.

**7.2.6 Precinct 6: Sub-Precinct—West Basin**

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
	with event space requirements.	
42. Create a walking trail/path through the Oak and Conifer stands.	Thin out the oaks to the south and conifer plantings to provide access between Precincts 5 & 7, and to provide access near and around the existing wetland, and also for greater recreational use and appreciation of the heritage values. The path should be directed through the sparser areas, where possible, to avoid tree loss. Also consider fencing off the area to prevent public access for a period of time to allow the vegetation to re-establish.	Short term: within 24 months.
43. Revitalise the pond/wetland.	Inspect the wetland (currently overgrown and unkempt) for water quality, vegetation growth, safety and interpretation opportunities.  Revitalise the wetland in accordance with the investigation report—its findings and recommendations.	Medium term: 2-5 years.

**7.2.7 Precinct 7: The Pond, West Bank and The Train (Miniature Railway)**

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
44. Precinct 7 is ranked as having a High level of significance and should be conserved as such.	Elements of a High ranking should be retained and conserved. These elements require a high level of care in their management, but can tolerate change when it is undertaken in accordance with the CMP and with heritage advice.	Ongoing
45. Conserve and retain the extant NCDC play features, including the 1980s children’s playground, play pond (refer to the policy below) and the white play sculpture.	The adventure play features should be conserved and, where in conflict with current code requirements, should be sensitively reconciled with necessary upgrade planning and design. Note the 1980s playground was recently upgraded in 2009.	Ongoing
	Research the original NCDC design for the play pond, which included a waterfall, and seek heritage advice for reinstatement, while adhering to current safety regulations.	Medium term: 2-5 years
46. Conserve and retain play pond, assess safety and upgrade.	Reinstate the pond and the waterfall for children’s play. Research the original character and design intent of the pond to determine feasibility for restoration and refurbishment of the pond. Assess the pond depth adjacent to the perimeter of the playground and consider reducing to a depth of 300mm.	Medium term: 2-5 years
47. Expand the play facilities to re-create a ‘play precinct’.	Assess potential locations for playground expansion, and develop ideas for creative and adventure play equipment to suit various ages.  Refer to, or possibly reinstate/reinterpret former elements of the 1960s adventure play items, such as the tree houses/forts and mouse house, where possible, within current Australian safety standards for play spaces.	Medium term: 2-5 years

### 7.2.7 Precinct 7: The Pond, West Bank and The Train (Miniature Railway)

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
48. Investigate and reinstate the Maze.	Undertake further research and investigation to find a suitable location for re-creating the Maze—possibly in Precinct 7, adjacent to the other play facilities—and provide interpretation.	Medium term: 2-5 years
49. Provide wind protection from the west.	Supplementary and replacement trees could be introduced to the structural plantations of the windbreak, to maintain the heritage values and provide an on-going buffer protection from the prevailing westerly winds.  Allow for opportunities to access the lake edge and to maintain for views out across the lake.	Short term: within 24 months.
50. Restore and upgrade the miniature railway so that it is in keeping with the heritage values.	As a condition of the lease, the owners/ managers should be required to restore and upgrade the miniature railway facility, so that it is in keeping with the heritage values and this CMP.	Ongoing
	Consider the replacement of the existing kiosk with a new kiosk/cafe building, to facilitate a structure which is in keeping with the heritage values of Weston Park. If changes are proposed, ensure the heritage impacts are mitigated. For example, retain the existing location, adjacent to Pescott Lane which is in keeping with the heritage character of the precinct.	Medium term: 2-5 years.
51. Upgrade barbeque and picnic areas.	Upgrade the picnic furniture in accordance with a consistent Weston Park furniture palette, and relocate as necessary in accordance with park-wide strategy (based on the revised masterplan).	Medium term: 2-5 years.
52. Upgrade the Pescott Lane car park to better service the precinct.	Upgrade existing carpark to make more efficient and review the line marking. Minor expansion is possible provided an assessment of potential heritage impacts is undertaken.	Medium term: 2-5 years.
53. Upgrade toilet amenities.	The pine log shelter has been removed recently (west bank) and is proposed to be replaced. The design of all new amenities should be subject to heritage impact assessment.	As required.

### 7.2.8 Precinct 8: Sub-Precincts—East and West Yarralumla Peninsula

Conservation Policy	Conservation Actions	Timing Category
54. Precinct 8 is ranked as having a High level of significance.	Elements of High significance should be retained and conserved. These elements require a high level of care in their management, but can tolerate change when it is undertaken in accordance with the CMP and with heritage advice.	Ongoing
55. Upgrade carparking to better service the precinct.	Upgrade the carpark; however, due to the proximity of the lake it is recommended to seal the carpark and to assess the viability of employing 'Water Sensitive Urban Design' (WSUD) principles to collect run-off.	Medium term: 2-5 years.

**7.2.8 Precinct 8: Sub-Precincts—East and West Yarralumla Peninsula**

<b>Conservation Policy</b>	<b>Conservation Actions</b>	<b>Timing Category</b>
56. Increase opportunities for passive recreation.	Increase passive recreation opportunities in the precinct (small parking nodes, picnic tables, etc). Investigate the area as a possible location for events.	Medium term: 2-5 years.
57. Conserve and retain vegetation, including the circular tree plantations.	Monitor existing circular eucalypt plantations and new tree plots and regularly check for plant performance. Replace as required in accordance with CMP and the tree management plan (to be developed). Establish and maintain dry grass meadows.	Medium term: 2-5 years.
58. Install new barbeque and picnic areas.	Upgrade barbeque facilities in accordance with a consistent Weston Park furniture palette. The locations are dependant on further detailed studies (through the revised masterplan) including careful consideration of the visual impact from the shoreline.	Medium term: 2-5 years

**7.2.9 Precinct 9: Sub-Precinct—Kurrajong Point**

<b>Conservation Policy</b>	<b>Conservation Actions</b>	<b>Timing Category</b>
59. Precinct 9 is ranked as having a High level of significance.	Elements of a High significance ranking require a high level of care in their management, but can tolerate change when it is undertaken in accordance with the CMP and with heritage advice.	Ongoing
60. Conserve and maintain important views out from Kurrajong Point.	Conserve and maintain important views. Remove the identified weed tree species in adjacent precincts (refer to Appendix D).	Ongoing
61. Conserve and maintain the beach area for swimming and fishing.	Conserve the beach for swimming and fishing. Allow lightweight watercraft to access or launch from the beach.	Medium term: 2-5 years
62. Remove the carpark from the Point	Remove the carpark from the termination point. Use the existing carpark to the east. Seal the carpark and assess the viability of employing WSUD principles to collect run-off	Short term: within 24 months.