



ACT Heritage Council

## Entry to the ACT Heritage Register

*Heritage Act 2004*

### **20080. Trees of the Former CS&IR Experiment Station**

**Swinden Street and verges**, being the area to the front property boundaries of Blocks 11-18 Section 42, Blocks 18-33 Section 43, Blocks 23-28 Section 44, Blocks 18-20 Section 34, Blocks 1-12 Section 36 and Blocks 1-15 Section 41

**Section 61 and Section 73**, being the area bounded to the north by Bradfield Street, to the south by Bonython Street to the east by Frencham Street and to the west by Melba Street

#### **DOWNER**

This document has been prepared by the ACT Heritage Council.

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

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

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

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ACT Heritage Council

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**AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY  
INTERIM HERITAGE PLACES REGISTER**

For the purposes of s. 54(1) of the *Land (Planning and Environment) Act* 1991, a citation for:

**TREES OF THE FORMER COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC & INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH (CS & IR)  
DICKSON EXPERIMENT STATION, DOWNER**

has been prepared by the ACT Heritage Council and included in an interim Heritage Places Register.  
This is pursuant to ACT Heritage Council Resolution No. 45/5 made on 25 May 1998.

Date of gazettal: **26 June 1998**

Enquiries about this place and copies of this citation are available from:

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## INTERIM HERITAGE PLACES REGISTER

### CITATION

#### TREES OF THE FORMER COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC & INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH (CS & IR) DICKSON EXPERIMENT STATION, DOWNER

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#### LOCATION OF PLACE:

- **Swinden Street and verges**, being the area to the front property boundaries of Blocks 11-18 Section 42, Blocks 18-33 Section 43, Blocks 23-28 Section 44, Blocks 18-20 Section 34, Blocks 1-12 Section 36 and Blocks 1-15 Section 41, Downer, and
- **Section 61 and Section 73, Downer**, being the area bounded to the north by Bradfield Street, to the south by Bonython Street to the east by Frencham Street and to the west by Melba Street.

(Refer Fig 1)

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#### FEATURES INTRINSIC TO THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PLACE:

The features intrinsic to the heritage significance of the place comprise:

- Swinden Street verges with avenue plantings of eucalypts
  - Sections 61 and 73: Monterey pine (*Pinus radiata*), Yellow box, (*Eucalyptus melliodora*), Apple box (*Eucalyptus bridgesiana*) and Californian big tree (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*).
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#### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Swinden Street and verges and Sections 61 and 73, Downer are significant as the approach and hub of the former CS&IR Dickson Experiment Farm which occupied 670 acres of northern Canberra for 25 years from 1940 to 1965. During this time a wide range of agricultural research of Territory and National significance was carried out including research related to wartime and immediate post-war needs.

Swinden Street is characterised by large eucalypt trees which were planted in about 1943 to line the driveway to the Farm. These trees, which are over 50 years old, whilst approaching the end of their effective and safe lives as street trees, continue to contribute through their size and overall form to the streetscape qualities.

The Monterey pine windbreak and other mature tree plantings particularly the Yellow box and Apple box, which lined former roads and the two specimens of Californian big tree, on Sections 61 and 73 date from the early 1940s and are significant landscape elements.

While Monterey pine is a common species in plantation forestry and farm windbreaks, its presence as a windbreak in a suburb is unusual. In landscape terms the windbreak encloses and protects the playing fields and community facilities and provides a delineation between the suburban housing component and the central open space.

The treelined driveway and the administrative and laboratory facilities for the Farm determined the urban plan for the suburb of Downer in the late 1950s.

In social terms the maturity of the shopping centre, which was 'recycled' from the Experiment Farm buildings, provides a feeling of maturity in a suburb where all the houses were brand new and the gardens non-existent.

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#### **SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS:**

In accordance with s.54(1) of the *Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991*, the following requirements are identified as essential to the conservation of the heritage significance of this place. These requirements are prepared to implement the following conservation policy for the place:

#### **The features identified as intrinsic to the significance of the place are to be conserved and appropriately maintained.**

Any action affecting the requirements to conserve the heritage significance of this place is development under Part VI of the Land Act and requires approval prior to undertaking the activity. To undertake development without prior approval may constitute an offence.

#### **1. Requirements Relating to the Landscape**

- 1.1 Swinden Street and verges shall be retained in present orientation and dimensions.
  - 1.2 Swinden Street shall be retained as an avenue with a predominant Australian tree character.
  - 1.3 Mature planting on Sections 61 and 73, comprising the Monterey pine, Yellow box, Apple box, and Californian big tree, shall be conserved and fenced off to protect against damage from car parking..
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#### **MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:**

In assessing this place for the interim Heritage Places Register, the Council recommends that a number of actions and activities should be undertaken which will enhance the heritage values of the place. They are made as recommendations and have no legal effect.

1. In relation to Swinden Street, an annual assessment by a tree surgeon, of tree health and structural integrity including the inspection of tree crowns, using a travel tower should be undertaken. Any trees found to be structurally unsound should be immediately removed to obviate any risk to the public. In view of the likelihood of the remaining trees (Camden woollybutt) declining and being a safety hazard they should be removed in three stages at 5, 10 and 15 year intervals, commencing with the poorest 30% of trees. They should be replaced with advanced Grey Box or other agreed *Eucalyptus* species, interspersed with Flowering Cherry (*Prunus sp.*). At this stage any earlier plantings of Grey Box showing poor form should also be replaced.
  2. The plantings on Sections 61 and 73, should be interpreted to the public using signs or other means. These trees should also undergo yearly assessments for health and structural integrity as part of a tree conservation and management programme for the area.
  3. Particular attention should be given to fencing the two Californian big trees in area F and the Monterey Pines adjacent to Bradfield Street to avoid compaction to their root systems from uncontrolled car parking associated with sporting events on the adjacent oval and Scout clubhouse.
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**DOCUMENT HISTORY:**

- 1        22 August 1997        Draft citation prepared for consideration by the ACT Heritage Council at Meeting 40.
- 2        5 December 1997        Draft citation released for public comment.
3.       25 May 1998        Revised draft citation prepared for consideration for interim Heritage Registration by the ACT Heritage Council at Meeting 45.
- 4        26 June 1998        Gazetted in an interim Heritage Places Register.