



ACT Heritage Council

## Entry to the ACT Heritage Register

*Heritage Act 2004*

### **20043. Tocumwal Housing Precinct**

Sections 33-37, Sections 54-56, 59, (Blocks All) Section 60 Blocks 1, 8-13, Section 89 (Blocks All) and adjacent road reserves of Macarthur Avenue, Miller Street, Tate Street and Macpherson Street as identified as part of H43

**O'CONNOR**

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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.

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## 43. Tocomwal Housing Precinct, O'Connor [V79]<sup>1</sup>

### Location

District of Canberra Central, Division of O'Connor, all of Sections 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 54, 55, 56, 59, 89, Section 60 Blocks 1 and 8-13 and adjacent road reserves of Macarthur Avenue, Miller Street, Tate Street and Macpherson Street as identified in Figure 43 and indicated on the Territory Plan Map by the Heritage Places Overlay H43.

### Features Intrinsic To The Heritage Significance Of The Place

The place comprises:

- a) the extant 'Tocomwal' houses on blocks identified in Figure 43 (affected properties listed in Schedule 1);
- b) the existing subdivision pattern;
- c) the road layout including the culs de sac and their streetscapes; and
- d) the public open spaces contained within the Precinct.

### Statement Of Significance

The Tocomwal Housing Precinct in O'Connor is significant as an outstanding example of low cost pre-fabricated housing, which was constructed in Canberra after World War 2.

As part of the Government's solution to the critical housing shortage being experienced in Canberra at the time, many of the houses originally constructed at Tocomwal in NSW for the US Army Air Corps were re-erected in the ACT. The cottages are of distinctive design types and limited geographically to the O'Connor Precinct and a small area in Ainslie.

The Precinct remains the most intact example of this style of housing and is unique in Canberra for its urban planning, landscaping and social history.

The eight culs de sac evident in the precinct share access onto a community recreation area with the individual identity of each street reinforced by the street plantings. Many of the cottages retain their original hedge plantings. The 'precinctual' planning is thus significant.

The sense of cohesion of the streetscapes within the Precinct is achieved by the repetition of features in the housing stock, and the integration of this with unifying street plantings and hedges. It creates an area of high aesthetic value.

### Specific Requirements

In accordance with s54(1) of the *Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991* the following requirements are identified as essential to conservation of the heritage significance of this place as part of the interim Heritage Places Register. The requirements are prepared to implement the following conservation policy for the place:

The Precinct, including the park, is to be conserved as a low density residential and landscape precinct of cultural significance. For the purposes of this policy, "original" means constructed prior to 1960, and "existing" means at the date of gazettal to the interim Heritage Places Register.

- i) Streetscape**
  - a) Existing street trees, remaining street hedges and original street furniture, including street lights and signs, shall be conserved and appropriately maintained.
  - b) New street furniture shall be sympathetic with the original design.
  - c) New driveways shall only be permitted if they are consistent with the original design philosophy and do not detrimentally affect the established landscape values of the precinct.

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<sup>1</sup> [V79: Added to Heritage Places Register 30/10/1998 (Variation Number 79)]

**ii) Street pattern and layout**

- a) The existing street pattern is to be retained.
- b) The centrally located park is to be conserved as an area for public use, and as a key feature of the original design.

**iii) Building including alterations and additions**

***All buildings***

- a) New buildings, external alterations and additions may be permitted only where they will not significantly diminish the heritage values of the streetscape.
- b) Two storey buildings or additions may be permitted only where it can be demonstrated that, when visible from the public domain, they will not significantly diminish the heritage values of the streetscape.

***Identified original buildings***

- c) In addition to (iii) (a) and (b) above, the following requirements apply to the original buildings identified in Schedule 1 (affected properties indicated on Figure 43).
- d) External alterations and additions to identified original buildings shall reflect and complement the architectural style of the original buildings. This includes alterations to external finishes and changes including painting and adding or removing rendering.
- e) No buildings or structures shall be erected between the front boundary and a line drawn along the street side of the forward most building and then directly to the closest point on the nearest side boundaries.
- f) Minor external alterations may be made to the street frontage of buildings only where the Heritage Council is satisfied that the proposed work will not adversely affect the heritage significance of the place.
- g) External alterations and additions may be permitted to the sides of buildings only if the additions are set back 0.5m from the existing front of the building. This requirement does not apply where the block has two apparent frontages (ie blocks with a boundary running parallel to the central urban open space).
- h) The original building form is to remain dominant.
- i) The roof pitch, walls, window types and materials, shall be as similar to the existing buildings as is feasible.

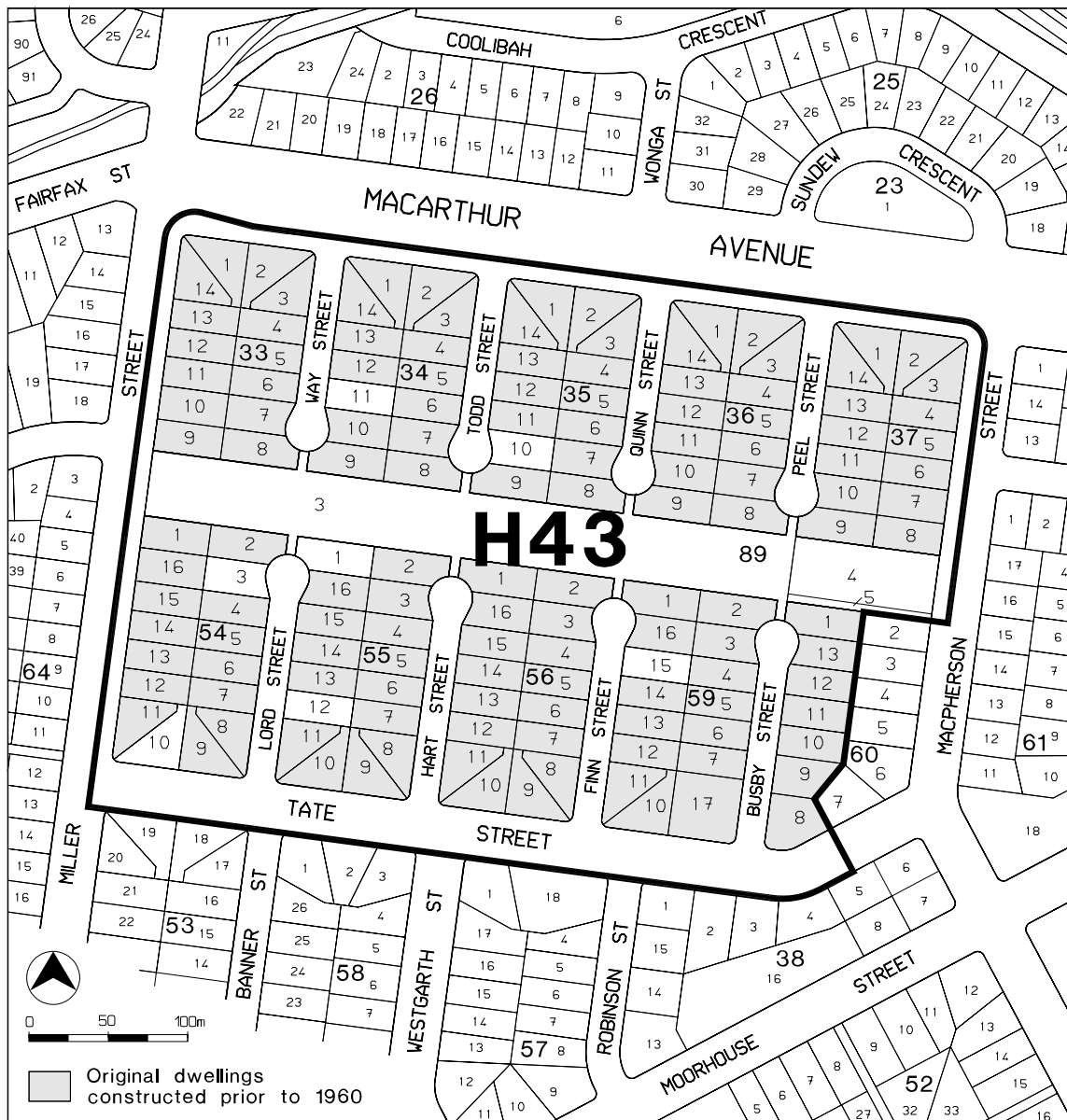
**iv) Demolition**

- a) Subject to (iv)(b) and (iv)(c), demolition of original buildings identified in Schedule 1 shall not be permitted, other than in exceptional circumstances, including circumstances in which the building is structurally unsound and beyond economical repair or where there are significant public health and safety reasons to warrant demolition.
- b) The demolition of original external building fabric of buildings identified in Schedule 1 may be permitted in the context of permissible alteration of, and/or additions to, existing buildings.
- c) Alteration or addition to, or demolition of, internal components of original buildings may be permitted provided the external fabric of the building is not adversely affected.
- d) Demolition of buildings constructed after 1959 may be permitted provided the design of any replacement buildings is consistent with conserving the heritage values of the streetscape and landscape.

**v) Multi-unit development**

- a) Multi-unit developments may be permitted only where it can be demonstrated that, when visible from the public domain, the proposed building(s) do not significantly diminish the heritage values of the existing streetscape and landscape.

**Figure 43: Tocumwal Housing Precinct, O'Connor**



**SCHEDULE 1  
EXTANT TOCUMWAL HOUSING IN O'CONNOR**

<b>Property Reference</b>	<b>Street Address</b>	<b>Identified Item(s)</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>
Section 33, all blocks; Section 34, blocks 1-10, 12-14; Section 35, blocks 1-9, 11-14; Section 36, all blocks; Section 37, all blocks;	52-76 (even) Miller Street, 2-20 (even) Macarthur Avenue, 37-47 (odd) Macpherson Street, 3-13 (odd) Tate Street, 1-7, 9-12 Way Street,	Houses	Construction completed before and including 1959.
Section 54, blocks 1, 2, 4-9, 11-16; Section 55, blocks 2-11, 13-16; Section 56, all blocks;	1-9, 11, 12 Todd Street, 1-12 Quinn Street, 1-12 Peel Street,		
Section 59, blocks 1-7, 10-14, 16, 17; Section 60, blocks 1, 8-13.	1-3, 5-10, 12, 13 Lord Street, 1-14 Hart Street, 1-9, 11-14 Finn Street, 1-14 Busby Street.		