

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – OAKS ESTATE SUBDIVISION & ENVIRONS – APRIL 2017

house with verandah) for Sydney Ryan (who was using them as an investment, buying them, building on them and quickly selling them off) by O'Rourke Carpenters of Queanbeyan in 1924. Ryan did not sell this house immediately like the others, but appears to have either lived in it or rented it out (this is not clear) until it was sold in 1939.

- Block 5 (18 River Street) – In 1926 it was originally a two room weatherboard cottage named "Rose Cottage" with a separate kitchen building. It was gradually expanded over the years and has had extensive gardens. By 1965 it had expanded to a seven room complex with an enclosed verandah.
- Block 6 – 20 River Street 1970s brick veneer duplex, concrete roof tiles, aluminium windows. Williams notes that it was not built on until after 1959.
- Block 7 (22 River Street) – A 1920s rendered brick cottage with original galvanised iron roof, rendered brick chimney and wall, double hung windows, reconstructed verandah, modern studio at rear, and 1970s chain fence. Originally built for Ned Robertson by Tom Rickman using concrete blocks made by Dick Robertson.
- Block 8 (24 River Street) – A timber cottage with recent galvanised iron cladding, and weatherboard cladding and timber windows. There is a modern two storey addition at rear. The first house built on this block was in the 1940s by Ted Robertson.
- Block 9 (26 River Street) – Named "Weowna". A rendered brick cottage with additions, scored rendered walls (faux-stone coursing), new bullnose front verandah, and 'M' roof addition. In 1902 the property title transferred to Ned Robertson noting that there was a house already on it (possibly from 1890s). The house was extended in stages over time using salvaged materials in vernacular style, including 2 brick rooms added to front c.1906. It has been heavily modified following renovations and much of the original material has been replaced.
- Block 10 (28 River Street) – A 1970s brick veneer house with concrete tile roof and aluminium windows. In 1926 Ned Robertson bought Blocks 10-13 and operated a sawmill on them. In 1957 Blocks 11-13 were sold off with the sawmill and operated under a different owner.
- Blocks 11-13 (30-34 River Street) – 1970s walk up flats in face brick. 1926 Ned Robertson bought Blocks 10-13 and operated a sawmill on these blocks.
- Block 21 (8 Hazel Street) – A 1990s brick veneer house with Colorbond roof and new picket fence after the late 1980s original house burnt down and was replaced by the current building.
- Block 22 (3 George Street) – A 1950s fibro clad house with timber frame, skillion galvanised iron roof, timber windows, informal salvaged material fence and front.
- Block 23 (5 George Street) – A 1970s brick veneer house with concrete tile roof, timber windows, and detached metal garage. The original house on this block was demolished in the 1980s, when the current house was built.
- Block 24 (7 George Street) – A 1920s timber cottage with double-hung windows, new galvanised iron roof, 1950s concrete verandah with single red brick wall on the west side, detached weatherboard garage in rear. The first house on this block dating from c.1893 was demolished between 1908 and 1913. A new house was built between 1913 and 1933 and then extended during the 1940s. The shed at the rear existed before 1913 and it appears to have been used as a residence at some stage in its life or the fireplace etc may just be from it being used as a workshop. Peter Freeman & Associates note that a butcher and his family were living in the hut in the early 1950s and have suggested that the hut pre-dates the subdivision; however, this early date is unlikely as, despite their argument to the contrary, it fits in the orientation and layout of the blocks, slab buildings were being created and reused into at least the 1940s and it was not mentioned in any of the early transfers between Bull and Tomsitt.
- Block 25 (9 George Street) – Generally noted as an 1890s cottage, but it does not appear in the 1915 survey maps. Like its neighbour on Block 26, it is likely to date from the 1920s and has 1990s renovations and additions (such as a new roof, red brick walls altered and patched or painted), brick garage and timber carport.
- Block 26 (11 George Street) – Named "Hill Crest". A 1920s rendered cottage with original galvanised iron roof and verandah, and leadlight doors which are period but probably not original. A later addition has been added to the east side of the house. In 1925 the land sold to Elizabeth Jane Robertson with a house built in 1926-27 using Dick Robertson's concrete bricks.
- Block 27 (13 George Street) – The first house was built after 1959 when the parcel of land

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made up from Blocks 7 and 27 was split, but had been demolished by the mid-1970s. The current house is a 1980s split level brick house with a separate smaller residence in the rear of the block.

- Block 28 (15 George Street) – A 1950s style timber framed house with corrugated iron roof, ribbed asbestos cladding, brick base which has been significantly remodelled.
- Block 29 (17 George Street) – A collection of attached buildings of various materials and origins containing a demountable building with annexe, 1920s fibro building with gal roof, and a shipping container.
- Block 30 (19 George Street) – A 1980s brick veneer house with pressed metal roof and aluminium windows.
- Block 31 – vacant
- Block 32 (23 George Street) – A 1980s or 90s weatherboard clad demountable building in two halves on a brick base.
- Block 33 (25 George Street) – A 1980s or 90s timber framed weatherboard house with metal garage at rear.



Figure 48 10 River Street - Block 1 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 50 14 River Street - Block 3 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 49 12 River Street - Block 2 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 51 16 River Street - Block 4 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).

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Figure 52 18 River Street - Block 5 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 55 24 River Street - Block 8 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 53 20 River Street - Block 6 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 56 26 River Street - Weowna - Block 9 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 54 22 River Street - Block 7 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 57 28 River Street - Block 10 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).

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Figure 58 30-34 River Street - Blocks 11-13 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 61 5 George Street - Block 23 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 59 8 Hazel Street - Block 21 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 62 7 George Street - Block 24 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 60 3 George Street - Block 22 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 63 9 George Street - Block 25 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).

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Figure 64 11 George Street - Block 26 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 67 17 George Street - Block 29 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 65 13 George Street - Block 27 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 68 19 George Street - Block 30 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 66 15 George Street - Block 28 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 69 21 George Street - Block 31 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 70 23 George Street - Block 32 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 71 25 George Street - Block 33 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).

- **Section 10** is bounded by McEwan Av to the west, Hazel Street to the north and William Street to the east. This is the likely location (the location was noted as a house on McEwan Street, but Section 7 Block 10 had other owners at the time, so it must have been located in one of the three houses in Section 10 at the time) of a brothel that was raided in 1969 that formed a test case for brothel laws in the ACT, an important step in laws that have developed in the ACT to create the current status of brothels in the ACT. This section developed its light industrial character in the late 1980s, having previously been less densely developed with small residential buildings:
 - Block 1 (3 Hazel Street / 8-10 McEwan Avenue) – A large 1980s industrial shed with an addition to the front corner. It is a transport warehouse that has been built across historical blocks 3-5 in the 1980s.
 - Block 2 (7 William Street / 1 Hazel Street) – A series of five late 1980s metal-clad workshops/sheds.
 - Block 3 (6 McEwan Avenue) – A 2 storey light industrial workshop from the late 1980s.
 - Block 4 (4 McEwan Avenue) – Romney hut (see previous individual section)
 - Block 5 (2 McEwan Avenue) – A 1920s weatherboard cottage with brick chimney, 1960s concrete block motel addition at rear, modern picket fence. Mid-1940s current Block 5 was separated from the previous block layout and a house built for Jack Hustler by Joe O'Rourke with the flats being added later



Figure 72 3 Hazel Street / 8-10 McEwan Avenue - Block 1 Section 10 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 73 7 William Street/1 Hazel Street - Block 2 Section 10 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 74 8-10 McEwan Avenue - Block 3 Section 8 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 75 2 McEwan Avenue - Block 5 Section 10 (ACT Heritage, 2014).

- **Section 11** is bounded by Hazel Street to the south, William Street to the east, and George Street to the west. The higher ground on the southern end of the Section was the first part to be developed with the northern part filled in later:
 - Blocks 1 and 20 (2 & 4 Hazel Street) – A semi-detached rendered brick residence built by 1889. The semi-detached brick cottage joins across the two blocks. The two blocks were initially owned as a parcel with different people living in each side of the building. In 1947 it was bought by the Corsini family who converted it into a single house; however there is no note of when it was divided again, although it was presumably after 1978 when Mrs Corsini died. The half of the house located on Block 1 has been renovated and restored and is in a good condition while the half located on Block 20 has not been maintained to the same standard.
 - Block 4 (8 George Street) – A weatherboard cottage with red brick chimneys, painted galvanised iron roof, pressed metal gable cladding, timber windows, fibro enclosed verandah and a weatherboard addition. The house was erected between 1903 and 1913.
 - Block 5 (10 George Street) – A timber frame weatherboard cottage with aluminium windows, skillion roof. It is potentially an older cottage (c.1938, possibly from Molonglo) that has been substantially altered so that the original form is hard to determine. During the 1950s a strong storm blew off the roof and it was extensively remodelled.
 - Blocks 6-7 (12 & 14 George Street) – "Dover Court" walk up flats. In 1972 Blocks 6 and 7 had "in principle" support (i.e. they could not object at that point in time) from the NCDC to be developed into flats. An NCDC file note on the development commented that the building was sited closer to the boundary than they would usually allow, but while it was still under freehold title they had to rely on "persuasion" and that they should be "...thankful for small mercies" that it was not as close as it could have been. The developers were Pals Investment Pty Ltd designed by P. Green. A letter from R. J. Corrigan to the NCDC in March 1974 indicated that they owners were inquiring about the conditions of the possible lease after acquisition, but by November they were no longer interested.
 - Blocks 8-9 (16 & 18 George Street) – "Elmsall Court" walk up flats. In 1972 Blocks 8 and 9 had "in principle" support (i.e. they could not object at that point in time) from the NCDC to be developed into flats. The developers were Pals Investment Pty Ltd designed by P. Green.
 - Blocks 10-11 (20 & 22 George Street) – "Carla Court" 1970s walk up flats.
 - Block 12 (24 George Street) – A 1970s brick veneer house with aluminium windows and a detached garage with Kliplok skillion roof. In 1973 Blocks 12 and 13 had "in principle" support (i.e. they could not object at that point in time) from the NCDC to be developed into flats, but it was noted that the land would be acquired by the Commonwealth in the near future after which it would be uncertain if an approval would be given. The flats were not built.
 - Block 13 (26 George Street) – A timber framed 1980s or 90s building on brick base with windows of aluminium and wood and salvaged timber framed coloured glass. Stucco texture cladding panels.

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- Blocks 14-15 – vacant. In 1973 Blocks 14 and 15 had “in principle” support (i.e. they could not object at that point in time) from the NCDC to be developed into flats, but it was noted that the land would be acquired by the Commonwealth in the near future after which it would be uncertain if an approval would be given. The developers were Pals Investment Pty Ltd. The flats were not built.
- Block 23 (17 William Street) – An early 1950s War Service Loan timber frame fibro cottage on concrete base with terracotta roof, new aluminium windows and a sympathetic addition to the rear. Detached concrete block garage and steel mesh fence. Fibro house. One of 3 houses (not including Hazelbrook) on the street in the 1950s.
- Block 24 (19 William Street) – A brick veneer house with terracotta tiled roof and timber windows.
- Block 25 (21 William Street) – A timber framed fibro house with concrete roof tiles and a garage underneath.
- Block 26 (23 William Street) – A 1950s brick house with concrete tiled roof, steel framed windows, rendered brickwork, and garage underneath.
- Block 27 (25 William Street) – A 1970s brick veneer house with concrete roof tiles, aluminium windows, and a garage underneath.
- Block 28 (27 William Street) – A 1980s brick veneer house with aluminium windows, and dual occupancy house of similar design to rear.
- Block 29 (29 William Street) – A 1980s brick veneer house with concrete roof tiles and aluminium windows.
- Block 30 (31 William Street) – A 1970s brick veneer house with concrete tile roof, aluminium windows, skillion carport, and a metal shed at rear.
- Block 31 (33 William Street) – A 1950s brick house with terracotta tile roof, timber windows, stone facing to lower level and a garage underneath.
- Block 32 (35 William Street) – A 1960s brick veneer house with concrete tile roof and timber or PVC windows.
- Block 37 (13-15 William Street) – A two storey 1960s red brick house with terracotta tile roof, aluminium windows and a concrete terrace and a large metal shed.
- Block 38 (6a & 6b George Street) – previously Blocks 2 and 3, with a garage on block 2 and a house on block 3. Block 3 sold by 1913 with a house on it by 1925. Sometime after 1939 a second house was built at the back of the block by the children of the owners (who before 1939 were renting it since 1925). The block sold in 1950 with the new owners adding a second storey to the rear house after this time. Block 3 -
 - 6a George Street (previously Block 2). A 1990s (the previous house was demolished in 1996) two storey weatherboard and red brick house, gabled Colorbond roof, set back on block, with a modern timber garage.
 - 6b George Street (previously Block 3). A 1925 weatherboard cottage that has been extensively remodelled with new additions. The second house at the back of the block was put in after this time and sometime after the 1950s the house at the back was extended and raised to a second storey.



Figure 76 2 Hazel Street - Block 1 Section 11 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 77 8 George Street - Block 4 Section 11 (ACT Heritage, 2014).

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Figure 78 10 George Street - Block 5 Section 11 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 81 20-22 George Street - Carla Court - Blocks 10-11 section 11 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 79 12-14 George Street - Dover Court - Blocks 6-7 Section 11 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 82 24 George Street - Block 12 Section 11 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 80 16-18 George Street - Elmsall Court - Blocks 8-9 Section 11 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 83 26 George Street - Block 13 Section 11 (ACT Heritage, 2014).

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Figure 84 Blocks 14-15 Section 11 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 87 21 William Street - Block 25 Section 11 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 85 17 William Street - Block 23 Section 11 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 88 23 William Street - Block 26 Section 11 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 86 19 William Street - Block 24 Section 11 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 89 25 William Street - Block 27 Section 11 (ACT Heritage, 2014).

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Figure 90 27 William Street - Block 28 Section 11 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 93 33 William Street - Block 31 Section 11 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 91 29 William Street - Block 29 Section 11 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 94 35 William Street - Block 32 Section 11 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 92 31 William Street - Block 30 Section 11 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 95 13-15 William Street - Block 37 Section 11 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 96 6a George Street - Block 38 Section 11 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 97 6b George Street - Block 38 Section 11 (ACT Heritage, 2014).

- **Section 12** is located between William Street and the Queanbeyan River. Section 12 is in historic Section L which was only developed at the northern and southern ends as the topography steeply slopes to the river the middle blocks would not have allowed much room for building:
 - Block 20 (8 William Street) – A 1950s house with Canberra Red brick veneer, timber windows, terracotta roof tile. Separate brick garage. c.1946-47 a weatherboard house was built followed in 1953 with a new house on the same block of a brick construction.
 - Block 21 (10 William Street) – A timber frame house at the rear of the block. Mature Cyprus trees likely predate current house.
 - Block 22 (12 William Street) – A timber frame weatherboard cottage at the rear of the block with corrugated iron roof and timber framed windows. A Colorbond garage is located at the front of the block.



Figure 98 8 William Street - Block 20 Section 12 (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 99 12 William Street - Block 22 Section 12 (ACT Heritage, 2014).

- **Section 15** Blocks 1, 2 and 5 – urban open space and river corridor zones next to the community hall



Figure 100 Blocks 1-2 and 5 Section 15 (ACT Heritage, 2014).

Landscapes

Several landscapes have previously been identified as having possible heritage significance:

- Queanbeyan and Molonglo River corridors from the railway bridge to The Oaks – the rivers form a natural border for Oaks Estate and have been used historically as a water source for residents as well as recreationally up to current times. It contributes to the precinct as an area of natural beauty that is valued by the residents. There is a high probability of the river corridors containing areas of significance for Aboriginal heritage as it is part of a known pathway and a meeting/corroboree ground. It was noted that the Representative Aboriginal Organisations (RAO) "...have expressed the opinion that this site may hold significance for them." (NOHC, 2013a:25). Just downstream of the Queanbeyan and Molonglo Rivers junction is the remnants of a flying fox used for flood control information, however any heritage significance it may have has not been established;



Figure 101 Queanbeyan River corridor looking north (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 102 Molonglo River corridor looking west (ACT Heritage, 2014).

- The river ford and road embankment – located at the northern end of River Street is the remnant ford and from the northern bank of the Molonglo River is a remnant track heading north from there for ~500m until it joins the current Oaks Estate Road alignment. This ford and road was a shortcut from Yass and the farming lands to the north to the railway station and was mostly used as a stock route. The alignment of the road changed in the 1940s to take advantage of the low-level crossing installed as a part of the abattoir and was primarily a stock route into the 1970s, becoming more important for car traffic after being sealed and is

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today a high volume traffic area and heavy traffic bypass for Queanbeyan. The main road into Queanbeyan (today Pialligo Avenue) continued from the Oaks Estate turnoff to the current Yass Road where there were high-level bridges across the Queanbeyan and Molonglo Rivers; and



Figure 103 Molonglo River ford north of River Street (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 104 Molonglo River ford north of River Street (ACT Heritage, 2014).

Elm grove along the riverbank near The Oaks – the grove of mature elm trees is an unusual feature located north of The Oaks on the river bank surrounding a minor drainage line. There is no historical information available about the grove making its heritage value uncertain, although it is valued by the Oaks Estate community for its aesthetic value and a place where children play. Adjacent to the Elm trees is a hedge of mature Osage orange trees along the fenceline of The Oaks and it is likely that these trees date from after 1888 when the current boundary for the property was formed, although they may be earlier plantings marking out paddock fence lines. Aerial photography shows that the Osage orange trees were quite well matured in the early 20th century, but the elm grove was not clearly visible until the 1970s.



Figure 105 Elm Grove (ACT Heritage, 2014).

Views and vistas – there are several views and vistas in the precinct that are valued by the local community and have been the basis of a heritage study into an expanded heritage nomination boundary (NOHC, 2013). The expanded area that was suggested for the nomination to take these into account consists of rural blocks which contains no historical features that directly relate to Oaks Estate. The subdivision of Oaks Estate was primarily created for profit and allowing people to set up businesses with access to the railway following standard practice with little consideration

demonstrable for the views and vistas available. The value of the views and vistas associated with Oaks Estate has an amenity value to the residents, but cannot be considered as a part of a heritage nomination under the *Heritage Act 2004*.

Streets - The street layout has remained relatively unchanged since the initial subdivision in 1888. The road widths were 100 chains (~20m) as per Governor Darling's 1829 regulations (Proudfoot, 1995:159) which is still the distance between blocks, i.e. the road and verge on both sides. The current sealed road width in Oaks Estate is ~6m wide. The pattern and orientation of the streets retain their cardinal pattern and intersect each other at right angles, again as per Darling's regulations. The southern sections of the historical Oaks Estate that now lie within NSW also retain the 100 chain distance between blocks, but the road and verge widths have changed to create wide bitumen roads, often with wide concrete pedestrian footpaths and verge widths between 4-9m. Distances between blocks with varying road and verge widths are similar, albeit with greater variation across the range, across the rest of the ACT, particularly in the older suburbs.

The approaches to Oaks Estate are a mix of light industrial and rural landscapes. Oaks Estate Road travels through open paddocks. The western extent of Railway Street passes the industrial suburb of Beard on one side and a small horse paddock on the other before passing the rail line on the southern side of the road and the electrical substation on the north side of the road followed by more paddocks. The western entrance to the suburb along Railway Street is flanked by the light industrial sites of the new development at the Capital Flowers site (Block 20 Section 2) and an Ampol depot. Railway Street between The Oaks and McEwan Avenue is flanked by sparse light industrial development, open blocks and mature trees.

In the residential areas of Oaks Estate, north of Hazel Street, the streetscapes resemble that of most of the older established suburbs of the ACT with low to medium density housing, attractive mature trees, sealed roads with gutters and drains and overhead power lines. The roads generally drop to lower ground northwards towards the river.

Notes on individual streets (Information on street names from Williams, 1997):

Railway Street – named based on its alignment and proximity to the railway line that was the impetus for creating the subdivision. The street has guttering in the built up area eastwards from Hill Street and only on the built up side (i.e. north gutter). The western end of the street (approaching Oaks Estate) had relatively dense tree growth on each side clearing to a more suburban cover from Hill Street eastwards; however, it was recently cleared of trees along the frontage of Block 20 Section 2, which creates a more industrial entry to the suburb. This is the main road through Oaks Estate and passes mostly light industrial and empty blocks.

Hill Street – is a geographical name referring to the low hill that The Oaks sits upon. The street is a dirt track that is essentially a driveway for The Oaks and rear access for properties along Florence Street.

Florence Street – named after John Bull's daughter. The road is sealed and has guttering. Driveways coming off the road are also sealed. Northwards of Hazel Street the blocks on either side are developed and there are mature trees of various types; southwards it is surrounded by empty blocks.

River Street – is named because it is the access to the river ford. The road is sealed and has guttering. Northwards of Hazel Street the blocks on either side are developed and there are mature trees of various types; southwards it is surrounded by empty blocks and Gillespie Park. There is a good view of the Queanbeyan Rail Station to the south of the street. The northern end of the street has a cul-de-sac but there is a dirt track continuing northwards that provides access to the river flats and was the historical road to the river ford and the road that provided access to the northern areas of the ACT, evidence of which can still be seen travelling northwards for ~500m until it joins the current road alignment. This was the first road in Oaks Estate to be sealed in the early 1930s as it was considered to be a country road connecting Queanbeyan to the Yass-Queanbeyan Road, although through-traffic was discouraged as the ford was considered dangerous.

George Street – is named after George Tomsitt. The road is sealed and has guttering with a concrete footpath along the east side. The blocks on either side are developed and there are mature trees of various types.

William Street – is named after William Price. The road is sealed and has guttering. Northwards of Hazel Street the blocks on either side are developed and there are mature trees of various types; southwards it has the Community Hall on the east side and the rear access of the Light industrial area on the west.

Hazel Street – is named after the Hazelbrook woolwashing and tannery. The road is sealed and has guttering with a concrete footpath along its northern side. To the north of Hazel Street are the residential areas; to the south is the light industrial areas and Gillespie Park. This is the main street for the suburb as it provides access to all the major

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sections and is evidenced by it being the location for the bus stop and the fire shed. The western tip of the road was closed in 1963 as Block 25 Section 3 was formed.

McEwan Av – the street was not given a name initially but was later named after the Minister for the Interior John McEwan; the origin of the spelling mistake is unknown. The road is sealed and has guttering with a concrete footpath along its western side.



Figure 106 Railway Street facing west (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 109 River Street facing south (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 107 Hill Street facing north (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 110 George Street facing north (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 108 Florence Street facing south (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 111 William Street facing south (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 112 Hazel Street facing east (ACT Heritage, 2014).



Figure 113 McEwan Avenue facing south (ACT Heritage, 2014).

Physical condition and integrity

The area has undergone a number of changes as it has developed over the years. These have occurred in relation to important events linked to local, regional or national development and can be grouped into five broad categories: pre-European settlement, early colonial settlement, the Oaks Estate subdivision, the establishment of the Federal Capital Territory and then the post-war period of modern development.

Pre-European settlement – the area was described by Charles Throsby Smith, one of the team of Europeans to first visit the area, as “a most beautiful forest as far as we could see, thinly wooded by Gums and Bastard Box, the tops of the Hills stony and stone sand, but in the valleys a fine Rich Soil” (cited in Watson, 1927. p.9) Since then the area has been cleared with little remnant vegetation remaining. The rivers have been infested with willow and other weed species that had significantly slowed the flow of water, but recent clearing and rejuvenation of the river corridor has seen a significant reduction of weed species, although it is likely that some of those weeds were associated with the historical Chinese market gardens. Although the top of the soil would be highly disturbed, the deep alluvial soil that made the area suitable for market gardens is likely to have buried Aboriginal artefacts and possibly human burials.

Early colonial settlement – the initial European development in the area included several small temporary huts, but the most significant feature would have been the large stone cottage currently known as The Oaks. Surrounding The Oaks several outbuildings were erected, but it is unknown if any of the current outbuildings are original or exactly what has changed. In the nearby paddock to the east of The Oaks a small cemetery developed. The Oaks is still standing and the building has high integrity, however the landscape has changed significantly with the boundary surrounding the building shrinking from over 100 acres to less than 5 acres and the cemetery has been built over. The other feature to appear towards the end of this era was the wool washing works and fellmongery business that had several buildings associated with it, but all that is left of them is the Hazelbrook house on Block 3 Section 14, the rest being built over by the Hazelbrook nursery. Additionally, the area on the opposite side of the river to the Oaks Estate suburb boundary would have changed very little since this time and is likely to preserve evidence of Aboriginal use of the area during the 19th century, including the 1862 corroboree.

Oaks Estate Subdivision – in 1888 the area was sub-divided into 247 blocks (as recorded in Deposited Plan 2207, whereas the sale was advertised as 300 blocks – Figure 3) with roads created that form the historical basis for the current layout of Oaks Estate as a suburb. The original planning was based on the regulations created by Governor Darling in 1829 for the layout of towns (Proudfoot, 1995: 159). The current layout of the suburb has changed in several ways: 49 of the blocks are now within NSW, many of the blocks that were located within the 100-year flood zone have been retired and amalgamated into larger rural blocks as have several parcels of land and there have been several minor variations of block sizes and orientations. The major changes include:

- the 49 blocks that were part of Sections M through P were separated from Oaks Estate in 1911 when the ACT border was established and they were left in NSW, becoming a part of the Queanbeyan suburb of Crestwood;
- the blocks that were located within the 100-year flood zone were combined into three rural blocks. Block 20 Section 2 subsumed historical Blocks 2-9 Section B, Blocks 2-10 Section A and most of an unnamed road that was never built; these blocks were partly within the flood zone, and have since been combined into a light industrial block. Blocks 5-6 Section 13 (being counted as a single parcel for convenience) subsumed historical Blocks 6-9 (part), 10-11, 17-24 Section C; Blocks 6-16 and 28-34 Section F. These blocks were located within

the 100-year flood zone and were mostly utilised as a single parcel for market gardens. Blocks 4-5 (being counted as a single parcel for convenience) Section 14 subsumed into the Hazelbrook nursery historic Blocks 14-20 and 34-40 Section H as well as Blocks 16-19 and 33-35 Section K as they lay within the 100-year flood zone;

- the topography of historic Section L made development there difficult. The central part of the Section, Blocks 1-9, were amalgamated into the current Block 2 Section 15 with an irregular shaped block created in the southern end to house the Community Hall;
- Block 25 Section 3 was created by the Vacuum Oil Company depot spreading across historic blocks 1-5 Section D, 1 and 12 Section C as well as the western end of Hazel Street;
- the orientations of the blocks in Section 10/historic Section J have changed but this has had little effect on the current layout of buildings on the section;
- the area containing The Oaks, Blocks 15-16 Section 2 subsumed historic Block 10 Section B and Blocks 11-14 Section A; and
- Other minor alterations.

Post-FCT changes – Changes to Oaks Estate that have occurred since the suburb was first formed happened after it became a part of the ACT. It was very slowly provided with the same amenities and services that are common to every other suburb in the ACT. The most noticeable effects to the precinct that are visible in the public realm include:

- water reticulation added in 1938, including the water tower;
- electricity added in 1940, including power poles;
- sewerage added in 1968 leading to the disappearance of most outdoor toilets by the 1980s; and
- in the early 1970s the remainder of the roads were sealed and guttered and street lighting installed.

Post-War and post-1974 changes – Most of the major developments had already taken place by this stage in Oaks Estate's history. This period is characterised by an intensification of the suburban qualities of Oaks Estate which can be seen in:

- several medium-density developments were built in the early 1970s;
- several of the light industrial businesses in Section 7 were demolished, while others were built in Section 10;
- the western entrance to Oaks Estate has suffered from the loss of street trees along Block 20 Section 2 in early 2014;
- The fuel depot on Block 25 Section 3 was demolished and the site is currently surrounded by cyclone fencing and is overgrown;
- there are several vacant blocks – Blocks 2-3 Section 3, Blocks 1-3 Section 5, Blocks 5-6 and 9 Section 7, Block 31 Section 8, Blocks 14-15 Section 11, Blocks 3-4 Section 13, and Block 1 Section 14;
- The Molonglo River towards the western border of Oaks Estate has shifted northwards, likely as a result of the sand quarry on the northern bank; and
- The Queanbeyan and Molonglo Rivers have been cleared of exotic species, such as willow and blackberry, which has opened up the river walking track and banks.

Current conditions – Oaks Estate has undergone several phases of substantial change throughout its long history. It has changed from a rural area to a low density semi-rural suburb to its current suburban form. Every development and improvement that has occurred has brought Oaks Estate more in-line with the rest of the ACT's other suburbs in terms of density, services, building types and streetscapes. It has retained several individual elements from each of its development phases and is unusual in that it still contains light industrial areas in close proximity to residential areas, but there is no over-arching theme applicable to define the precinct.

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