



ACT Heritage Council

Entry to the ACT Heritage Register

Heritage Act 2004

20103. Well Station Homestead Precinct

Section 5 Block 2 (part)

HARRISON

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ACT Heritage Council

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

**WELL STATION HOMESTEAD PRECINCT
Harrison, District of Gungahlin**

For the purposes of s. 54 of the *Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991*, this heritage assessment for the above places has been prepared by the ACT Heritage Council as the basis for its inclusion within an interim Heritage Places Register. Pursuant to resolution: 86/6 on 14 October 2003

Notification Effective: 12 November 2004

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

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ACT Heritage Council
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WELL STATION HOMESTEAD PRECINCT

LOCATION OF PLACES:

Also known as 'Wells Station'.

Wells Station Road, Gungahlin

Part Block 2 Section 5 Harrison, District of Gungahlin

Homestead at Australian Capital Territory 1:10,000 topo-cadastral map series Map 208-612, GR 213125-612350.

The Well Station Homestead Precinct comprises the Well Station Homestead group and a surrounding area defined by a boundary as delineated in Map 1.

This boundary incorporates the buildings historically associated with Well Station, visual curtilage that is sufficient to maintain a rural setting for the homestead group that maintains the sense of grazing paddocks on each side.

FEATURES INTRINSIC TO THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE OF WELL STATION HOMESTEAD PRECINCT:

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

- (i) Individually identified built heritage places of cultural significance, as listed below and identified on Maps 2 & 3.
 - Homestead complex—U-shaped group of buildings, of slab and weatherboard constructions of various dates, including 1850s, 70s and early twentieth century, comprising;
 1. original house (north wing) weatherboard, lath and plaster and slab house built by Rolfe, 1850's;
 2. slab schoolroom and dairy (north wing), pre 1915;
 3. kitchen and sitting room wing and weatherboard addition and later extensions (south wing), post 1872;
 4. link room (west wing), post 1915;
 5. privy;
 6. garden shed;
 7. fowl house;
 8. iron shed (garage), and
 9. tank stand and associated iron ship tank water tanks.

- Shearing Shed complex—a series of pre and post federation rural support buildings, comprising:
 10. slab and brick stables and worker's accommodation building, pre 1915;
 11. shearing quarters concrete slab foundations, post 1915;
 12. slab and corrugated iron shearing shed and extensions, 1900-05?
 13. slab hay and store shed, now sheep shelter 1900-05?
 14. sheep dip and footbath;
 15. sheep yards; and
 16. two concrete feed silos and loading ramp.

- (ii) The agricultural rural setting, which includes all the following cultural landscape elements;
 17. line of planted eucalypts extending approximately 700 m on the eastern side of Wells Station Road south of the homestead group;
 18. pine tree-lined approach avenue running approximately 200 m north-east to the homestead from Wells Station road;
 19. trees and other plantings, and landscape features around and between the homestead buildings and between the homestead complex and the shearing shed complex, including pines, firs, eucalypts, hedges, fruit trees, poplars, stone wall;
 20. open box woodland west, north and east of the homestead area;
 21. cleared paddocks surrounding the homestead and shearing shed complexes.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Well Station homestead and associated outbuildings and immediate visual catchment is significant as a very good example of a medium scale pastoral domestic and work environment of the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The components of the homestead and its working area and the spatial relationship between them are largely intact. The Well Station buildings constitute an important collection, now rare in the ACT. The Well Station vernacular buildings demonstrate a range of building styles and materials applied to both domestic and work structures. The close association with Gungaharra homestead demonstrates the pattern of small holdings typical of the region (which is now the northern part of the A C T, but less common in many other rural areas. (Criterion c and f).

The property and the homestead area is associated with the early European settlement and evolution of the district that subsequently became the ACT, the property remaining in pastoral use from at least the 1850s to the present day. The place has specific associations with the Rolfe and McKeahnie families, who were important for their intensive involvement in the early European settlement of the area now part of the A C T. (Criterion g).

The homestead complex, together with the lines of trees and the pasture land overlooked to the east and north towards 'Up Top' hill, has aesthetic significance and is demonstrative of a cultural landscape and pastoral aesthetic remnant in a rapidly diminishing number of rural properties now within the A C T. (Criterion b).

The homestead group of buildings has a history of addition over time, with little removal of earlier components, and as such has a strong potential to contain archaeological and built

evidence of research significance. It also has strong potential as a teaching site. (Criterion k).

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CONSERVATION OF WELL STATION HOMESTEAD PRECINCT

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

The features of the Well Station Homestead Precinct that contribute to its heritage significance, which includes historic structures, landscape features, trees and potential archaeological sites, shall be managed to conserve the significance of the place as a rural homestead complex.

CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE 1.

Provide adequate conservation management planning

Conservation Objective 1.1

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

Specific Requirements for Conservation Objective 1.1:

- (a) A conservation management plan (CMP) shall be developed for the place to guide its conservation and future use.
- (b) Any works necessary prior to the development of a CMP that may potentially impact on significant fabric shall be guided by a professionally prepared interim assessment and conservation policy relevant to that area or component (ie. a Heritage Impact Statement - HIS).
- (c) No changes of use necessitating substantial changes to the place, or other substantial works affecting fabric, other than reversible stabilisation works, will be permitted before the preparation of a CMP, after which all works and uses should be in accordance with the CMP.
- (d) Maintenance shall be as defined in the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter (as annotated 1999) and shall not involve change to significant fabric. Maintenance shall be continued regardless of the status of the CMP or HIS.
- (e) Following the preparation of a CMP, identified essential conservation works shall be implemented. The buildings have some severe conservation problems that require urgent attention. The requirements determined within the CMP or HIS might alter or supersede other Specific Requirements in this interim register entry.

CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE 2

Conserve the Significant Components of the Place

Conservation Objective 2.1

Maximise the retention of the cultural significance and integrity of the complex by limiting damage or removal of buildings or other components of the place.

Specific Requirements for Conservation Objective 2.1

- (a) The partial or total demolition of identified built heritage elements (refer Schedule of Intrinsic Features above) shall not be permitted except in exceptional circumstances. These exceptional circumstances may include the presence of intractable health or safety risks or the impracticability of reasonable economic conservation options.
- (b) Where standard conservation options are found not to be feasible and prudent for a place or element, demolition or removal of significant material will be limited to minimum extent necessary, and standard conservation principles will be applied to the maximum extent possible. All fabric to be removed or modified shall be professionally recorded and the records lodged with and responsibly archived by Environment ACT.
- (c) Any application for works necessitating damage or removal of significant fabric must include a professional structural or health assessment that clearly validates the need for and extent of demolition, and a professional conservation assessment that indicates the extent to which conservation might be achieved.

Conservation Objective 2.2

Avoid any adverse impact on significance from new developments, additions, use or treatment of the place.

Specific Requirements for Conservation Objective 2.2.

- (a) New development (such as new buildings or major additions) shall only be permitted in order to accommodate a compatible use for the place (in the Burra Charter meaning of that term), and as such will involve no, or minimal, impact on cultural significance.
- (b) Minor alterations and additions to buildings and structures associated with the conservation of the place and the achieving of occupational health and safety standards, (including access for people with disabilities) shall be defined by the 'cautionary approach' and by non-negotiable statutory requirements.
- (c) New development for the purposes outlined in (a) above should not confuse the interpretation of the significance of the place by mimicking the original fabric. The

design of any new elements should be sympathetic with and visually subservient to the significance of the homestead complex.

- (d) Alterations and additions to significant buildings for purposes outlined in (b) above should match the original details, materials, and finishes for key elements including roofing and ridge capping, gutters and down pipes, fascia and eaves detail, wall finishes and details, window types, materials and sill details and door treatment. Records of all such work shall be professionally recorded and the records lodged with Environment ACT.
- (e) Existing structures and original fabric shall be preserved in situ, unless removal is approved in an agreed conservation management plan. Any fabric that may be subject to disturbance or removal shall be professionally recorded before any action commences and the records lodged with and responsibly archived by Environment ACT.

CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE 3

Conserve the Landscape Character

Conservation Objective 3.1

Preserve the agricultural rural setting of the homestead precinct reflecting its historical functions:

Specific Requirements for Conservation Objective 3.1.

- (a) The landscape setting of the homestead shall be conserved with avenues of trees, individual trees, woodland and grassland paddock areas.
- (b) The curtilage of the place within the boundaries defined above shall be retained free of urban development.
- (c) The pattern of fences, gates and paddocks should be retained in its existing state, as far as possible given the future management needs.
- (d) Species that are "Environmental Weeds" should be removed unless they are an identified feature intrinsic to the significance of the place.
- (e) No new plantings should be permitted except for the purposes of replacing historic plantings which have died or are in extremely poor condition. New plantings may be approved for the purposes of providing a landscape setting or screen to any new development.
- (f) A landscape management plan, compatible with the CMP shall be prepared for the precinct as part of any development that incorporates major building or car parking works and shall be implemented.

Conservation Objective 3.2

Retain the diversity of tree species and preserve individual trees or collections of trees.

Specific Requirements for Conservation Objective 3.2

- (a) Trees or shrubs over 6 metres tall shall not be removed from leased land without the consent of the Authority.
- (b) Removal of trees or shrubs over 6 metres tall may be permitted where in accordance with approval criteria included in relevant tree protection legislation operating in the Territory.
- (c) Where the removal of a tree is approved, a replacement tree of stock and species common or sympathetic to the precinct shall be introduced at an approved location within the block. This requirement may be waived where a substantial number and appropriate distribution of existing trees are to be retained within the block.
- (d) The replacement of removed trees and their location will be guided by the CMP.
- (e) Tree management such as essential pruning of plants or thinning of self-seeded or suckered growth should be seen as maintenance, and may occur subject to supporting specialised advice from a tree surgeon, arborist or other appropriately qualified person.
- (f) A horticultural analysis and assessment should be undertaken as an input to the CMP. The horticultural analysis and assessment will include policies for replacement plantings, new plantings and horticultural maintenance.

CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE 4

Conserve archaeological sites

Conservation Objective 4.1

Conserve the archaeological evidence associated with the significant buildings and sites, or with any identified Aboriginal sites.

Specific Requirements for Conservation Objective 4.1

- (a) Do not 'clean up' the buildings, their interiors or the surrounding land until a CMP or HIS has provided recommendation for this aspect of the place's significance.
- (b) Any disturbance of sub-surface deposits in the vicinity of any building shall be preceded by an archaeological assessment, and works guided by the outcomes of such assessment. Previously tilled garden areas may continue to be tilled to a depth appropriate for garden purposes.

- (c) Should any Aboriginal sites be located within the boundary of the place, disturbance shall only be permitted after consultation with the relevant Aboriginal organisations, a detailed archaeological investigation of the potentially affected area and a continuous watching brief by an archaeologist while work occurs in the area, and
- (d) An archaeological zoning map shall be prepared as part of the CMP or as an interim component conservation plan, including the definition of precise boundaries of all archaeologically sensitive areas. Until this zoning map has been prepared, any development will be treated as involving archaeologically sensitive areas.

CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE 5

New development not to diminish heritage values

Conservation Objective 5.1

Ensure new developments do not diminish cultural significance.

Specific Requirements for Conservation Objective 5.1

- (a) New development within or in close proximity to any significant building will be treated as 'adaptation' in the Burra Charter sense, and as such shall have minimal impact on significance and shall involve minimal change.
- (b) New development at a distance from existing structures shall have minimal impact on the significance of the landscape features of the place, including views to and from the homestead and the shearing shed precincts.

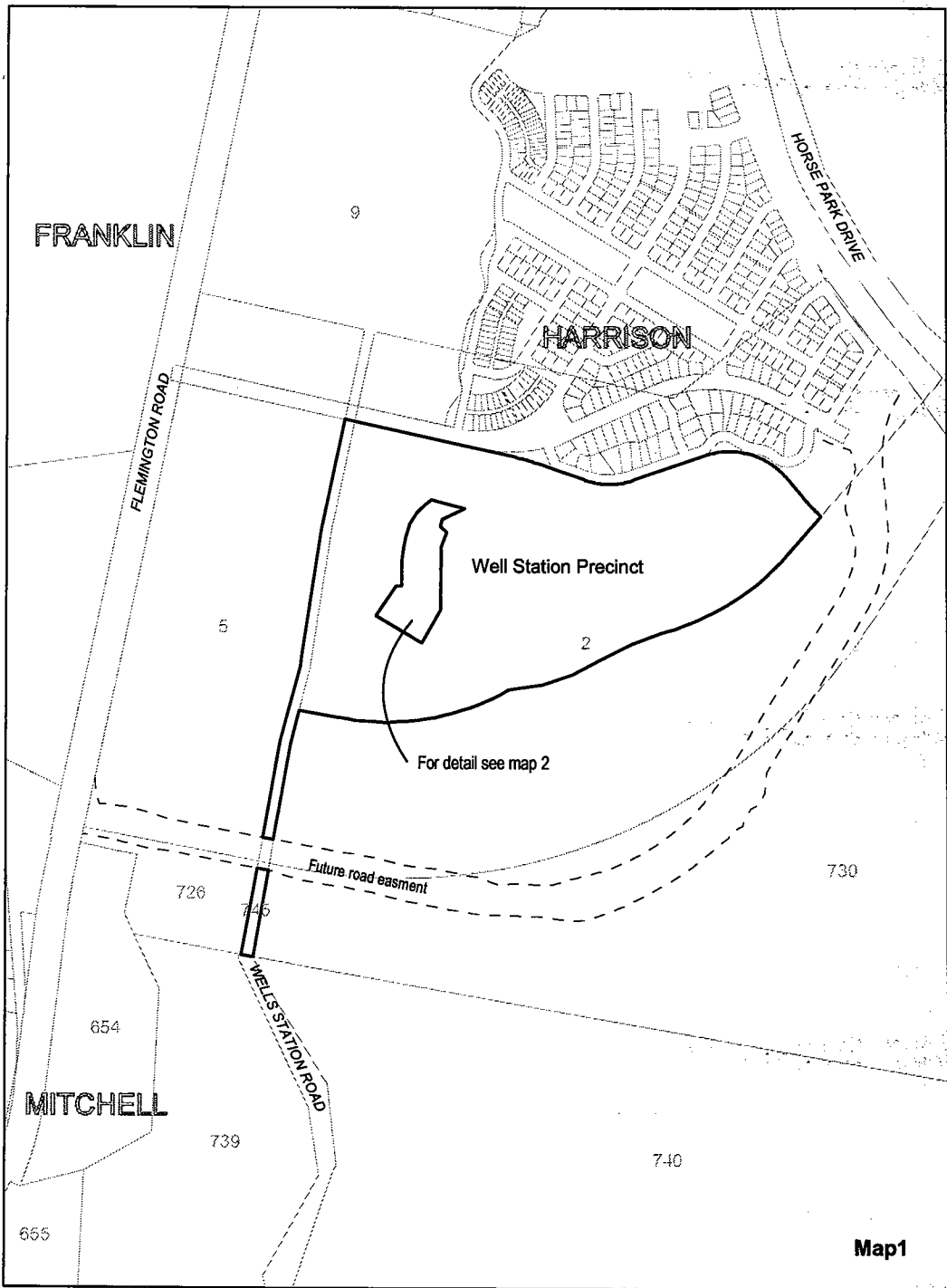
Conservation Objective 5.2




Ensure new development is sympathetic to the rural character of the built and landscape elements of the place.

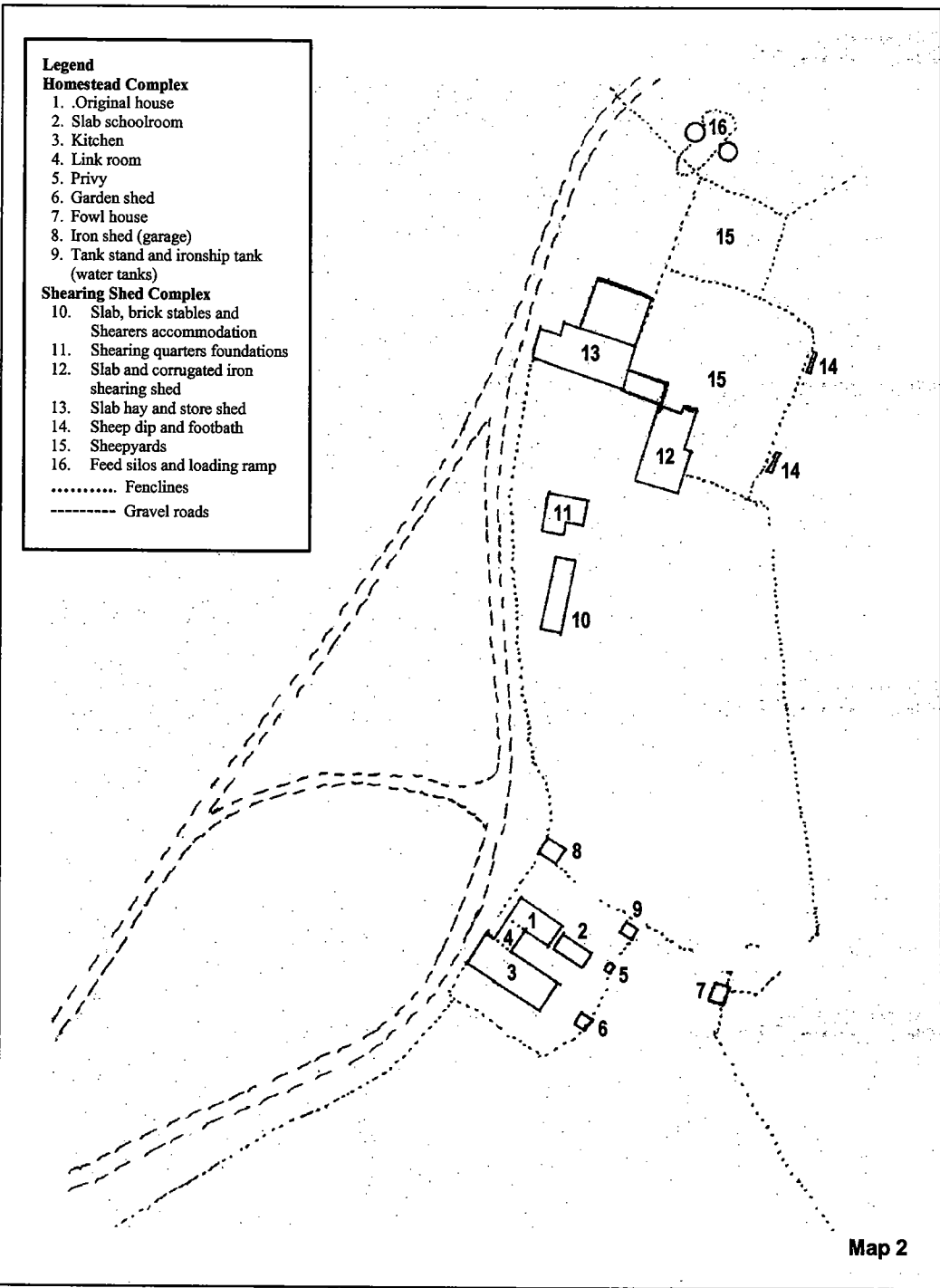
Specific Requirements for Conservation Objective 5.2

- (a) The design, size, scale, colour, material of any new buildings or new structures shall be sympathetic to the character of the existing structures in their immediate proximity and in areas remote from existing buildings or structures.
- (b) No new structures shall be located between the homestead and shearing shed, or within the garden areas north or east of the homestead.
- (c) New buildings may be permitted south of the homestead, provided scale and landscaping ensures a well screened and recessive presence.



- (d) New structures required for agricultural purposes may be located to the north and north east of the Woolshed area in accordance with Requirement 5.2 (a) above.
- (e) Roads and parking areas, unless otherwise indicated in the CMP, shall remain unsealed.
- (f) Parking areas will be sited so as to minimise visual impact as seen from the homestead and shearing shed areas, and
- (g) New services should be designed and located to minimise their impact upon original fabric and prominent vistas, being underground where possible.

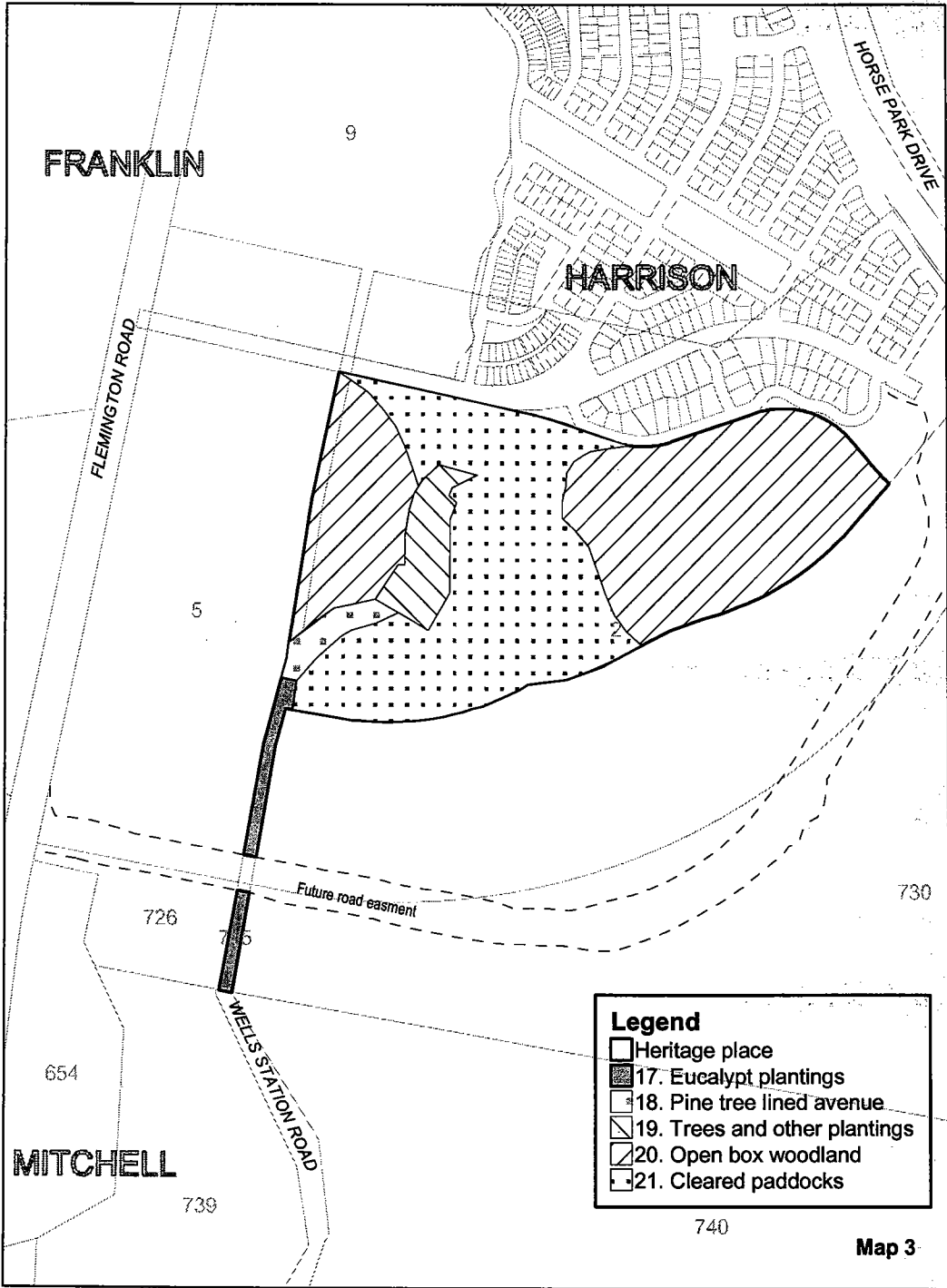


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- Legend**
- Homestead Complex**
1. Original house
 2. Slab schoolroom
 3. Kitchen
 4. Link room
 5. Privy
 6. Garden shed
 7. Fowl house
 8. Iron shed (garage)
 9. Tank stand and ironship tank (water tanks)
- Shearing Shed Complex**
10. Slab, brick stables and Shearers accommodation
 11. Shearing quarters foundations
 12. Slab and corrugated iron shearing shed
 13. Slab hay and store shed
 14. Sheep dip and footbath
 15. Sheepyards
 16. Feed silos and loading ramp
- Fencelines
 ----- Gravel roads

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<p>Map Units: MGA Zone 55 metres Datum: GDA 94</p>			



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