



## ACT Heritage Council

# Statement of Heritage Effect Approval

Under Section 61H of the *Heritage Act 2004*

Applicant Reference: Yarralumla  
Townhouses  
Heritage Reference: Yarralumla B11&12  
S64  
Contact Officer: JD  
Received by Council: 13 December 2019

**TO: Philip Leeson Architects Pty Ltd**  
David Hobbes  
David <david@philipleeson.com.au>

Block:	Section:	Division / District:	Heritage Place:
12 & 16 (now 19)	64	Yarralumla	Early Canberra Brickworks Housing

Status of Place: Registered Heritage Place  
Description of Works: Construction of seven townhouses.  
Report Details: “Yarralumla Townhouses, Blocks 12&16 Section 64  
Yarralumla – Statement of Heritage Effects” (Philip Leeson  
Architects, December 2020)  
Council Advice provided by: Chair / Heritage Council

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Pursuant to Section 61H of the *Heritage Act 2004*, the ACT Heritage Council advises that:

- ☒ **The Statement of Heritage Effect is approved, with conditions** as set out below, on the basis that:
- (a) the proposed activity is justifiable at, or near, the place; and
  - (b) there are no reasonably practicable alternative ways to carry out the proposed activity at the place; and
  - (c) that reasonable steps have been identified to reduce the risk of diminishing the heritage significance of or damage to the place.
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### Background:

On 13 December 2019 the ACT Heritage Council (the Council) received an application for the approval of the “Yarralumla Townhouses, Blocks 12 & 16 Section 64 Yarralumla – Statement of Heritage Effects” (the SHE) (Philip Leeson Architects, December 2020), for proposed works at Blocks 12 and 16 Section 64, Yarralumla (Early Canberra Brickworks Housing).

The Early Canberra Brickworks Housing precinct, comprising Blocks 8, 11, 12 and 16 Section 64, Yarralumla is registered on the ACT Heritage Register and significant as the

earliest permanent public housing in the Canberra (constructed 1921 – 1922) for workmen associated with the construction of the nearby Yarralumla Brickworks and Nursery.

Development approval was previously granted in 2007 as part of DA20073503 for works at Blocks 12 and 16 (now Block 19). Works completed at this time included excavation and partial retaining walls and concrete slab for basement carparking; demolition of most of the cottage on Block 16; and demolition of all but front wall of the cottage on block 12 and construction of a new floor slab.

The Council supported the extent of demolition works at this time on the basis of engineering advice which identified inadequate footings to both cottages. Works proposed included the removal of external walls, insertion of a monolithic slab to both cottages and reconstruction of external walls with original “*Canberra Red*” bricks from the cottages. These works were partially completed to the cottage on Block 12 only and subsequently abandoned.

A revised scheme was proposed in 2012 and a Stop Work Notice issued as unapproved demolition works were undertaken. Since that time the cottages have been propped to prevent further collapse of the remnant building fabric and remain uncovered which has resulted in further ongoing deterioration and instability of the original building fabric of the cottages.

The project was reactivated in 2019 with a new design developed by Thursday Architecture. During preliminary discussions with the Council it was identified that the little remaining original building fabric was structurally unsound. The Council agreed that heritage values of the place had been substantially modified and that a proposal for reconstruction may not adequately conserve the heritage significance of the place, noting the further deterioration of the remaining original building fabric.

The submission proposes the construction of seven townhouses across the two blocks with six two storey townhouses fronting Hutchins Street and a single-storey townhouse to the rear of Block 16. The existing partially completed basement parking on Block 12 would be utilised and modified to suit the proposed new development. However, the remaining original building fabric of both cottages is to be demolished as it is considered to be structurally unsound.

The new buildings are to present as a simple cubic form with the upper storey setback from the lower with a defined parapet edge, reducing the overall bulk of the buildings. Long side elevations are to be broken up by kitchen pop-outs clad in recycled “*Canberra Reds*”.

The six two-storey townhouses addressing Hutchins Street are to be sited approximately six (6) metres from the property boundary, consistent with the original cottage on the block. The existing *Photinia* hedge to the property boundary is to be retained and pruned. Landscaping to the block is to comprise entry gates to the townhouses set within the existing *Photinia* hedge. The front courtyards to the townhouses are to be landscaped with lawn, deciduous trees and smaller shrubs.

The existing bitumen verge crossing to Bentham Street to be retained and replaced with bitumen where required. The driveway within the block is to provide access to the basement parking, with an onsite parking-bay close to the block boundary. The verge crossing on Hutchins Street is to be retained and the driveway replaced by a red brick paved path providing access to the rear townhouse.

The dwellings are to be finished in an off-white textured rendered masonry. The upper floors are to be a darker charcoal colour. The rendered walls are to be capped with basalt stone, which is also to be used as veneer to the spandrel panels between the windows on the upper levels. Recycled “*Canberra Reds*” are to be used for the proposed front pedestrian gate piers, front pathways, kitchen pop-out cladding and as a portal trim to the window and door openings to the front terraces. Doors and windows are to be aluminium framed in Colorbond “*Monument*”.

The SHE provides an assessment of the proposal against the Heritage Guidelines (the Guidelines) of the ACT Heritage Register Entry for the place, which were developed on the basis that the original cottages would remain substantially intact with sympathetic additions. Consequently, the SHE identifies that the proposed development is not consistent with Requirements 1.5(a); 1.8(b); 3.1; 3.2; 3.3; 3.8; 4.1; 4.2 and 4.4 of the Guidelines for the place as the remaining original building fabric is to be demolished.

The Council acknowledges that it has previously provided support for works at the place which proposed the demolition and reconstruction of original building fabric to provide structurally sound footings for proposed works to the cottages. Whilst these works were partially completed, unapproved demolition and abandonment of any further works has resulted in the current unsound condition of the remaining original building fabric.

The Council understands that retention of existing original building fabric within the proposed new development would require further substantial intervention which in itself may result in further loss of original building fabric. Notwithstanding, the extent of loss of original building fabric from the cottages and the current unstable condition, reconstruction of the cottages is not considered to be an appropriate heritage outcome. On this basis, the Council considers the proposed works to be justifiable.

The Council identifies that the integrity of the built form and street elevations of the remaining cottages has been extensively and irreversibly diminished by previous works to the cottages, including substantial unapproved demolition to the cottage on Block 16.

The SHE identifies that the development is to incorporate “*Canberra Red*” bricks from the original cottages within the new development for paving, pedestrian pillars, external cladding and portal to the terraces. Further, substantial landscaping is proposed to the front courtyard of each terrace, and between the terraces, complementing the existing landscape character of the immediate streetscape which is characterised by dwellings set within a mature landscape garden setting.

The Council considers that whilst this would not result in a scheme which retains the existing original building fabric, it provides for new development which complements the existing dwellings within the streetscape through the adoption of a setback similar to that of the cottage on Block 16; the use of reclaimed “*Canberra Reds*” from the original cottages within the construction of the new townhouses; retention of the existing hedge to the block boundary and new dwellings set within a substantial garden setting.

### **Decision and Conditions:**

The Council acknowledges that the heritage values of the place have been irretrievably compromised and that reconstruction of the original portions of the cottages is not feasible given the structural instability of the remaining original building fabric on the site. Whilst the Council regrets the loss of the remaining original building fabric it is mindful that it is neither reasonable nor practical to retain and conserve the remaining building fabric without further intervention.

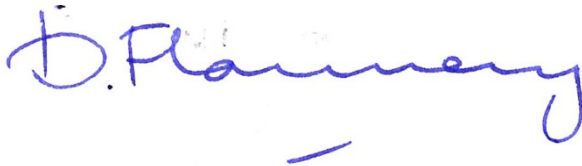
Further, in this instance, reconstruction of the cottages is not considered to be an appropriate heritage outcome.

Following review of the application, the Council is satisfied that the proposed activity is justifiable, and that there are no reasonably practicable alternative ways to carry out the proposed activity, and that reasonable steps have been adopted to reduce detrimental heritage impacts.

On this basis, the Council approves the Statement of Heritage Effect application subject to the following conditions:

1. Photographic recording of remnant original building fabric is to be completed prior to the commencement of any works.

2. Existing “*Canberra Reds*” from original remnant building fabric on the blocks shall be reused within the development, including bricks already stockpiled on block.
3. The SHE is approved for a period of two years.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "D. Flannery". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D' and a long, sweeping underline.

David Flannery FRAIA MPIA  
**Chair (as delegate for),**  
**ACT Heritage Council**

2 March 2020