

INTERIM HERITAGE PLACES REGISTER

CITATION

Name of Place: ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING

LOCATION OF PLACE: Parkes Place, corner King Edward Terrace, Parkes, ACT

Section and Block Suburb: Block 1, Section 35, Parkes

Area bounded by: All of Block 1, Section 35, Parkes

FEATURES INTRINSIC TO THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PLACE:

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

- The building is highly significant for its prominent and strategic location as a major element in the planned organisation of Canberra's Parliamentary Triangle. The siting of the building is in accordance with the 1916 plans of Walter Burley Griffin and, with the later Treasury Building balancing its mass across central lawns of the land axis vista, contributes to the planned aesthetic qualities of the Parliamentary Triangle which are held in high regard by the Australian community.
 - Socially, the Administrative Building has played a key role in the development of Canberra and the National Centre of Government, having been the starting place for the movement of Government Departments to Canberra.
 - The building is a fine example of 1940s architecture. Its plan form is of interest for the way it follows the design of the 1924 Architectural Competition, won by W Sydney Jones. The use of light courts was a distinct design feature to introduce light to the interior spaces of such a large building. The foyers and lift lobbies are fine and unusual examples of design of their period. The building was claimed to be the largest Australian office building when completed in 1955 and was the largest Canberra office building up until the 1960's.
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

The Administrative Building occupies an important place in the Parliamentary Triangle. Its relationship to the Treasury Building and Griffin's land axis is an important design characteristic of the precinct.

The building is a fine example of Commercial Architecture of the 1940's and contains some distinct features (light courts, foyer and lift lobbies). Historically, the Administrative Building has played a key role in the development of Canberra as the national centre of government, having been the staging place for the movement of government departments to Canberra and housing government departments since then.

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:

Any action relating to these requirements is development for the purposes of the Act and will require approval prior to undertaking the activity. To undertake development without such approval may be an offence.

1. Requirements Relating to the Building

1.1

1.2

2. Requirements Relating to the Setting

2.1

2.2

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

In assessing this place for the interim Heritage Places Register, the Council recommends that the following 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.

DOCUMENT HISTORY

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| 1. | date | Draft citation considered by ACT Heritage Council at Meeting (number) |
| 2. | date | Draft citation released for public comment |
| 3. | date | Revised citation for ACT Heritage Council Meeting (number) |
| 4. | date | Gazetted in an interim Heritage Places Register |
| 5. | 19/6/93 | Nomination form National Estate |
| 6. | 15/12/94 | Registered |

Attachment A

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:

1.

Architect: 1994: George Sydney Jones
1928: George Godsell (Robertson & Marks)
1947: LR Weidner (Department of Works and Housing)
Builder: 1947 Concrete Constructions of Sydney.

The building plan is based around nine storey high rectangular core block (2 levels are below ground and the top level is plant). The main axis runs east to west. Four storey high (2 below ground) wings project perpendicularly to the north and west face of the building.

Blocks A & D are located at the end of the core block.

Blocks B & C are symmetrically placed between them.

The building is 'inter-war stripped classical design' and faced with polished red granite to ground floor and dressed sandstone ashlar blocks to the upper levels.

The principal entry to the buildings is centrally located on the portico from just above the first floor level is located centrally to the elevator. The sides of the opening are defined with semi-circular columns capped with lintels. The opening is equally divided with 2 oval columns - all elements are in polished granite. Access is available centrally on north, south and east elevations through aluminium faced porticos.

The interior of the Administrative building is one of the few 1940's-1950's public building interior in Australia that remains substantially intact.

2. STATUS OF PLACE AT NOMINATION DATE:

3. BACKGROUND:

4. RELEVANT PRINCIPAL NATIONAL HISTORIC THEMES:

5. ANALYSIS AGAINST THE CRITERIA SPECIFIED IN SCHEDULE 2 OF THE LAND (PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT) ACT 1991

Under Section 56 the criteria for the assessment of the heritage significance of places are:

- (i) a place which demonstrates a high degree of technical and/or creative achievement, by showing qualities of innovation or departure, or representing a new achievement of its time;**
- (ii) a place which exhibits outstanding design or aesthetic qualities valued by the community or a cultural group;**
- (iii) a place which demonstrates a distinctive way of life, taste, tradition, religion, land use, custom, process, design or function which is no longer practised, is in danger of being lost, or is of exceptional interest;**
- (iv) a place which is highly valued by the community or a cultural group for reasons of strong or special religious, spiritual, cultural, educational or social associations;**

- (v) a place which is the only known or only comparatively intact example of its type;
- (vi) a place which is a notable example of a class of natural or cultural places or landscapes and which demonstrates the principal characteristics of that class;
- (vii): a place which has strong or special associations with a person, group, event, development or cultural phase which played a significant part in local or national history;
- (viii) a place which represents the evolution of a natural landscape, including significant geological features, landforms, biota or natural processes;
- (ix) a place which is a significant habitat or locality for the life cycle of native species; for rare, endangered or uncommon species; for species at the limits of their natural range; or for district occurrences of species;
- (x) a place which exhibits unusual richness, diversity or significant transitions of flora, fauna or natural landscapes and their elements; or
- (xi) a place which demonstrates a likelihood of providing information which will contribute significantly to a wider understanding of natural or cultural history, by virtue of its use as a research site, teaching site, type locality or benchmark site.

6 REFERENCES:

Author Title date publication

1. Garnett, Rodney and Hyndes, Danielle; *The Heritage of the Australian Capital Territory*
2. National Trust of Australia (ACT) et al, Canberra 1992
3. Philip Cox, Richardson, Taylor and Partners Pty Ltd, *Administrative Building, Parkes, Conservation Plan, for Australian Estate Management, Canberra 1992*
4. Draft Conservation Plan
5. Mitchell Archives