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MEDIA RELEASE

13 May 2010 **For Immediate Release**

ACT National Trust calls for better administration of the ACT Heritage Act

The ACT National Trust has submitted a round of recommendations on the current review of the ACT Heritage Act calling for better administration of the Act.

Of major concern to the Trust is the ever increasing volume of heritage places nominations that are not proceeding through the assessment system and have caused a huge backlog.

Over the past ten years the Trust has nominated over twenty places to the ACT Heritage Register which even today have shown no progress towards placement on the Register. These places, therefore, have no statutory protection under the Heritage Act.

The President of the National Trust, Mr Eric Martin AM, said today that these nominations have been done by professionals experienced in heritage assessment and have been peer reviewed by the Trust's Heritage Committee prior to submission. We can see no reason why such nominations should not be accepted.

The Trust is also concerned that many of the nominations on the backlog may be wiped off because of the length of time since they have been submitted.

The Trust has made a number of recommendations designed at making the Act more viable. We are asking for a more concerted effort by the Heritage Council to ensure that all nominations are processed in a more timely fashion; more financial and staffing support is made available to allow this to happen.

If these steps are taken the Act, which is designed to protect places of identified heritage values will begin to work. At the moment it does not offer the protection it should.

The Trust's recommendations were sent to the ACT Government last week and are available on our website: http://www.m2cms.com.au/uploaded/18/Trust_comments_May_2010.pdf