

NATIONAL TRUST REGISTER OF SIGNIFICANT PLACES

CITATION

NAME OF PLACE: DEASLAND HOMESTEAD AND DAIRY

LOCATION OF PLACE:

Section and Block Suburb:

1. Block 311. Gungahlin. East of the present Ginninderra Village Tourist Complex - Barton Highway Gungahlin
2. Map 200612 ACT 1:10,000 Planning Series 207150-613420
3. The area of the house and outbuildings excluding the Woolshed is enclosed by netting and rail fences
4. Total area is approximately 9.6 hectares

Area bounded by:

FEATURES INTRINSIC TO THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PLACE:

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

Deasland demonstrates the second phase of rural life in the area, when landowners had become prosperous and began to construct more comfortable permanent residences. It was close to the hub of Ginninderra Village, and together with the Blacksnith's workshop marks the south-eastern end of the Village precinct.

Deasland represents a rural lifestyle which is becoming less common around Canberra. It is still a wool producing property.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

The original Deasland was an exceptionally well-built, light timber framed homestead, timber clad, with fine detail and finishes. It was a particularly good example of Australian carpentry craftsmanship and construction.

Deasland represents the culmination of sequential homestead construction on this site, an established and civilised dwelling, not a rough pioneering shelter.

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS:

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:

In accordance with Section 54 (1) of the Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991, the following requirements are identified as essential to the retention of the heritage significance of the place:

A Conservation Plan shall be prepared and shall include:

1. A detailed history of the site and buildings to positively determine the age and sequence of construction of the existing building, and
 - an archaeological survey to determine the types and extent of previous usage of the site, and to assess the building's context in relation to contemporary buildings of Ginninderra Village;
 - a study of the vegetation and landscape elements relating to Deasland; and
 - a determination of the boundaries of the land appropriate to the homestead.
2. The Conservation Plan shall be submitted to the Heritage Council of the ACT for approval within a time specified by the Heritage Council in consultation with the lessees.
3. All building works and alterations which affect the homestead, outbuildings or precinct shall conform to the requirements of this approved Conservation Plan.
4. The property is to be used for residential purposes.
5. Until the day on which the Conservation Plan is approved by the Council, the place shall be used for residential/ rural purposes and be maintained so as to ensure that the significance of the built fabric and setting will not be altered.

1. **Requirements Relating to the Building**

- 1.1 Not applicable
- 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 Trust recommends that the following actions and activities should be undertaken which will enhance the heritage values of the place: SEE ABOVE.

DOCUMENT HISTORY

1. date Draft citation considered by Council at Meeting (number)
2. date Revised citation for Council Meeting (number).....APPROVED/NOT APPROVED
3. 1993 Submitted for inclusion in interim Heritage Places Register
4. 3/2/94 Classified by NTA(ACT)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:

Deasland is a single storey weatherboard homestead which originally comprised six rooms off a central passage and an interior bathroom which is now a pantry. Two open verandahs on the north-west and north-east were part of the original building.

The building is framed with light timber and the hip roof uses few underpurlins to support the long 100mm x 50mm common rafters. The structure is slender but sound.

The original roof was galvanised corrugated iron. The sheets were laid alternatively under and over and fixed with screws and lead washers. Some of the sheets of this red roof were branded 'Gospel Oak' galvanised. The roof was replaced in 1993, after asbestos removal, with unpainted galvanised iron. The original sheets remain on site.

The external walls are clad with 'rusticated' 45mm mould weatherboards, which are scribed to external corner stop-boards with no mitres. The original external colour is evident as deep cream or buff and has been returned to that colour from white.

The two brick chimneys are capped with three of the four original glazed earthenware chimney pots.

Open verandahs on the south-east and north-east have been re-roofed with a "bell" concave verandah roof shape similar to the original roof. These sections of roof are painted in broad stripes of red and cream. The verandah originally finished at each end with a mitred hip and the profile of this is evident.

The north-west verandah was originally open and enclosed later. It is built on timber stumps as far as the original back door. Old steps are evident under the present floor. The bathroom and laundry have been built later and have solid foundation walls. The verandah roof of corrugated iron shows two ages and two different pitches.

The south-west side of the verandah roof is supported by brick stumps and appears to have always been enclosed. It was built later than the north-west verandah and has a corrugated iron roof with a quad eaves gutter.

The floors of both these verandahs are T & G board in three sizes.

Internal walls were originally lined with 150mm wide pine lining boards with beaded mould to all walls and ceilings. In most areas these features have been obscured by "Canite" cladding fixed to the original lining.

The ceilings in the living and dining rooms have been lowered from the original 3.6m. All walls and linings are in good condition.

All floors are timber board on timber frame, all sound. Solid 600mm wide strong walls support all walls of the original homestead, and under-floor ventilation is minimal.

The front door is not original, nor in keeping with the original style. Flyscreen doors have been added to all exterior doors and do not contribute to the building.

French doors opening out onto the southeast and north-east verandahs were a feature of the house. Two pairs of french doors have been removed from the south-east verandah and replaced by large horizontal windows. The original french doors and some internal doors are still in the shed at the rear.

The original 45mm thick four-panel back door with bold moulding is still in place, near the pantry. Internal doors are original four-panel, 35mm thick, or later hollowcore flush and painted doors.

Some of the original double-hung timber-framed windows are in place, but many different window styles have been incorporated into the extensions and verandah enclosures.

A unique feature of the original homestead was its timber decoration. The decoration included soffit brackets at the top of verandah posts, moulded window sills and door architraves, a solid verandah handrail with unusual 'woven' timber balustrading and ornate finial on the roof ridge. The detailed soffit brackets are all that remain.

Only one of the five original fireplaces remains intact, in bedroom 1. The original Victorian timber mantel and brackets, with carved lintel, still remain above a brick fireplace with brick shoulders. All other fireplaces have been removed, and several fireplaces gutted to recess oil or wood heaters, and in the kitchen a stove.

A brick dairy cum meat room with a stone floor and plaster lined board ceiling nine metres from the back south-west corner of the homestead is rendered and is now painted buff. It has a corrugated iron pitched roof and the original adjustable louvred shutters as windows.

The existing garden comprises a plantation of 40 ornamental trees, mainly conifers, south of the homestead. An orchard of 55 fruit trees including apples, pears, quinces and plums was planted from the entrance along the western side of the driveway, but no evidence remains.

A tennis court on the north of the house is a least fifty years old and has an ant-bed surface and timber and wire netting surrounds.

The nearby woolshed is to be removed/demolished with the development of access roads to new Harcourt Hill residential and tourist development in Gungahlin.

2. STATUS OF PLACE AT NOMINATION DATE:

Conservation Plan prepared by Strine Design 1982

CLASSIFIED by the National Trust of Australia (ACT) 3/2/94

Listed on the ACT Heritage Places Register 1993

NCDC Sites of Significance Volume No.3, Page No. 22-23 SOS Number GH7

ACT Leased Land - Lessee John MacKinnon, Fernhill Pastoral Company (Galong) Pty Ltd.

3. BACKGROUND:

Deasland homestead was built in 1890 on or adjacent to an earlier homestead complex, by George Harcourt, a man of some renown in the Ginninderra area.

The house is oriented parallel to the Barton Highway, facing south-east. Several buildings of Ginninderra Village were adjacent to this side and it is possible that the house faced the village.

George Harcourt came to Ginninderra in 1860 as a book keeper for William Davis Jr of Ginninderra Station. In 1862 he purchased the store at Ginninderra Village from Davis and moved it from its original location near Davis' home on the Ginninderra Estate to a site near the crossing of Ginninderra Creek by the Yass Road (now the Barton Highway).

Harcourt successfully ran the store for more than 20 years, and was the fourth postmaster of Ginninderra from 1862-1882. George Harcourt married Miss Millicent Ward, the daughter of a local farmer, in 1880.

Harcourt acquired considerable land in the area. In 1887 he sold the store and began building the Deasland Homestead almost opposite the store. The residence and a woolshed were completed in 1890.

George Harcourt died in 1893, but his family remained at Deasland until 1913, when the property was resumed by the Commonwealth Government.

Harcourt was a prominent member of the Ginninderra community, known as a pigeon fancier, a crack shooter and member of the Acclimatisation Society. He released 21 sky larks at Deasland in 1881 and was associated with the local extermination of the lyre bird.

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;**

Deasland represents the culmination of sequential homestead construction on this site, an established and civilised dwelling, not a rough pioneering shelter.

The timber work and roof construction show a high degree of technical achievement in the detail of the timber work and the light but strong timber frame construction supporting the roof.

- (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;**

Deasland demonstrates the second phase of rural life in the area, when landowners had become prosperous and began to construct more comfortable permanent residences. It was close to the hub of Ginninderra Village, and together with the Blacksmith's workshop marks the south-eastern end of the Village precinct.

Deasland represents a rural lifestyle which is becoming less common around Canberra. It is still a wool producing property.

- (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;**

Deasland Homestead was built by George Harcourt, a prominent figure in the early history of Ginninderra. He was storekeeper and Post Master for twenty years between 1862 and 1882.

The tennis court at Deasland was an important social hub in the early 1900's.

- (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

Barlow, S. 1992 *Heritage Study of Deasland Homestead* Unpublished student report to Cultural Heritage Management unit, University of Canberra.

Butt, E G. 1982 *Deasland Homestead Architectural Assessment* ACT Heritage Committee, Canberra.

Garnett, R and D Hyndes 1992 *The Heritage of the ACT* The National Trust (ACT), Canberra.

Gillespie, L L 1979 *If Ginninderra Creek could speak*, *Canberra Historical Journal* No 2, pp 20-25.

Gillespie, L L. 1991 *Canberra 1820-1913* AGPS, Canberra.

NCDC 1988 *Sites of Significance in the ACT* Volume 3, Gungahlin and Belconnen pp 22-23.