



*Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*

Notice under section 341JI

**INCLUSION IN THE COMMONWEALTH HERITAGE LIST  
OF LAKE BURLEY GRIFFIN AND ADJACENT LANDS**

I, Sussan Ley, Minister for the Environment, having considered in relation to the place and the Commonwealth Heritage values described in the Schedule of this instrument:

- (a) the Australian Heritage Council's assessment whether the assessed place meets any of the Commonwealth Heritage criteria; and
- (b) the comments given to the Council under sections 341JF and 341JG of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*; and

being satisfied that the place described in the Schedule has the Commonwealth Heritage values specified in the Schedule, pursuant to section 341JI of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, include the place and the specified Commonwealth Heritage values in the Commonwealth Heritage List.

Dated: 8/4/22

Sussan Ley

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Sussan Ley

Minister for the Environment

## SCHEDULE

### AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Australian Capital Territory

#### **NAME: Lake Burley Griffin and Adjacent Lands**

#### **BOUNDARY:**

About 6640ha, Canberra, comprising the following:

1. Lake Burley Griffin, extending to the outside walls where these exist or otherwise to a line drawn at the normal lake level, except that the line shall be drawn across the entrance to Lake Burley Griffin of the Molonglo River, Jerrabomberra Creek and Sullivans Creek. All islands within Lake Burley Griffin are included except for Aspen Island and the Carillon.
2. Scrivener Dam, Commonwealth Bridge and Kings Avenue Bridge.
3. Comprising Blocks 1, 3, 4, 5 Section 54 Parkes; Block 2 Section 38 Barton; Blocks 1, 2, 3, 4 Section 89 Acton; Block 1 Section 126 Yarralumla; Block 1 Section 129 Yarralumla; Block 1432 Central Canberra District.
4. Stirling Ridge and Attunga Point Yarralumla comprising Block 3 Section 128, Block 4 Section 22, Block 13 Section 108 Yarralumla.
5. Yarramundi Point comprising Block 1339, 1299, 1338, 1300, 1343 Canberra Central District.

(a) **Criterion**  
the place has significant heritage value because of the place's importance in the course, or pattern, of Australia's natural or cultural history.

#### **Values**

The Lake Burley Griffin and Adjacent Lands place has significant historic heritage value. Characteristics of the place with significant historic value include the following.

From the early days of Canberra's establishment as the national capital, the gradual formation of Lake Burley Griffin marked major milestones in the capital city's creation. As a substantial national project, the construction and completion of Lake Burley Griffin demonstrates the push for national development during the years immediately after Federation and before the First World War, and again after the Second World War, under the Menzies government.

Lake Burley Griffin is associated with the original city competition brief for the design of Canberra. Its final form at completion is consistent with the original guiding intentions set out in the competition brief. This link with the original brief connects us to the aspirations and vision Australians had for Federation and its capital city at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The Lake's design and form reflect the story of its development including the tensions between designers, administrators and politicians in the development of the capital.

The Lake's design reflects the influence of three major urban design movements including the City Beautiful movement, the Garden City movement and International Modernism. The use of City Beautiful and Garden City theories and ideas is reflected in the use and design of the lake to fulfill aesthetic, open space and outdoor recreation functions. The lake also forms part of the water axis and has been designed in parts to include symbolic, ceremonial, formal and informal and active and passive recreation space. The design influences of International Modernism can be seen in the engineering works within the place including the fish belly flap gates of Scrivener Dam, Commonwealth Avenue Bridge and Kings Avenue Bridge.

The central area of Lake Burley Griffin provides an aesthetic and symbolic backdrop for many military and civil memorials along its foreshore. National events and ceremonies have and continue to be staged around, near and over the lake because of its beauty and function within the central national area.

## Criterion

## Values

Stirling Park has a layered collection of Indigenous, pastoral and early capital city features including Aboriginal stone artefacts and arrangements, a scarred tree, old routes and tracks, exotic plantings, remnant mining sites, campsite and homestead sites and the remaining remnant structures of the former Westlake workers settlement. Westlake provided accommodation for early Canberra builders and tradesmen working on the construction of buildings like Old Parliament House, East Block, West Block and Hotel Canberra. The remnant layout of the Westlake settlement is still legible in the landscape demonstrating the living conditions of those early workers and their families who came to Canberra as builders and tradesmen. Over time this settlement became a strong community remembered today by former residents and their families.

Roman Cypress Hill is a significant historic planting area. The remnant historic planting of *Cupressus sempervirens* was planted in 1919–1921 when the first planning and layout for Griffin’s Canberra was being undertaken. Charles Weston’s work to establish the landscape of the city is also partly demonstrated here. Today it is a remnant of Griffin’s plan for the treatment of the western horizon. Only part of the hill planting remains in its original setting, the remaining planting area is located across the highway to the west.

The Lindsay Pryor Arboretum is associated with the history of urban landscaping and city horticulture in Canberra. The historic planting in the arboretum area demonstrates some of Pryor’s experimental work on the growth of a variety of tree species for potential use in the city’s parks and streets. The planting and surrounding water areas also form part of the attractive parkland and water views from Government House.

Features which express the significant historic values of the place include, but are not limited to: the lake as a whole including its edge treatments, the Captain Cook Water Jet, the Commonwealth and Kings Avenue bridges, Scrivener Dam, lake islands, the Lake’s contribution to the geometry of Griffin’s plan for Canberra; the remnant historic plantings of *Cupressus sempervirens* trees located on part of the hill known as Roman Cypress Hill; the remnant historic plantings within the Lindsay Pryor Arboretum; the site and remnant structures of the former Westlake settlement; the No 1 sewer vent in Stirling Park and the layered historic landscape of Stirling Park representing the Indigenous, pastoral and early capital city periods of Canberra.

- (b) the place has significant heritage value because of the place's possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Australia's natural or cultural history.

The Lake Burley Griffin and Adjacent Lands place has significant rarity value because of the place’s possession of uncommon, rare and endangered aspects of Australia’s natural and cultural history. These rare aspects of the place are described below.

### *City Beautiful and Garden City exemplar*

Lake Burley Griffin is an important exemplar design site which can demonstrate design and planning devices characteristic of the two most important town planning movements of the twentieth century; the City Beautiful and Garden City movements. Canberra is one of the few planned twentieth century cities in Australia and in the world. The city’s national capital function provided planners and designers, like Griffin, with an opportunity to use their best and most innovative planning ideas drawing from the town planning practices of their time.

In particular, the lake forms part of the water axis which Griffin used to arrange city elements and connect surrounding natural features. The grand scale of lake vistas along the water axis and in other areas gifts the National Triangle and city a sense of grandeur and beauty. The lake overall, also provides long water vistas which feature the surrounding, sometimes snow covered, Brindabella Mountains. Viewed from high vantage points like Black Mountain, Mt Ainslie and Red Hill, the lake is a distinctive character element providing a lake setting for its urban, residential and national capital activities and spaces. The lake also integrates the northern and southern sides

## ***Criterion***

### **Values**

of the central city. The formal areas of the lake also provide a water setting for national institutions which are showcased on its foreshore.

The use of visual follies like the lake's islands, the National Carillon and the Captain Cook Memorial [water] Jet are examples of visual devices informed by the City Beautiful movement.

From a Garden City perspective, the lake provides a variety of recreation spaces and is itself a huge open space in the middle of the central city area of Canberra. The lake area is almost twice the size of Central Park in New York. Stirling Park and Yarrumundi Reach are part of an extensive and generous system of parks and open space along the lake's foreshore. The treatment of Roman Cypress Hill also demonstrates the careful management of visual experiences which were planned deliberately in a dynamic way to enhance the visual experience of the city and National Triangle.

The features which express these rarity values include but are not limited to the lake as a whole including its edge treatments, the Captain Cook Memorial Jet, the lake's two bridges, Scrivener Dam, lake islands, the lake's contribution to the realisation of the water axis, the Roman Cypress Hill planting, the use allocation of Stirling Park and Yarramundi reach as parkland, the long uninterrupted lake vistas and views (from the Lake) of the Brindabella Mountains and the many long water vistas afforded from the foreshore and for those using the lake for boating.

#### *Engineering techniques*

The 'fish-belly' flap gates of Scrivener Dam enable the lake's water levels to be controlled to a precise degree. The technology identified and built at Scrivener Dam (fish-belly-flap gates) is rare in Australia and represents the development of standards in hydrology and dam engineering in its time.

#### *Natural areas*

The large surviving grassy woodland area, now modified to grassland, at Yarramundi Reach displays important characteristics of the remnant Natural Temperate Grassland ecological community. This ecological community is recognised at a territory and national level as a threatened ecological community. The grassland at Yarramundi Reach provides habitat for the Striped Legless Lizard which is recognised at a territory and national level as a threatened species and the Perunga Grasshopper, also recognised as a threatened species.

The White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland ecological community of Stirling Park is a recognised threatened ecological community. This community provides habitat for another threatened species, the Button Wrinklewort, and may provide suitable habitat for the vulnerable Gang-gang Cockatoo and Superb Parrot.

Both the remnant Natural Temperate Grassland of Yarramundi Reach and the derived native grassland in the western section of Stirling Park may also provide important habitat for the critically endangered Golden Sun Moth.

Wetland environments at Yarramundi Inlet, Acacia Inlet and Warrina Inlet, comprising reed beds, fringing terrestrial vegetation and open water, provide habitat for a diverse population of waterfowl and land birds. Latham's Snipe, the Common Greenshank, the Red-necked Stint and the Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, listed migratory wetland species, are recorded from these wetlands. Other locally rare species recorded here include the Greater Crested Grebe, the Little Bittern, the Little Grassbird and the Musk Duck.

## Criterion

## Values

The wider aquatic ecosystem of the lake provides habitat for the threatened Murray Cod.

Below the waters and along the shoreline of the lake are occurrences of limestone, including a limestone cave; rare examples of a feature from which the original post-contact settlement name for the Canberra locality, the 'Limestone Plains,' is derived. Early descriptions of the area often refer to limestone, but most examples have since been either built on or submerged under the lake.

The features which express the natural rarity values include but are not limited to the whole area of designated grassland on Yarramundi Reach; the White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland community on the slopes of Stirling Ridge; the lake habitat of the Murray Cod comprising the waterbody, aquatic vegetation and lake bed; the grassland habitat of the Striped Legless Lizard, Perunga Grasshopper and Golden Sun Moth, which includes the whole area of designated grassland on Yarramundi Reach and the western section of Stirling Park; the habitat of the Button Wrinklewort which includes the upper slopes of the central and western parts of Stirling Park; the wetland bird habitats along the foreshores and shallows of the two inlets along Yarramundi Reach and the one inlet to the east of Government House; the Acacia Inlet wetland at the northern end of Yarramundi Reach, extending south along the reach and including the majority of reed beds along the Reach foreshores, and the limestone formations occurring both above and below the surface of the lake.

- (c) the place has heritage value because of the place's potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Australia's natural or cultural history

The Lake Burley Griffin and Adjacent Lands place has significant research value because of the place's potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Australia's history and practice of urban planning, architecture and landscape architecture. Indigenous sites and natural sites are also able to yield important information. Specific areas or characteristics able to yield information are described below.

### *Design and planning studies*

Lake Burley Griffin and its many 'design layers' is a source of information about key theories, practices and histories associated with urban planning, architecture and landscape architecture. Evidence of the work of key practitioners including Walter Burley Griffin, Marion Mahoney, John Sulman, Charles Weston, Lindsay Pryor, Sir William Holford, Dame Sylvia Crowe, Richard Clough, Peter Harrison, Trevor Gibson, and John Overall are also evident and are a valuable historic resource for further study and examination. The fish belly flap gates of Scrivener Dam and the two major bridges also provide the opportunity for further research and teaching potential associated with engineering practice and design technologies.

The features which express these significant historic research values include but are not limited to Lake Burley Griffin and its designed and planned features associated with the design practitioners mentioned above.

### *Natural Science*

The occurrence of threatened species in the Yarramundi grasslands (particularly the Striped Legless Lizard and Perunga Grasshopper) and at Stirling Park (Button Wrinklewort), and the ecological communities themselves (Natural Temperate Grassland and White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland) provide opportunities for ecological research on habitat and population relationships. The lake's wetlands offer similar opportunities for the study of resident and migratory birds. The freshwater ecosystems of the wider lake also provide research opportunities for the study of aquatic ecosystems. This research would be particularly focused within the context of artificially impounded water bodies in urban

## Criterion

## Values

environments.

The features which express these significant natural heritage research values include the whole area of designated grassland on Yarramundi Reach, the upper slopes of the central and western parts of Stirling Park and the lake waters, including the small wetland pockets near and around Yarramundi Reach.

### *Indigenous history*

Indigenous sites within the place have the potential to reveal evidence of traditional lifeways and the economy of Indigenous people in the Canberra region prior to European settlement. The features which express these significant Indigenous research values include the Indigenous sites (12) at Yarramundi Reach and Stirling Park.

- (d) the place has significant heritage value because of the place's importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of: a class of Australia's natural or cultural places; or a class of Australia's natural or cultural environments

The Lake Burley Griffin and Adjacent Lands place has important representative values. The aspects or characteristics of the place which have representative value are as follows.

### *City Beautiful Design exemplar*

The design and final form of Lake Burley Griffin demonstrate key aspects of important design philosophies and styles from the early twentieth century, including the City Beautiful Movement and the Garden City Movement. The influence of International Modernism from the mid- twentieth century is also evident. Lake Burley Griffin is representative of a small group of designed urban environments in Australia containing areas of water used primarily for ornamental purposes and is one of the largest and best-known examples.

### *Natural areas*

Some areas within the place possess remnant vegetation. Collectively these areas represent the characteristics of the pre-1820s natural environment. These areas include:

- adjacent to Yarramundi Inlet there is a surviving individual *Eucalyptus viminalis* representing the original Molonglo River riparian forest. This tree is the sole indicator of the past riparian forest in the study area;
- small remnants of the Natural Temperate Grassland community which exist in patches between Alexandria Drive and the lake foreshore from Blue Gum Point to Attunga Point. These areas represent remnant examples of the pre-1820s vegetation;
- a large grassy woodland area, now modified to grassland, located at Yarramundi Reach. This area displays the significant characteristics of the Natural Temperate Grassland community;
- a large remnant of the original White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland on the slopes of Stirling Ridge in Stirling Park;
- a remnant eucalypt dry open forest, characteristic of north and west facing slopes in the ACT, located on the eastern ridge of Stirling Park; and
- a re-growth Snow Gum stand at the northern end of Yarramundi Reach. This stand is characteristic of the natural woodland/forest transition in the southern tablelands.

The features which express these significant representative values include but are not limited to Lake Burley Griffin surrounds and the natural features described above.

- (e) the place has significant heritage value because of

Lake Burley Griffin and Adjacent Lands place has important aesthetic characteristics valued by:

**Criterion**

the place's importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group

**Values**

*For Australians*

Lake Burley Griffin is recognised as a beautiful feature of Canberra. In particular the Lake provides an attractive water setting for national institutions, lakeside parklands and lakeside memorials. Lake Burley Griffin is also featured in many promotions of Canberra to the extent that it has become a landmark and signature element of the city and its presentation as the capital of Australia.

*For the Canberra Community*

Lake Burley Griffin is appreciated by Canberrans as a beautiful part of their city. Its visual appeal during the day and night is appreciated as an essential part of their city and as a 'signature' element of Canberra as a place. Some particular characteristics appreciated by Canberrans include the presence of large areas of water, the reflections and seasonal variations on the water surface, the formal water basins near the national institutions and Parliament buildings and the more natural, quieter areas of the lake like Yarramundi Reach. Views to the water are also valued because of the 'calm presence' it provides in an individual's experience of the nearby city area.

The features which express these aesthetic values include but are not limited to the large size and varied shape of the lake; the lake's quiet and peaceful areas (particularly the secluded areas in the lower reaches); the water body and surface of the lake (including the maintenance of its water level); and the reflective qualities of the water.

- (f) the place has significant heritage value because of the place's importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period

The lake's design, development and final completion is considered by experts to be an achievement of creative genius and demonstrates a high level of technical engineering and urban design achievement. This high level of achievement is demonstrated by the following aspects or characteristics of the place.

Lake Burley Griffin is an essential element of the Griffin plan for the capital city of Canberra. Its design has been purposefully developed to reflect Canberra's function and status as the nation's capital. The lake is used as a unifying design element and incorporates key aesthetic and functional roles within the overall plan for the city.

The design of Lake Burley Griffin strongly reflects two key periods of creative and technical accomplishment. In the early period of the lake's development the lake's design is associated with the City Beautiful and Garden City town planning movements. Work undertaken from the 1950s is associated with International Modernism. The overall form of the lake is most strongly associated with its original conception set out in the city design competition brief. The lake's edge treatments and details, such as islands, are more reflective of later periods of construction.

The lake's form also reflects the way the designers made use of the city site and the Molonglo River's features. West Lake, in particular, is evidence of the original 'river' form of the city site. The basins are evidence of the former river flood plain as well as evidence of the ancient Molonglo Lake.

The final form of the lake closely resembles Griffin's 1918 plan with the exception of the deletion of East Lake. This similarity provides evidence of the essential integrity of the plan for the lake as conceptually developed by Griffin while he was in Canberra. The design of the lake includes formal and informal parts and reflects some of Griffin's geometric devices. The lake's integration of government and civic functions (on its opposite banks) has also been retained, although the intensity of the planned relationship has been weakened in implementation.

The design of Lake Burley Griffin and Associated Lands provides evidence of tensions over time between Griffin's primarily City Beautiful plan and the interplay

## **Criterion**

## **Values**

of Garden City ideas and the influence of Holford and the National Capital Development Commission.

Lake Burley Griffin demonstrates a number of urban design approaches and styles. These occur within a designed and richly symbolic environment which is absent in many other more contemporary urban places. This richness demonstrates a sophisticated design approach to the urban design of the lake and its surroundings. Some key features of this include: the link between the axes and landscape features; the inclusion of formal and informal lake areas; the purposeful links with both close and distant topography; the relationship between vertical and horizontal elements (like the National Carillon and the Captain Cook Memorial Jet); the mirroring of foreshore and surrounding natural features, the lake's provision of water frontage for national institutions; the relationship between areas of distinctive character planting (around the lake) which makes use of seasonal colour and texture and the lake's contribution to the presentation of the city area as a city in a natural landscape.

Lake Burley Griffin also demonstrates a high degree of technical achievement in engineering. The construction of the two bridges and Scrivener Dam were projects which demonstrated high levels of achievement in their time.

The features which express these values include but are not limited to the lake as a whole, Scrivener Dam, Commonwealth and Kings Avenue bridges, the islands within the lake and the lake's function as part of the water axis.

- (g) the place has significant heritage value because of the place's strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons

Lake Burley Griffin and Adjacent Lands place is important to various communities as a landmark and as a signature element of Canberra. It also acts as an important reference point in the construction of Canberra's place identity. The use of the lake has also created strong associations with recreation users like rowers, small watercraft users and walkers. Special associations with the Australian community are also present.

### *For Australians*

Lake Burley Griffin plays an important role in representing the image of Canberra to the nation and potentially internationally. Its landmark value as part of the national capital's landscape is well recognised and widely valued. For Australians, especially those who have visited Canberra, Lake Burley Griffin is a well-recognised symbol of Canberra, forming the central focus of the national capital designed landscape. The lake is also valued as a place which provides an attractive setting for visitors walking or driving through the city and around key national institutions.

### *For the Canberra Community*

Lake Burley Griffin is highly valued by the Canberra community as an important and essential part of Canberra. The lake contributes significantly to Canberra's place identity and provides a range of recreation opportunities for all Canberrans. The lake also connects Canberrans to Canberra's function and purpose as the nation's capital as the lake is a central design element in the construction of the national capital. Canberrans are proud of the lake as a significant construction achievement. The unification of two parts of the city at completion of the lake is remembered.

Lake Burley Griffin is highly valued by the Canberra community as an important community gathering place which is also used as a setting for large public events. The lake remains a place which has been experienced and enjoyed by Canberrans for over 35 years for leisure and as a visual delight.

Lake Burley Griffin is highly valued by the Canberra community as a place that represents the realisation of the Griffin design for Canberra. The lake also creates a

## **Criterion**

## **Values**

setting for community celebration and engagement. Lake Burley Griffin is also highly valued by the Canberra community as a place of personal memory and experience.

The Canberra community has a strong attachment to the lake as a whole, as well as to a range of individual places on and around the lake. These values are shared across the community, irrespective of the nature, length and frequency of association.

The features which express these social values include but are not limited to, the whole of Lake Burley Griffin.

- (h) the place has significant heritage value because of the place's special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Australia's natural or cultural history

Lake Burley Griffin and Adjacent Lands place has significant associations with people of importance in Canberra's history of development. These associations include the following.

Important people involved with the creative and technical aspects of the design and construction of Lake Burley Griffin include Walter Burley Griffin, Marion Mahony Griffin, Charles Scrivener, Sir William Holford, Dame Sylvia Crowe, Richard Clough and the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC). Lake Burley Griffin also has strong associations with Sir Robert Menzies who played pivotal role in the implementation of the lake's construction. His support is associated with the final push towards the lake's completion.

Walter Burley Griffin is an important figure in Australia's cultural history because of his contribution to the design of Canberra as Australia's capital city. In recognition of his contribution Lake Burley Griffin has been named in appreciation of his work.

Marion Mahony Griffin worked with Walter Burley Griffin on the design for Canberra. Her perspective drawings were a brilliant representation of the ideas presented in the competition drawings for Canberra. In recognition of her contribution the Marion Mahony Griffin view at Mt Ainslie has been named in appreciation of her work.

Charles Scrivener surveyed and recommended the Canberra site for Australia's capital city. He also made recommendations regarding the suitability of this site for ornamental waters which pointed to the eventual creation of Lake Burley Griffin.

British planner, William Holford, was engaged by the Menzies Government to recommend a way forward for the construction of Lake Burley Griffin. Holford did extensive work on the design of Lake Burley Griffin and its two bridges.

Sylvia Crowe and Richard Clough were prominent landscape architects involved with the landscape development and planting works around the lake, and, in particular, of Commonwealth Park.

The experimental planting plots within the Lindsay Pryor Arboretum are strongly associated with the pioneering and extensive work planned and carried out by Lindsay Pryor and his team in the landscaping of the city scape of Canberra.

Many professions have been involved in planning, design and construction of Lake Burley Griffin including town planners, architects, landscape architects, engineers and surveyors. In the case of landscape architects and town planners in Australia, the growth of these professions in Australia has a strong association with Lake Burley Griffin and some of the adjacent lands within the place.

The features which express these values include but are not limited to: the lake as a whole, including all its designed and engineered elements; the Roman Cypress Hill stand of *Cupressus sempervirens* and Pryor's surviving trial plantings covering the

***Criterion***

**Values**

southern portions of Yarramundi Reach.