

Register of Significant Twentieth Century Architecture

RSTCA No: R081

Name of Place: Corroboree Park Ainslie

Other/Former Names:

Address/Location: Area includes Paterson Street, Toms Crescent, Lewis Street, HArgaves Crescent, Corroboree Park, Grimes Street, Higgins Crescent, Drake Street, Lister Crescent and Limestone Avenue AINSLIE 2602

Blocks 1-9 & 25 Section 6, Blocks 1 & 5-15 Section 7, Blocks 1 & 10-20 Section 9, Blocks 1 & 10-20 Section 10, Blocks 1 & 4-15 Section 12, Blocks 6-12, 17-18 Section 13 and Sections 7, 8, 9 & 11 of Ainslie

Listing Status:		Other Heritage Listings:	
Date of Listing:		Level of Significance:	Local
Citation Revision No:	2	Category:	Residential
Citation Revision Date:	January 1990	Style:	Georgian Revival

Date of Design:	1925	Designer:	Planner – Sulman, Architect – Casboulte
Construction Period:	1927-29	Client/Owner/Lessee:	FCAC (planning), FCC (housing)
Date of Additions:	Various	Builder:	Federal Capital Commission

Statement of Significance

Corroboree Park Ainslie Urban Conservation area is a distinctive and rare example of early Canberra planning and timber government housing. The siting of houses around Corroboree Park and the striking layout of crescents focused on the park, combined with interesting and striking tree planting creates a precinct of distinctive character. The Federal Capital Commission timber houses in the area are among the best examples of their type in Canberra, and are a landmark in the development of early government housing and residential precincts in Canberra. Historically and socially important in Canberra, the area was named to commemorate the tradition of aborigines using the area as a corroboree ground. The older eucalypts in the park have reputed links with the arrival of James Ainslie in 1825, being the site of his camp. The 1927 Ainslie Hall, located in the park, is socially significant as a meeting place in early Canberra. The houses of the precinct are examples of Federal Capital architecture, while the planning exemplifies the 'garden city' concepts of planning in Canberra.

Description

Corroboree Park Urban Conservation area is a precinct surrounding a semi-circular park including two pairs of symmetrically planned crescents, along which timber houses were constructed by the Federal Capital Commission from 1925 to 1929. The houses, originally constructed as "artisan dwellings" and for lower paid public servants, have terracotta tiled roofs, and some exhibit a decorative use of timber in porch supports and lattice work used to vent the gable ends of the houses. In the park stands the 1927 Ainslie Hall, another (later) hall, formerly the YMCA and a tennis pavilion, all built of timber and roofed in corrugated iron. Around the perimeter of the park are planted Eucalypts, with a variety of trees and shrubs in the park. Grevillea robusta (silly oak) line Hargraves and Higgins Crescents and the street between them. Toms and Lister Crescents are striking in appearance, similar to other early FCC planting schemes, and are lined with alternating Roman cypresses and Prunus 'Nigra' trees. Lewis and Drake Streets are lined with

large Roman Cypresses and Grimes Street is lined with pines. The layout of this urban landscape first appeared in the 1925 approved plan of Canberra, and is attributed to Sir John Sulman, Chairman of the Federal Capital Advisory Commission.

Condition and Integrity

The FCC houses are generally in good condition. Many houses have been modified, but the character of the period has been retained. There are now gaps in the avenues of street trees.

Background/History

Analysis against the Criteria specified in Schedule 2 of the Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991

(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

Unique and rare examples of FCC timber housing in the Federal Capital.

(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 or 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

Siting of the buildings is significant with the striking layout of crescents.

(vii) a place which has strong or special associations with person, group, event, development or cultural phase which played a significant part in local or national history

Quality and siting significant - early timber house among the best of their type in Canberra and layout of crescents combined with tree planting.

(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

Historically and socially important.

- early FCC housing
 - area named to commemorate the tradition of aborigines using the area as a corroboree ground
 - older eucalypts have reputed links with the arrival of James Ainslie in 1825.
 - in the park is 1927 Ainslie Hall which has social significance as a meeting place in early Canberra.
-

References

Other Information Sources