

# 1.0 Background and Introduction

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## 1.1 Background

The National Capital Authority (NCA) commissioned Godden Mackay Logan Heritage Consultants (GML) in October 2012 to prepare a Heritage Management Plan (HMP) for Blundells Cottage.

As a Commonwealth Heritage listed place, the NCA is obliged under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cwlth) (EPBC Act) to prepare a HMP to appropriately conserve and manage the Commonwealth Heritage values of Blundells Cottage.

## 1.2 Site Identification

Throughout this report the title 'Blundells Cottage' is taken to refer to the stone and brick cottage, the associated slab shed and its surrounding garden area and local landscape setting.

Blundells Cottage is located on Wendouree Drive on the northern shore of the Lake Burley Griffin within Canberra's National Triangle which is defined by apex points on the Parliament House site, City Hill and Russell (Figure 1.1). The site is demarcated by Lake Burley Griffin to the south, Parkes Way to the north and Kings Park to the east (Figure 1.2).



**Figure 1.1** Site location of Blundells Cottage in Canberra ACT showing extent of National Triangle. (Source: GML on Google Earth base plan, 2012)



**Figure 1.2** Detailed site map showing Blundell's Cottage, slab shed and significant cypress trees associated with Alice Oldfield. (Source: GML on Google Earth base plan, 2012)

## 1.3 Heritage Status

### 1.3.1 Heritage Listings

Blundell's Cottage is listed for its heritage values on several heritage registers, including the following:

#### **Commonwealth Heritage List**

- Blundell's Farmhouse, Slab Outbuilding and Surrounds (Place ID 105734)

The Commonwealth Heritage List (CHL) was created under the EPBC Act in 2004. This statutory list recognises places of heritage value which are owned or controlled by the Commonwealth Government. The cottage was entered on the CHL on 15 July 2005. The CHL citation is included at Appendix A. Being on the CHL, it is subject to the conservation provisions of the EPBC Act.

#### **Register of the National Estate**

- Blundell's Farmhouse, Slab Outbuilding and Surrounds (Place ID 13324)

Blundell's Cottage was registered on the Register of the National Estate (RNE) on 1 November 1983. The RNE ceased to have statutory effect in February 2012 and the RNE listing does not provide direct legal protection or prescriptive requirements for management. The RNE is retained by the Commonwealth as an archive database of places. The RNE citation matches the CHL citation.

## **ACT Heritage Register**

- Blundells Cottage (Section 47, Block 6 part)

The ACT Heritage Register includes places of natural and cultural significance, including Indigenous places. It was set up under the *Heritage Act 2004*. In 1998, the ACT Government's Heritage Council accepted Blundells Cottage as a nominated place to the Interim Heritage Register.

Rather than being fully registered, Blundells Cottage is included on the ACT Heritage Register as a nominated place. As a general rule, heritage places within the ACT but located in the Designated Area are not protected by the ACT Heritage Act since the ACT Government has no statutory rights through planning legislation to protect the identified heritage values of these places. The ACT Heritage Council relies on Commonwealth legislation to protect places in the Designated Area which have heritage value to the Territory as well as to the Commonwealth.

## **National Trust of Australia (ACT) Register of Significant Places**

The National Trust of Australia (ACT) maintains a Register of Significant Places. National Trust recognition is not a statutory listing. The ACT National Trust conferred Classified status on the cottage in 1998, meaning that the Trust's heritage committee (a group of professionals volunteering their expertise to the organisation) had investigated potential heritage values at the cottage and conferred the highest level of public community recognition and non-statutory heritage status on the place by listing it on the ACT National Trust Classified Places list.

## **NCA Heritage Register**

- Blundell's Farmhouse, slab outbuilding and surrounds, Wendouree Drive, Parkes ACT.

The NCA has developed a Heritage Register of places of Commonwealth Heritage value under their control or ownership. Blundells Cottage is included on this register.

## **1.4 Legislative and Management Context**

### **1.4.1 Legislative Framework**

#### **Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (Cwlth) 1999**

The EPBC Act was established in part to protect places of significant natural or cultural heritage value owned or controlled by the Commonwealth.

#### *Commonwealth and National Heritage Lists*

The 2004 amendments to the EPBC Act established the CHL and National Heritage List (NHL). The CHL is for those places owned or controlled by the Commonwealth that have been assessed as having heritage values against the criteria established under that Act. Places identified with *outstanding* heritage values for the nation as a whole are eligible for inclusion in the NHL. National Heritage places may be owned or controlled under any jurisdiction.

Blundells Cottage is included on the CHL and is therefore subject to the provisions of the EPBC Act. No NHL places have been identified at Blundells Cottage either previously or in this HMP, but there is currently a nomination being examined for national heritage values for the central areas of Canberra associated with its National Capital status.

## 1.4.2 Management of Heritage Values

Blundells Cottage site and its immediate surrounds are subject to management by the NCA. The NCA is responsible for the management and maintenance of the cottage buildings, the gardens and the surrounding Kings Park. Management of Blundells Cottage must take into account its heritage status.

### Protection of Heritage Values under the EPBC Act

The EPBC Act requires that:

- a person must not take an action on heritage-listed Commonwealth land that has, will have or is likely to have a significant impact on the environment (including heritage);
- a person must not take an action outside Commonwealth land that has, will have or is likely to have a significant impact on the environment (including heritage) on Commonwealth land; and
- the Commonwealth must not take an action that has, will have or is likely to have a significant impact on the environment (including heritage) on Commonwealth land.

Unlawful taking of an action in these categories may attract a civil penalty of up to \$1.1 million or a criminal penalty of up to two years imprisonment. In addition, under the EPBC Act a person must not take an action that has, will have or is likely to have a significant impact on matters of national environmental significance, without approval from the Minister responsible for the Act. There are substantial penalties for taking such an action without approval (civil penalties up to \$5.5 million or criminal penalties up to 7 years imprisonment).

### Impacts on Heritage Values and Self-Assessment Process

The NCA acts in accordance with the EPBC Act to ensure that it does not take any action that has, will have or is likely to have an adverse impact upon the identified heritage values (National and/or Commonwealth) of any place in its ownership or control. The NCA's established procedures and guidance for works proposals that take into account the heritage values of places included in the CHL and NHL are included in its internal Heritage Manual.

The Heritage Manual, which refers to the *Significant impact guidelines 1.2—Actions on, or impacting upon, Commonwealth land and Actions by Commonwealth Agencies, 2012* (prepared by the Department responsible for the EPBC Act) informs staff how to identify the nature of an impact on a place with Commonwealth Heritage values, using the guidelines as the basis of its self-assessment process, and reach a view on whether the impact is significant, with an adverse impact on heritage values of a place and if an EPBC Act referral is needed. The Heritage Manual provides examples of how to reach judgments, and the importance of taking a cautionary approach.<sup>1</sup>

### Commonwealth Heritage Management Principles

The EPBC Act (s341Y) requires CHL places to be managed in accordance with the Commonwealth Heritage management principles, which encourages identification, conservation and presentation of a place's heritage values through applying best available skills and knowledge, community (including Indigenous) involvement and cooperation between various levels of government. The principles are set out in Schedule 7B of the EPBC Regulations. This HMP has been written to

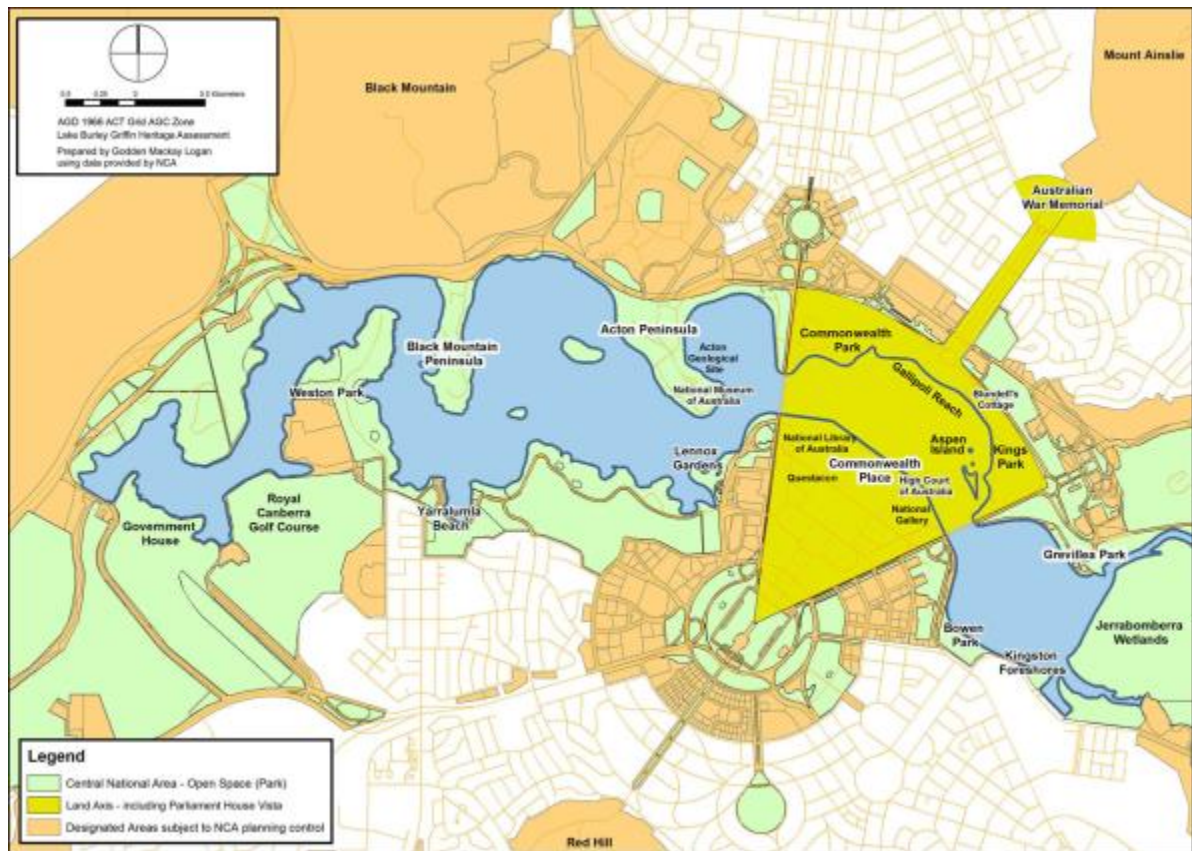
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<sup>1</sup> National Capital Authority Heritage Strategy, 2010–2013, February 2011.

comply with the requirements of the EPBC Regulations, Schedule 7B. Schedule 7B is included at Appendix B.

### 1.4.3 ACT (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988 and the National Capital Plan

The *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988* is the primary piece of legislation that outlines the functions of the NCA, including its planning and regulatory roles. The National Capital Plan forms the strategic planning framework for Canberra and the ACT. In accordance with Section 10(1) of the *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988*, the National Capital Plan sets out detailed conditions for planning design and development for Designated Areas. The NCA is responsible for planning and development approval within Designated Areas with all development to be guided by *The Griffin Legacy*. Blundells Cottage is located in a Designated Area. (Figure 1.3)



**Figure 1.3** Context diagram showing NCA designated land, Central National Areas and the land axis. (Source: GML of Lake Burley Griffin Heritage Assessment 2010, Figure 2.16).

The National Capital Plan also accounts for heritage places and sites within Designated Areas and acknowledges their importance and contribution to the Capital. There are heritage policies and principles which underpin the National Capital Plan. Blundells Cottage is a recognised heritage place.

#### **The Process for National Capital Authority Works Approval**

As with all actions proposed for Commonwealth Heritage places in Designated Areas, the NCA's consideration of proposals is based on the relevant provisions of the National Capital Plan.

Primarily, the NCA is obliged to undertake the works approval process for development proposals in Designated Areas.<sup>2</sup>

Works approvals may be required, used to support, or inform a referral under the EPBC Act. Therefore, in addition to the self-assessment process noted above, it is prudent for works approvals or conservation works to be undertaken internally by the NCA where it involves development.

The NCA outlines their role for assisting applicants, which also applies internally, through a process of design development to achieve outcomes appropriate to those areas which embody the special characteristics of the National Capital.<sup>3</sup> As part of this process, if appropriate, consultation with the NCA's Director, Development Assessment and Heritage should be sought by anyone considering works at an early stage of design development before completing and lodging an application for works approval.

#### **1.4.4 Other Commonwealth Legislative Requirements and Codes**

The following additional Commonwealth legislative requirements and codes are also of relevance for works to places such as Blundells Cottage, and compliance could have an impact on the heritage values of the place:

- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 No. 10 (WHS Act);*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA Act); and*
- *Building Code of Australia (BCA).*

### **1.5 Relevant Documentation**

A Conservation Management Plan (CMP) was initially produced in 1983 with an update in 1994 to guide protection of heritage values at the cottage. Both of these documents predate the EPBC Act and do not fulfill all necessary management requirements under the current legislation. A bibliography is provided at Appendix G. Key conservation documents referred to in this report are:

- Morton Herman, August 1961, Report to the National Capital Planning Commission Canberra, ACT, on Blundells Cottage, Scotts Crossing Road, Canberra.
- Phillip Cox and Partners Pty Ltd 1983, Blundells Cottage Conservation Study Report prepared for the Department of Housing and Construction, ACT Region.
- Freeman Collett & Partners Pty Ltd with Robert Boden 1995, Blundells Cottage Precinct CMP prepared for the National Capital Planning Authority (NCPA).
- Gillian Mitchell 2010, Condition Assessment Blundells Cottage, report prepared for the National Capital Authority.
- Gillian Mitchell 2012, Blundells Cottage Paint Analysis, report prepared for the National Capital Authority.

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<sup>2</sup> Under the National Capital Plan, see the National Capital Authority website: <[http://nationalcapital.gov.au/planning\\_and\\_urban\\_design/works\\_approval/index.asp](http://nationalcapital.gov.au/planning_and_urban_design/works_approval/index.asp)>.

<sup>3</sup> National Capital Plan as above

The room numbering system used in the CMP has been continued in this HMP. The rooms were numbered from the rear of the cottage to the front according to the following schedule:

### Room Numbers

Room 1—1888 extension present office

Room 2—1888s extension kitchen

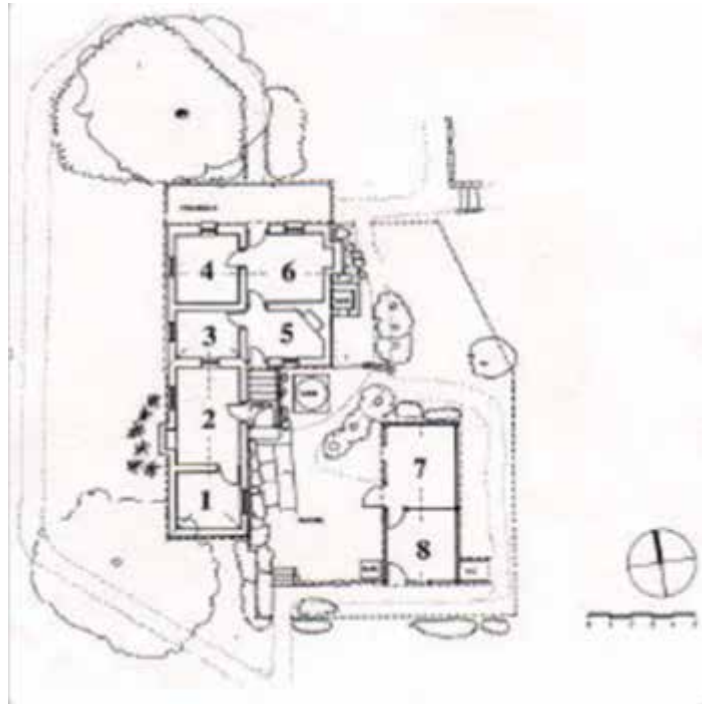
Room 3—1860s small bedroom

Room 4—1860s large bedroom

Room 5—1860s kitchen

Room 6—1860s parlour

**Source:** Freeman Collett & Partners Pty Ltd with Robert Boden 1995, Blundells Cottage Precinct CMP.



These room numbers have been used in the descriptions throughout this HMP

## 1.6 Responsibility for Heritage Management

Responsibility for appropriately managing the heritage values of Blundells Cottage rests with all NCA personnel, contractors and other site users. The Cultural Heritage Manager NCA has responsibilities associated with the day-to-day management of heritage values at the site and is the first point of contact for onsite heritage matters. The NCA Exhibitions and Facilities Manager has responsibility for the collections, interpretation and education programs at Blundells Cottage. Day-to-day maintenance and repairs are overseen by the NCA Asset Manager and project officers. The daily cottage presentation, guiding duties and immediate on site management, is the responsibility of a Cottage Officer. The NCA also has management responsibility for the area of Kings Park in which Blundells Cottage is located.

Heavy penalties apply under the EPBC Act for failing to manage the heritage values in an appropriate manner.

## 1.7 When to Use the HMP

The HMP should be used when:

- preparing strategic plans for Blundells Cottage or King's Park;
- planning for a change of use or new development necessary for operational needs (such as serving educational programs or staff office needs) to meet future demands, where such development may impact on heritage values identified in the CHL listing and this HMP;

- designing and constructing new buildings and landscaping, or alterations to the existing buildings and landscape (or those in the vicinity of the cottage) that may impact on identified CHL heritage values at Blundells Cottage;
- upgrading building services or site infrastructure;
- proposing minor new works;
- undertaking routine cleaning, maintenance and repair work at Blundells Cottage that may impact on identified CHL heritage values within the site;
- undertaking soil remediation and removal of hazardous materials from buildings and other structures at the cottage site, or in its vicinity;
- disseminating an understanding of the heritage values of Blundells Cottage through interpretation and education programs; and
- disposing of all or part of Blundells Cottage or its collection.

The management of the moveable heritage collection should be guided by both the understanding of its significance as part of the overall heritage values of Blundells Cottage, and by the development of a Collection Management Plan incorporating collection acquisition and disposal policies.

## **1.8 Methodology and Structure of the HMP**

### **1.8.1 Requirements for Heritage Management Plans for CHL Places**

The methodology of this HMP complies with the requirements for management plans for places on the CHL. HMPs for CHL places are prepared to assist Commonwealth departments and agencies to manage their heritage sites appropriately, and to guide future works and developments to reduce the need for referrals under the legislation. Schedule 7A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2000* (EPBC Regulations) sets out the matters to be addressed in heritage management plans and this HMP complies with these requirements—refer to Appendix B.

The EPBC Act (s341S) requires Commonwealth agencies to prepare a management plan to protect and manage their CHL places consistent with the Commonwealth Heritage Management Principles. Section 6.0 of this HMP has conservation policies, actions and implementation recommendations drafted against the Commonwealth Heritage Management Principles of Schedule 7B of the EPBC Act.

### **1.8.2 The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance 1999**

The *Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance 1999*, (the Burra Charter) outlines a nationally recognised process of conservation principles and processes which are closely allied to the Commonwealth Heritage Management Principles. This HMP follows the Burra Charter process for identifying heritage values and planning for their and management.

### **1.8.3 Outline Methodology**

The methodology for this HMP followed Burra Charter principles for the identification and conservation of heritage values. For the early preparation of this HMP, available background



information was reviewed including historic documents, the existing heritage management documents, current heritage listings and values assessments. Consultation was undertaken with relevant stakeholders to gain an understanding of the management and operational requirements of the site.

Site inspections were undertaken to verify and update the heritage values and confirm the presence of heritage features. The site inspection for the historic heritage component (November 2012) included a visual assessment of the condition of the built heritage assets to guide recommendations for conservation works. A site inspection by the team's archaeologist was undertaken (November 2012) to investigate the potential for Indigenous cultural heritage values and archaeological sites. Stakeholder consultations were held in November and December 2012.

Results of research, documentation and consultation were synthesised and analysed in an assessment of the heritage values of Blundells Cottage against the EPBC's Commonwealth Heritage criteria to validate existing official values and update them. The identified heritage values and operational needs of the place were considered in relation to constraints and opportunities for the conservation of heritage values at Blundells Cottage. The cumulative information was focused into heritage conservation policies compliant with the EPBC Act as explained above.

#### **1.8.4 Outline Structure**

The structure and content of the HMP has been formulated to assist those responsible for the ongoing management and forward planning of the site. The sections of the report are outlined below with a brief description of their content.

**Table 1.1** Outline Structure of GML 2013 Blundells Cottage Draft HMP.

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##### **Executive Summary**

This provides an outline overview of the HMP findings and recommendations.

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##### **Section 1.0—Background and Introduction**

This provides a background to the HMP, the heritage status of Blundells Cottage and legislative framework applying to the site (the CHL listing is provided at Appendix A), a brief outline of stakeholder consultation (full details are provided at Appendix E), social values investigation and project limitations.

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##### **Section 2.0—Understanding the Place—Historical Context**

This provides a history of the Blundells Cottage site including Aboriginal occupation of the Molonglo River valley, the place of the cottage as part of the Duntroon Estate, a brief history of the three main long-term tenant families of the cottage (the Ginns, Blundells and Oldfields), the campaign to conserve the cottage in the face of major landscape alterations to make Lake Burley Griffin and the operation of the cottage as a folk museum by the CDHS.

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##### **Section 3.0—Understanding the Place—Built Elements and Archaeology**

This provides an overview of the evolution of the buildings with a physical description of the buildings, elevation by elevation, element by element, both externally and internally and significant elements are identified. A condition assessment is included as an analysis with comment on significant fabric and its ability to tolerate change. Changes to the cottage fabric since the 1994 CMP are identified.

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## **Section 4.0— Understanding the Place—Landscape, Garden, Curtilage**

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This provides an overview of the location and surrounding landscape of the cottage including important views. It provides analysis for a location context for a proposed curtilage which is defined with suggestions for how it can be incorporated into interpretation of the important heritage values of the cottage.

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## **Section 5.0—Understanding the Heritage Values**

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This provides a statement of the existing official CHL values with an assessment and validation of these values. A comparative assessment is provided with a revised assessment of heritage values against the CHL criteria with a revised overview statement of significance to provide an update of the heritage values of Blundells Cottage. The condition of the heritage values is described and defined. The different main features of the cottage are ranked for their relative heritage significance and the tolerance for change of these elements is measured and defined to inform management recommendations. Reference is made to the detailed analysis of significant elements made in Section 3.0 where the cottage is described feature by feature.

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## **Section 6.0—Constraints and Opportunities**

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Constraints and opportunities for heritage conservation and interpretation arising from the significance and management realities including the collections are examined with a discussion of specific issues arising from the heritage values and stakeholder consultations which are detailed in Appendix D.

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## **Section 7.0—Conservation Policies, Actions and Implementation**

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The heritage values of Blundells Cottage, the constraints and opportunities, and the operational needs are distilled into policies with defined actions and an implementation strategy. These are written with reference to the Commonwealth Heritage Management Principles as outlined in Schedule 7B of the EPBC Act. A compliance table is provided at Appendix B.

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## **Section 8.0—Schedules for Conservation Works and Ongoing Maintenance**

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This provides detailed schedules to prioritise and guide essential conservation works and identify ongoing maintenance needs including priorities and timing.

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## **Section 9.0—Appendices**

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Appendix A—CHL citation

Appendix B—EPBC Act Compliance Tables

Appendix C—Historical Timeline

Appendix D—Manager and User Requirements and Aspirations

Appendix E— Consultation

Appendix F— Interpretation Discussion Framework

Appendix G— Bibliography

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## **1.9 Consultation**

### **1.9.1 Key Stakeholders**

For the development of this HMP preliminary consultation was undertaken with key stakeholders as identified in discussion with the NCA. Stakeholders were contacted by telephone (where possible) and follow up was undertaken via email. Consultation informed relevant stakeholders about the development of the HMP and new interpretative work at the cottage to comply with legislative requirements under the EPBC Act, seek views and information from stakeholders about their understanding of the heritage values of the site, obtain information about heritage management issues, expectations and ways of addressing these issues in the HMP. The key stakeholders included NCA managers and staff (including heritage, interpretation guides, works and asset

managers involved with the cottage), CDHS representatives (including past CDHS managers and guides of the cottage), the ACT National Trust President, ACT Heritage representative, Aboriginal representatives from identified local groups, and teachers and education specialists.

### **1.9.2 Management Stakeholder Consultation**

Stakeholder consultation highlighted a variety of issues in relation to maintenance and conservation, and interpretation and visitor experience. These are outlined below and in Appendix F and informed development of policy in Section 7.0. It should be noted that not all stakeholder concerns were within the remit of this HMP but were management operational issues to be guided by the application of HMP policies.

#### **Maintenance and Conservation**

Issues with cottage maintenance held to be of foremost importance for maintenance and conservation were:

- issues of damp inside the cottage, both rising damp and leaks from the failing gutters, roof and chimneys—implications for both building fabric and collections;
- poor drainage around the immediate area of the cottage with roof drainpipes emptying onto the ground rather than into drains and a leaking watertank;
- impact of mature trees in proximity to the building;
- loss of mortar to exterior of cottage, repointing of stone and bricks, and consideration of limewash protection;
- lack of information about original colours used in limewash of interior and exterior timbers; and
- security issues in relation to window screen coverings, security lighting and isolated nature of the property.

#### **Interpretation and Visitor Experience**

Issues with cottage interpretation and visitor experience were identified as:

- lack of heating to ensure comfort of staff and visitors in winter, and dehumidifying;
- inadequate office space and room for storage for background, educational and interpretation materials;
- need to improve disabled accessibility;
- lack of curtilage delineation and interpretation;
- screening of Parkes Way;
- collection management opportunities; and
- inadequate shelter provision for visiting school groups.

Some of these issues have been able to be addressed in this HMP and have policies in Section 7.0 but other management resolutions are beyond the scope of a HMP.

### 1.9.3 Indigenous Consultation

In order to appropriately assess the Indigenous heritage values under the EPBC Act, consultation was undertaken with the local Aboriginal community. This practice is standard for assessments under the EPBC Act and serves to draw out the intangible heritage values that cannot be readily assessed through research and site inspections. The Indigenous heritage values of a place, must be identified by the relevant local Indigenous community in line with *Ask First: a guide to respecting Indigenous heritage places and values*, published by the Australian Heritage Commission, 2002.

For land in the ACT, the process of identifying the correct Indigenous community members for consultation has been addressed through the issuing of an official 'Representative Aboriginal Organisation' (RAO) list by ACT Heritage.

The RAO list identifies the following four groups for consultation in the ACT:

- Buru Ngunnawal Aboriginal Corporation (Mr Wally Bell);
- Consultative Body Aboriginal Corporation on Indigenous Land and Artefacts in the Ngunnawal Area;
- Little Gudgenby River Tribal Council; and
- Ngarigu Currawong Clan (Mr Tony Boye).

Cultural significance is assessed by the Indigenous community and relates to the historical and pre-historical landuse of an area, along with stories, mythologies and traditions relating to the site and its broader landscape and cultural context. The consultation procedure undertaken with the Aboriginal groups was that each was contacted by telephone in late November 2012 to explain the nature of the HMP project and establish whether or not they had an interest in being part of the project.

Mr Bell of the Buru Ngunnawal Aboriginal Corporation indicated that he was of the opinion that the area had been so substantially disturbed that it did not warrant any further concern. He indicated interest in seeing the types of policies that are set out in the HMP in relation to Indigenous issues and his primary interest was in the interpretation associated with the place where he indicated a desire for some input into content and opportunity for review of draft interpretation proposals.

Mr Boye of the Ngarigu Currawong Clan noted a primary interest in the nature of the relationship between Aboriginal people and colonial settlers at contact and that these stories should be included in the interpretation of the site. Mr Boye also noted that he believed that the Molonglo River was cut into the flood plain and would have only had seasonal use when not in flood. He considered it unlikely to have any remnant archaeological sites. The edges of the flood plains were where people met, where people lived and where they waited. He thinks that the messages for interpretation should include the idea that families would have camped and waited while men went pursuing Bogong moths. He also acknowledged the vast amount of surface damage done to the local area by the creation of the lake and cited other places of more importance to Aboriginal people, such as Black Mountain, Sullivan's Creek and Capital Hill. Mr Boye indicated that he would be interested in commenting on the draft HMP policies and having the Aboriginal people acknowledged in the history of Blundells and included in future interpretation of the place—specifically the interpretation of the prior use of the land and the contact period.

The remaining two Aboriginal groups have yet to respond.

### 1.9.4 Targeted Heritage Stakeholder Consultation

Investigations for this HMP and the development of a new interpretation strategy at Section 7.0 included targeted stakeholder consultations. Stakeholders were agreed with the NCA and a meeting was convened for 2 November 2012. 18 participants attended the group session consultation meeting. Other stakeholders were contacted by phone or visited at their homes. Stakeholders are identified in Table 1.1 below.

**Table 1.2** Stakeholders consulted in November 2012 about Blundells Interpretation and Displays

<b>Attendees at Targeted Heritage Stakeholder Meeting</b>	
Pamela Owen, NCA Exhibition & Facilities Manager, NCA	Eric Martin, ACT National Trust President and author of 1983 CMP
Roslyn Hull, Education & Outreach Officer, NCA	Peter Dowling, Australian Council of National Trusts
Anna Wong, Cultural Heritage Manager, NCA	John Armes, Senior Manager of the ACT Historic Places (Lanyon, Calthorpes and Mugga Mugga House Museums) and volunteer guide at Cooma Cottage
Carolyn Skorupa, visitor services assistant and Blundells guide	Kate Gardiner Education and Community Program Officer ACT Historic Places
Antoinette Buchannan, Librarian, ACT Heritage Library	Jan Blank, ACT Heritage Library volunteer/NCA volunteer
Pam Younge, past CDHS member/cottage volunteer	Can Ercan, Heritage Officer, ACT Heritage
Barry Price, past President/CDHS member	Kathleen Berg, Blundells Cottage volunteer guide
	Pip Giovanelli, Heritage Architect, part of GML team and worked on Blundells conservation in the past
<b>Stakeholders consulted in person at their homes or by phone</b>	
Mervyn and Beth Knowles, past CDHS members who helped set up cottage displays and researched the book 'The Cottage in the Parliamentary Triangle'	Linda Young, Course Director, Cultural Heritage & Museum Studies, Deakin University (catalogued cottage collections)
Tony Blundell, family member	Helen Digan, CDHS Secretary

Stakeholders were invited to introduce themselves and state their connection with the cottage. They were asked what they thought the key cottage stories would be given either a five or a 20 minute story-telling timeframe, and what the key messages to take away from a cottage visit were considered to be. There was a discussion about audience needs and what visitors responded to most during a cottage visit, especially in relation to different categories of visitors (children, adults, women, men, tourists). The Blundells experience was also compared against that at other house museums in the region (Calthorpes' House, Lanyon, Mugga Mugga, Cooma Cottage). The favorite collection items that resonated with stakeholders and visitors were explored along with a range of possible interpretation techniques and circulation patterns. The immediate and wider landscape setting of Blundells Cottage was discussed in relation to the heritage garden and landmark quality of the cottage.

## **Stakeholder Consultation Findings**

The scope and findings of the stakeholder consultation are provided in tabular format at Appendix E. Whilst many of the results of the consultation went beyond the scope of this HMP, comments have been incorporated which informed the social value assessment (Section 5.2.2) in association with Section 1.10 below, and the Interpretation Discussion Framework (Appendix E).

### **1.9.5 Stakeholder Consultation Conclusion**

The active and passionate engagement of the consultation sessions indicates that Blundells Cottage is a heritage place held dear by both heritage professionals in the Canberra community and those who have had close associations with the cottage through repeated student visits. Reports were that children responded well to the cottage and the experience of their visits.

The stakeholders consulted in relation to displays and interpretation at the cottage comprised an informed group already committed to heritage conservation and interpretation. While the group was basically united over some questions, other issues solicited a wide range of responses from the group indicating a variety of responses to the cottage. This is not necessarily undesirable since potential visitors to the cottage will comprise varied groups from school parties, families, locals and tourists including those from overseas. The cottage interpretation must be able to convey chosen themes and messages compatible with the heritage values to this diverse audience range.

### **1.9.6 Public Consultation**

In line with the EPBC Act and its ongoing commitment to community engagement, the Blundells Cottage Draft HMP Report was presented for public consultation by the NCA from 1 August 2013 until 6 September 2013. All stakeholders (as identified at project commencement) were notified. The report was publically available on the NCA 'Have Your Say' website. A notice was also placed in the *Canberra Times* on Saturday 3 August 2013, notifying the general public of the project, and the opportunity to comment. One response was received via the website and the comments were addressed in the revised HMP and a Public Consultation Report provided to the NCA. A public information session, facilitated by the NCA, was also held on 23 August 2013, with one stakeholder in attendance.

## **1.10 Blundells Cottage Visitor Statistics**

The NCA has provided visitor statistics for the Cottage which are shown at Table 1.3. The statistics show that school visitation is rising and now comprises one quarter of all visitors. Consultation indicated that the interpretation of Blundells Cottage and its collections were a good match for teaching the requirements of the new National History Curriculum. An opportunity therefore exists for the NCA to aim for every school child in the ACT to visit Blundells Cottage during their primary school education. It is noted that the statistics below do not take into consideration informal tours and visits to the site, such as those outside opening hours or only to the garden area to view the exterior of the buildings. Further statistical recording and analysis of visitors to the cottage is therefore needed to fully develop interpretation and education programs in the future.

**Table 1.3** Blundells Cottage total visitor numbers 2007–2012—general public and schools. (Source: NCA)

Key:	Entry Fee Charged	Opened More Days				
<b>Blundells Cottage Total Visitor Numbers</b>						
Month	2012/13	2011-12	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09	2007/08
July	303	429	104	53	80	1086
August	315	360	57	86	66	465
September	549	440	109	106	88	771
October	277	429	105	128	94	795
November	243	186	160	73	50	190
December	202	157	72	23	20	128
January	166	749	375	99	67	228
February	0	233	154	72	52	97
March	0	460	388	107	68	65
April	0	284	353	66	53	83
May	0	385	494	218	135	121
June	0	328	488	214	207	70
<b>Year Total</b>	<b>2055</b>	<b>4440</b>	<b>2859</b>	<b>1245</b>	<b>980</b>	<b>4099</b>
<b>School Visitation</b>						
Month	2012/13	2011-12	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09	2007/08
July	63	143	0	0	0	458
August	121	153	0	0	0	81
September	208	83		47	12	88
October	62	22		0	0	61
November	73	0	44	0	0	64
December	35	0		0	0	0
January	0	0		0	0	0
February	0	3		0	0	0
March	0	74	51	0	0	0
April	0	0		0	0	0
May	0	149	225	164	0	0
June	0	61	231	92	0	0
<b>Year Total</b>	<b>562</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>551</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>752</b>

## 1.11 Basic Social Value Investigation

A full social value study of Blundells Cottage was not undertaken for this HMP. The findings of the targeted stakeholder consultation were combined with a brief and basic literature search of current tourism material readily available from the Canberra Tourist Information Office and a brief Internet search for readily available information on community support for the cottage. NCA staff and volunteers were asked about who visited the cottage. Visitor statistics for the cottage are provided at Table 1.3.

### 1.11.1 Results of Social Value Investigation

#### Newspapers

Blundells Cottage features intermittently in the Canberra Times, mainly depending on newsworthy activities taking place at the cottage. However during the preparation of this HMP the cottage was featured in a small article in the Canberra Times purely on the strength of its historic values under the heading 'Blundell's Farmhouse history includes escaping demolition'.<sup>4</sup>

#### Souvenir Books

Blundells Cottage features as a photogenic place of aesthetic charm in glossy souvenir books on Canberra published over many years—*Canberra in Colour* by Rhys Roberts 1970, *I love Canberra* by Heide Smith 1983, *Canberra the Guide* by Ken Taylor and David Headon 1997, *Canberra, Celebrating Australia* by Steve Parish 1998, and *Canberra's Secrets* by Margaret Wade 2003.

#### Tourist Brochures

Blundells Cottage is marketed to the current day tourist population via brochures such as 'See Yourself in the Nation's Capital', the NCA and visitcanberra.com as a historical attraction to be seen when in Canberra. It is associated with physical activities such as cycling, walking, car tours (eg: Canberra Tracks) and Segway's—as a stop on part of a set out track/tour. Its central setting means it is in a prime location for lake users—this also means it is often associated with other significant tourist locations around the lake and central area. The main feature of the site highlighted is its location and its free entry status as a tourist attraction. Four of the more readily available tourist brochures give no background information to the site, listing it simply as an 'attraction'.

#### Internet

Blundells Cottage features mainly on tourist web sites, specifically ones encouraging visits to Canberra and trip advisor sites, including personal trip blogs. It also features in relation to Canberra ghost tours and sites discussing supernatural connections. Internet images tend to be tourist 'happy snaps' or professional photographer shots focused on the picturesque nature of the cottage with a heritage 'feel' rather than a fully informed understanding of the heritage significance of the cottage.

On the NCA's own website information about Blundells Cottage located under the Discover the National Capital—Visiting tab.

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<sup>4</sup> Canberra Times 31 October 2012, p12.



## **Social Value Deduction**

Blundells Cottage is a recognised part of the Canberra landscape both as a physical entity and within the community's mental map of the city even if local residents visit the cottage infrequently. The cottage is a valued place for a variety of reasons. Older long-term Canberra residents, who remember the transformation of the cottage from rural farm set in paddocks to historic site museum, retain a firm affection for the place. School teachers and students, which comprise the largest visitor group, value the cottage as an important glimpse of the past that illuminates their understanding of the present.

The wider Canberra community, while not appearing to be actively engaged in the cottage, retains an acceptance of its place in the Canberra landscape as an 'old place' (primarily as a tourist rather than a heritage site) although the 'old' nature of the place is certainly a selling point increasing its importance in public perception. Numerous wedding parties value the cottage as a picturesque backdrop to add romance and gravitas to formal photographs. The most common image of the cottage is an external view of the front verandah shown for its picturesque qualities stemming from its age. Historic images are of the building in an evolving cityscape to accentuate the modern National Capital. Parents of children who have visited as part of a school outing are more likely to visit with them after hearing about the place.

There was certainly a high degree of community involvement and wide social attachment to the cottage during the decades immediately after it was saved from demolition. During the 36 year term of CDHS stewardship of the cottage as a house museum, there was active community participation in the place, and community attachment to the cottage.

### **1.12 Project Limitations**

Accurately locating former farm features (such as fence lines and outbuildings etc) was not because of limited historic survey information. Recommendations regarding establishing an appropriate curtilage for interpreting and managing the landscape setting and archaeology of the site are therefore based on interpretation of photographs, plans and maps available. The important point is that the footprints of former buildings and haystacks are in the correct relationship to the cottage even if the exact former location cannot be fully ascertained.

### **1.13 Authorship and Acknowledgements**

This report has been written by Anne Claoué-Long, Associate; Martin Rowney, Senior Heritage Consultant; Sarah Webeck, Heritage Consultant; and Bethany Lance, Graduate Consultant of GML. The report content has been guided and reviewed by Sheridan Burke, Partner of GML. The updated condition assessment and Outline Schedule of Works was undertaken by Pip Giovanelli, Built Heritage Specialist, subconsultant to GML, who also had input into the discussion of constraints and opportunities. Ciara Fitzgerald, cultural and environmental heritage student at ANU worked as an intern with GML during the drafting of this report and assisted in research and administrative tasks. All information drawn from previous academic and consulting work has been referenced and GML acknowledges the 1994 Freeman Collett & Partners Pty Ltd CMP for provision of much historical information and context.

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- Glen Thomas, Asset Manager, NCA;
- Malcolm Martin, Senior Project Officer, NCA; and
- the stakeholders identified at Appendix E.