

# Register of Significant Twentieth Century Architecture

**RSTCA No:** R063

**Name of Place:** Yarralumla Brickworks

**Other/Former Names:** Canberra Brickworks

**Address/Location:** off Denman Street YARRALUMLA 2600

Block 1 Section 102 of Yarralumla

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Listing Status:	Registered	Other Heritage Listings:	
Date of Listing:	1984	Level of Significance:	National
Citation Revision No:	2	Category:	Industrial/ Manufacturing
Citation Revision Date:	October 1987	Style:	

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Date of Design:	1913	Designer:	Department of Works – Henry Rolland
Construction Period:	1914-15	Client/Owner/Lessee:	DASETT
Date of Additions:	1922, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1953, 1955, 1958, 1960's, 1971, 1979.	Builder:	Unknown

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## Statement of Significance

The brickworks is of historical interest as the first manufacturing building in the ACT. The Staffordshire kiln is the only surviving example of its type in Australia. The range of kiln types is also significant and their history parallels the phases of growth of Canberra. The later kilns are representative of brickmaking throughout the twentieth century. The brickworks is also significant as the site of manufacture of bricks for buildings of outstanding public importance such as the Provisional Parliament House, and symbolic of the determination of the Federal Government to create a viable self-sufficient new city. The brick and steel structures exhibit rare architectural qualities in the Canberra environment. The excellent use of brick forms and tall pitched iron clad roofs create interesting and dramatic external massing and internal spaces, and contrast with the dark interiors of the kilns. The siting and design of the brickworks was also significant, sited behind a low hill so as not to intrude on the Federal Capital, and the original kilns had low, fanforced chimneys. The 1953 chimney stack is a fine industrial structure, and the 1953 modified Hoffman kiln is reported to be the largest in the Southern Hemisphere. The adjacent brickpits, which are of geological significance, are considered to be a valuable scientific and educational area.

## Description

The brickworks at Yarralumla were the first brickworks to be established by the Federal Government. The existing hopper, machine shed, workshop and kiln structures and quarry areas demonstrate the functions and development of the Commonwealth Brickworks over a period of 62 years from 1913 - 1976. Bricks, terracotta tiles, pipes and vents were made there. During the expansive 1920's phase of development of the Capital the brickworks supplied the essential building materials for the majority of Canberra's earliest public buildings and housing. It was linked by a small gauge railway to the Provisional Parliament House during its construction. A variety of kiln types are demonstrated together with fan houses, chimney stacks and support structures. The roofs have exposed metal trusses in the 'Staffordshire' kiln and the machine bays. The 20 chamber 'Staffordshire' kiln built in 1915 is the only one of its type in Australia. Two Hoffman/Hardie patent type continuous kilns (1927, 1953) remain, together with three "dome"

down-draft kilns (although early kiln types they were only built in c.1963). The kilns are functionally arranged in parallel forming stacking bays between. Corrugated iron and steel machinery halls and workshops (1955) were built on the site of the original 1915 machine sheds. The 1953 chimney stack is a fine industrial structure, and the 1953 modified Hoffman kiln is reported to be the largest in the Southern Hemisphere.

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### **Condition and Integrity**

The buildings are relatively intact and sound, although there are a number of buildings in a "semi-derelict/overgrown" condition. The majority of the original machinery has been removed.

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### **Background/History**

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### **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*

*(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*

*(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*

*(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*

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### **References**

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### **Other Information Sources**