



ACT Heritage Council

HERITAGE ADVICE

Environmental Significance Opinion

ACTPLA Reference: ESO-202500038
Heritage Reference: Tennent-B58 & B120
Contact Officer: CW
Received by Council: 29 July 2025
Due date: 8 September 2025

TO: Territory Planning Authority
City and Environment Directorate
EPDImpact@act.gov.au

Block:	District:	Heritage Place:
58 & 120	Tennent	Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station

Status of Place: Registered Heritage Place
Description of Works: Honeysuckle Visitor Hub Renewal - Stage 1
Report Details: *“Environmental Significance Opinion – Supporting Statement. Honeysuckle Visitor Hub Renewal – Stage 1”* (Parks & Conservation Service, July 2025); and
Namadgi National Park Precinct Upgrades: Woods Reserve and Honeysuckle Creek Campgrounds. Cultural Heritage Assessment and Statement of Heritage Effect” (Past Traces Pty Ltd, May 2025).
Council Advice provided by: A/g Director (Approvals and Advice)

Pursuant to Section 140 of the *Planning Act 2023*, the ACT Heritage Council advises that:

☒ The proposal is **unlikely to have a significant adverse environmental impact, subject to conditions** described below.

Background:

On 27 July 2025, the Territory Planning Authority referred an application for an Environmental Significance Opinion (ESO) to the ACT Heritage Council (the Council) for entity advice (ESO202500038).

The ESO application relates to Stage 1 of the proposed renewal of the Honeysuckle Visitor Hub at the termination of Apollo Road in Namadgi National Park. Renewal of the visitor hub is required as the existing assets are aged, and the area requires a better delineation between day use, camping use, and walking track head locations to improve visitor experience and reduce visitor concentration and impacts.

Stage 1 of the proposed works includes demolition of the existing toilet block and construction of a new 3 x cubicle toilet in the Gemini camping area (Block 58 Tennent), construction of a new 1 x cubicle pump-out toilet in the day use area (Block 120 Tennent), and upgrading of visitor directional and information signage throughout the Honeysuckle Visitor Hub.

The proposed new toilet facilities in the day use area in Block 120 Tennent are located within the curtilage of the Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station, a registered place on the ACT Heritage Register (the Register). The works are therefore subject to *Heritage Act 2004* provisions.

Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station holds heritage significance due to its historical importance in ACT's involvement in twentieth century manned space exploration, its importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics and layout of a Manned Space Flight Network (MSFN) tracking station, and its special association with the United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and prominent engineer Thomas Reid.

The attributes intrinsic to the heritage significance of the Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station include:

- Remnant concrete platforms of the operations area and the power building;
- Concrete foundations for the 26m dish and transmitter building;
- Concrete footprint of the former fuel tanks;
- Landscape setting consisting of numerous exotic trees (including Cedars, Liquidambars, Silver Birches, Golden Cypress, Japanese Maple, Tortured Willow, and Junipers);
- Internal circulation roads;
- Stone retaining walls indicating landscape setting; and
- Cleared setting within natural bushland.

The proposed construction of a 1 x cubicle toilet within the registered curtilage of the Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station involves the following activities:

- Removal of turf within the proposed 4 x 6 m (24m²) footprint of the new toilet, situated approximately 14m to the south of the existing picnic shelter on the western side of the bitumen carpark located to the west of the Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station operations building remnant concrete platform;
- Excavation of a smaller portion of land at 4m depth, using a medium size excavator, for the installation of one pump out 7,500L septic tank. Remove fill or re-use in toilet block demolition;
- Laying of concrete slab and erection of a prefabricated timber and steel toilet block (Landmark 'Coastal K9401');
- Installation of one 1000L slimline poly water tank;
- Minor landscaping;
- Shallow excavation and construction of an approximately 20m long x 1.2m wide gravel cement path with steel edging running from the picnic shelter to the new toilet entrance; and
- Marking and signposting a dedicated accessible parking bay in the existing bitumen car park at the front of the toilet, with a pram ramp at 1:8 grade.

The ESO application acknowledges the heritage significance and registered status of the Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station, and includes the following measures designed to avoid and minimise impact to the conservation values of the heritage place:

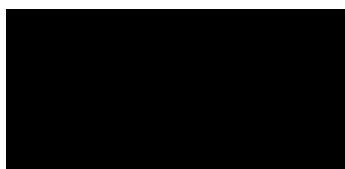
- The proposed design of the Stage 1 renewal works avoids all key features intrinsic to the heritage significance of the Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station;

- The proposed works are confined to small scale construction within a small footprint;
- Care will be taken during construction works to ensure that damage to all key heritage features in the immediate area of the proposed works is avoided – this includes no removal or damage to landscape elements such as rock retaining walls and exotic vegetation;
- The proposed form, materials and colour schemes of the new toilet block, gravel cement path, and signage are designed to be appropriate for national park settings;
- A Parks and Conservation Service (PCS) Works Plan will be prepared for all contractors involved in the proposed works. Each contractor will be inducted on-site and briefed on all environmental and heritage controls and given a copy of the ESO Approval; and
- If unrecorded heritage items are located during the proposed works, a process such as the Unexpected Discovery Plan outlined in Attachment A – *“Namadgi National Park Precinct Upgrades: Woods Reserve and Honeysuckle Creek Campgrounds. Cultural Heritage Assessment and Statement of Heritage Effect.”* (Past Traces Pty Ltd, May 2025) (Appendix 3) shall be implemented.

Decision and Conditions:

Following review of the ESO application, and as a delegate of the Council, I advise that the proposed Stage 1 renewal works to the Honeysuckle Visitor Hub are unlikely to diminish the significance of the place, subject to the following conditions:

1. All works are to be undertaken in accordance with the heritage impact mitigation measures contained in the ESO application and outlined above; and
2. No additional works or variation of proposed works are to be undertaken without prior advice or approval from the Council.



Corinne Softley
**A/g Director (Approvals and Advice) (as delegate for),
 ACT Heritage Council**

4 September 2025