



## ACT Heritage Council

# HERITAGE ADVICE

## *Environmental Significance Opinion*

ACTPLA Reference: ESO 202400048  
Heritage Reference: Tennent-B58 & B120  
Contact Officer: CW  
Received by Council: 18 November 2024  
Due date: 6 January 2025

**TO: Territory Planning Authority**  
Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate  
[EPDImpact@act.gov.au](mailto:EPDImpact@act.gov.au)

Block:	Section:	Division / District:	Heritage Place:
58; 120	0	Tennent	Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station

Status of Place: Registered Heritage Place  
Description of Works: Realignment of two sections of Honeysuckle Walk  
Report Details: “*ESO Supporting Statement - Honeysuckle Walk.*” (Parks & Conservation Service, November 2024).  
Council Advice provided by: Director (Registrations and Engagement)

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Pursuant to Section 140 of the *Planning Act 2023* and Section 60 of the *Heritage Act 2004*, the ACT Heritage Council advises that:

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

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### Background:

On 18 November 2024, the Territory Planning Authority referred an application for an Environmental Significance Opinion (ESO) to the ACT Heritage Council (the Council) for entity advice (ESO202400048).

The ESO application relates to the proposed realignment of two sections of Honeysuckle Walk, a short circuit walking track (1.5 km) commencing at the Honeysuckle campground and encircling the former Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station and Honeysuckle picnic area in Namadgi National Park, (parts Block 58 and Block 120, Tennent, ACT).

The proposed partial realignment of Honeysuckle Walk is designed to establish a circuit walking track that bypasses the Honeysuckle campground, and both starts and finishes at the Honeysuckle picnic area. The proposal forms part of a program of improvements and upgrades to visitor facilities in the Honeysuckle area following the Orroral Valley Black Summer bushfire in January-February 2020.

Specifically, the proposed partial realignment of Honeysuckle Walk involves:

- Realignment 1 – establishment of a new section of walking track measuring approximately 250m in length and up to 1200mm in width, involving minor manual/small machinery clearing of mid-layer vegetation and installation of steel marker posts, rock steps, and drainage features such as earth swales where necessary. The small machinery that may be utilised includes a mini-excavator (1 tonne), a skid-steer loader (Bobcat), a motorised wheelbarrow, and a side-by-side all-terrain vehicle (ATV).

- Realignment 2 – renewal of and improvements to a section of former management trail measuring approximately 250m in length and up to 1200mm in width, involving installation of steel marker posts and drainage features such as earth swales, table and mitre drains, where necessary.
- Track closure – closure of approximately 580m of redundant sections of walking track by scarifying surface and placing local vegetation debris over the area to promote stabilisation and regrowth.

The former Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station (Block 120, Tennent) is a registered heritage place on the ACT Heritage Register.

Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station has been assessed to hold cultural heritage significance due to its historical importance in ACT's involvement in twentieth century manned space exploration (heritage significance criterion (a) under the *Heritage Act 2004*), its importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics and layout of a Manned Space Flight Network (MSFN) tracking station (heritage significance criterion (d)), and its special association with the United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and prominent engineer Thomas Reid (heritage significance criterion (h)).

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

- operations area, consisting of remnant concrete platform
- power building, consisting of remnant concrete platform
- concrete foundations for 26 metre dish and transmitter building
- concrete footprint of former fuel tanks
- landscape setting, consisting of exotic trees:
  - a row of Cedrus (*Cedrus deodara* and *C.atlantica*)
  - Liquidambers (*Liquidamber styraciflua*)
  - Silver birches (*Betula pendula*)
  - Golden Cypress (*Cupressus macroparpa 'Brunniana Aurea'*)
  - Japanese Maple (*Acer palmatum*)
  - tortured willow (*Salix matsudana 'Tortuosa'*)
  - small junipers (*juniperis communis*).
- internal circulation roads
- stone retaining walls indicating landscape setting
- cleared setting within natural bushland.

The Conservation Objective set out in the Heritage Register Entry for the Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station states that the heritage place should be conserved and appropriately managed in a manner respecting its heritage significance.

Parts of the proposed realignment of Honeysuckle Walk fall within the registered curtilage of the Honeysuckle Creek Track Station heritage place, including:

- an approximately 75m long section of Realignment 1, located in the north-eastern part of the heritage place, to the north of the concrete foundations for the antenna and transmitter building
- an approximately 50m long section of Realignment 2, located in the south-western corner of the heritage place, to the south of the concrete footprint of the former fuel tanks.
- an approximately 75m long section of redundant walking track closure, located in the north-western corner of the heritage place.

The proposed Honeysuckle Walk realignments will enter the Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station from bushland near the access road and concrete foundations for the antenna and transmitter building (Realignment 1) and near the concrete footprint of the former fuel tanks, following an existing access trail to Honeysuckle Creek (Realignment 2). Walkers will complete the circuit track through the Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station using existing footpaths, stairs, and roads.

The ESO application acknowledges the cultural 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:

- All proposed track works are confined to the natural bushland area fringing the built environment, remnant footprint, cleared landscape setting, and exotic tree plantings of the Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station.
- Proposed vegetation clearing for Honeysuckle Walk Realignment 1 is minor in scale, confined to a new track corridor of 1200mm in width, and will be undertaken by hand and small machinery.
- All proposed works on Realignment 2 are confined to an existing management trail footprint.
- Proposed works will cease beyond the boundaries of the significant attributes and remnant structural features of the Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station – with Realignment 1 terminating on the northern side of the access road and concrete foundations of the antenna and transmitter building, and Realignment 2 terminating at the former fuel tanks concrete foundations area.
- No works are proposed within the cleared landscape setting or amongst the structural remains of the Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station.
- No impacts are proposed to the exotic tree plantings associated with the Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station.

#### **Decision and Conditions:**

Following review, and as a delegate of the Council, I advise that the proposed partial realignments of Honeysuckle Walk are unlikely to have significant adverse heritage impacts, 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.
2. No additional works are to be undertaken without prior advice from the Council.
3. Works exclusion zones are to be established around the physical boundaries of the concrete foundations of the antenna and transmitter building and the footprint and concrete foundations of the former fuel tanks, and no activities, including vehicle/machinery traffic, storage of plant, equipment, materials, or debris etc, are to occur in these areas.
4. All contractors/workers are provided with a site-specific heritage induction prior to commencing work.
5. Should any additional heritage elements or objects, including Aboriginal places or objects, be encountered during works, all activities at that location should cease to allow for heritage assessment and management (in accordance with Sections 74 and 75 of the *Heritage Act 2004*), and the discovery is to be reported to the Council within five working days.



Heather Wallace  
**Director (Registrations and Engagement) (as delegate for),**  
**ACT Heritage Council**  
6 January 2025