



THE SUBURB

The inner south Canberra suburb of Yarralumla was gazetted in 1928, apparently named for an Aboriginal word meaning 'echo'. Many of its streets are named after botanists and colonial governors. Yarralumla is home to some of Canberra's early buildings and the diplomatic community.

THE FORESTRY PRECINCT

With the construction of Australia's capital city underway, the Yarralumla brickworks were established in 1913 to supply building material. Construction on the Commonwealth nursery and Westbourne Woods arboretum followed.

Thomas Charles Weston was responsible for testing and selecting plant species at the arboretum for their suitability to Canberra's environment; from 1913 through to 1924 Weston oversaw the propagation of more than two million trees which were then planted in the Canberra area.

The Forestry Precinct was established in 1927 as a response to Federation to provide a national forestry school and national forest research centre. It consists of a complex of buildings, arboretum, nursery and recreation grounds. The Forestry School was built from designs by John Kirkpatrick, assisted by Henry Rolland. The School's location was chosen because of the proximity to the arboretum at Westbourne Woods. In 1965 the School's educational role was taken over by the Australian National University and in 1975 its research activities were transferred to the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO).

A Federal Government decision eight years ago to consolidate CSIRO activities at Black Mountain, has left the Yarralumla site excess to their requirements. A handful of CSIRO staff and some external tenants remain on the site.

THE NEXT EVOLUTION

CSIRO sold the site to Gunyar Pty Ltd in June 2002, with a twenty-year lease allowing CSIRO to retain control of the property. The Crown Lessee of the site is The Trustee for Gunyar A.C.T. Properties Trust. The beneficiary of the Trust is The Shepherd Foundation (<https://shepherdcentre.org.au/>), a Registered Charity whose primary purpose is to assist children with hearing loss. The Shepherd Foundation is headquartered in Sydney and has a local presence in Canberra. Oakstand (<http://oakstand.com.au>), will act on behalf of The Shepherd Foundation to manage the evolution of the CSIRO site to Forestry Place, Yarralumla.

Forestry Place is the name we have given to the next evolution of the 11-hectare site.

The CSIRO Yarralumla site is currently included in the Commonwealth Heritage List. In 2017 Environmental Resources Management Australia Pty Ltd (ERM) was commissioned by the CSIRO to update the 2008 Heritage Management Plan for the site. Any further use or development of the site will be undertaken with consideration of the April 2018 ERM Heritage Management Plan (<https://www.csiro.au/~media/About/Files/Heritage/CSIRO-Yarralumla-HMP-2018.pdf?la=en&hash=BE98401B69576229C29F223F5CD0EE152D547474>).

Forestry Place could be many things. Because of its size, history and location, the site could host educational, residential, commercial, cultural or community future uses ... or a combination thereof. Developing a draft master plan is the first stage and will include collaboration with the National Capital Authority and the community to progress and develop this exclusive site.