

# Australian National University

## Acton Campus — Site Inventory



Study Item/ Area	Research School of Biology (RSB)
Acton Campus Precinct	BANKS Precinct
Building Nos. & Names	46 (Research School of Biology), 46A-H (Ancillary Structures)

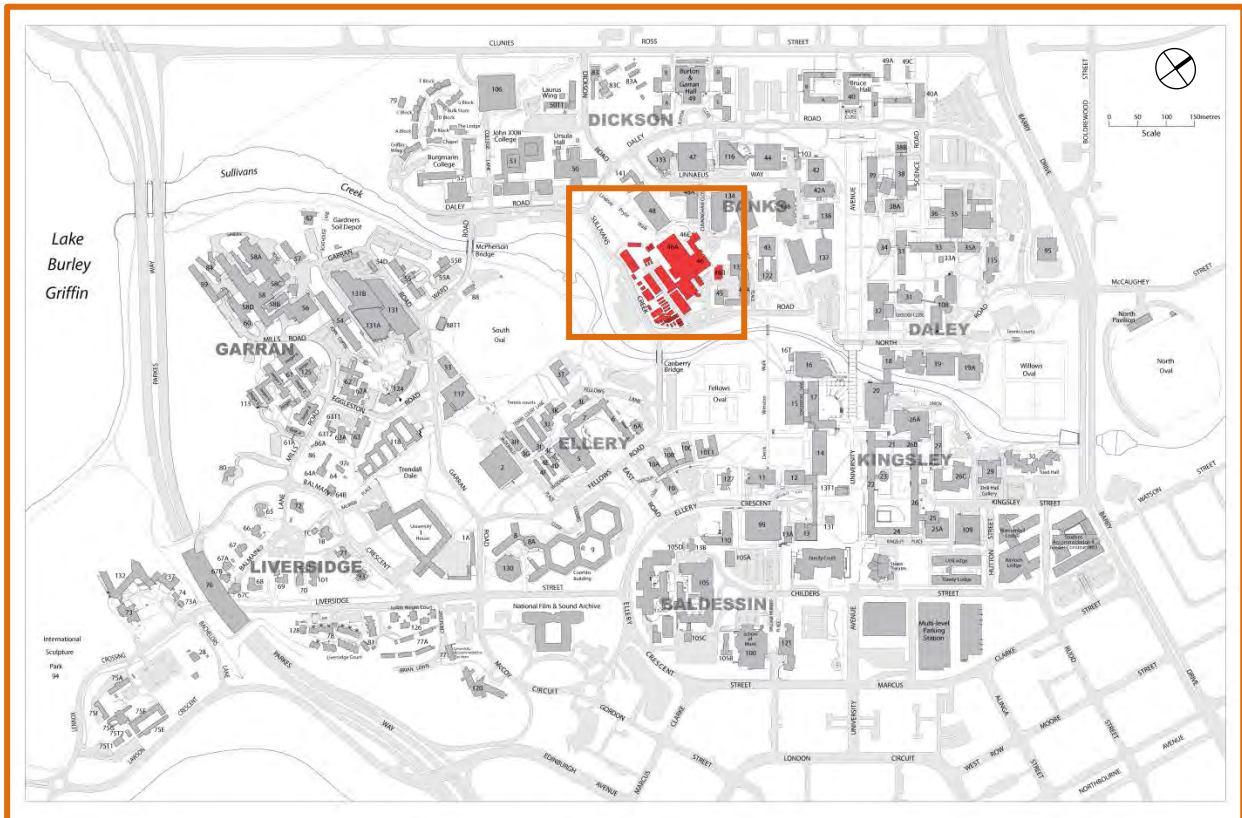


Figure 1: Location of study area within the ANU Acton Campus site.

Heritage Ranking	Research School of Biology (Group)— <b>Low</b> —Does not meet criterion for Commonwealth Heritage List
Heritage Listing	The Research School of Biology is not individually listed on the Commonwealth Heritage List (CHL).
Condition—Date	The condition noted here is at March 2012. The buildings in the Research School of Biology (RSB) continue to be well maintained as both a teaching and research facility and are in good condition.
Relevant Documentation	There is currently no relevant documentation for the RSB.

### Context of the Buildings



Figure 2: The Research School of Biology in the context of the Banks and Dickson Precincts.

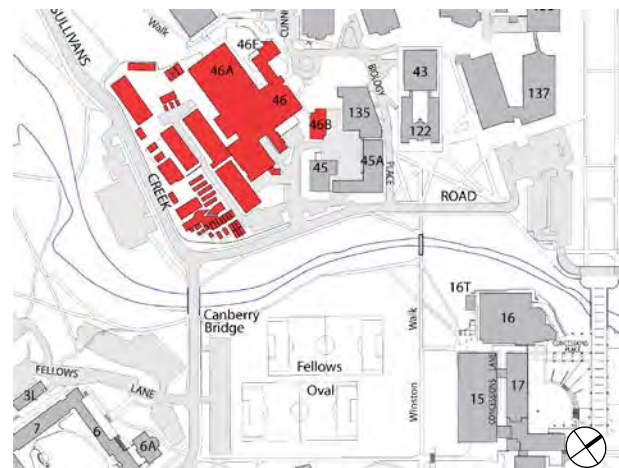


Figure 3: The Research School of Biology in relation to Fellows Oval and Sullivan's Creek.

### Brief Historical Overview

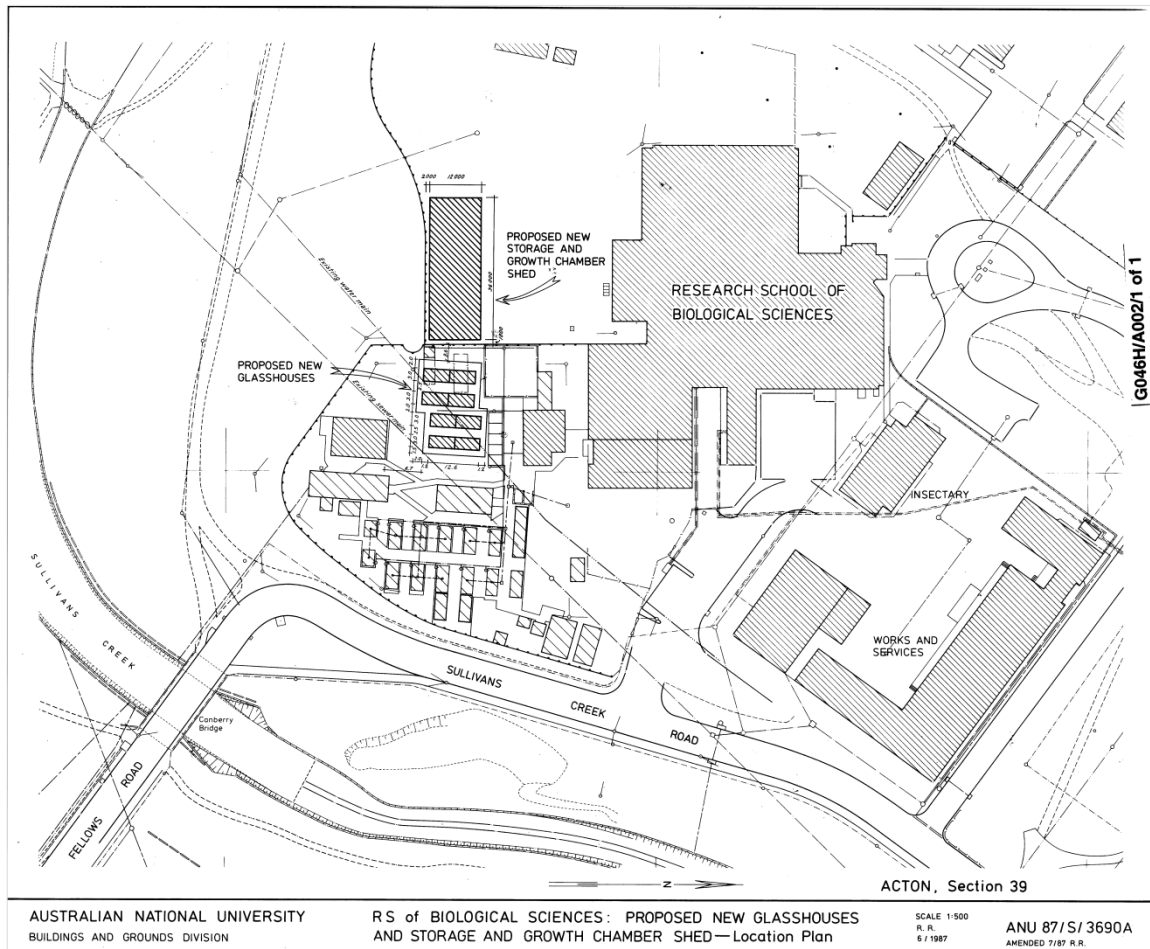
In June 1968 temporary accommodation for the Research School of Biological Sciences was completed in the old Nurses Quarters of the Canberra Community Hospital Buildings (now the Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health).

Plans for the permanent buildings were prepared in 1970 by Hely & Horne (with Eggleston, Macdonald & Secomb), and construction began shortly after by Hughes Brothers on the site to the northwest of Sullivan's Creek that had served as the isolated location of the Magnetic Hut (later to be converted as office space in the late 1960s and today used by RSBS). On 14 November 1970 the foundation stone of RSBS was laid by the Right Honourable Nigel Bowen, Minister for Education & Sport.

The building was officially opened by the Governor General, Sir Paul Hasluck on November 10, 1972, though Stage One was not completed until December 1972. In 1978 the extension to house the Electron Microscope Unit had been completed, and by 1986 plans had been prepared by Anthony Cooper and Associates for extensions (46A) to be constructed by B Huckstepp & Sons.

The workshop extension was planned by Anthony Cooper and Associates and constructed by Banutti in 1989. The Storage and Growth Chambers (glasshouses) were added in 1991. A year later Anthony Cooper and Associates prepared plans for the wing extension, which were carried out by Project Coordination. In 2000 an upgrade to the waste enclosure was planned by May Russell Architects and constructed by John Hindmarsh Pty. Ltd.

In early 1974, initial plans were prepared for the glasshouses, store and soil bins (46C – Plant Culture) by Anthony Cooper and Associates. The area for the structures was allotted in 1978, and upgraded in 2000. The RSBS glasshouses (46F) were erected from 1972, and have had intermittent upgrades since that time. In September 1978 plans were prepared for the RSBS Insectary (46B) by Anthony Cooper and Associates and were completed in 1979 by Concrete Constructions. In 1978 plans were also prepared for the RSBS Garages (46G) by Belmont Garages. In April 1983 working drawings were prepared by A&S Drafting, ACT for the Solar Glass House (46D). The building was completed in 1985. The RSBS Lecture Theatre (46E) was planned in January 1992 by Anthony Cooper and Associates. It is unclear exactly when the Old Growth Chambers (#46H) were planned or constructed, although they received an upgrade in 2000, planned by May & Russell Architects.



**Figure 4:** Proposed site of the 1988 Glasshouse construction including the arrangement of buildings already constructed. Drawn by Buildings & Grounds Division June 1987.

## Description of the Research School of Biology

### Buildings

The research School of Biology is a three storey building constructed of redbrick and in situ concrete consisting of a central entry and vertical circulation space; unequal side wings with a strong horizontal banded composition of continuous glazing, brick (ground floor) and concrete (upper floors) spandrels and fascias. The generous internal atrium space contains common room facilities at ground level, stepped ramps to upper levels with bridge connections to wings containing laboratories and offices with sawtooth south light roof glazing over the whole area.

**Landscape** The landscape is mixed with bedded native and exotic plantings in limited space.

## Significance Assessment against the Commonwealth Heritage criteria

### Statement of Significance

N/A

Criteria	Assessment
<p><b>(a) Historic</b> The place has significant heritage value because of the place's importance in the course, or pattern, of Australia's natural or cultural history.</p>	The Research School of Biology Buildings do not meet CHL criterion (a) for historic values.
<p><b>(b) Rarity</b> The place has significant heritage values because of the place's possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Australia's natural or cultural history.</p>	The Research School of Biology Buildings do not meet CHL criterion (b) for rarity values.
<p><b>(c) Scientific</b> The place has significant heritage value because of the place's potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Australia's natural or cultural history.</p>	The Research School of Biology Buildings do not meet CHL criterion (c) for scientific values.
<p><b>(d) Representative</b> The place has significant heritage value because of the place's importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of: A class of Australia's natural or cultural places; or A class of Australia's natural or cultural environments.</p>	The Research School of Biology Buildings do not meet CHL criterion (d) for representative values.

Significance Assessment against the Commonwealth Heritage criteria

<p><b>(e) Aesthetic</b> The place has significant heritage value because of the place's importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group.</p>	<p>The Research School of Biology Buildings do not meet CHL criterion (e) for aesthetic values.</p>
<p><b>(f) Creative/Technical</b> The place has significant heritage value because of the place's importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.</p>	<p>The Research School of Biology Buildings do not meet CHL criterion (f) for creative/technical values.</p>
<p><b>(g) Social</b> The place has significant heritage value because of the place's strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.</p>	<p>The Research School of Biology Buildings do not meet CHL criterion (g) for social values.</p>
<p><b>(h) Associative</b> The place has significant heritage value because of the place's special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Australia's natural and cultural history.</p>	<p>The Research School of Biology Buildings do not meet CHL criterion (h) for associative values.</p>
<p><b>(i) Indigenous</b> The place has significant heritage value because of the place's importance as part of Indigenous tradition.</p>	<p>The Research School of Biology Buildings do not meet CHL criterion (i) for Indigenous values.</p>



## Photographs



Figure 5: An aerial view of the RSB site circa 1951 including the Magnetic Hut, since demolished. (Source: ANU Archives)



Figure 6: Front entrance of the RN Robertson Building for the Research School of Biology. (Source: <http://lostoncampus.com.au/15628>)



Figure 7: Foyer of the Robertson Lecture Theatre, Building 46E. (Source: <http://lostoncampus.com.au/15647>)



Figure 8: View of the New Glasshouses for the RSB. (Source: ANU Heritage Office 2010)

## Management Issues

### Constraints and Opportunities

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As the RSB Buildings are of low significance, no **constraints** are noted.

The RSB Buildings are ranked as being of 'Low' significance as they contribute to the overall significance/values of the ANU Acton campus, however they do not fulfil criteria for heritage listing on their own merit.

The **Tolerance for Change** heritage management tool, outlined in Section 7.6 of the ANU Acton Campus Heritage Study 2012, will assist in conserving heritage values through a process of change. The RSB Buildings are able to tolerate a moderate amount of change through development.

As the RSB is of low significance, no **opportunities** are noted.

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### Recommendations

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Photographic recording for the ANU archives should be undertaken prior to substantial change to buildings or landscaping in any future development.

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