



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

---

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY  
Dr Marisa Paterson MLA (Chair), Ms Jo Clay MLA (Deputy Chair), Mr Ed Cocks MLA

## Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into ACT's heritage arrangements

**Submission Number: 032**

**Date Authorised for Publication: 4 April 2023**

## **ACT Legislative Assembly inquiry into ACT's Heritage arrangements**

### **Submission from Tidbinbilla Pioneers Association 30 March 2023**

Tidbinbilla Pioneers Association (TPA) members are descendants and friends of settler-Australian families in Tidbinbilla and the surrounding rural area from the mid-1800s through to the present day. Membership is also available to others who have an ongoing interest in preserving and promoting the area's heritage values.

Having a strong, passionate connection with Tidbinbilla, including heritage listed Rock Valley Homestead, Nil Desperandum, the re-created Tidbinbilla Eucalyptus Oil Distillery, other heritage locations/precincts etc, TPA members join many other interested groups and individuals in preserving and promoting the region's rich cultural heritage. Fondly known as "The Pioneers", members provide important local historical knowledge and understanding, and work with ACT Parks and Conservation Service in maintaining this valuable heritage into the future. We also play a lobbying role, as a volunteer organisation, to highlight issues, and facilitate opportunities in the presentation and management of the heritage space.

We also have a successful track record over many years in receiving ACT Heritage grants on behalf of PCS, who are the owner and manager of various heritage assets within Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve, and putting those grants to good use.

TPA's scope of interest also extends to other areas, within rural ACT, with a historic connection to Tidbinbilla. "West of the Murrumbidgee" is a term that best describes this.

From the outcomes and recommendations of the inquiry, TPA looks forward to a more adequately structured, well-managed and well-resourced heritage culture within ACT Government and its many agencies/entities, and out to the wider community. This would lead to improvements that ensure ACT's heritage assets are better protected, preserved, respected, promoted, and improved, particularly in rural ACT.

TPA's expectations are that this also brings about improvements in the delivery and effectiveness of education initiatives that will raise the understanding, acceptance and immersion of heritage values across the broader community as well as in schools and other education institutions.

We look to those leaders and decision-makers in the heritage space, from the top level down, to raise the profile and resourcing of Heritage in rural ACT and to "show the way" in heritage receiving a much more equitable place in the management priorities of asset owners and managers, who are dealing with a host of priorities, heritage being among these.

To underpin these broader considerations it will be important to embed these with more detail and weight as heritage-specific requirements in Plans of Management and specific Heritage Management Plans. Among others, one particularly clear need is for an overall Heritage Management Plan that covers all of Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve, with its many sites, precincts, remnants that represent heritage values.

To this end, it would be beneficial for ACT Parks and Conservation Service to have a dedicated funded resource and perhaps a small support team, within its own staffing profile, to focus solely on heritage assets and heritage-related matters in general. There are enough heritage sites, precincts and heritage dealings within the PCS estate across rural ACT to build a strong business case for funding this unique resourcing.

Lastly (or firstly?), the effectiveness of relationships, whether ACT Government inter-agency, intra-agency, with other entities or out with the broader heritage community and the public in general, is paramount to a positive and productive heritage culture. The resources available within government agencies should be more effectively utilised to train/coach/mentor/encourage a much better level of interworking and a consistent desire to achieve the common goal.