



ACT Heritage Council

**AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY  
HERITAGE REGISTER  
Background Information**

## **TUGGERANONG SKATEPARK**

BLOCK 11 AND SECTION 55, GREENWAY

At its meeting of 10 June 2026, the ACT Heritage Council decided that the Tuggeranong Skatepark was not eligible for provisional registration.

The information contained in this report was considered by the ACT Heritage Council in assessing the nomination for the Tuggeranong Skatepark against the heritage significance criteria outlined in s 10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

---

### **Description**

Tuggeranong Skatepark is located in the suburb of Greenway, within the Tuggeranong town centre (refer Figure 1). The skatepark at 25 Bartlet Place is positioned immediately east of Tuggeranong Town Park, close to the foreshore of Lake Tuggeranong. Its proximity to the lake edge and adjacent recreational areas contributes to its public character that is consistent with the district's planned, open-space network.

The skatepark is within walking distance of community and educational facilities such as Lake Tuggeranong College (approximately 540 metres southeast) and the South Point Tuggeranong shopping centre (approximately 750 metres south). The skatepark functions not only as a sporting facility but as a component of the wider recreational landscape of Tuggeranong.



*Image 1: Tuggeranong Skatepark looking south (Skatermaps, n.d.)*

---

## History

### The rise of BMX

BMX Freestyle is an extreme sport which began in the 1970s as an offshoot of BMX racing, with riders mimicking motocross tricks on skateparks and dirt, eventually evolving into distinct styles like flatland (tricks on flat ground), vert (ramps/vert), park (within a skatepark), street (using stairs, rails, curbs and walls), and dirt (on soil). BMX gained mainstream traction through the 1980s with purpose-built freestyle bikes featuring pegs and stronger frames.

By the 1990s it became globally popular (Australian BMX Museum 2026). BMX Freestyle joined the X-Games in 1995, bringing massive exposure and new styles like street and park. The sport expanded worldwide through magazines, videos, and competitions, with riders innovating globally. BMX debuted at the Beijing Olympics in 2008, and BMX Freestyle Park became an Olympic sport at the Tokyo 2020 Games (Camilleri et al 2024).

### BMX arrives in Australia

In the early 1970s a cycling boom in Canberra highlighted the need for planned infrastructure for bike riders. Tuggeranong was inaugurated in February 1973, and provisions were made for residential, commercial and recreational land uses (ACT Heritage 2025).

The late 1970s saw the introduction of BMX riding to Canberra. At the time, the provision of recreational facilities, including skateparks which were used by BMX riders, came under the jurisdiction of the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC 1984).

The Canberra BMX Club was founded in 1978 and has been an active part of the Australian BMX scene ever since, making it one of the oldest and most successful clubs in Australia (Canberra BMX 2026). In 1981 the ACT BMX Club formed, affiliated with the Australian governing body. The sport grew steadily with local enthusiasts building tracks and fostering a family-friendly community.

Between 1987 and 1997 the ACT was at the forefront of skate park development (Archives ACT 1976-87). Skateparks were open to BMX riders, scooter riders, inline skaters, as well as skateboarders. The first skatepark at Belconnen influenced the design of several other facilities both in Australia and overseas (Archives ACT 1988). Following the success of Belconnen and Civic Skateparks, construction commenced on the third major skatepark in Tuggeranong in 1995.

### **BMX in the ACT today**

Canberra has a rich history in BMX, evolving from early grassroots enthusiasm to a city with top-tier facilities, world-class athletes and an active BMX culture. As unofficial caretakers of sites around the city that they use, BMX and skateboarding clubs and associations as well as other users sweep sites of rubbish and hazards, report damage, follow-up on repairs, fill-in damaged areas and organise events.

In recent years, the local BMX community, including members of the Freestyle ACT BMX Club, successfully campaigned for better facilities (Canberra BMX 2026). This advocacy culminated in the opening of a new BMX freestyle facility at Stromlo Forest Park in 2023, suitable for all skill levels from beginners to elite riders (Coleman 2023).

Canberra has several BMX clubs supporting both racing and freestyle. These include, among others:

- Canberra BMX Club, Melba
- Freestyle ACT BMX Club
- Tuggeranong Vikings BMX Club, Kambah
- Canberra BMX Club, Melba

### **Tuggeranong Skatepark**

Tuggeranong Skatepark cost around \$600,000 to build and was considered a progressive concrete skatepark at the time (Oxigen 2012). In developing a response to the Tuggeranong brief a series of design workshops with inline skaters, BMX riders as well as 'old' and 'new school' skateboarders were held fortnightly over a 3-month period. This process revealed a

marked change in skating styles since the Belconnen facility was completed in 1991 (Telfer 2026). In addition to responding to the latest skating requirements, structural engineers refined construction methods to minimise costs whilst at the same time ensuring facilities would not require major refurbishment expenditure for at least 10 years (Archives ACT 1995). Notably, the BMX community were very vocal and actively involved in these consultation sessions, more so than the local skateboarding community. As a result, the landscape architects, including two students from Canberra University, were able to respond to the needs of the BMX community through the provision of a more nuanced user experience through jumps and open-air features (Telfer 2026).

Tuggeranong Skatepark opened in 1995 after an extensive consultation process with its users (Archives ACT 1995). Councils from across Australia had observed the process closely and corresponded with the ACT Government regarding the consultative process and the design it produced.



*Image 2: The opening of Tuggeranong Skatepark in 1995 was attended by hundreds of local skateboarders and BMX riders (Telfer 2026).*

## **Design features**

Tuggeranong Skatepark has been a well-used location for BMX, scooter, inline skating and skateboarding in Tuggeranong for over 30 years. Regarding BMX use of the site, the design can be described as an example of early 1990s "big air" design. Big air design for BMX primarily refers to a specific style of skatepark architecture from the early 1990s featuring large,

expansive ramps and flow areas designed to enable riders to perform advanced aerial tricks (Australian BMX Museum 2026).

Tuggeranong Skatepark's large ramps and large areas for flow riding allow riders to accomplish tricks and combinations. The combination of 2 large halfpipes and large ramps with wide areas to gain speed, as well as the design of the "lap of love", which incorporates 6- and 8-foot-high quarter pipes with straight ramps, spine, street-spine and hips, was unique in the ACT in the 1990s.

Tuggeranong Skatepark was designed in close consultation with the local BMX community, resulting in features of big air design (Telfer 2026). Characteristics of big air design seen at Tuggeranong Skatepark include:

- **Spacious flow-riding areas:** The park is designed with ample space, allowing riders to gain speed and maintain momentum.
- **Large halfpipes and quarter pipes:** These provide the height necessary for big air tricks like flips, flares, and bar spins.
- **Progressive skill development:** The layout supports the progression of riders, from building basic confidence on smaller features to performing at elite levels on larger ones.
- **Big air design:** Big air design is considered less common in most modern skatepark facilities which often focus on different types of street or park elements. This reflects the BMX community's input during the design consultation phase.

The development of these official facilities has been crucial, especially in contrast to earlier, unofficial hand-built jumps which sometimes faced removal orders (Archives ACT 1976-87).

These facilities host annual events celebrating the culture and competition of BMX in Canberra. Prominent riders from around Australia and overseas visit Canberra for these events, including Dave Mirra. The ACT Jam is an annual festival of BMX culture and creativity, bringing together international and local riders for street-style events and competitions in locations like Braddon and Stromlo Forest Park. Also notable is Cyclonats, an annual festival of cycling culture in Canberra that includes BMX events among many other cycling disciplines.

## **ACT Skate Strategy**

The ACT Government is developing a draft ACT Skate Strategy to improve skating infrastructure, with completion expected by mid-2026. This initiative focuses on upgrading key locations like Tuggeranong and Kippax Skateparks, building new facilities in growing suburbs, and incorporating skateable elements into public spaces.

Major upgrades are planned for the 30-year-old Tuggeranong Skatepark. The draft Skatepark Strategy is being developed in consultation with the skateboarding and BMX communities (ACT Government 2026).

## Integrity and physical description

Tuggeranong Skatepark remains largely intact and structurally unchanged, however, the fabric shows clear wear and tear. Despite some obvious wear and abrasion – some repaired by the community themselves – the surface is generally still intact. It is noted that BMX riders can successfully use surfaces that are rougher or that retain some damage, compared to skateboarders or inline skaters.

While the skatepark may have possessed visual coherence at the time of its construction, its aesthetic qualities have been progressively reduced through degradation of the physical fabric, including surface wear, patching and material fatigue.

The materials and finishes used at the skatepark are now visibly outdated, particularly in comparison with contemporary skateparks in the ACT that employ more refined construction techniques, consistent surface treatments and higher-quality finishes. This loss of material clarity and visual cohesion has diminished the legibility of any original aesthetic intent.

Since Tuggeranong Skatepark opened there have been significant advancements in skatepark design and materials (Telfer 2026). The ACT Government announced in 2025 upgrades to the skatepark, the first major improvements in over 30 years. These have been welcomed by both the BMX and Skateboarding community in Canberra, both of whom have advocated for upgrades for several years. The Government has committed to a consultative process to involve all user groups in this upgrade (ACT Government 2026).

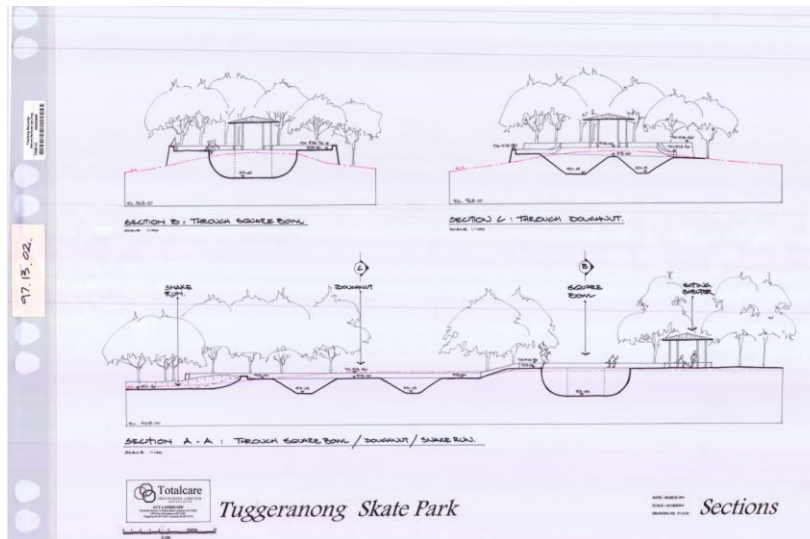


Image 3: Tuggeranong Skatepark cross-sections showing elements designed following consultation (Archives ACT 1995).



Nomination boundary



Figure 1: Nomination boundary

---

## References

- ACT Government. (2026). *Draft ACT Skate Strategy*. <https://www.cityservices.act.gov.au/news/news-and-events-items/october-2025/the-draft-act-skate-strategy>. Accessed February 10, 2026.
- ACT Heritage. (2025). *Erindale Brick Banks Background Information*. [https://www.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/2872020/Background-information-Erindale-Brick-Banks-August-2025.pdf](https://www.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/2872020/Background-information-Erindale-Brick-Banks-August-2025.pdf). Accessed April 20, 2026.
- Archives ACT. (1976-1987). *Skateboard Tracks Prior to 1988*. File NC76/150, 1976–1987. Canberra.
- Archives ACT. (1988-1999). *Skateboard facilities, Tuggeranong Skatepark*. Canberra.
- Australian BMX Museum. (1987). <https://www.australianbmxmuseum.com/1987>. Accessed February 10, 2026.
- Borden, Iain. (2019). *Skateboarding and the City: A Complete History*. London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts.
- Camilleri, Daniel. (2025). 'Exploring Creativity in BMX Trail Construction: Stack, Slap, Repeat'. *Possibility Studies & Society*. Vol. 3, no. 2: 236–250. <https://doi.org/10.1177/27538699241273740>. Accessed March 20, 2026.
- Camilleri, Daniel, Ryan Williams, Ross Sallis, and Vlad Glăveanu. (2024). 'Creativity in BMX: What Is It, What Does It Look Like, and What Contributes to It?'. *Journal of Creative Behavior*. Vol. 59, no. 4. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jocb.70071>. Accessed March 20, 2026.
- Canberra BMX. (n.d.). Canberra BMX. <https://www.canberrabmx.com>. Accessed February 10, 2026.
- Canberra BMX Club. (n.d.). Canberra BMX Club. <https://canberrabmxclub.com.au>. Accessed February 10, 2026.
- Coleman, James. (2023). 'New BMX Track at Stromlo Forest Park Will Put Canberra on the Map'. *Region Canberra*, August 10, 2023. <https://region.com.au/690809>. Accessed March 20, 2026.
- Coleman, James. (2024). 'It's Taken 13 Years but a New Vert Ramp Is Coming to Canberra's Biggest Skate Park. Is It Enough?'. *My Gungahlin*, March 24, 2024. <https://mygungahlin.com.au/its-taken-13-years-but-a-new-vert-ramp-is-coming-to-canberras-biggest-skate-park-is-it-enough/12861/>. Accessed April 16, 2024.
- Cummings, Lorna. (2025). *Sporting Heritage: What Value Does It Hold?* MPhil(R) thesis, University of Glasgow. [https://theses.gla.ac.uk/85622/3/2025CummingsMPhil\(R\).pdf](https://theses.gla.ac.uk/85622/3/2025CummingsMPhil(R).pdf). Accessed February 10, 2026.
- Department of the Capital Territory. (1976). *Youth Involvement Program 1975–76*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.
- Johnston, Dan. (2022). 'Skateparks: Trace and Culture'. *Global Media Journal* Vol. 10, no. 1. <https://www.hca.westernsydney.edu.au/gmjau/?p=2425>. Accessed April 18, 2024.

Legislative Assembly for the ACT. (2023). *Terms of Reference: Inquiry into Skateboarding and Skate Parks in the ACT*. Canberra. Accessed May 10, 2024.

National Capital Development Commission (NCDC). (1984). *Metropolitan Canberra: Policy Plan, Development Plan*. Canberra. Accessed March 6, 2024.

O'Connor, Paul. (2024). 'When a Skatepark Becomes a Sacred Space'. *The Conversation*, March 29, 2024. <https://theconversation.com/when-a-skatepark-becomes-a-sacred-space-226760>. Accessed April 16, 2024.

O'Connor, Paul, Imogen Willing, Benjamin Duester, and Stefan Hölsgens. (2025). 'The Leisure of Grey Spaces, Urban Play and the Chromatic Turn'. *Leisure Studies*. Vol. 44, no. 5: 753–763. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02614367.2025.2512747>. Accessed February 10, 2026.

Oxigen Pty Ltd. (2012). *Tuggeranong Town Park Masterplan Report: Short and Long Term*. Prepared for the ACT Government. Canberra, December 2012.

Quinn, Patrick, and Iain Borden. (2023). 'Seven Original 1970s Skateparks That Show Why These Urban Treasures Should Be Protected'. *The Conversation*, December 8, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.64628/AB.jwjrnrfqv>. Accessed February 10, 2026.

Quinn, Patrick, and Iain Borden. (2023). 'Solid Surf: An Assessment of the Heritage Value of Late 1970s–Early 1980s Concrete and Asphalt Skateboard Parks, and Strategies for Their Protection and Conservation'. *Journal of Contemporary Archaeology* Vol. 10, no. 1: 139–169. Accessed May 10, 2024.

Reddit. (2022). Canberra Needs New Skateparks, Skate Spaces and a Skateboarding/Skatepark Strategy. [https://www.reddit.com/r/canberra/comments/vmbubc/canberra\\_needs\\_new\\_skateparks\\_skate\\_spaces\\_and\\_a/](https://www.reddit.com/r/canberra/comments/vmbubc/canberra_needs_new_skateparks_skate_spaces_and_a/). Accessed March 5, 2024.

Skatermaps. (n.d.). Tuggeranong Skatepark. <https://skatermaps.com/tuggeranong-skatepark/>. Accessed February 10, 2026.

Telfer, D. (2026) Conversation with the author regarding the planning and design of the Tuggeranong Skatepark. January 15, 2026.

West, David. (2024). Personal communication regarding stone, brick, concrete and skateboarding over time. May 1, 2024.

Whelen, J. (1997). *Nowhere to Play: Towards an Understanding of Play Needs in Middle Childhood*. Thesis, School of Planning and Design, University of Melbourne.