



Old Weetangera Road Trail Notes

O'Connor to Holt, ACT

Trail length – 11.2km

Explore the Old Weetangera Road Trail!

The Old Weetangera Road is one of the oldest trackways in the Canberra district, and has had a long and colourful life. Now it's your turn to follow the road.

It was first referenced in the 1830s, soon after European occupation of the area, but it is likely that the route was first used thousands of years before. It follows the flat ground and low saddles between the Canberra Plain and the Murrumbidgee River, and linked up to other tracks across the river to give access to towns such as Tumut.

These trail notes give detailed wayfinding directions, as well as interesting snippets of history about the road and surrounding areas. The notes also point where you can see remnant sections of the old road and to the many side-tracks you can take from the main trail. The directions to these side-track locations are not detailed, but we encourage you to use mapping software such as Google Maps on your smartphone to see which shared pathways link to them.

You're now ready to get on your way. The trail is signposted to be followed from west to east from O'Connor to Holt. However, it is possible to start in Holt and follow the trail towards O'Connor. If you choose to do this, just reverse the order of trail notes. We encourage you to stop at each interpretive sign along the route and read both the sign and trail notes in tandem to get the full experience of what the trail has to offer.

If you find the entire trail too long to cycle, or are walking the trail, you can choose to do one or several of the sections below. Each section starts and ends at an interpretive sign.

Bon voyage!

Know before you go

Safety on the trail

The trail makes use of existing bike paths, shared pathways, roads and the Bicentennial National Trail between O'Connor and Holt. A road bike will be fine for all surfaces, though a hybrid or mountain bike is recommended for Section 4 on the Bicentennial National Trail.

The route still follows the main road through Belconnen, Belconnen Way. Please be aware of traffic, cross safely at road crossings and always wear a helmet.

Returning Home

The trail is currently one-way only, so you can turn around at the end and cycle back the same way you've come. Otherwise, catch a bus from Drake-Brockman Drive back to Belconnen.

Extend your trip

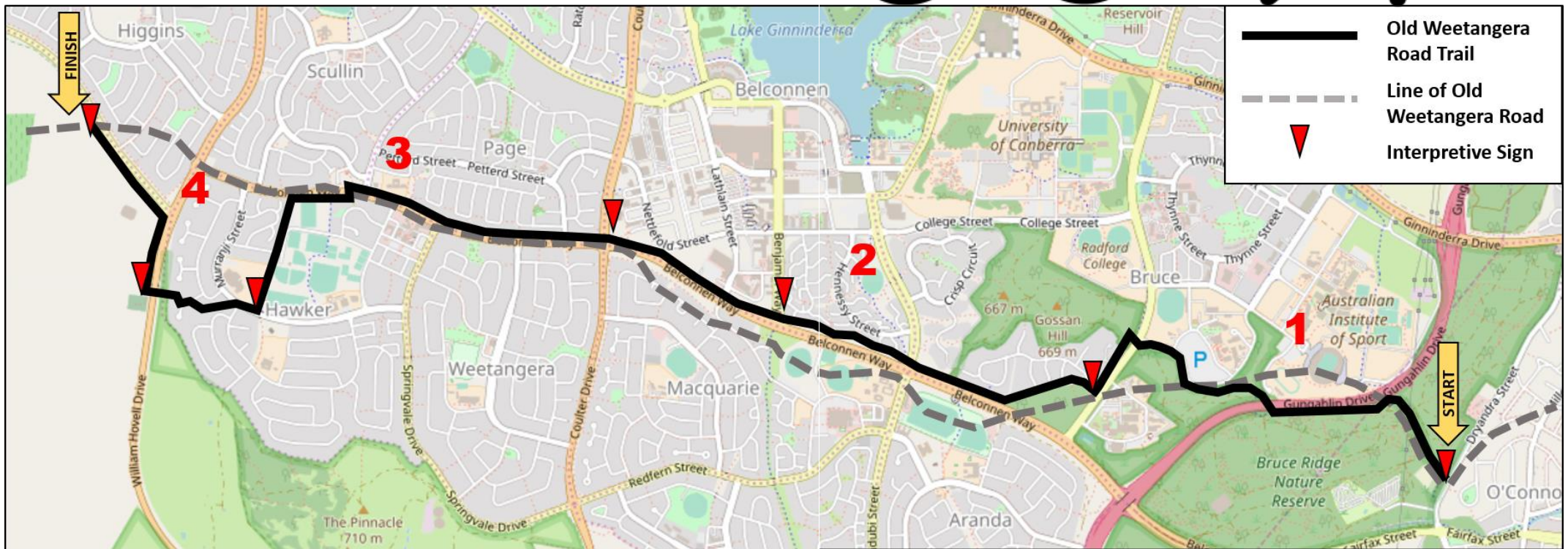
There are many side-routes to duck off the main trail and visit places of heritage significance. Most of these are part of the Canberra Tracks network and have interpretive signage. Visit canberratracks.act.gov.au for more information.

At the end of the trail, keep following Drake-Brockman Drive to Stockdill Drive and then to Shepherds Lookout. Follow walking trails beside Lower Molonglo Water Treatment Plant to the junction of the Murrumbidgee and Molonglo Rivers and see if you can spot where the Old Weetangera Road crossed the Molonglo and climbed up to meet Uriarra Road. From here you can do the Uriarra Loop Walk track.

Follow Drake-Brockman Drive to Spofforth Street and follow this north to Ginninderra Creek. This is the old alignment of Charnwood Road to Charnwood homestead, and formed a loop up to the old Yass-Queanbeyan Road (now the Barton Highway).

Trail Sections

1. Dryandra Street to Jaeger Circuit (3.0km)
2. Jaeger Circuit to Coulter Drive (3.4km)
3. Coulter Drive to Murrnaji Street (2.6km)
4. Murrnaji Street to Drake-Brockman Drive (2.2km)



1. Dryandra St to Jaeger Ct

Distance: 3.0km

Surface: asphalt bikeway

Some history

Between the 1860s and the mid-1900s, the Old Weetangera Road followed an alignment close to what is Clianthus Street from its crossing of Sullivan's Creek. O'Connor and Lyneham were built in the 1950s. At this time, road access to Belconnen was re-routed via Macarthur Avenue and Scrivener Street. From Dryandra Street (POINT A) the old road cut up over Bruce Ridge and under what is now the AIS. A farmhouse (POINT B) is one of the oldest houses in the vicinity. You can see the old road embankments on the bikepath over the ridge (POINT C) and sections of the road through bush near Purdie Street (POINTS D and E).

Directions

1. Start at the Canberra Tracks sign at the dirt carpark opposite 162 Dryandra St.
2. Follow the shared path up Bruce Ridge to just before underpass and turn left to follow the path beside Gungahlin Dr. The old road would have continued straight ahead at this point.
3. Turn right under Gungahlin Dr and follow the path to beside Purdie St. The dirt track between Purdie St and Masterman St is part of old road. Part of Purdie St follows the line of the old road. See where the road would have continued up the hill on your left.
4. Cross Haydon Dr at the pedestrian island. Turn left and follow the path south beside the road.
5. Cross Jaeger Ct, turn immediately right down the path and finish at the interpretive sign.

Visit

The intersection of the Old Weetangera Road and the old Yass-Queanbeyan Road (now Ellenborough St) was at what is now the Lyneham wetlands. Why not start your journey here and visit the historic St Ninian's Church and the O'Connor wetlands (Canberra Tracks sign) and find out more about the history of old Lyneham? From POINT F you can also visit Gossan Hill (a known Ngunnawal camping site and ochre quarry).



2. Jaeger Ct to Coulter Dr

Distance: 3.4km

Surface: asphalt bikeway

Some history

You are now down off the ridge and into the beginning of old Weetangera, the original name for the Belconnen district. Gossan Hill and the old 'Black Creek' (close to the alignment of Eastern Valley Way) are known Ngunnawal camping sites, with Nellie Hamilton and her family visiting in the late 1800s. From this point, Belconnen Way follows closely the route of the Old Weetangera Road. Try and spot some of the older trees lining the route (POINT E).

Directions

1. From Jaeger Ct, follow the shared path west towards Belconnen Town Centre on the north side of Belconnen Way for 2.2km.
2. Cross Eastern Valley Way.
3. Stop at the interpretive sign to the east side of Benjamin Way (POINT C).
4. Cross Benjamin Way and continue on the shared path to Coulter Dr.
5. Finish at the interpretive sign on the east side of Coulter Dr.

Visit

The patch of bush in front of you at the beginning of this section (POINT A) contains a section of the old road, indicated by v-drains and old fence posts. The whole area has been reclaimed by regrowth, but you can still explore. At POINT C, follow the shared path north to Belconnen Town Centre and visit the site of the old Emu Bank homestead (you are following an old access route).

If you follow the path to the south of Belconnen Way (POINT D) you will link up with a path through the Aranda Bushland which will bring you back to O'Connor. This is the old Finneran's Road which provided access to southern homesteads and an easier route over the Black Mountain ridges. From this path you can also visit the site of the Springvale Homestead and Rosebud Apiary. Check out the Canberra Tracks website for their locations.



3. Coulter Dr to Murrnaji St

Distance 2.6km

Surface – shared footpath, asphalt bikeway

Some history

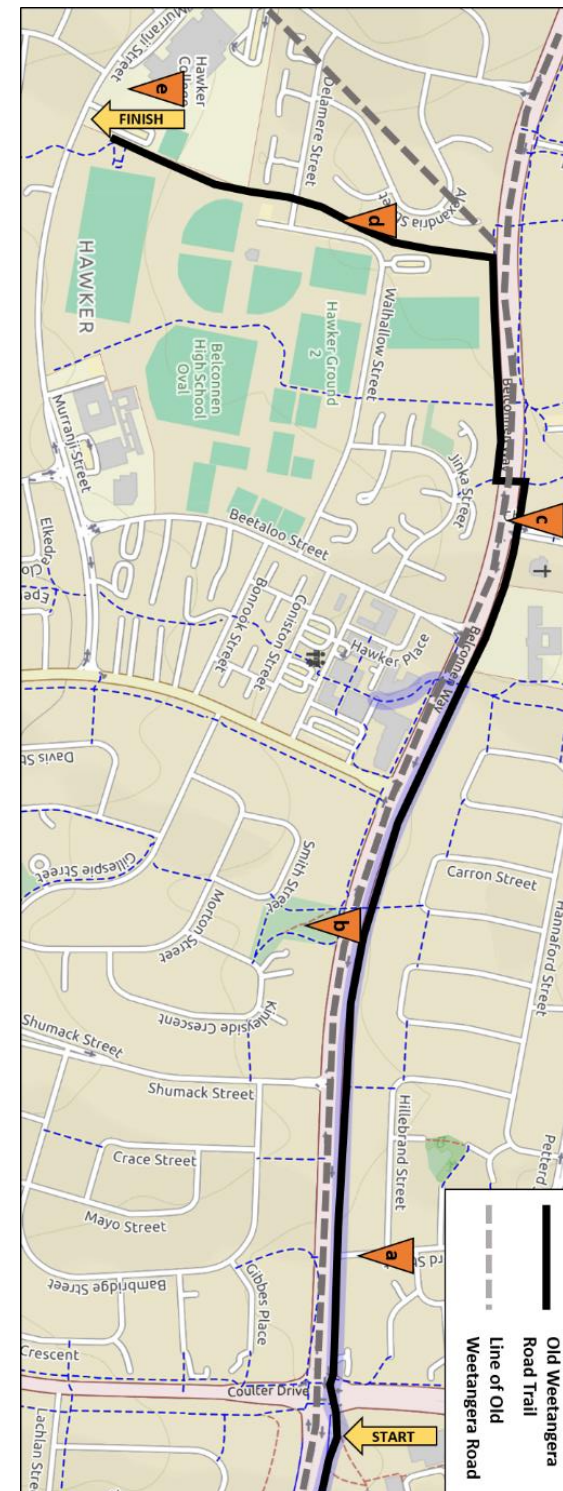
We are now in the heart of the thriving old locality of Weetangera, also the name of the current suburb. Belconnen Way sits directly on top of the Old Weetangera Road at this point. Coulter Drive closely follows an original track north (POINT A) to Ginninderra (now Gold Creek) and Hall villages. You can visit the Hall Schoolhouse Museum and find out more about the history of these 'two towns'. The old Weetangera School and Post Office (1875-1937) was located to the immediate south of the road (POINT B). There was a track north to the Cranleigh Homestead (POINT C) and south to the Kama and Lands Ends Homesteads (POINT D).

Directions

1. Stay on the path to the north of Belconnen Way. At this point the path narrows and becomes a shared footpath. You can ride on this path.
2. Stay on the north path until just past Chewings St (approx. 750m).
3. Take the underpass to southern side of Belconnen Way.
4. Stay on share path on southern side.
5. In 400m, just past the playing field, take path on the left towards Delamere St.
6. Follow this path for 650m beside Hawker College playing fields.
7. Finish at the interpretive sign just before the Murrnaji St underpass.

Visit

Follow an underpass under Belconnen Way to visit the site of the Weetangera Schoolhouse (POINT B). A Canberra Tracks sign in the park tells the history of the school. Follow Chewings Street (POINT B) and visit the site of the old Cranleigh Homestead (Canberra Tracks sign).



4. Murrnaji St to Drake-Brockman Dr

Distance: 2.2km

Surface: road, shared footpath, dirt path

Some history

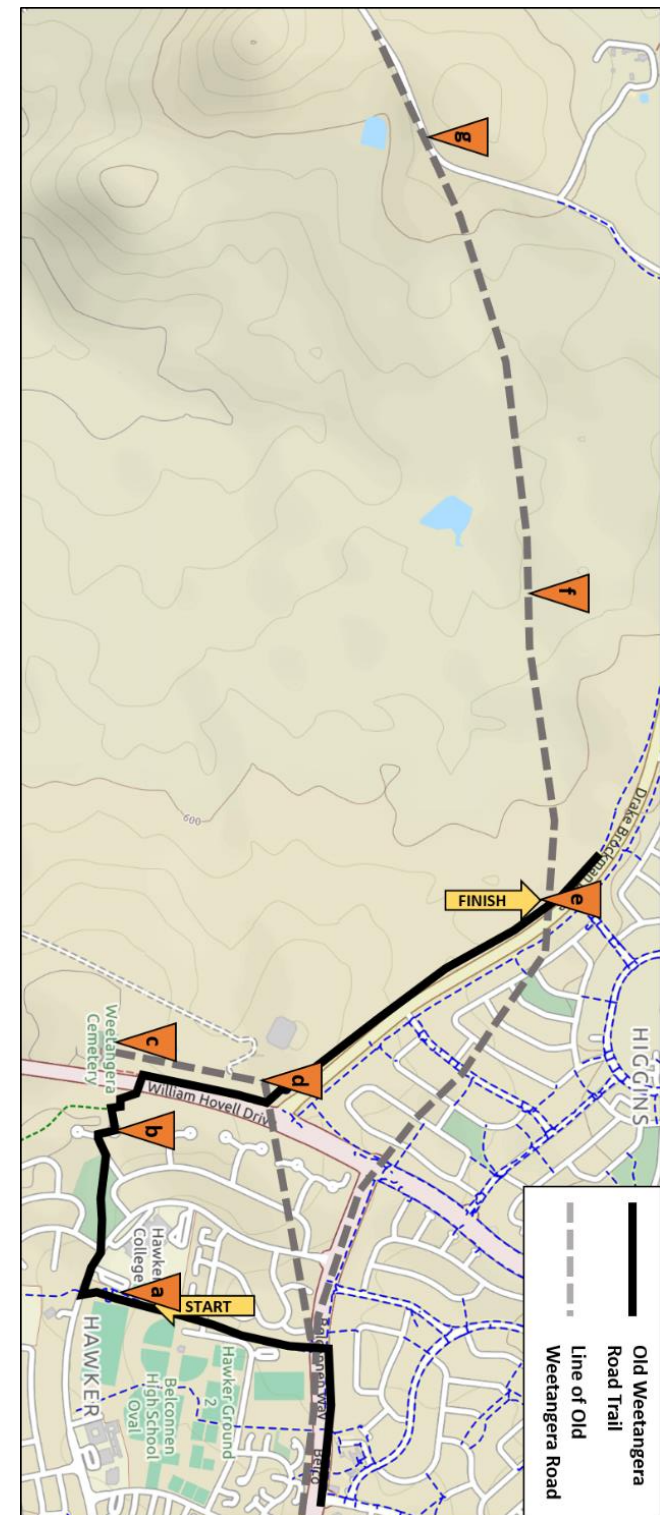
At this point, the trail diverges from the Old Weetangera Road to head south to visit the Old Weetangera Cemetery. The Cemetery is the oldest in the district and served the Weetangera Methodist Church (1869-1955). Several old driveways linked the homesteads in this part of Weetangera to the main road and the trail follows one of them beside William Hovell Drive. The trail ends where the old road crosses Drake-Brockman Drive and heads south-west across the paddocks (POINT E). You can see the flat, grassy road surface and take in the vista across the paddocks to the Brindabellas.

Directions

1. From the site of Kama Homestead (POINT A), go through Murrnaji St underpass and immediately turn right to come up onto Murrnaji St.
2. In around 150m, turn left onto path through park and onto Mainoru Plc.
3. In 50m, turn right at T-junction and at end of road take footpath to left between houses.
4. You are now at the edge of Hawker and are passing through a stand of remnant bushland and old fencelines (POINT B).
5. Go down tarmac road (Bicentennial National Trail) under William Hovell Drive. You are now at the Old Weetangera Methodist Cemetery (POINT C).
6. Head north along dirt road to Lands Ends Homestead (POINT D). Pass through front gates of homestead and turn left to follow the Bicentennial National Trail along the fenceline. Drake-Brockman Drive will be to your north.
7. The trail finishes at final sign near to the entrance of Pegasus Riding School (POINT E). Pegasus is the site of the 'Old Weetangera House', an early homestead.

Visit

Continue along Drake-Brockman Drive and turn left onto Pro Hart Ave / Stockdill Drive. You can see the old road parallel to Stockdill and follow the walking paths from Shepherds Lookout down to the junction crossing. Here the Old Weetangera Road crossed the Molonglo to join the Uriarra Road.





Richard Southwell and his rabbit card along a Weetangera Road, late 1800s. Image courtesy of the Hall Museum.



Looking across O'Connor in the 1930s with the Old Weetangera Rd in the foreground. Image from NLA (PIC/10532 LOC Cold store PIC Neg.)



Transformation of Weetangera to Belconnen in 1968. You can see the Old Weetangera Road running east west through the photo, being swallowed up by the new development.



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Accurate at April 2019