

Planning and Development (Environmental Significance Opinion – Blocks 2042 and 2228 Jerrabomberra – Symonston Water Pump Station) Notice 2015 (No 1)

Notifiable Instrument NI2015–242

Made under the

Planning and Development Act 2007 s 138AD (Requirements in relation to environmental significance opinions)

1 Name of instrument

This instrument is the *Planning and Development (Environmental Significance Opinion – Blocks 2042 and 2228 Jerrabomberra – Symonston Water Pump Station) Notice 2015 (No 1)*.

2 Commencement

This instrument commences on the day after notification.

3 Environmental Significance Opinion

The Conservator of Flora and Fauna has prepared an Environmental Significance Opinion (ESO) under section 138AB of the *Planning and Development Act 2007* (the Act), relating to items 1(a) and 3 of Part 4.3 of Schedule 4 of the Act.

The text of the ESO is in the schedule.

Note 1: A copy of the ESO may be obtained from the Environment and Planning Directorate website:

http://www.planning.act.gov.au/topics/design_build/da_assessment/environmental_assessment/environmental_significance_opinions

Note 2: Under section 138AD(6) of the Act, the ESO and the notice including the text of the ESO expire 18 months after the day the notice is notified.

Dorte Ekelund
Chief Planning Executive
1 June 2015



ACT
Government

Environment and Planning

Ms Dorte Ekelund
Chief Planning Executive
ACT Planning and Land Authority
Dame Pattie Menzies Building
DICKSON ACT 2602

Dear Ms Ekelund *Dorte*

This is to advise of my decision, under s.138AB(4) of the *Planning and Development Act 2007*, on the request for an Environmental Significance Opinion for the upgrade of the Symonston Water Pump Station located in Blocks 2042 and 2228 District of Jerrabomberra. The proposal is not likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact provided the works are in accordance with the conditions as provided.

Please find attached the Environmental Significance Opinion and a Statement of Reasons for the decision.

Yours sincerely

Dr A. Lane
Conservator of Flora and Fauna

14 May 2015

ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE OPINION

In accordance with section 138AB(4) of the *Planning and Development Act 2007* (the Act), I provide the following environmental significance opinion:

PROPONENT

Mr Benjamin Bryant, Team Leader, Impact Assessment and Approvals, Icon Water.

LOCATION

Blocks 2042 and 2228 District of Jerrabomberra, and the road reserve of Mugga Lane.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

The installation of a new aboveground pump set adjacent to the existing Symonston Water Pump Station, installation of approximately 600 m of new pipe under the existing gravel track, and extension of the existing gravel access road to provide for vehicle turn around.

The proponent wants the application for the development approval assessed for an environmental significance opinion on the grounds that the proposal is not likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact, and has applied to the Conservator of Flora and Fauna to that effect.

OPINION

This opinion is granted subject to the following conditions made under s138AB(4) of the Act.

Provided the works are undertaken in the manner described in the documentation as submitted, and in accordance with the following conditions of approval, they are unlikely to cause a significant adverse environmental impact.

- All works, machinery, vehicles and trench spoil must be confined to the existing access track / fire trail
- That the depth of coverage of the proposed watermain is 900mm unless it can be demonstrated that a lesser depth is acceptable with satisfactory evidence;
- Only weed free sand and material is to be utilised to backfill the trench;
- No trenching to remain open at night;
- Reinstatement of the trench and fire trail is to be to Parks and Conservation Service's requirements;

- The roadway is to be crowned with effective permanent drainage both sides of the track;
- Machinery and vehicles entering the reserve are free of soil, weed or other organic material; and
- The site shed, sand and other materials are to be stockpiled or located on a site agreed by the Parks and Conservation Service.

Attached is a Statement of Reasons for the decision.



Dr A. Lane
Conservator of Flora and Fauna

14 May 2015

**STATEMENT OF REASONS
REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

The proposed development is a proposal mentioned in Schedule 4 of the *Planning and Development Act 2007* – Development proposal for an activity requiring an EIS Schedule 4, being:

Part 4.3, item 1(a) development that may impact on a species or ecological community that is endangered.

The area of the works is mapped as White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland listed under the provisions of the Commonwealth's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*; and

Part 4.3, item 3 proposal for development on land reserved under s 315 for the purpose of a wilderness area, national park, nature reserve or special purpose reserve.

Block 2228 District of Jerrabomberra is within Callum Brae Nature Reserve. Block 2042 District of Jerrabomberra is outside of the reserve and works within this block would be unlikely to trigger the requirement for an environmental impact statement but the project has been assessed holistically to ensure all impacts are addressed.

The proponent wants the application for the development approval assessed for an environmental significance opinion on the grounds that the proposal is not likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact, and has applied to the Conservator of Flora and Fauna to that effect.

Meaning of *significant* adverse environmental impact

An adverse environmental impact is *significant* if—

- (a) the environmental function, system, value or entity that might be adversely impacted by a proposed development is significant; or
- (b) the cumulative or incremental effect of a proposed development might contribute to a substantial adverse impact on an environmental function, system, value or entity.

In deciding whether an adverse environmental impact is *significant*, the following matters must be taken into account:

- (a) the kind, size, frequency, intensity, scope and length of time of the impact;
- (b) the sensitivity, resilience and rarity of the environmental function, system, value or entity likely to be affected.

In deciding whether a development proposal is likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact it does not matter whether the adverse environmental impact is likely to occur on the site of the development or elsewhere.

It has been determined that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant environmental impact, based on the documentation submitted, known values of the site, and provided the works are carried out in accordance with the conditions of approval.

Project description

The main and preferred water supply for Canberra is gravity fed from the Bendora Dam via the Stromlo Water Treatment Plant. For 1 to 3 months per year the Googong Water Treatment Plant is used as the sole supply. Googong Dam, located on the Queanbeyan River to the southeast of Queanbeyan, is fed by water from a rural catchment which includes farmlands and small communities. The water from this catchment must undergo extensive treatment and be pumped to Canberra through the Googong Bulk Supply Main.

The Googong Water Treatment Plant was augmented in 2004 to enable it to meet the average daily summer demand of the whole of Canberra and Queanbeyan. This ensures that high quality treated water can be provided should the raw water quality in the Cotter catchment deteriorate, or there is not sufficient storage volume to meet water supply needs.

The Symonston Water Pump Station located on Block 2228 and Block 2042 District of Jerrabomberra operates when Googong is being used for supply. All three pumps located at the pump station are only used at the same time when the demand is high.

For Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) reasons, Icon Water is required to modify the existing pump station from being an underground facility to an above ground facility with side access. It is proposed to address all OH&S issues by constructing a new access road around the facility that will mean, due to the slope of the site, that they can convert and extend the existing facility and have the above ground access that is required.

In addition to the proposed development addressing safety risks, it is proposed to address operational limitations associated with the existing assets. This is to be achieved by connecting a new booster pumpset alongside the existing Symonston Water Pump Station pumps on the Googong Bulk Supply Main that will provide the ability to ensure continual potable water supply from Googong when required.

The scope of works as proposed by the proponent is as follows:

- Modifications to the existing pump pit;

- Installation of an above-ground booster pumpset and pipework. This work requires excavation immediately adjacent to existing infrastructure below natural ground level;
- Installation of approximately 600m of 150mm diameter pipe under the existing fire trail / access track;
- Relocation of existing power lines requiring a new concrete pole to be installed and the existing transformer relocated on to it. From there the power will go underground to the existing building. Two existing power poles will be removed on completion; and
- Extension of the existing gravel access road to provide for vehicle turn around.

Documentation Submitted

- Report titled: Symonston Water Pump Station Environmental Assessment Report (ACTEW Water 10 April 2015); and
- ESO Application Form 1M.

Natural conservation values present

The vegetation around the Symonston Pump Station is mapped as Box/Gum Grassy woodland. The report notes that “the dominant overstorey species is *Eucalyptus blakelyi* represented by two distinct age classes, one being an over mature cohort showing signs of senescence, the other a young lignotuberous cohort. Co-dominant overstorey species are *E. melliodora* and *E. polyanthemos*. The shrub layer is mostly absent with the exception of an isolated patch of *Acacia dealbata*. Herbaceous weed incursion is high in both species diversity and ground cover. Native grass cover is also high in patches. Native herbs are represented by few species in low abundance.”

The Box Gum Woodland community is protected under both the Commonwealth’s *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and the ACT’s *Nature Conservation Act 1980*. No individual protected status species were observed during a survey undertaken by the proponent in December 2014. This was confirmed by a site visit by an ecologist from the ACT Government’s Conservation Research Unit in March 2015.

One eucalypt immediately south-east of the existing pump station will be subject to canopy lifting on the southern side and a small pocket of lignotuberous regrowth will be removed. No other woody vegetation will be impacted.

Block 2042 Jerrabomberra is not within in the reserve. It is assumed that this block was created to encompass the existing Icon Water assets (noting that Callum Brae Nature Reserve was created in 2008), however the block does not align with the assets as built. This is expected to be corrected in the near future.

Impact on the Reserve

The new pipeline is to be installed within the existing gravel access track. This track is used for access to the pump station and forms part of the fire trail access for this reserve. A pipeline within a main management and fire control track could be problematic over time as future grading of the track may reduce the depth of the pipe. In addition, poor compaction can cause track erosion and or subsidence issues. Conditions have been included to ensure the depth of the pipe and the reconstruction of the track is at a standard that will alleviate the risk of these problems occurring.

Potentially Significant Environmental Impacts

The area that will be impacted by the works is highly modified and largely exotic, and there will no significant direct impact to Box Gum Woodland species, except for the canopy lifting of a *Eucalyptus blakelyi* as noted above. No species listed as vulnerable or endangered in the ACT were recorded during the field survey.

It has been determined that the potential for a significant environmental impact is low.