
ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE OPINION - MONARO HIGHWAY UPGRADE, HUME AND ISABELLA DRIVE INTERCHANGES - (ESO 202400010)

In accordance with section 140 (4) of the *Planning Act 2023* (the Act), I provide the following environmental significance opinion:

APPLICANT

Transport and City Services Directorate as represented by Mick Roberts,
A/g Senior Director Facilities.

APPLICATION and DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

The applicant has applied under section 140 (4) of the Act to the Conservator of Flora and Fauna for an environmental significance opinion to the effect that the development proposal set out in the submission is not likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact (the application).

The development proposal is for proposed road upgrades as part of the Monaro Highway Upgrade project, at the Hume and Isabella Drive Interchanges as described in the submission.

LOCATION

The development will span 4 blocks in the division of Hume;

- Block 6, Section 8, Hume
- Block 2, Section 8, Hume
- Block 70, Section 7, Hume
- Block 5, Section 25, Hume

MATTERS TO WHICH THIS OPINION APPLIES

This opinion applies only to the development proposal as described in the application.

OPINION

Provided the works are undertaken in a manner consistent with the following conditions in addition to the mitigation measures contained in the supporting application for an ESO, they are unlikely to cause a significant adverse environmental impact.

This opinion is granted subject to the following conditions made under s140 (4)(b) of the Act:

1. No work is permitted on site when a Total Fire Ban is declared.
2. On days of High fire danger rating (FBI 25 or greater) all hot works and works that could emit a spark must cease.
3. Hot works activities must otherwise be deferred to be undertaken under less risky conditions and consideration given to what mitigations measures such as fire suppression equipment can be implemented. The daily rating and a four day outlook are available during the declared bushfire danger period at <https://esa.act.gov.au/for> the proponent to assess risks.
4. Hot works includes; welding, cutting, grinding, or other works involving open flames or which emit a spark such as excavating hard rock, slashing and brush-cutting
5. The proposed works may be subject to random compliance inspection by Conservation Officers as requested by the Conservator of Flora and Fauna.

Attached is a Statement of Reasons for the decision.

Bren Burkevics
Conservator of Flora and Fauna

April 2024

STATEMENT OF REASONS REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The proposed development is a proposal mentioned in Schedule 1 of the *Planning (General) Regulation 2023* – requiring environmental impact statement, being:

Part 1.2, item 16 - proposal that is likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact on 1 or more of the following:

- (a) a critically endangered species;*
- (b) an endangered species;*
- (c) a vulnerable species;*
- (d) a conservation dependent species;*
- (e) a regionally threatened species;*
- (f) a regionally conservation dependent species;*
- (g) a provisionally listed threatened species;*
- (h) a listed migratory species;*
- (i) a threatened ecological community;*
- (j) a protected native species;*
- (k) a Ramsar wetland;*
- (l) any other protected matter*

The Project Area contains potential moderate-quality habitat for Pink-tailed Worm lizard.

Part 1.2, item 17 – proposal involving -

- (a) the clearing of more than 0.5ha of native vegetation in a native vegetation area, other than on land in a future urban area; or*
- (b) the clearing of more than 5.0ha of native vegetation in a native vegetation area on land in a future urban area*

The proposal will impact 0.88 ha of native vegetation.

The proponent wants the application for the development approval assessed in the merit track 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 and ongoing management are carried out in accordance with the conditions attached to this ESO.

Project description

The proposed project includes upgrades to the Monaro Highway and to the connecting road network of Tralee Street, Sheppard Street and Mugga Lane forming part of the planned Package 2 upgrade works.

Package 2 works will improve network safety for all transport users as well as

- Improve freight access and efficiency.
- Enable an increase in the use of public and active transport.
- Improve transport and network resilience.
- Support the sustainability of the region.

The proposed works include;

- New Hume flyover over the Monaro Highway connecting Mugga Lane and Tralee Street (the existing Monaro Highway right turn into and out of Mugga Lane will be closed off).
- Tralee Street upgrades at the approach to the new Hume flyover and the new Tralee Street south roundabout.
- Modification of the existing Monaro Highway–Sheppard Street intersection to allow only left in and left out movements.
- New Mugga Lane to Hume flyover lanes and northbound on ramp to Monaro Highway.

Documentation Submitted

- ESO Supporting documentation
- Letters of Authorisation
- Form 1M.

Natural conservation values present

Natural conservation values on the blocks proposed for the project are limited due to their location and current land use. The Project Area is primarily located within the Hume Industrial Precinct, a highly developed area with low quality vegetation.

The site is located to the south-west of the proposed Jerrabomberra East Grasslands Reserve and to the south of the West Jerrabomberra Nature Reserve which provide habitat for several threatened grassland species. However, the highly developed nature of the proposed site and its proximity to the Monaro Highway means the proposed works will have limited impact to the natural processes, and landscape connectivity value of the area.

The Project Area is dominated by exotic grassland and mixed native tree plantings. Some potential moderate quality habitat for the pink-tailed worm lizard (*Aprasia parapulchella*) is present in proximity to the project area, but no suitable habitat occurs within the project footprint. There are also hollow-bearing trees (HBTs) present within and surrounding the proposed site which may provide some habitat for woodland birds. Of these HBT's only one is located within the project footprint but this tree is to be retained.

Potentially Significant Environmental Impacts

Due to its history of disturbance and past grazing, the site for the proposed works contains limited ecological values. The project area does not represent important habitat for any threatened flora communities and the project proposal includes comprehensive mitigation measures to further mitigate impacts to the environment.

Mitigation measures include appropriate levels of weed control, erosion and sediment control measures, clear marking for significant trees and appropriate protection measures for nearby riparian areas.

Conditions have been included to ensure that works comply with the current standard conditions relating to bushfire risk.

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2. On days of High fire danger rating (FBI 25 or greater) all hot works and works that could emit a spark must cease.
3. Hot works activities must otherwise be deferred to be undertaken under less risky conditions and consideration given to what mitigations measures such as fire suppression equipment can be implemented. The daily rating and a four-day outlook are available during the declared bushfire danger period at <https://esa.act.gov.au/for> the proponent to assess risks.

4. Hot works includes; welding, cutting, grinding, or other works involving open flames or which emit a spark such as excavating hard rock, slashing and brush-cutting
5. The proposed works may be subject to random compliance inspection by Conservation Officials as requested by the Conservator of Flora and Fauna.

It has been determined that if the works are undertaken in a manner consistent with the above conditions attached to the ESO in addition to the mitigation measures contained in the supporting application for an ESO, they are unlikely to cause a significant adverse environmental impact.