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**ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE OPINION – Revegetation Callum Brae Nature Reserve (ESO 202600014)**

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

**APPLICANT**

ACT Parks and Conservation Service, as represented by Emily Belton, Restoration Project Officer.

**APPLICATION and DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL**

The applicant has applied under section 140(4) of the Act to the Conservator of Flora and Fauna seeking an environmental significance opinion 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 planting 1,200 native trees and shrubs within Callum Brae Nature Reserve to satisfy approval conditions for the Sulwood Drive shared path upgrade under ESO 202400035 as described in the submission.

**LOCATION**

Block 11 Section 102 Symonston

**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 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 section 140(4)(b) of the Act:

1. The works must be undertaken in accordance with the conditions of approval and mitigation measures stated in the application.
2. Access to the site must be granted to conservation officers if a random compliance inspection is requested by the Conservator of Flora and Fauna.

Attached is a Statement of Reasons for the decision.



Bren Burkevics  
Conservator of Flora and Fauna

15 June 2026

## 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 18 - proposal for development in a reserve, unless the proposal is for minor public works to be carried out by or for the Territory in accordance with a minor public works code approved by the conservator of flora and fauna under the Nature Conservation Act 2014, section 318A;*

The proposed works are within Callum Brae Nature Reserve.

The proponent is seeking an environmental significance opinion to remove the requirement for an environmental impact statement 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 for an opinion 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 development proposal is for planting 1,200 native trees and shrubs within Callum Brae Nature Reserve to satisfy approval conditions for the Sulwood Drive shared path upgrade

under ESO 202400035. The requirement is for PCS to manage the planting as per the Funding Proposal.

The planting site was identified by CNP South Rangers as a priority for ecological restoration and is also recognised within the ACT Restoration Priority Tool as a degraded section of Box-Gum Woodland within the reserve for restoration. As well as meeting the requirements of the funding proposal, the objective is to increase ecological condition, connectivity and woodland habitat values. The proposed project directly implements these objectives by reinstating missing structural elements in an area where canopy cover, tree density and shrub layer composition are currently well below benchmark condition thresholds.

Restoration involves planting a total of 1,200 trees and shrubs in approximately 7.5 ha of Box-Gum Woodland in poor condition. Planting efforts will focus on the more degraded northern part of the site, which is currently missing canopy species, and along the gully to stabilise erosion. Site preparation for planting will include brush-cutting thistle and St John's wort stems and augering 1,200 holes for tubestock plants. Tubestock will be planted with weed mats, mulch and plant guards. Shrubs will be planted in clusters to create patchiness and structural heterogeneity.

Follow-up works will include guard maintenance, watering and plant replacement as required over a two-year period. Fixed GPS photo points will be established to monitor the project. The project aims to achieve a 90% plant survival rate two years after planting, consistent with funding requirements.

### **Documentation Submitted**

- Explanatory note regarding supporting documentation for the application for an Environmental Significance Opinion;
- Letter(s) of Authorisation;
- Form 1M.

### **Nature conservation values present**

Callum Brae Nature Reserve supports a high density of mature hollow-bearing eucalypts and contains a mosaic of woodland, grassland and small dam habitats. The reserve is a significant refuge for threatened and declining woodland bird species and forms a key component of a major wildlife corridor connecting Mount Mugga Mugga, Red Hill, Isaacs Ridge and landscapes extending toward NSW and the Murrumbidgee River.

The following species listed under the NC Act have been recorded or are known to occur in the reserve:

- Swift Parrot (*Lathamus discolor*)
- Gang-gang Cockatoo (*Callocephalon fimbriatum*)
- Hoary Sunray (*Leucochrysum albicans subsp. tricolor*)
- Scarlet Robin (*Petroica boodang*)
- Speckled Warbler (*Pyrrholaemus sagittatus*)
- Diamond Firetail (*Stagonopleura guttata*)

- White-winged Triller (*Lalage tricolor*)
- Varied Sittella (*Daphoenositta chrysoptera*)

The planting site contains PCT16: *Eucalyptus melliodora* – *Eucalyptus blakelyi* Tableland Grassy Woodland (PCT 16.1.4 to 16.4.4). Parts of the site are mapped as EPBC listed Box Gum Woodland and there is one record of *Lalage tricolor* (White-winged Triller) within the site.

### **Potentially Significant Environmental Impacts**

Potential short-term impacts associated with the works include localised soil disturbance, weed spread, erosion risk and temporary disturbance to fauna during site preparation, planting and follow-up maintenance. These impacts are expected to be limited in scale and duration and can be appropriately managed through the mitigation measures proposed in the application. The project is also expected to deliver significant long-term ecological benefits through increased structural diversity, enhanced habitat condition, greater resilience to pressures such as fragmentation and climate variability, and improved ecological function consistent with the management objectives for Canberra Nature Park and the Box-Gum Woodland Action Plan.

This opinion is granted subject to the following conditions made under section 140(4)(b) of the Act:

1. The works must be undertaken in accordance with the conditions of approval and mitigation measures stated in the application.
2. Access to the site must be granted to conservation officers if a random compliance inspection is 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 and the mitigation measures contained in the supporting application for an ESO, they are unlikely to cause a significant adverse environmental impact.