
**ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE OPINION – Transmission Line 6 Maintenance works
(Canberra Substation to Capital Wind Farm) (ESO 202600031)**

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

APPLICANT

WSP, as represented by Mrs Helen Sloane, Senior Associate Environmental Scientist.

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 maintenance works on Transmission Line 6 as described in the submission.

LOCATION

Works are in the following blocks:

- Block 3 Section 85 Strathnairn
- Block 8 Section 3 Macnamara
- Block 2 Section 186 Dunlop
- Blocks 1442, 1608, 1620, 1621 & 1622 Belconnen District

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, 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. All works must be undertaken in a manner consistent with the mitigation measures contained in the application.

2. Access to the site must be granted to Conservation Officers if a compliance inspection is requested by the Conservator of Flora and Fauna.
3. As works are on Bushfire Prone Land, the following conditions apply:
 - a) No work is permitted on site when a Total Fire Ban is declared
 - b) On days of High fire danger rating (FBI 25 or greater) all hot works and works that could emit a spark must cease, and defer the activities to be undertaken under less risky conditions. 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.
4. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) must be provided to the Conservator for endorsement prior to commencement of works.

Attached is a Statement of Reasons for the decision.

Bren Burkevics
Conservator of Flora and Fauna

21 September 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 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 following listed ecological community and species have been recorded / known to occur in proximity to the proposed works locations:

- Natural Temperate Grassland
- Golden Sun Moth (*Synemon plana*)
- Perunga Grasshopper (*Perunga ochracea*)
- Striped Legless Lizard (*Delma impar*)
- Hoary Sunray (*Leucochrysum albicans subsp. Tricolor*)
- Gang-gang Cockatoo (*Callocephalon fimbriatum*)
- Little Eagle (*Hieraaetus morphnoides*)

The ACT rare Canberra Raspy Cricket (*Cooraboorama canberra*) has also been recorded nearby.

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 Dunlop Grasslands Nature Reserve and Jarramlee-West MacGregor Grasslands 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 maintenance works on the ACT section of Transmission Line 6 extending from Canberra Substation to Capital Wind Farm. The project involves maintenance works to change out the existing Overhead Earth Wire (OHEW) with Optical Ground Wire (OPGW) on 11 transmission towers across eight blocks in northwest ACT.

Proposed works include:

- Replacement of the existing OHEW with OPGW
- Establishment of brake and winch sites (20m x 20m) at 2 locations:
 - Tower 2 within Dunlop Grasslands Reserve – two brake and winch sites, each involving excavation to establish a level 20m x 20m bench for safe operation of stringing equipment;
 - Tower 18 within Jarramlee-West MacGregor Grasslands Reserve – one brake and winch site, no bench required, use of steel grid mesh to store brake and winch equipment.
- Works are to be completed within 6 months.

Vehicles and equipment used would include 4WD utility vehicles, elevated work platforms, and brake and winch machinery.

A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be prepared and implemented and will include a weed management plan.

Documentation Submitted

- Supporting documentation for the application for an Environmental Significance Opinion;
- Letter of Authorisation
- Form 1M.

Natural conservation values present

Dunlop Grasslands Nature Reserve and Jarramlee-West MacGregor Grasslands Nature Reserve are part of a large, contiguous grassland habitat extending into neighbouring parts of NSW. The reserves contain patches of critically endangered Natural Temperate Grasslands and are known habitat of the vulnerable Golden Sun Moth (GSM) and other grassland species.

Project works occur predominantly within disturbed patches previously modified by historical grazing and soil disturbance from transmission line works within the easement. Vegetation at the proposed works locations at the two transmission towers is mostly exotic with low species richness.

Potentially Significant Environmental Impacts

The overall scale of this project is low and unlikely to result in any significant adverse impacts. Impacts to native grassland areas are considered minor, temporary and localised in nature.

The project team has engaged with the Conservator's Office early in the proposal and has developed appropriate mitigation measures in consultation. These include minimising vehicle access to existing access tracks and limiting off-road driving, avoiding native grassland areas and rocky habitat areas likely to be used by threatened grassland species, and working outwards from reserves to minimise risk of weed spread.

The project team will prioritise efforts to avoid GSM active flying season (mid-October to end of January), particularly November, however appropriate controls are in place to protect the species if unavoidable.

Conditions have been included to ensure that a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) is submitted to the Conservator for endorsement prior to commencement of works.

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

1. All works must be undertaken in a manner consistent with the mitigation measures contained in the application.
2. Access to the site must be granted to Conservation Officers if a compliance inspection is requested by the Conservator of Flora and Fauna.
3. As works are on Bushfire Prone Land, the following conditions apply:
 - a) No work is permitted on site when a Total Fire Ban is declared
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4. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) must be provided to the Conservator for endorsement prior to commencement of works.

It has been determined that if the works are undertaken in a manner consistent with the above conditions attached to the ESO, they are unlikely to cause a significant adverse environmental impact.