

Molonglo Valley Strategic Assessment

Annual Report 2016 - 2017

Annual report for the Molonglo Valley Plan for the Protection of Matters of National Environmental Significance (NES Plan) for the period of 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017

Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, ACT Government

November 2017

From commencement of the NES Plan, the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate was responsible for monitoring and reporting on delivery of the plan. As of 1 July 2016, these responsibilities were transferred to the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate.

This report has been prepared by the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate for the 2016-2017 financial year.

Key Contact

Impact Assessment

Planning Delivery

Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate

GPO Box 158

CANBERRA ACT 2601

www.planning.act.gov.au

EPDImpact@act.gov.au

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List of abbreviations

Acronym	Description
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
AMS	Adaptive Management Strategy
BGW or Box-Gum Woodland	White Box – Yellow Box – Blakely’s Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland
CEMP	Construction Environment Management Plan (interchangeable with EMP)
CMTEDD	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate
DA	Development Application
DoEE	Department of the Environment and Energy
EDD	Economic Development (Part of CMTEDD)
EDP	Estate Development Plan
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EPA	Environment Protection Authority
EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (Cwth)
EPSDD	Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (formerly the Environment and Planning Directorate)
ESA	Emergency Services Agency
LDA	Land Development Agency (under CMTEDD) (Active until 30 June 2017)
MNES	Matters of National Environmental Significance
NES Plan	Molonglo Valley Plan for the Protection of Matters of National Environmental Significance
NSW	New South Wales
NTG or Natural Temperate Grassland	Natural Temperate Grassland of the Southern Tablelands of NSW and the ACT
PDF	Planning and Design Framework
PTWL	Pink-Tailed Worm Lizard, <i>Aprasia parapulchella</i>
SLA	Suburban Land Agency (Established 1 July 2017)
TCCS	Transport Canberra and City Services (formerly Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS))

Note: References to Department and Directorate names in the body of this report are accurate as at the end of the reporting period, 30 June 2017.

1 Introduction

This Annual Report is prepared in accordance with Section 6 of the Molonglo Valley Plan for the Protection of Matters of National Environmental Significance (NES Plan), September 2011. It reports on the implementation of the NES Plan from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017.

Section 6 of the NES Plan requires the ACT Government to monitor and report annually on the implementation of the NES Plan. The primary purpose of monitoring and reporting is to ensure that the conservation outcomes described in the NES Plan are achieved.

In the 2016-2017 financial year the former Land Development Agency (LDA) released sites permitting the development of up to:

- 231 dwellings in Coombs;
- 1,210 dwellings in Denman Prospect 2; and
- A 8,714m² mixed use site in Coombs;

The Indicative Land Release Program for 2017-18 to 2020-21 indicates that 190 residential dwellings are expected to be released in Coombs in 2017-18, with 365 residential dwellings and a 15,700m² mixed use site expected to be released in Wright.

2 Background

In September 2008, the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and Commonwealth Governments entered into an Agreement to conduct a strategic assessment under Part 10 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) .

The strategic assessment included all of East Molonglo with the exception of the suburbs of North Weston, Wright and a portion of Coombs. These suburbs have prior approval under the EPBC Act (Reference numbers: 2009/5041, 2009/4752 and 2009/5050). Refer to Figure 1 for the strategic assessment area.

The NES Plan, which details the ACT Governments commitments to protect MNES in the Molonglo Valley, was assessed by the Commonwealth and endorsed in October 2011. Actions associated with urban development within East Molonglo were then approved by the Commonwealth in December 2011. The West Molonglo area was not included in this approval.

West Molonglo is included within the scope of the strategic assessment as it includes MNES and was part of the same overall process to establish the Structure Plan. West Molonglo is included in the West Belconnen Strategic Assessment that is currently being prepared by Riverview Projects.

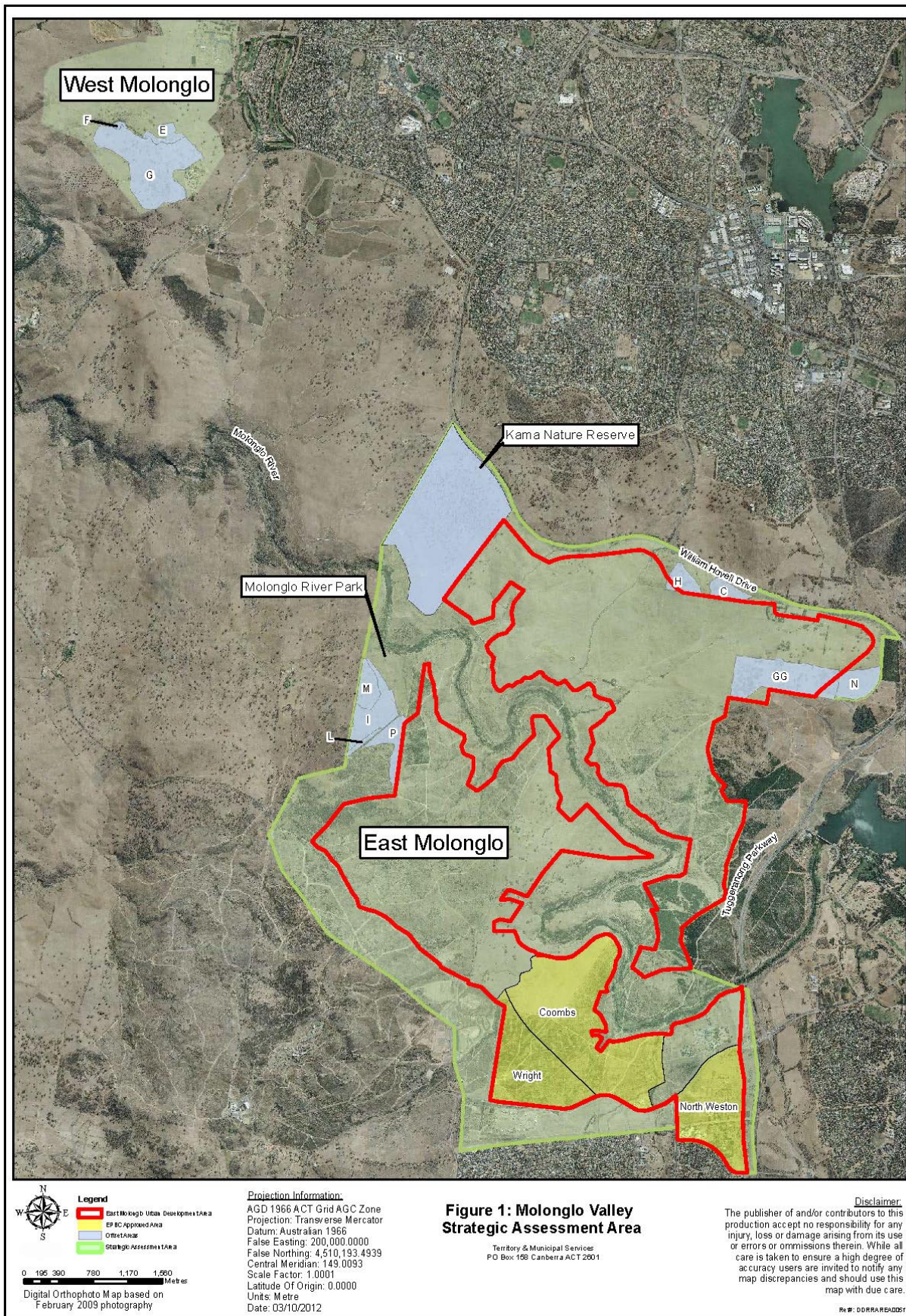
The NES Plan establishes a set of conservation activities to protect MNES. These are broadly based around the following hierarchy of steps:

- avoidance of impacts on MNES;
- mitigation of impacts on MNES including on-ground management to provide maintenance and improvement of MNES values in important areas; and
- establishing offset areas to compensate for unavoidable impacts on MNES.

The MNES that require protection through the NES Plan are:

- *White Box – Yellow Box – Blakely’s Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland* (Box-Gum Woodland);
- *Natural Temperate Grassland of the Southern Tablelands of NSW and the ACT* (Natural Temperate Grassland);
- *Aprasia parapulchella* (Pink-tailed Worm Lizard);
- *Polytelis swainsonii* (Superb Parrot); and
- *Lathamus discolor* (Swift Parrot).

Figure 1 Molonglo Valley Strategic Assessment Area



3 Implementation of the NES Plan

EPSDD currently has responsibility for monitoring and reporting on the delivery of the NES Plan on behalf of the ACT Government.

The NES Plan specifies conservation outcomes that the ACT Government will deliver to protect MNES and the actions that will be undertaken to achieve those outcomes. In particular, Section 4 of the NES Plan provides 44 specific actions related to conservation outcomes for Box-Gum Woodland, Natural Temperate Grassland and Pink-tailed Worm Lizard.

The NES Plan does not specify specific conservation outcomes and actions in relation to the Superb Parrot and Swift Parrot. These species are therefore not included in the table. However, the NES Plan states that the most important conservation action for Superb Parrot and Swift Parrot is the protection and ongoing management of the Kama Nature Reserve which includes approximately 117ha of BGW. Additionally, conservation outcomes detailed in section 4.1 of the NES Plan for patches C, D, H, I, L, M, P, T, West Molonglo and Patch GG will benefit Superb Parrots and Swift Parrots.

3.1 Development completed in 2016-2017

The following development was undertaken or approved in the Molonglo Valley Strategic Assessment Area in 2016-2017:

- Continued development of Denman Prospect and Wright;
- Construction of infrastructure for a sewer main (Molonglo Valley Block 71);
- Construction of John Gorton Drive 3 (Molonglo 3 road and intersection); and
- Development of Denman Prospect 1B.

3.2 Report on performance by outcome/commitment

Table 1 describes the commitments from the NES Plan and the status of each commitment. Commitments which have been completed are green.

Table 1 Commitments, delivery and timing

NES Plan Ref	Action	Responsible Entity	Timing	Current status
Actions to achieve the conservation outcomes for Box Gum Woodland				
Impacts to Box-Gum Woodland will be limited to a maximum of 110 ha and a range of measures will be implemented to minimise this area of impact.				
1	Ensure that the combined impacts on Box-Gum Woodland from development within East Molonglo and construction of infrastructure within the river corridor do not exceed 110 ha.	EPSDD	Throughout and on completion of the final Planning and Design Framework (PDF) for both stages 2 and 3 and through the approval of estate development plan (subdivision) development applications.	See Section 3.4- Impacts on MNES, Table 3 and Figure 2 show the amount of Box Gum Woodland that has been impacted to date. In the 2015-16 financial year, CMTEDD undertook a budget monitoring and mapping project to consolidate all data sets for MNES and development outcomes. This work is being progressed by EPSDD.
2	Amend the East Molonglo river corridor boundary, in stages 2 and 3 respectively with a view to reducing the impacts to Box-Gum Woodland. This process will ensure that connectivity within the river corridor is maintained.	EPSDD	Progressively, on completion of the final EDPs for stages 2 and 3, respectively.	Stage 2 PDF finalised in 2012. EPSDD is currently preparing a PDF for Stage 3, however, finalising boundaries will not occur until the final EDPs are approved. Note – An interim limited area planning and design framework for Molonglo Valley stage 3 was approved in March 2017. This interim area PDF only applies to a small area to the north of Molonglo Stage 3 towards William Hovell Drive to facilitate capital works construction activities.
3	Design the infrastructure that will occur in the river corridor to minimise impacts to Box-Gum Woodland.	CMTEDD and EPSDD (PCS, Infrastructure Planning)	Prior to the construction of infrastructure.	Ongoing. Design principles adopted by EDD and incorporated in contracts for design and construction projects. The extent of recreational infrastructure proposed in the River Park Concept Plan was reviewed through the draft Plan of Management process. There are two significant refinements which emerged, these include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where practicably possible, the proposed trunk cycle path will be relocated to within the Inner Asset Protection Zone. This utilises the lighting corridor of the edge road and minimises fragmentation of the River Park; and • recreation facilities such as parks, access roads, car parking, barbecues and toilets will be centralised to two areas - Catherine Park (Sludge Pits) and Ryans Hill special purpose reserves. TCCS has completed contracts with specialist ecologists to prepare draft Ecological Management Guidelines for all aspects regarding managing and monitoring MNES at Molonglo inside the 3 nominated offset areas (Kama Nature Reserve, the Molonglo River Corridor and Patch GG). These guidelines will inform ongoing design and operational works. EDD has prepared an early draft Urban Edge Master Plan for the Commercial Centre & Environs in stage 2. This plan will assist the final location of the development boundary, taking into account urban development, environmental values, fire management requirements and edge infrastructure including trunk sewers, urban stormwater management facilities, edge streets and cycle paths, and control of access from vehicles and pedestrians into sensitive habitat. The final location of the River Corridor boundary for the Commercial Centre and environs will be decided when the relevant EDP is approved. Both the Molonglo Sewer Pedestrian Bridge (Butters Bridge) and Cravens Creek Pond projects have been designed to minimise impacts on PTWL habitat, by positioning the infrastructure clear of habitat as much as practicable. For both projects, habitat close to (but not actually impacted) is

				<p>required to be fenced off and protected as the first item of construction work to be undertaken.</p> <p>For Butters Bridge, an “incrementally launched” structural form was chosen to specifically avoid habitat. This method of construction allows the bridge to be “pushed” over the river and its embankments, from one abutment only, minimising impacts beneath to the piers only.</p> <p>Environmental assessments including ecological surveys to review and update existing ecologically impacts have commenced along the remaining section of John Gorton Drive and the bridge crossing over the Molonglo River. The environmental assessments will be finalised in into an Impact Assessment Report (IAR) in 2018, and will provided the basis for ensuring there have been no significant changes to any ecologically sensitive areas.</p>
4	Develop, implement and independently monitor Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs) to ensure that unforeseen direct or indirect impacts from construction activities within the development area and the river corridor are avoided.	EPSDD	<p>Development of the CEMPs prior to construction.</p> <p>Implementation of the CEMPs during construction.</p>	<p>Ongoing. CEMPs have been prepared for all approved estate developments within the strategic assessment area.</p> <p>EPSDD has incorporated the requirement for CEMP’s in all Capital Works infrastructure documentation for Molonglo and has engaged a site surveillance officer to monitor capital works projects in Molonglo.</p> <p>The requirement for CEMP’s has been incorporated into all Capital Works documentation for Molonglo River Park, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coombs fire management zone establishment works • Coombs PTWL habitat protective fence • Barrer Hill pine removal stage 1&2. • Box Gum Park pedestrian walking track • Coombs riverside shelters and Aprasia habitat boardwalk • Barrer Hill restoration – vertical habitat structures • Woodland track signage • Creek crossings at Holdens Creek Pond outflow and Patch K • Forb enhancement works within Kama Nature Reserve • Coombs boundary fence <p>To date, approximately 31 CEMPs have been prepared and approved for construction work in Molonglo 1 and 2. This has been done for minor preliminary works such as geotechnical investigations, fencing and utility relocations, as well as all major construction activities such as roadworks, bridges and ponds.</p>
<p>Three offset sites will be established within the strategic assessment area (Kama Nature Reserve, Molonglo River Park, Patch GG) that will provide for the long term protection of 234 ha of Box-Gum Woodland (see Figure 6 of NES Plan). The three offset sites will be adaptively managed to maintain and enhance the ecological condition of the Box-Gum Woodland that occurs there.</p>				
5	Develop a management plan for the Kama Nature Reserve to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of Box-Gum Woodland within the reserve (approximately 117 ha).	EPSDD (PCS)	Development prior to the commencement of the construction of Sewer 3 East or within 2 years and 6 months of endorsement of the NES Plan; whichever occurs first.	<p>A draft plan was prepared by November 2014 meeting the required timeframe; however review of the fire management approach was required to bring the draft plan into line with the new Strategic Bushfire Management Plan version 3 which was endorsed in September 2014.</p> <p>A revised draft Molonglo River Reserve Management Plan (including Kama Nature Reserve) will be complete for public consultation in late 2017 or early 2018.</p>
6	Implement the management plan for the Kama Nature Reserve to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of Box-Gum Woodland within the reserve.	EPSDD (PCS)	<p>Commencement on completion of Action 5.</p> <p>Implementation ongoing.</p>	<p>Commencement on completion of Action 5.</p> <p>Implementation ongoing in accordance with Molonglo Adaptive Management Strategy, Molonglo Ecological Guidelines and Kama Operational Plan.</p>
7	Establish a buffer outside the Kama Nature Reserve between the reserve and the proposed development area, and allow for appropriate uses consistent with nature conservation uses of the reserve. The buffer will be developed to ensure that fire	EPSDD (PCS, Strategic Planning and Land	As part of the final PDF for stage 3 and confirmed through the approval of estate development plan (subdivision) development applications.	Ongoing. Final PDF for stage 3 is expected to be completed in 2018.

	management is undertaken outside of the Kama Nature Reserve and will provide protection against urban edge effects.	Development Projects)		
8	Develop a Park Concept Plan for the “Molonglo River Park” which will occur along the East Molonglo river corridor. This Plan will establish management zones within the Park, specifically identifying areas to be designated for conservation as well as identifying recreation areas and resolving public access. A key focus of this plan will be the protection of Box-Gum Woodland.	EPSDD	Development prior to the commencement of construction of John Gorton Drive Stage 2A or within 1 year of endorsement of the NES Plan; whichever occurs first.	Complete. The Molonglo River Corridor Concept Plan prepared by EPSDD was endorsed on 28 August 2012.
9	Develop a management plan for the Molonglo River Park to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of Box-Gum Woodland within the park (approximately 73 ha).	EPSDD (PCS)	Development prior to the commencement of the construction of the Sewer 3 East or within 2 years and 6 months of endorsement of the NES Plan; whichever occurs first.	An Operational Plan for Molonglo River Park was completed in June 2014. A draft Molonglo River Reserve Management Plan was prepared by November 2014 meeting the required timeframe; however the review of the fire management approach was required to bring the draft plan into line with the new Strategic Bushfire Management Plan version 3 which was endorsed in September 2014. This delay was reported to the Australian Government and an extension of time agreed. This timeframe was however exceeded due to time needed to resolve issues relating to the Kama Nature Reserve buffer. The buffer issues have been addressed in the draft plan and work is being undertaken to prepare the document for public consultation in late 2017 or early 2018.
10	Implement the management plan for the Molonglo River Park to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of Box-Gum Woodland within the park.	EPSDD (PCS)	Commencement on completion of Action 9. Implementation ongoing.	From 2012, EPSDD has undertaken a number of restoration works within the river corridor in line with the operational plans and the draft Molonglo River Reserve Management Plan.
11	Establish Patch GG as an offset site by incorporating the area into the National Arboretum.	EPSDD	Established within 6 months of endorsement of the NES Plan.	Complete. On 22 January 2013 the ACT Government purchased ‘Glenloch’ from its former long term lessees. In 2014 Patch GG was transferred for incorporation into the National Arboretum to enable management as an offset site.
12	Develop a management plan for Patch GG to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of Box-Gum Woodland within the park (approximately 44 ha).	EPSDD (PCS)/TCCS	Development prior to the commencement of the construction of Sewer 3 East or within 2 years and 6 months of endorsement of the NES Plan, whichever occurs first.	Complete. Patch GG has been incorporated into the National Arboretum. An Operational Plan for Patch GG was completed in June 2014.
13	Implement the management plan for Patch GG to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of Box-Gum Woodland.	EPSDD (PCS)	Commencement on completion of Action 12. Implementation ongoing.	Management is being undertaken in line with the operational plan. Restoration planting was undertaken in 2016.
Adaptively manage 28 ha of Box-Gum Woodland within the strategic assessment area to maintain and enhance its ecological condition. This will be made up of patches C, H and N.				
14	Develop management plans for Box-Gum Woodland patches C, H, and N (see Figure 3 of the NES Plan) to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of Box-Gum Woodland within these areas.	EPSDD (PCS)	Development prior to the completion of the final PDF for stage 3.	Operational Plans for Patches C & H will be developed by EPSDD in 2017-18. An Operational Plan for Patch N was developed in 2014, as part of the Arboretum Woodland Conservation Area but has not been implemented. The land is under the custodianship of the LDA who are managing the area for weed control, pest management and bushfire fuel load monitoring.
15	Implement management plans for Box-Gum Woodland patches C, H, and N to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of Box-Gum Woodland within these areas.	EPSDD (PCS)	Commencement on completion of Action 14. Implementation ongoing.	See above.
Adaptively manage 45.4 ha of Box-Gum Woodland within the strategic assessment area to maintain its ecological condition. This will be made up of patches I, L, M and P.				
16	Develop management plans for Box-Gum Woodland patches I, L, M and P (see Figure 3 of the NES Plan) to provide for the maintenance of the ecological condition of Box-Gum Woodland within these areas.	EPSDD (PCS)	Development after completion of Adaptive Management Strategy and within 2 years and 6 months of endorsement of the NES Plan.	Patches I, L and M are managed under a rural lease with a Land Management Agreement. Operational Plans for Patch P will be developed by EPSDD in 2017- 18.

17	Undertake fuel hazard management in patches I, L, M and P with the management and protection of Box-Gum Woodland as a critical consideration (within the constraints of ensuring the safety of the urban population).	EPSDD (PCS)	On completion of Action 16.	As above. The Bushfire Risk Strategy undertaken by the LDA has ESA and Fire Management Unit of TCCS support and will set the management requirements both within and immediately outside the future urban development boundary in Denman Prospect taking into account Box Gum Woodland.
18	Annually monitor the condition of the Box-Gum Woodland patches I, L, M, P (total area of 45.4 ha) on the western boundary of East Molonglo to ensure that fuel hazard management is not negatively impacting on the Box-Gum Woodland values.	EPSDD (PCS)	On completion of Action 16.	A Monitoring Procedures Manual for Molonglo was prepared by EPSDD in 2013 in accordance with the AMS. EPSDD has undertaken annual vegetation monitoring since 2013, in accordance with the monitoring procedures manual.
19	Should the monitoring in Action 18 show that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for a period of two consecutive years; • more than 30% of the combined area of patches I, L, M, P (total area of 45.4 ha) no longer meets the EPBC Act listing criteria for Box-Gum Woodland; then the ACT Government will establish an offset site within two years of those monitoring results that meets the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the offset will be in the Molonglo Valley; and • the offset will include a minimum of 90.8 ha of EPBC Act listed Box-Gum Woodland. 	EPSDD	If required.	EPSDD completed annual vegetation monitoring for the fourth consecutive year in 2016. Vegetation condition monitoring results show that the ecological condition of patches I, L, M and P has been maintained.
20	Should an offset site be required under Action 19, then the offsite site will be established as a Nature Reserve and managed consistently with the other offset sites (Kama Nature Reserve, Molonglo River Park, Patch GG).	EPSDD (PCS)	If required.	Not required.
Maintenance and enhancement of the Box-Gum Woodland that occurs within the West Molonglo component of the strategic assessment area.				
21	Manage the Box-Gum Woodland that occurs in West Molonglo in accordance with the terms of a Land Management Agreement (LMA). LMAs are required by Part 9.7 of the <i>Planning and Development Act 2007</i> for all non-urban leases. The LMA covering the BGW in West Molonglo contains a Land Action Plan which ensures that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the ecological functioning and integrity of BGW on the lease is retained and improved; • the extent and character of the BGW is preserved; and • there is an Action Plan which details the activities, timeframes and performance measures put in place to ensure the conservation outcomes are met. 	EPSDD (PCS)	Ongoing.	Not required. See Commitment 22 below.
22	West Molonglo is zoned broadacre and is not part of the ACT Government's current land release program. In the event that West Molonglo is developed in the future for broadacre uses or residential development then, subject to confirmatory ecological assessment of Box-Gum Woodland, the area of EPBC Act Box-Gum Woodland that occurs there will be set aside as a Nature Reserve.	EPSDD	If required the Nature Reserve will be established prior to construction in West Molonglo commencing.	Complete. Box-Gum Woodland in West Molonglo was set aside as nature reserve through Territory Plan Variation 351 approved on 23 October 2015. The area of Box-Gum Woodland originally mapped for the strategic assessment was refined through an ecological assessment undertaken by David Hogg Pty Ltd in 2013. The current reserve boundaries were set based on the later ecological assessment.
Improving and applying the knowledge about the management of Box-Gum Woodland.				
23	Establish and manage an off-site restoration project, as an indirect offset, for Box-Gum Woodland.	EPSDD (PCS)	Before development commences in Stage 2.	Complete. The use of Barrer Park which is on site was supported by the Commonwealth as meeting this commitment. EPSDD started BGW restoration work in 2014. A total of 15,607 plants, 1,505 trees and shrubs and 14,102 groundcovers were planted. EPSDD completed Stage 3 of the BGW restoration in 2016-17. As part of Stage 3, ten vertical habitat structures, 400 CWD logs and 80 tonnes of surface rock

				<p>was placed into the restoration area to provide habitat for threatened and non-threatened BGW species.</p> <p>The vertical habitat structures project is an innovative restoration initiative currently being trialled in the Molonglo River Reserve. The project installed a total of ten habitat structures, including 5 utility poles and 5 relocated mature trees, enriched with carved hollows and artificial bark providing habitat for invertebrate, bird, bat and marsupial species.</p> <p>In collaboration with ANU researchers at the Fenner School of Environment and Society, this study will shed light on the effectiveness of this restoration method for biodiversity in modified landscapes.</p>
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Actions to achieve the conservation outcomes for Natural Temperate Grassland				
No direct or indirect impacts to Natural Temperate Grassland.				
24	Protection of the Natural Temperate Grassland within the Kama Nature Reserve.	EPSDD (PCS)	Ongoing.	<p>In 2014-15, EPSDD undertook Ecological Surveys of Natural Temperate Grassland.</p> <p>EPSDD is preparing a Plant Field Guide for the Molonglo Valley Conservation Area to promote the ecological values of the reserve and thereby assist residents in the Molonglo Valley to protect the reserve.</p> <p>EPSDD is undertaking the following research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grassland habitat research – slashing as a biomass management tool for NTG and BGW – research project; and NTG ecosystem recovery through habitat rock supplementation. <p>In 2016-17, EPSDD commenced a forb enhancement program in Kama Nature Reserve to enhance forb diversity, increase ecological condition and habitat values of NTG and BGW within Kama Nature Reserve and to implement and test BGW understorey enhancement recommendations informed by research undertaken by the ANU Fenner School.</p> <p>In 2016-17, EPSDD also conducted an ecological burn within the Kama Nature Reserve. The burn was undertaken as part of a larger grassland restoration research project, which aims to improve the ecological condition of NTG.</p>
Adaptive management of the Natural Temperate Grassland that occurs within the Kama Nature Reserve to maintain and enhance its ecological condition.				
25	Develop a management plan for the Kama Nature Reserve to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of Natural Temperate Grassland within the reserve.	EPSDD (PCS)	Development prior to the commencement of the construction of the Sewer 3 East or within 2 years and 6 months of endorsement of the NES Plan; whichever occurs first.	Please see response to commitment 5.
26	Implement the management plan for the Kama Nature Reserve to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of Natural Temperate Grassland within the reserve.	EPSDD (PCS)	Commencement on completion of Action 25. Implementation ongoing.	Please see response to commitment 6.
27	Establish a buffer outside the Kama Nature Reserve between the reserve and the proposed development area, and allow for appropriate uses consistent with nature conservation uses of the reserve. The buffer will be developed to ensure that fire management is undertaken outside of the Kama Nature Reserve and will provide protection against urban edge effects.	EPSDD (PCS, Strategic Planning and Land Development Projects)	As part of the final PDF Stage 3 and confirmed through the approval of estate development plan (subdivision) development applications.	Please see response to commitment 7.
Actions to achieve the conservation outcomes for Pink-tailed Worm Lizard				
Impacts to high and moderate quality PTWL habitat will be limited to a maximum of 27 ha and a range of measures will be implemented to minimise this area of impact.				
28	Ensure that the combined impacts on high and moderate quality PTWL habitat from development within East Molonglo and construction of infrastructure within the river corridor do not exceed 27 ha.	EPSDD (PCS, (Infrastructure Planning), SLA (Molonglo Valley),	Progressively, on completion of the final EDPs for stages 2 and 3, respectively.	<p>PDF Stage 2 complete.</p> <p>PDF for stage 3 is currently under preparation. Final boundaries will be confirmed once EDPs are approved.</p>
29	Amend the East Molonglo river corridor boundary in stages 2 and 3 respectively with a view to reducing impacts to high and moderate quality PTWL habitat. This process will ensure that connectivity within the river corridor is maintained.	EPSDD (PCS, Strategic Planning))	Progressively, on completion of the final EDPs for stages 2 and 3, respectively.	<p>PDF Stage 2 complete.</p> <p>The East Molonglo River Corridor was amended accordingly.</p> <p>PDF for stage 3 is currently under preparation. Final boundaries will be confirmed once EDPs are approved.</p>

30	Design the infrastructure that will occur in the river corridor to minimise impacts to high and moderate quality PTWL habitat.	EPSDD & CMTEDD	Prior to the construction of infrastructure.	Ongoing. Please see response to commitment 3.
31	Develop, implement and independently monitor Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs) to ensure that unforeseen direct or indirect impacts from construction activities within the development area and the river corridor are avoided.	EPSDD & (PCS, Infrastructure Planning) SLA (Molonglo Valley), CMTEDD (Civil Infrastructure Delivery)	Development of the CEMPs prior to construction. Implementation of the CEMPs during construction.	Ongoing. Please see response to commitment 4.
Two offset sites will be established within the strategic assessment area (Kama Nature Reserve and the Molonglo River Park) that will provide for the long term protection of 66 ha of high and moderate quality PTWL habitat (see Figure 6 of the NES Plan). These areas will be adaptively managed to maintain and enhance the ecological condition of the PTWL habitat that occurs there.				
32	Develop a management plan for the Kama Nature Reserve to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of all PTWL habitat within the reserve (approximately 6 ha which includes 3.33 ha of high and moderate quality habitat).	EPSDD (PCS)	Development prior to the commencement of the construction of the Sewer 3 East or within 2 years and 6 months of endorsement of the NES Plan; whichever occurs first.	Please see response to commitment 5.
33	Implement the management plan for the Kama Nature Reserve to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of all PTWL habitat within the reserve.	EPSDD (PCS)	Commencement on completion of Action 32. Implementation ongoing.	Please see response to commitment 6.
34	Establish a buffer outside the Kama Nature Reserve between the reserve and the proposed development area, and allow for appropriate uses consistent with nature conservation uses of the reserve. The buffer will be developed to ensure that fire management is undertaken outside of the Kama Nature Reserve and will provide protection against urban edge effects.	EPSDD (PCS, Strategic Planning and Land Development Projects)	As part of the final Planning and Design Framework for stage 3 and confirmed through the approval of estate development plan (subdivision) development applications.	Please see response to commitment 7.
35	Develop a Park Concept Plan for the "Molonglo River Park" which will occur along the East Molonglo river corridor. This Plan will establish management zones within the Park, specifically identifying areas to be designated for conservation as well as identifying recreation areas and resolving public access. A key focus of this plan will be the protection of high and moderate quality PTWL habitat.	EPSDD	Development prior to the commencement of construction of John Gorton Drive Stage 2A or within 1 year of endorsement of the NES Plan; whichever occurs first.	Complete. The Molonglo River Corridor Concept Plan prepared by EPSDD was endorsed on 28 August 2012.
36	Develop a management plan for the Molonglo River Park to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of high and moderate quality PTWL habitat within the park (approximately 62 ha).	EPSDD (PCS)	Development prior to the commencement of the construction of the Sewer 3 East or within 2 years and 6 months of endorsement of the NES Plan; whichever occurs first.	Please see response to commitment 9.
37	Establish a 20 m buffer around high and moderate quality Pink-tailed Worm Lizard habitat (other than, for example the areas to be impacted by the bridge crossings and strategically placed walking tracks) within the East Molonglo river corridor. Manage these areas to ensure the maintenance of their conservation value. Management measures (as outlined in Section 3) will be incorporated into the management plan for the river corridor.	EPSDD (PCS)	On completion of the final Planning and Design Framework for stage 2 and completion of the Park Concept Plan.	Buffer zones were identified in the Park Concept Plan. Management measures are incorporated into the Molonglo River Reserve Draft Reserve Management Plan due for public release in 2017.
38	Implement the management plan for the Molonglo River Park to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of high and moderate quality PTWL habitat within the park.	EPSDD (PCS)	Commencement on completion of Action 36. Implementation ongoing.	Operational plans are being implemented.
39	Register a disallowable instrument under the <i>Domestic Animals Act 2000</i> to effect a cat containment policy for the Molonglo area.	TCCS & EPSDD (PCS)	30 June 2012	Complete. DI-2015-58

Continued protection of 28.1 ha of high and moderate quality PTWL habitat within the Lower Molonglo Nature Reserve (see Figure 4 of the NES Plan). These areas will be adaptively managed to maintain the ecological condition* of the PTWL habitat that occurs there.				
40	Continued implementation of the Plan of Management for the Lower Molonglo Nature Reserve to provide for the maintenance of the ecological condition of the high and moderate quality PTWL habitat that occurs there (approximately 28.1 ha).	EPSDD	Ongoing.	<p>The following management actions have been undertaken in the Lower Molonglo Nature Reserve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing strategic ecological cattle grazing to reduce exotic grass biomass and reduce fire risk from surrounding fuel loads • Targeted African Love Grass (<i>Eragrostis Curvula</i>) and Blackberry (<i>Rubus Fruticosus</i>) control over half the habitat • Targeted control of pigs in surrounding landscape which resulted in 15 individuals being removed and associated reduction in ground disturbance. • Ongoing strategic grazing and weed control requirements on properties with PTWL habitat that are managed under the Land Management Agreement process.
Protection of an additional 23.3 ha of high and moderate quality PTWL habitat within the strategic assessment area outside of the development and offset areas (see Figure 4 of the NES Plan). These areas will be adaptively managed to maintain and enhance the ecological condition of the PTWL habitat that occurs there.				
41	Develop management plans for the other areas of high and moderate quality PTWL habitat that occurs within the strategic assessment area and outside of the development and offset areas (approximately 23.3 ha) to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of the PTWL habitat within these areas.	EPSDD (PCS)	Development after completion of the Adaptive Management Strategy and within 2 years and 6 months of endorsement of the NES Plan.	An Operational Plan for the area of PTWL habitat to be protected under Action 40 as identified at Figure 3A of the AMS 2013, will be prepared in 2017-18.
42	Implement management plans for the other areas of high and moderate quality PTWL habitat that occurs within the strategic assessment area and outside of the development and offset areas (approximately 23.3 ha) to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of the PTWL habitat within these areas.	EPSDD (PCS)	Commencement on completion of Action 41. Implementation ongoing.	PTWL habitat restoration Stage 4 commenced in 2016-17 at the Coombs peninsula tip to ensure the ecological condition of PTWL habitat is enhanced and connectively improved and to ensure that fire management standards are reached.
Improving and applying the knowledge about the management of PTWL.				
43	Undertake a research project examining the effects on PTWL of disturbance and proximity to urban areas.	EPSDD (PCS)	Commencement within 6 months of endorsement and incorporated into the Planning and Design Framework for both stages 2 and 3.	<p>Stage 1a (Mt Taylor habitat disturbance case study) - complete.</p> <p>Stage 1b - ongoing. The PTWL low-impact monitoring research project commenced in 2014 and will continue until 2020. Early results are promising with the low-impact monitoring method achieving a similar number of detections as traditional methods of surveying the species (i.e. rock rolling).</p> <p>Stage 2a (population monitoring) – ongoing. Population monitoring and habitat condition monitoring is being undertaken as part of Stage 1b and the Molonglo vegetation condition monitoring program.</p> <p>Stage 2b (PTWL translocation trial) – ongoing. Translocation recipient sites are being established.</p> <p>Stage 2c (PTWL habitat restoration) – ongoing. 4ha of habitat restoration has been undertaken since 2014.</p> <p>- In 2014, 11 habitat islands were established across the former Blewitts pine plantation. The objective of the restoration works was to improve habitat connectivity between the two genetically distinct populations. Over the past three years, 10 of the 11 habitat islands have been colonized leaving only one island to be colonized before the two populations are effectively reconnected.</p> <p>- Following the development of a PTWL habitat restoration method in collaboration with the ANU (McDougall, A., R.N. Milner, D.A. Driscoll & A.L. Smith (2016). Restoration rocks: integrating abiotic and biotic habitat restoration to conserve threatened species and reduce fire fuel load.</p>

				<i>Biodiversity and Conservation 25 (8), 1529-1542</i> , 3 ha of PTWL habitat restoration has been undertaken within fire management zones adjacent to PTWL habitat. The objective of the restoration works is to reduce fire fuel loads and provide habitat for the PTWL. PTWL have been detected in five of the seven PTWL habitat restoration sites surveyed and a second threatened species, Perunga grasshopper, has also been found in one of the restoration sites.
44	<p>Amend the development boundary, adjacent to high and moderate quality PTWL habitat on the western edge to avoid:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • direct impact from bushfire management – the Outer Asset Protection Zone (OAPZ) and Inner Asset Protection Zones (IAPZ) will be between the PTWL habitat and the development boundary; and • indirect impacts from urban development. 	EPSDD	Boundary amendment will be incorporated immediately into the draft Planning and Design Framework for stage 2. The boundary amendment will be prescribed by a Territory Plan amendment, post completion of the Estate Development Plan (EDP) for stage 2.	<p>Complete.</p> <p>Stage 2 development boundaries were set by the Territory Plan Variation 281. The development boundary on the north western edge has been adjusted to avoid impacts on the high and moderate quality PTWL habitat.</p>

3.3 Other NES Plan requirements and actions

In addition to the specific MNES related commitments, the NES Plan contains a number of implementation requirements and actions. Table 2 details each action or requirement, and provides a status update as at 30 June 2017.

Table 2 Other NES Plan requirements and actions

No	NES Plan Page Reference	Commitment	Responsible Entity	Comment/Status
1	2	To ensure conservation outcomes and protect MNES adjacent to the development area in the lower Molonglo Valley, the ACT Government will make necessary amendments to the Structure Plan.	EPSDD (Strategic Planning, Territory Plan)	<p>Whilst the commitment makes reference to the Structure Plan, which is part of the Territory Plan, it will be the Territory Plan (not specifically the Structure Plan) that will be varied in accordance with the <i>Planning and Development Act 2007</i> as development in Molonglo progresses.</p> <p>On 10 August 2012 Technical Amendment to the Territory Plan No. 2012-24, which includes the applicable provisions arising from the Planning and Design Framework (PDF) for Molonglo Valley Stage 2 came into effect.</p> <p>EPSDD and the former LDA commenced background planning investigations and assessments for Molonglo Valley Stage 3 in 2013-14. These investigations are now being undertaken by EPSDD and will inform the preparation of a PDF for Molonglo Valley Stage 3, currently being prepared by EPSDD.</p>
2	3	Following endorsement of the NES Plan under the EPBC Act, actions (or classes of actions) that will occur to implement the endorsed NES Plan may be approved by the Minister.	EPSDD	Complete. Commonwealth Minister provided approval on 20 December 2011. The approval has effect until 31 December 2041.
3	9	<p>Infrastructure within the river corridor comprises the following activities and will be staged to be most cost effectively developed (in the following order):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Gorton Drive which includes the construction of dual bridges crossing the Molonglo River; • East-West Arterial Road bridge crossing of the Molonglo River; • Water quality control ponds; water mains; sewer mains and sewer pump stations; and • A combined sewer / pedestrian / cycle bridge. 	EPSDD (PCS, Infrastructure Planning, TCCS, CMTEDD (Civil Infrastructure Delivery), SLA (Molonglo Valley)	<p>On 27 April 2012, the ACT Government advised the Commonwealth that the ACT Government required a change to the order of this infrastructure to effectively manage the sequencing of land release.</p> <p>The following infrastructure has been completed within the River Corridor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sewer Pedestrian Bridge over Molonglo River, and associated sewer main approaches • Cravens Creek Pond <p>John Gorton Drive has been constructed through Molonglo Stage 1 and 2 to a point approximately one kilometre south of the Molonglo River, and has not yet extended into / over the River Corridor. The roadwork over the River Corridor is unlikely to be required before 2022.</p> <p>The East West Arterial has been constructed east of John Gorton Drive for a distance of approximately 1.1 km.</p> <p>John Gorton Drive construction has recently commenced in Molonglo 3 south from William Hovel Drive, and will be initially constructed for a distance of approximately 900m.</p> <p>EPSDD completed construction of minor recreation facilities in the River Reserve adjacent to Coombs including a pedestrian trail linking 2 picnic shelters and board walk with lookout at Holdens Creek Hill. In addition, a pedestrian trail was constructed at Box Gum Park linking the Holdens Creek Hill boardwalk. These facilities were constructed using low environmental impact methods and will help to control pedestrian movement through the reserve and away from areas of high conservation value.</p> <p>In 2016, EPSDD constructed creek crossings at Holden Creek Pond outflow and at Patch K. Orientation and interpretive signage was designed and installed along the woodland track to inform visitors of the ecological and cultural heritage values in the Reserve. A temporary boundary fence for Coombs Riverside was also constructed to control access into the Reserve.</p>
4	10	Variations to the East Molonglo development boundary to minimise the impact on MNES values. A particular focus of this is the reduction of impacts on moderate and high quality Pink-tailed Worm-lizard habitat.	EPSDD (Land Development Projects) & SLA (Molonglo Valley)	<p>Changes to the river corridor boundary occurred after the Molonglo Valley Stage 2 PDF was approved in 2012.</p> <p>EPSDD and the former LDA commenced background planning investigations for Molonglo Valley Stage 3 in 2013-14. These investigations are now being undertaken by EPSDD and will inform the preparation of the PDF. The final buffer detail to Kama Nature Reserve and along the River Corridor will be set through subsequent EDP approvals.</p>
5	10	<p>Designing infrastructure that will occur in the river corridor to avoid or minimise impacts to MNES. This process includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • re-aligning the location of the major bridges (as compared to the original location proposed in the Molonglo Structure Plan) to minimise impacts on moderate and high quality Pink-tailed Worm Lizard habitat; and • aligning other infrastructure to avoid moderate and high quality Pink-tailed Worm Lizard habitat and Box-Gum Woodland where this can be achieved. 	EPSDD (PCS, Infrastructure Planning, TCCS, CMTEDD (Civil Infrastructure Delivery), SLA (Molonglo Valley).	Ongoing. Please see response to Table 1- Commitment 3.
6	10	A design principle to maintain ecological values within the East Molonglo development area where possible.		<p>Complete.</p> <p>Design principles adopted by EDD and incorporated in contracts for design and construction projects.</p>

No	NES Plan Page Reference	Commitment	Responsible Entity	Comment/Status
7	10	A commitment to avoid impacts on MNES within West Molonglo.		Complete. MNES in West Molonglo, referred to as West Belconnen were considered through the variation to the Territory Plan and amendment to the National Capital Plan. This area is included in the West Belconnen Strategic Assessment.
8	11, 35-36	The ACT Government will ensure that all construction activities (whether in the urban area or in the river corridor) will be subject to construction environmental management plans (CEMPs). These CEMPs will help to ensure that unnecessary impacts from construction (eg through the uncontrolled movement of machinery) are avoided. A detailed description of the content of CEMPs is provided in Section 4 of the NES Plan.	EPSDD (PCS) SLA (Molonglo Valley), CMTEDD (Civil Infrastructure Delivery)	Ongoing. Please see response to Table 1- Commitment 4
9	12	Within the strategic assessment area fire management will be aimed at the protection of both built assets and MNES values. This will be achieved through the identification of appropriate asset protection zones and the application of hazard reduction techniques that will both: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that the standards for fuel loads in the SBMP are met; and protect MNES values through the use of sympathetic management techniques. 	EPSDD (PCS) ESA, SLA (Molonglo Valley)	Asset protection zones have been identified as part of the operational plan for the river corridor and as part of the Bushfire Risk Strategy undertaken by the LDA which has ESA and Fire Management Unit of TCCS support and will set the management requirements both within and immediately outside the future urban development boundary in Denman Prospect taking into account BGW. Additional controls for asset protection and management will be included in EDPs.
10	17	It is also important to note that under Division 3.3 of the <i>Nature Conservation Act 1980</i> , Pink-tailed Worm Lizard has been declared a vulnerable species and Natural Temperate Grassland and Box Gum Woodland are declared endangered communities. The effect of these statutory declarations is that these species and communities need to be managed in accordance with a prescribed Action Plan, prepared by the Conservator for Flora and Fauna.	EPSDD	The <i>Nature Conservation Act 1980</i> has been amended to reflect this requirement.
11	18	Construction in the Molonglo Valley stage 2 and stage 3 will not commence before completion of the respective Planning and Design Frameworks for both stages 2 and 3. The final Planning and Design Frameworks will incorporate NES actions and commitments.	EPSDD (Planning Delivery and Strategic Planning))	The PDF for Molonglo Valley Stage 2 prepared by EPSDD was approved on 17 April 2012. EPSDD and the former LDA commenced background planning investigations and assessments for Molonglo Valley Stage 3 in 2013-14. These investigations are now being undertaken by EPSDD and will inform the preparation of a PDF for Molonglo Valley Stage 3, currently being prepared by EPSDD.
12	18	The ACT Government, as the proponent, will ensure that all development concerning MNES in the Strategic Assessment area is incorporated into any future development application and associated documentation to ensure any Commonwealth requirements are reflected in the decision by the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate.	EPSDD (Planning Delivery)	Ongoing – for consideration/application at development assessment stage
13	41	The ACT Government will monitor and report annually to the public on the implementation of the NES Plan. An annual report highlighting the conservation outcomes achieved in the previous year will be published by the ACT Government and provided to the Department of the Environment. The Report will include the monitoring results on the condition of the MNES, conservation outcomes (as listed in Section 4) and the outcomes of enhancement projects.	EPSDD (Planning Delivery)	Ongoing. To be finalised by the end of November each year.
14	41,42,43	Develop an Adaptive Management Strategy to set out the framework for achieving the NES Plan's commitments through monitoring, evaluation, experimental design, reporting, auditing and continuous improvement processes. The Strategy will inform the content and timing of specific management plans and actions to ensure a consistent, integrated and efficient application of adaptive management principles and practices to achieve long term conservation outcomes for MNES. The approved Adaptive Management Strategy will be submitted for approval by the Minister (Commonwealth) or delegate.		Complete. The AMS was endorsed by the Commonwealth Government on 7 August 2013.

No	NES Plan Page Reference	Commitment	Responsible Entity	Comment/Status
15	44	The NES Plan and its associated actions will be audited by an independent, third party expert every five years, for a 30 year period. The audit reports are to be provided to the Department of the Environment for their consideration.	EPSDD	Incorporated as an action in the AMS. Audit to be completed by 7 May 2018. Timing of audit confirmed by correspondence from DoEE dated 1 August 2017.
16	44	Appoint an independent, third party auditor and develop a customised audit protocol to ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • commitments made by the ACT Government in the NES Plan are being adhered to; and • conservation outcomes for the MNES are being achieved. 	EPSDD	As above. Required every 5 years. Audit to be completed by 7 May 2018. Timing of audit confirmed by correspondence from DoEE dated 1 August 2017.
17	44	The Treasury Directorate will ensure that commitments and actions in the NES Plan are funded.	CMTEDD	Ongoing.

3.4 Impacts on MNES

The NES Plan specifies limits for impacts on MNES from any development within the Molonglo Valley Strategic Assessment area. The following limits apply:

- a maximum of 110ha of BGW can be impacted;
- a maximum of 27ha of high and moderate quality PTWL habitat can be impacted; and
- no direct or indirect impact to Natural Temperate Grassland is allowed.

The NES Plan does not specify an allowable impact on the Superb Parrot and Swift Parrot.

Table 3 summarises the impacts on MNES from all developments completed in the assessment area since the NES Plan was endorsed as well as projects that were being progressed in 2016-2017. Figures 2 and 3 show the location and areas of BGW and PTWL that have been cleared.

Table 3 Impacts on Matters of National Environmental Significance (ha)

Impacts on Matters of National Environmental Significance (ha)			
	Pink-tailed Worm Lizard (limit 27ha of high and moderate quality habitat)	Box Gum Woodland (limit 110ha)	Natural Temperate Grassland (no impact)
Total cleared at 30 June 2017	0.55ha	10.96ha	0ha
Available balance	26.45ha	89.04ha	0ha

Figure 2 BGW areas that have been cleared to date

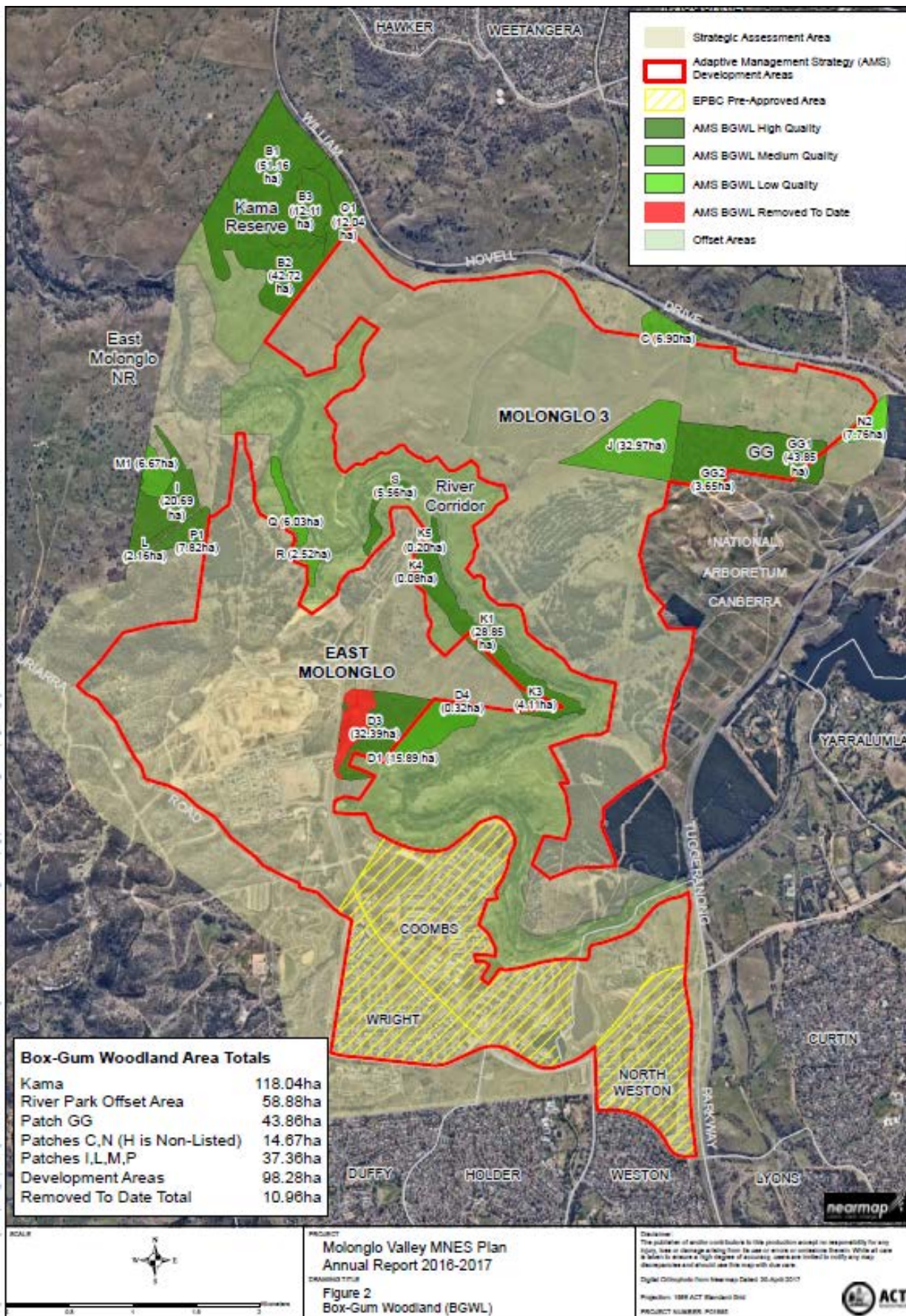
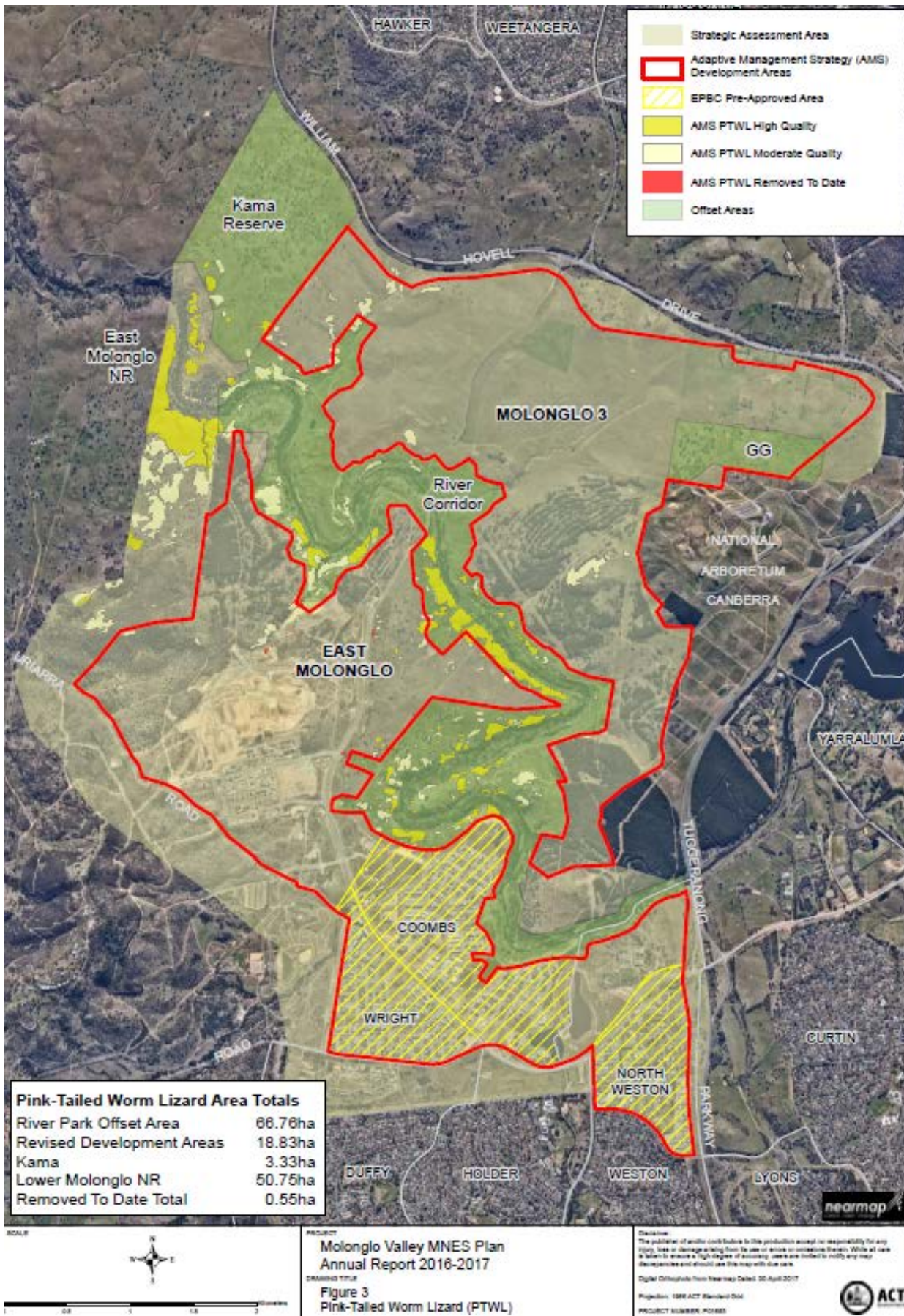


Figure 3 PTWL areas that have been cleared to date



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4 Deviation or non-compliance

The ACT notes the following areas of deviation or non-compliance with the commitments of the NES Plan. There are no recorded incidences of impacts on MNES that are protected by the Plan as a result of these non-compliances.

Table 7 – areas of non-compliance

Action No.	Commitment	Non-Compliance matter
5,9,25,32,36	Develop a management plan for the Kama Nature Reserve and the Molonglo River Park to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of MNES.	A draft plan was prepared by November 2014 meeting the required timeframe; however review of the fire management approach was required to bring the draft plan into line with the new Strategic Bushfire Management Plan version 3 which was endorsed in September 2014. Draft Reserve Management Plan complete for public release in 2017-2018.
16	Develop management plans for Box-Gum Woodland patches I, L, M and P to provide for the maintenance of the ecological condition of Box-Gum Woodland within these areas.	Patches I, L and M are managed under a rural lease with a Land Management Agreement. An operational plan for Patch P is currently under preparation by EPSDD. This Operational Plan was delayed to allow the completion of a fire management strategy for the western boundary of Denman Prospect urban development.
41	Develop management plans for the other areas of high and moderate quality PTWL habitat that occur within the strategic assessment area and outside of the development and offset areas (approximately 23.3ha) to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of the PTWL habitat within these areas.	An operational plan for the area of PTWL habitat to be protected is under preparation. This operational plan was delayed to allow the suitability of experimental restoration techniques to be tested and results gained over several years.

5 Corrections to information and data

In 2013, TAMS completed a Baseline Condition Assessment of the Box-Gum Woodlands (BGW) in the Strategic Assessment Area. This Assessment divided Patch P into 3 sub-patches based on condition, as follows:

- P1 – 7.8ha BGW
- P2 – 3.2ha other vegetation
- P3– 1.7ha other vegetation

Patch M was also divided into sub patches, as follows:

- M1 – 6.7ha BGW
- M2 – 3.1ha other vegetation

This revision was reflected in the AMS endorsed by the Commonwealth in August 2013.

In December 2015, the ACT Government commissioned BIOSIS to undertake a review of documents prepared for the development of Molonglo, specifically the NES Plan and the Adaptive Management Strategy. The report identified several inconsistencies between the NES Plan and the AMS. The report also documented and corrected numerous issues with the vegetation and habitat mapping data, and consolidated the mapping into one dataset. EPSDD is progressing this work.

6 References

ACT Government (2016) *Indicative Land Release Program 2016–17 to 2019–20*, Economic Development, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate.