

Planning and Development (Conditional Environmental Significance Opinion – Blocks 88 & 120 Tennent and Block 8 Rendezvous Creek – Infrastructure Upgrades) Notice 2019

Notifiable instrument NI2019–382

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 (Conditional Environmental Significance Opinion – Blocks 88 & 120 Tennent and Block 8 Rendezvous Creek – Infrastructure Upgrades) Notice 2019*.

2 Conditional Environmental Significance Opinion

- (1) On 22 May 2019, the Conservator of Flora and Fauna pursuant to section 138AB(4) of the *Planning and Development Act 2007* (the **Act**), gave the Applicant a conditional environmental significance opinion in relation to construction, on Blocks 88 & 120 Tennent and Block 8 Rendezvous Creek (within Namadgi National Park), of infrastructure upgrades and interpretive hubs featuring Aboriginal artworks and seating, signs and a picnic shelter to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the first moon landing.

- (2) In this section:

Conditional environmental significance opinion means the opinion in the schedule.

Note Under section 138AD(6) of the Act, the conditional environmental significance opinion and this notice expire 18 months after the day the notice is notified.

Brett Phillips
Delegate of the planning and land authority
14 June 2019

Schedule
(See section 2(2)).



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:

APPLICANT

Parks and Conservation Service, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate as represented by Miranda Gardner, Project Officer.

APPLICATION and DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

The applicant has applied under section 138AA 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 the installation of infrastructure upgrades and new public engagement elements at:

Site 1: the former Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station;
Site 2: the former Orroral Valley Space Tracking Station; and
Site 3: the Orroral Geodetic Observatory

within Namadgi National Park to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the First Moon Landing as described in the submission.

LOCATION

Site 1: Block 120 District of Tennent - Namadgi National Park
Site 2: Block 8 District of Rendezvous Creek - Namadgi National Park
Site 3: Block 88 District of Tennent- Namadgi National Park

MATTERS TO WHICH THIS OPINION APPLIES

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

OPINION

Provided the works are undertaken in the 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 s138AB(4) of the Act.

- all works are to be undertaken in accordance with the mitigation measures contained in the application for an ESO.
- All vehicles and construction equipment must be cleaned prior to entering the national park and be free of weed and soil material.
- Movement of vehicles and machinery is to be limited to existing bitumen roads and there is to be one access point for access to the installation sites.
- Follow up weed control is undertaken on any disturbed areas.

Attached is a Statement of Reasons for the decision.



Ian Walker
Conservator of Flora and Fauna

22 May 2019

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, a species that is vulnerable; protected; or has special protection status;

Two nationally listed species are found in the vicinity of the works:

1. Smoky Mouse *Pseudomys fumeus* listed as endangered pursuant to the Commonwealth's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and the *Nature Conservation Act 2014* (NC Act); and
2. Spotted-tailed Quoll *Dasyurus maculatus* listed as endangered pursuant to the EPBC Act and listed as vulnerable under the NC Act;

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.

The works are within Namadgi National Park.

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

21 July 2019 will mark 50 years since man's first steps on the moon. The ACT Government is funding permanent public works to commemorate the anniversary, further enhance the cultural heritage and visitor amenity of the sites, and link and highlight the role played by three former space sites within the ACT. The sites are:

- Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station;
- Orroral Valley Tracking Station; and
- Orroral Geodetic Observatory.

Site 1: Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station (former)

The following works will be undertaken at the Honeysuckle Creek tracking station site:

- Interpretive hub, including:
 - 3 interpretative hub signs;
 - Star lounge;
 - Relocation of an existing interpretative sign;
- Picnic Shelter; and
- Relocation of Namadgi information signs

Interpretative hub

A new interpretative hub comprising a 6.4 metre diameter space will be sited on the middle flat area of grass between the upslope to the former satellite dish and the down slope to the ground floor of the administrative building.

It is proposed to incorporate:

- Aboriginal artwork covering a 6.4 metre diameter concrete slab;
- Three sculptural steel elements
 - one with a welcome to country,
 - one with an Aboriginal night sky artwork and
 - the third with a conceptual map linking the three space sites – Honeysuckle, Orroral and Geodetic Dome with Ngunnawal pathways overlay;
- A 3.6 metre diameter night sky star gazing lounge located centrally within the interpretative hub; and
- The relocated existing night sky interpretive sign.

The construction sequence will be:

- Fabricate three panels offsite;
- Fabricate star lounge offsite;
- Excavate for footings using backhoe;
- Remove top layer of topsoil and store for later re-use;
- Prepare reinforcement for footings;
- Pour concrete footings on site from concrete trucks;
- Install corten steel signs (once concrete has cured);
- Install powder coated steel star lounge (once concrete has cured);
- Re-landscape the area to match existing conditions.

Picnic Shelter

A proprietary picnic shelter similar to the existing shelter at the former Orroral Valley Tracking station site is proposed for the Honeysuckle site. The structure will be located west of the former forecourt carpark and is sited to align with the centre line of the former satellite dish.

The shelter comprises four timber corner posts (at 4m centres) and sits on a base of Paddy's River gravel

The construction sequence would be:

- Fabricate all elements of shelter offsite;
- Prepare site;
- Pour concrete on site from concrete trucks;
- Install structure; and
- Re-landscape the area to match existing conditions.

Relocated Namadgi Sign

Adjacent to the Picnic Shelter will sit a Namadgi Sign (relocated from the nearby Honeysuckle camp ground). The sign will reuse existing posts and frame and will hold updated information panels.

Moon Walk

The existing 'moon walk' will be upgraded by replacing the current blue reflective markers – most of which are damaged – with reflective paint logos of "moon boot" prints. The prints will be placed at approximately 5 metre intervals along the existing bitumen road route.

Access to the proposed site of the installation would be via existing asphalt roads.

All disturbance arising from these works will be temporary.

Site 2: Orroral Tracking Station

The proposed work at Orroral Valley Tracking Station is an 'interpretive hub' comprising a 4.0 metre diameter concrete slab and artwork replacing an existing

section of narrow concrete pathway. The works have been sited to avoid to improve wayfinding. It is proposed to incorporate:

- An Aboriginal artwork covering a 4.0 metre diameter concrete slab;
- Three sculptural steel elements the same as those to be located at Honeysuckle Creek

These elements would be fixed to the concrete slab below the mosaic artwork and therefore their fixings would not be visible.

The construction sequence would be:

- Fabricate three panels off site;
- Cut out existing pathway;
- Remove top layer of topsoil and store for later re-use;
- Excavate (using backhoe) for 4.0 metre diameter concrete slab;
- Prepare reinforcement;
- Pour concrete slab on site from concrete trucks;
- Install corten steel panels (once concrete has cured);
- Re landscape the area to match existing conditions.

Access to the proposed site of the installation would be via existing asphalt roads.

All disturbance arising from these works will be temporary.

Site 3: Orroral Geodetic Observatory

The proposed work at Orroral Geodetic Observatory is:

- A curved 1790 x 1340mm printed interpretive signage panel fixed to the existing brick wall within the ground floor of the building; and
- A 300 x 420mm printed welcome sign fixed to the external face of the building (near the entry door).

Access to the proposed site of the installation would be via existing trails, by 4WD vehicle or on foot.

All disturbance arising from these works will be temporary.

Documentation Submitted

- Report titled: Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the First Moon Landing – Namadgi National Park – Stage 2;
- Orroral Map of threatened, endangered species;
- Form 1M.

Natural conservation values present

Site 1: Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station Site

The proposed works are all within a cleared area of the site outside of the area mapped as Smoky Mouse habitat.

The site is listed as a developed plot and has no significant regrowth with 90% of it being grassy knoll. The PCS Ranger responsible for the site has advised he believes there are no significant species present. The groundcover is Red Grass (*Bothriochloa macra*) and a handful of Snow Grass (poa sp.). There are some shrubs consisting of Grevillia sp. (a garden escapee) and possibly some Silver Wattle (*Acacia dealbata*). There are no eucalyptus or mature trees in the proposed construction area.

The surrounding blocks are listed as follows, but are not relevant to the proposed construction zone:

- Robertson's Peppermint grass-forb very tall woodland to open forest: Mountain Gum – Snow Gum ±
- Robertson's Peppermint grass-forb very tall woodland to open forest
- Robertson's Peppermint very tall wet sclerophyll open forest

Site 2: Orroral Valley tracking Station Site

No threatened species and communities are present in RENDEZVOUS CREEK – Approval Rural Block 8. The area is listed as habitat for Rosenberg's Monitor, which is not listed as threatened in the ACT or in the EPBC Act, but is listed as Vulnerable in NSW.

The site is listed as a developed plot and has no significant regrowth. There are no eucalyptus or mature trees in the proposed construction area.

The surrounding blocks are listed as follows, but are not relevant to the proposed construction zone:

- Natural Temperate Grassland; and
- Snow Gum – Candelbark tall grassy woodland.

Site 3: Orroral Geodetic Observatory

The Spotted-tailed Quoll is the only threatened species present at TENNENT – Approved Rural Block 88. Although the proposed works fall just within the area mapped as Spotted-tailed Quoll habitat, they will take place within the existing building and have no impact on the surrounding natural areas. The site and surrounding areas are listed as Snow gum – Mountain gum – *Daviesia mimosoides* tall dry grass-shrub subalpine open forest. There will be no impact on vegetation during the proposed works.

Impact on the Reserve

The Tracking Station buildings were demolished in 1992 after no other use could be found for them, and damage by vandals made them a danger to visitors. The satellite

dish that was relocated to Tidbinbilla Tracking station was renamed Deep Space station 46, and remained in use until late 2009. The antenna remains in place at Tidbinbilla as a historical site.

The remnants of Honeysuckle Tracking station remains in situ providing a positive visitor experience giving visitors the opportunity to interpret the site's former use as a space tracking station. The proposed art installation will add to this experience without interfering with the natural values of the area.

Potentially Significant Environmental Impacts

To reduce the potential for impact on the National Park for works are to be undertaken in accordance with the mitigation measures contained in the supporting application for an ESO, as well as the following:

- All vehicles and construction equipment must be cleaned prior to entering the reserve and be free of weed and soil material.
- Movement of vehicles to be limited to one access point for access to each of the installation sites.
- Follow up weed control is undertaken on any disturbed areas.

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.