

Planning and Development (Environmental Significance Opinion – AFP Gas Main Extension) Notice 2014 (No 2)

Notifiable instrument NI2014–658

made under the

Planning and Development Act 2007, s138AD (Requirements in relation to environmental significance opinions)

1 Name of instrument

This instrument is the *Planning and Development (Environmental Significance Opinion – AFP Gas Main Extension) Notice 2014 (No 2)*.

2 Commencement

This instrument commences on the day after notification.

3 Environmental Significance Opinion

An Environmental Significance Opinion has been prepared by the Conservator of Flora and Fauna.

The text of the opinion is shown at Annexure A.

Note: A copy of the opinion may be obtained from the Environment and Planning Directorate website:

http://www.planning.act.gov.au/topics/design-and-build/assessment_of_dev/environmental_assessment/environmental_significance_opinions

4 Completion

The environmental significance opinion and this notice including the text of the opinion expire 18 months after the day the notice is notified.

Dorte Ekelund
Environment and Planning Directorate
12 December 2014



ACT
Government

Environment and Planning

Ms Dorte Ekelund
Chief Planning Executive
ACT Planning and Land Authority
Dame Pattie Menzies Building
DICKSON ACT 2602

Dear Ms Ekelund *Dorte*

This is to advise of my decision, under s.138AB(4) of the *Planning and Development Act 2007*, on the request for an environmental significance opinion for the construction of a 100mm primary gas pipeline from Hackett to the AFP International Training Complex on Majura Road.

The proposal is not likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact on a species or ecological community that is endangered.

Please find attached the Environmental Significance Opinion and a Statement of Reasons for the decision.

Yours sincerely

Dr A. Lane
Conservator of Flora and Fauna

12 December 2014

ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE OPINION

In accordance with section 138AB(4) of the *Planning and Development Act 2007*, I provide the following environmental significance opinion:

PROPONENT

Ms Erin Dethridge, Senior Planner, ZNX c/o Environmental Resources Management Pty Ltd

LOCATION

From MacKenzie Street Hackett, adjacent to Madigan Street, to Block 622 District of Majura, utilising the fire trail through Mt Majura Nature Reserve and the Majura Pine Plantation.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

The project involves the installation of approximately 3,200 metres of 100mm polyethylene gas pipe to service the Australian Federal Police (AFP) International Training Complex on Majura Road.

The proponent wants the application for the development approval assessed for an environmental significance opinion 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.

OPINION

Installation of the pipeline in the manner described in the documentation as submitted is unlikely to cause a significant adverse environmental impact.

Attached is a Statement of Reasons for the decision.



Dr A. Lane
Conservator of Flora and Fauna

12 December 2014

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.

The majority of the proposal traverses Mt Majura Nature Reserve which is within Designated Land and therefore subject to the provisions of the National Capital Plan, not the Territory Plan. As a result, the approval authority for the works within the reserve is the National Capital Authority. However, for a proper assessment of the full environmental impacts, the following documentation includes an assessment of the whole alignment.

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 for an environmental significance opinion (ESO) 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 and known values of the sites.

Project description

The AFP Training Complex located in the Majura Valley currently utilises temporary on-site gas storage. The gas storage capacity at the facility has become insufficient in meeting demand and a permanent supply solution is sought. Various gas supply options were considered by ZNX Pty Ltd and Jemena, on behalf of the AFP, and it has been determined that an extension of the gas main in Hackett was the most feasible solution based on costs and the limited ground disturbance required.

It is proposed to extend the existing gas main from the existing connection on Mackenzie Street Hackett, adjacent to Madigan Street, through the Mount Majura Nature Reserve to the AFP Training Complex on Majura Road. Works will involve the installation of approximately 3,200 metres of 100mm polyethylene (PE) gas pipeline.

The scope of works as proposed by the proponent is as follows:

- The majority of the gas main extension will be mechanically trenched, with three areas of directional case boring where the alignment crosses Mackenzie Street, the Majura Parkway (currently under construction) and Majura Road, including the adjoining drainage line and wetland area.
- The proponent has proposed that the trenching will be approximately 300mm wide and the pipeline will be installed at a minimum depth of 1000mm (up to 1200mm through the Majura Reserve) with a temporary construction zone that will extend to a maximum width of 6m along the alignment.
- Works through the reserve will be located on the northern edge of the existing blue metal fire trail, and will be contained wholly within the trail (less than 4.0m disturbance).
- Material will be progressively returned to the excavated areas to ensure that trenches do not remain open overnight.
- Site restoration works will be undertaken to return all disturbed areas to at least the same condition of the land prior to the commencement of the works.
- A site compound containing amenities, materials and sand stockpiles will be located within the public reserve on the western side of Mackenzie Street.

Documentation Submitted

Reports titled:

- AFP Gas Main Extension, Application for Environmental Significance Opinion (ERM December 2014);
- AFP Gas Main Extension Madigan Street, Hackett to Australian Federal Police Training Complex Majura, Ecological Constraints Assessment (ERM December 2014) A
- FP Gas Main Extension Madigan Street, Hackett to Australian Federal Police Training Complex Majura, Heritage Constraints Report (ERM October 2014)

Heritage Advice (ACT Heritage Council 30 October 2014)

Plans;

Covering letter; and

ESO Application Form 1M.

Natural conservation values present

Mount Majura Nature Reserve contains habitat for orchids listed under the *Nature Conservation Act 1980*. Box Gum Woodland, listed under both the *Nature Conservation Act* and the Commonwealth's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999*, is within the Mount Majura Nature Reserve and adjacent to Majura Road.

The Application for Environmental Significance Opinion report notes "The proposal does not require the removal of any existing trees and the majority of the gas main extension will be contained within suburban parkland and the fire trail/tracks through Mount Majura Reserve and the Majura Pine Plantation. On this basis, the project is not expected to significantly impact on the ACT listed orchid habitat or Box Gum Woodland recorded in the Mount Majura Nature Reserve. The eastern section of the alignment however, namely Majura Blocks 165, 731 and 732 together with the Majura Parkway construction, comprises scattered trees and grassland. A further refined mapping product of the Kowen, Majura and Jerrabomberra districts (Baines *et al.* 2013) identified this section of the alignment within areas of:

- Yellow Box, Apple Box Tall Grassy Woodland (constituting Box Gum Woodland (ACT and EPBC listed threatened ecological community)); and
- Derived Native Grassland (grassland derived from cleared areas of Box Gum Woodland (ACT and EPBC listed threatened ecological community))."

An on-site review of the alignment by the Parks and Conservation Service and Conservation Planning and Research has determined that works outside of the Mt Majura Nature Reserve are in areas that are either exotic pasture, low diversity native pasture or a built area.

Potentially Significant Environmental Impacts

Any departure from Blue Metal track through Mt Majura reserve would result in a significant environmental impact, as the vegetation either side of the track is high

quality Box Gum woodland for much of its length and is known habitat of several significant plant species. As all disturbance is proposed to be within the previously disturbed area of the fire trail then the environmental impact would be low.

The inadvertent introduction of weed material into the area has the potential to impact on the reserve and surrounds. The proponent has indicated that all vehicles accessing the Mt Majura Nature Reserve will be washed down to ensure no weed material is carried into the reserve area and that only weed free sand and material taken from the trench will be utilised to backfill the trench.

A gas pipeline within a main management and fire control track could be problematic over time as future grading of the track may reduce the depth of the pipe. In addition, steep areas (e.g. near the Majura Pines) and/or poor compaction, can cause track erosion or subsidence issues, with the possibility of erosion and sediment deposits impacting on the areas adjacent to the track.

The proponent has undertaken to re-establish the existing road profile to guarantee the current road drainage is maintained. In steeper sections, and that part of the track within Mt Majura Nature Reserve, trench breakers will be installed to prevent subsurface trench line flows. These works will reduce the risk of erosion of the trench and subsequent off site impacts.

As the pipeline through the reserve will be laid within a gravel track that requires frequent maintenance, the proponent carried out an engineering assessment to determine the minimum depth of the trench that would be required to protect the pipeline from the possibility of compression in the future. Activities that may impact on the pipe include:

- use of the track as access for fully laden fire tankers;
- maintenance activities including grading the fire trail and the use of vibratory rollers; and
- future maintenance requirements to the culverts and drainage works.

This work has determined that an additional trench depth is required in order to allow a minimum depth of cover of 1m on top of the main, resulting in an overall trenching depth of 1.2m.

In addition, specific identification (gas main marker tags in accordance with AS4645) will be installed at regular intervals on the culvert head walls to ensure clear and accurate identification of the gas main for all future trail maintenance activities.

The remaining part of the route for which the ESO application applies is either exotic pasture, low diversity native pasture or a built area. There is a low possibility that some of the pasture in the vicinity of the Majura Parkway may be habitat of the

Striped Legless Lizard, recorded about 2.5 km to the south. However, provided the works is done in accordance with the construction notes specified on the plans, any significant impact is likely to be avoided.

It has been determined that the potential for a significant environmental impact is low provided works are in accordance with the documentation as submitted.