

# Planning and Development (Conditional Environmental Significance Opinion – numerous blocks, Belconnen – Replacement of Overhead Wires between Latham and Lawson) Notice 2017

Notifiable Instrument NI2017–131

Made under the

Planning and Development Act 2007 s 138AD (Requirements in relation to environmental significance opinions)

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## 1 Name of instrument

This instrument is the *Planning and Development (Conditional Environmental Significance Opinion – numerous blocks, Belconnen – Replacement of Overhead Wires between Latham and Lawson) Notice 2017*.

## 2 Conditional Environmental Significance Opinion

- (1) On 7 March 2017, 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 the replacement of the existing overhead earth wires with a new hybrid aerial cable, between Latham and Lawson.

- (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.

Dorte Ekelund  
Chief Planning Executive  
18 March 2017

## Schedule

### See section 2(2)

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#### **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**

ActewAGL Distribution, as represented by Trevor Fitzpatrick, Associate Director Purdon Planning Pty Ltd.

#### **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 replacement of the existing overhead earth wires associated with the ActewAGL 132KV network with a new hybrid aerial cable known as optical ground wire in the section of the transmission network between the Belconnen zone substation and the Latham zone substation as described in the submission.

#### **LOCATION**

Numerous blocks within the Belconnen district as detailed within the application. The 132KV line subject to this application commences at Block 1 Section 5 Lawson, traverses the suburbs of Lawson, McKellar, Evatt, Florey and Latham, to the zone substation located within Block 1 Section 14 Latham.

#### **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.

- Stringing equipment and light vehicles travelling between poles are cleaned prior to arriving on site to reduce the risk of weed spread.
- A program to minimise the likely spread and impact of African Lovegrass is developed to the satisfaction of the Conservator of Flora and Fauna prior to work commencing and implemented during operations.

Attached is a Statement of Reasons for the decision.



Dr A. Lane  
Conservator of Flora and Fauna

7 March 2017

## 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;*

The Lawson to Latham section of the ActewAGL 132KV transmission network is approximately 4.5 km in length with 14 towers that support the 132kV transmission line. A small amount of Natural Temperate Grassland is known to occur adjacent to pole 5. The area surrounding the Belconnen Zone Substation has the potential to provide habitat for Golden Sun Moth and Striped Legless Lizard.

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**

The proposal is for the replacement of the existing overhead earth wires associated with the ActewAGL 132KV network with a new hybrid aerial cable known as optical ground wire in the section of the transmission network between the Belconnen Zone Substation (located on Block 1 Section 5 Lawson) to the Latham zone substation (Block 1 Section 14 Latham). The new hybrid cable is to enable ActewAGL to immediately identify the location of any outage and direct repair crews to the correct location.

The cable is to be upgraded for a distance of approximately 4.5 km between 14 towers. The new cable will be strung using stringing machines located at opposite ends of the lines at the Zone Substations.

Using light vehicles, crews will access each tower along the alignment using existing formal and informal access tracks, install temporary rollers on each tower and connect the existing overhead earth wire. The new optical ground wire will then be connected to the existing earth wires. As the existing earth wire is pulled out by the stringing machines, the new optical wire will be pulled onto the temporary rollers. Work crews will then access each tower a final time to clip the optical wire in and remove the temporary rollers

Each stringing machine requires a work area of approximately 10m<sup>2</sup>. Both of the chosen locations is within the managed easement which is cleared of overstorey vegetation. The locations of stringing machines have been determined based on a combination of Occupational Health and Safety, site accessibility, efficiency, and consideration of environmental concerns.

Works are expected to take 1 day and no construction compound is required as the existing sub-station sites will be used for this purpose.

### **Documentation Submitted**

- ActewAGL OPGW Maintenance Works – Multiple Sections Environmental Due Diligence Report (Purdon Planning, September 2016);
- ActewAGL OPGW Maintenance Works – Application for an Environmental Significance Opinion Report (Purdon Planning, October 2016);
- OPGW Cable Specifications;
- Map of Territory Plan land uses;
- Form 1M.

### ***Natural conservation values present***

The areas surrounding the Belconnen Zone Substation has the potential to provide habitat for Golden Sun Moth and Striped Legless Lizard though surveys in 2011 did not record either of these species in this area (Hogg *et al.*, 2011). The other stringing machine will be located north of the Latham Zone Substation in an area within the transmission line easement that is mostly non-native vegetation.

The transmission line is mostly located within a grassy easement for electrical infrastructure. A small amount of Natural Temperate Grassland is known to occur adjacent to pole 5 and in the vicinity of the Lawson Substation. Neither of these patches will be impacted.

Scattered shrubs and trees are adjacent to much of the route; particularly along road verges and Ginninderra Creek. The route has two water crossings; one across Lake Ginninderra between poles 1 and 2 and the second across Ginninderra Creek approximately 100m north of the Lake Ginninderra dam wall.

### **Potentially Significant Environmental Impacts**

The transmission line crosses patches of previously recorded Natural Temperate Grassland near pole 5. A 'no-go zone' has been recommended for this area to ensure potential impacts are avoided.

The ESO does mark some of the patches as no go areas, but has not mapped all patches, some of which are quite small. Nevertheless existing patches are not at the proposed stringing locations, and the light traffic between poles is unlikely to have a significant impact. It is considered that a significant impact on native grassland and wildlife would be avoided provided works are in accordance with the ESO application and the following additional conditions:

- Stringing equipment and light vehicles travelling between poles are cleaned prior to arriving on site to reduce the risk of weed spread.
- A program to minimise the likely spread and impact of African Lovegrass is developed prior to work commencing and implemented during operations.

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.