Australian Capital Territory

Planning and Development (Conditional Environmental Significance Opinion – Block 1553, Belconnen – LWRF Augmentation) Notice 2022

Notifiable instrument NI2022–155

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 – Block 1553, Belconnen – LWRF Augmentation) Notice 2022.*

2 Commencement

This instrument commences on the day after its notification day.

3 Conditional environmental significance opinion

(1) On 25 February 2022, the Conservator of Flora and Fauna pursuant to section 138AB (4) (b) of the *Planning and Development Act 2007* (the ***Act***), gave the Applicant a conditional environmental significance opinion in relation to construction, on Block 1553, Belconnen, of new sludge drying beds at the Liquid Waste Receival Facility at the Lower Molonglo Water Quality Control Centre.

(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.

George Cilliers
Delegate of the planning and land authority
24 March 2022

Schedule

See section 3(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

Icon Water, as represented by Mr Michael Smith, Environmental Scientist.

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 construction of new sludge drying beds at the Liquid Waste Receival Facility at the Lower Molonglo Water Quality Control Centre. as described in the submission.

LOCATION

Block 1553, District of Belconnen, also known as 446 Stockdill Drive.

MATTERS TO WHICH THIS OPINION APPLIES

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

OPINION

Provided the works are undertaken in a manner consistent with the mitigation measures contained in the supporting application for an ESO, they are unlikely to cause a significant adverse environmental impact.

Attached is a Statement of Reasons for the decision.

Ian Walker
Conservator of Flora and Fauna

25 February 2022

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 development that may significantly impact on a species or ecological community that is endangered, a species that is vulnerable; protected; or has special protection status.

There are two critically endangered ecological communities that may occur within 1 km of the site. These are:

- Natural Temperate Grassland of the South-eastern Highlands
- White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland

There is also the potential presence of Pink Tailed Worm Lizard (*Aprasia parapulchella*) within proximity to the construction site.

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 mitigation measures contained in the supporting application.

Project description
Icon Water owns and operates the Lower Molonglo Water Quality Control Centre (LMWQCC), located at 446 Stockdill Drive, Holt ACT. The project described in the application is the customised modification of Bay 2 and the construction of new drying beds at Bay 3, at the Liquid Waste Receival Facility (LWRF) at LMWQCC. These modifications will allow the processing of wastes which have not been able to be treated before at the facility.

The proposed works will have minimal impact to the surrounding environment with the augmentation of existing infrastructure and installation of new drying beds on the western periphery of the existing LWRF.

Documentation Submitted

- ESO Application Form
- Icon Water – CX11250 – LMWQCC Liquid Waste Receival Facility Augmentation Report
- Letter of Authorisation for Environmental Impact Assessment Processes

Natural conservation values present

The greater LMWQCC site is located immediately adjoining the confluence of the Murrumbidgee and Molonglo Rivers. The Molonglo River is located approximately 50m south of the plant and is the discharge point for treated effluent, under an Environmental Authorisation licence with the Environment Protection Authority (EPA). The Murrumbidgee River is located approximately 200 m to the Northwest of the plant. The Molonglo River flows north into the Murrumbidgee River, which eventually flows to the Burrinjuck Dam towards Yass in NSW.

The treatment plant is situated within the natural environment surrounded by a river corridor nature reserve and hilly agricultural land. The general vegetative surrounds of LMWQCC are natural, grassy or vegetated with two broad native vegetation communities, being quite dense *Casuarina cunninghamiana* riparian vegetation and open Grassy Box Gum Woodland, amongst grassy and rocky potential *Aprasia parapulchella* habitat.

Impact on the Reserve

The proposed works will have minimal impact to the surrounding environment with the augmentation of existing infrastructure and installation of new drying beds on the western periphery of the existing LWRF.

The installation of new sludge drying beds will encompass excavation of the area (approximately 25m x 14m) to a depth of approximately 2m. The drying beds will be concreted and also include associated works such as internal pipework installation, leading from the drying beds to the existing LWRF. The site will be fenced in line with existing fencing, with a gravel pathway around the drying beds for vehicular access. Vehicle bollards are to be installed on the southern side of the drying beds.

Sediment and erosion control measures are to be in place during the works and maintained throughout. These controls are to be in line with the *Environment Protection Guidelines for Construction and Development in the ACT*, 2011. Localised landscaping around the drying beds is to be undertaken with any disturbed areas to be rehabilitated, post-installation.

The works will not require the removal of any trees. There are several peripheral eucalypts in proximity to the site. These were planted by Icon Water in the early 2000's and will be protected during works. Rehabilitation is to be undertaken using a native grass seed mix.

Potentially Significant Environmental Impacts

The project site does not exhibit the characteristics of either of the two listed critically endangered communities:

- Natural Temperate Grassland of the South-eastern Highlands

- White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland

The area proposed for the installation of the new drying beds is an open grassed area dominated with exotic species and selected with the location considerate of protected woodland and grasslands that may be present in the area.

The installation site will not impact on the Pink Tailed Worm Lizard (PTWL) habitat that has been identified in proximity to the site. The Pink Tailed Worm Lizard habitat (PTWL) has been previously fenced for other projects to ensure its protection; with star pickets and ribbon for the site across the road. These will be in place during the works and contractors inducted to the potential presence of the PTWL at the site. Protective fencing will be erected on the western edge of the works to protect another patch of potential PTWL habitat from the construction works.

There is a stand of trees present to the southwest of the site. These trees are not to be removed or damaged during the construction process. There is not expected to be any impact on these ecological communities and any risks are to be managed through mitigation measures detailed in the ESO.

It has been determined that if the works are undertaken in a manner consistent with the mitigation measures contained in the supporting application for an ESO, they are unlikely to cause a significant adverse environmental impact.