



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

In accordance with Sec 314 of the *Planning and Development Act 2007* I am writing to recommend changes to the Territory Plan public land overlay provisions. The proposed changes will implement environmental offsets agreed to facilitate development on sites that contain matters of National Environmental Significance under the provisions of the Commonwealth's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC).

Pinnacle Nature Reserve Extension (part Block 1616 District of Belconnen)

Ecological impacts associated with the development of the University of Canberra Public Hospital include the removal of 7.6 hectares of the EPBC Act listed critically endangered ecological community, White Box - Yellow Box - Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland. A range of measures to avoid or mitigate impacts on Matters of National Ecological Significance (MNES) will be implemented as part of the project, however due to residual and unavoidable impacts on Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands, an environmental offset package is required. The agreed direct land offset is that 19.3ha will be incorporated into the Canberra Nature Park (Pinnacle Nature Reserve) in perpetuity for management, protection and enhancement of the Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands. A plan of the area to be incorporated is shown as Attachment A.

The woodland in the Pinnacle Extension qualifies for listing as White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland on the basis of a mixed canopy of Yellow Box (*Eucalyptus melliodora*), Blakely's Red Gum (*E. blakelyi*) and Apple Box (*E. bridgesiana*) over a predominantly native understorey of Tall Spear Grass (*Austrostipa bigeniculata*) and Wallaby grasses (*Rhytidosperma* spp.) with at least 63 species of native forbs and grasses. These characteristics match the formal criteria for the recognition of the critically endangered community (Department of the Environment and Heritage 2006). Approximately 15.5 of the 19.5 ha is Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands (5.1 ha) and derived grasslands (10.4 ha), with the remainder being *E. macrorhyncha* Tableland Grass/Shrub Forest (4 ha).

Justice Robert Hope Park (Block 7 Section 72 Watson)

The development of Block 9 Section 64 Watson for medium density residential units, along with the extension of Negus Crescent to Antill Street, and offsite construction of stormwater works in Justice Robert Hope Park, will significantly impact the EPBC Act critically endangered White Box – Yellow Box - Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland (Box-Gum Grassy Woodland) and Regent Honeyeater (*Anthochaera phrygia*). On 29 November 2013, the Commonwealth Government approved the development subject to conditions.

The conditions include a requirement for the conservation and management of Justice Robert Hope Park to offset the impacts of the development on the Box-Gum Grassy Woodland and the Regent Honeyeater. An offset management plan was required. The offset management plan has been prepared and includes:

- Details of the monitoring program for the EPBC Act critically endangered White Box – Yellow Box - Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland; and
- Measures to conserve the offset area in perpetuity as habitat for the endangered Regent Honeyeater (*Anthochaera phrygia*) and White Box – Yellow Box - Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland

Justice Robert Hope Park is currently urban open space. In order to reflect its primary management objective for the protection of its natural values, it is proposed that its land use should be varied to Hills Ridges and Buffers with a nature reserve overlay.

I look forward to the Variations being progressed at your earliest convenience. Please contact Helen McKeown, Conservator Liaison Officer, if further information is required.

Yours sincerely

Dr A. Lane
Conservator of Flora and Fauna

March 2015



