

Analysis of Possible Zoning Options

Zoning	Opportunities (including off-sets)	Constraints	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
General Comment	<p>Around 75% of the Commercial CZ6 Leisure and Accommodation zoned area currently meets (or could easily meet) EPBC Act definition of endangered Box Gum community.</p> <p>If no development occurs, the land could become an advance offset) and be used as an offset for other development elsewhere in the ACT. Rezoning would be associated and undertaken as a part of the EPBC offset against future development to maximise “offset credit”.</p> <p>Further consideration is required regarding ongoing management of horses, so as not to reduce the quality of the woodland.</p>	<p>Land location in bushfire prone area on the edge of the urban area.</p> <p>No (residential) development permitted on land with a BAL29 or higher level. Bushfire assessment required.</p> <p>Edge road required.</p> <p>Any development on the 75% EPBC listed Boxgum will need to be offset - alternative site needs to be found and have similar values. Offset requirements is likely to be at least 1:3 or higher if the woodland offset is of lower quality.</p> <p>Any development will need to be protected through bushfire asset protection zones (IAPZ) (possibly 60m IAPZ and 0m Outer Asset Protection Zone) as the site is adjacent to a nature reserve. The IAPZ would also trigger the need for offset.</p>				

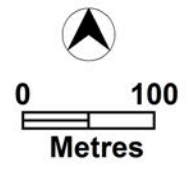
Zoning	Opportunities (including off-sets)	Constraints	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
		<p>If rezoning to Non Urban NUZ3 Hills, Ridges and Buffer occurred in the short term and is not linked to another development offset, the ACT losses a significant “offset credit” opportunity. Possible option to rezone to NUZ3 (not NR) but “offset credit” will not be as high.</p> <p>Any development will require the number of agisted horses to be reduced. May also result in the paddock complex becoming too small to manage efficiently (currently 10-12 horses) and alternative paddocks need to be found elsewhere.</p> <p>There is an existing short-term lease of 2.5ha with a dwelling and its curtilage.</p>				

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Existing Zoning Commercial CZ6 Leisure and Accommodation	<p>Can be used for entertainment, commercial accommodation, leisure, community uses.</p> <p>Minimal demand for these uses, particularly on the urban edge and somewhat away from services and activities.</p> <p>The site is already zoned for CZ6 development. It could be rezoned for other purposes. Much of North Watson already allows residential use. Either option would require a full variation to the Territory Plan.</p>	<p>Current zoning does not meet the <i>ACT Planning Strategy, 2018</i> Strategic Direction 1.1 of delivering up to 70% new housing in the existing urban area objective, because residential uses are not permitted in the CZ6 zone.</p> <p>Rezoning or adding residential to achieve Strategic Direction of the Planning Strategy.</p> <p>Community views may not be positive for CZ6 development and would likely impact maintenance of environmental values.</p> <p>Infrastructure to service would need to be extended / augmented.</p> <p>Environmental off-sets would be required for development of this land for CZ6 uses.</p>				
Other commercial zones:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CZ1 Core</li> </ul>	N/A	Usually Commercial Core zoning would be located in Group or Town Centres. Due to location on the urban edge, this is not considered an appropriate				

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		location for this type of Centre and it would disrupt the Commercial Centres Hierarchy.				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CZ2 Business</li> </ul>	N/A	This zone is usually allocated for office purposes and major employment locations, such as Deakin and Dickson. This zone is often located in Town Centres and Group centres and is thus not suitable due to, disruption to the Commercial Centres Hierarchy and inappropriate location for a major employment location at the urban edge.				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CZ3 Service Trades</li> </ul>	N/A	Trade services zones are usually located close to a town centre and for the reasons under CZ1 core above, this site is not desirable for a Town Centre due to its location on the urban edge and the proximity of Civic and Gungahlin Town Centres.				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CZ4 Local Centre</li> </ul>	N/A	Watson and Hackett already have local centres and there is no need for an additional local centre on the urban edge.				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CZ5 Mixed Use</li> </ul>	There is some potential for this use and would meet the strategic direction of providing	Limited potential for mixed use development due to its location on the urban edge in a bushfire prone area and constraints				

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	70% of housing within the existing urban area	regarding additional EPBC offsets at a ratio of at least 1:3.				
<b>Residential Zones</b>						
<b>RZ1, RZ2, RZ3, R4, R5</b>	Potential as other residential development at the site is located within North Watson. Already zoned for development, could be rezoned to another development zone which allows residential use.	Rezoning required.  Not close to services.				
<b>Community Facility Zone</b>	Would enable additional community facility land in north Canberra. The Ted Noffs Foundation currently used as a drug rehabilitation facility would meet some of the zone objectives for this zone and protect this use from competition from other uses in the longer-term. This use is appropriate for its purpose being somewhat removed from current urban uses.	Sensitive and vulnerable uses not broadly desirable in Bushfire Prone Area. Further community uses are not desirable and there is limited accessibility due to the location on the urban edge and would not protect the surrounding residential amenity due to impact from additional traffic and parking.				
<b>Non-Urban zones</b>	NUZ1 could protect existing landscape	NUZ4 would not be a suitable zone because it is not in a river				

Zoning	Opportunities (including off-sets)	Constraints	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NUZ1 Broadacre</li> <li>• NUZ2 Rural</li> <li>• NUZ3 Hills Ridges and Buffer</li> <li>• NUZ4 River Corridor</li> <li>• NUZ5 Mountains and Bushland</li> </ul>	<p>character while providing an opportunity to be considered for future urban purposes. NUZ2 is generally to provide for agricultural purposes and for horse agistment purposes and would reflect the current use of the land. NUZ3 is likely to be appropriate as it is the same zone to the north, south and Waston Woodlands section 76 to the east. The land in the designated area, administered by the National Capital Authority is zoned Hills, Ridges and Buffer in the National Capital Plan.</p>	<p>corridor. The purpose of this zone is to achieve protection of the integrity of riparian areas. NUZ5 seeks to preserve water supply and protect ecological resources by conserving vegetation communities in a relatively undisturbed state. It is, therefore, not an appropriate zone as the majority of the land has already been used for the purposes of horse agistment.</p>				



Aspinall Street

Negus Crescent

Justice Robert Hope Park

Antill Street

Homestead and curtilage

Ted Noffs Foundation


75


86

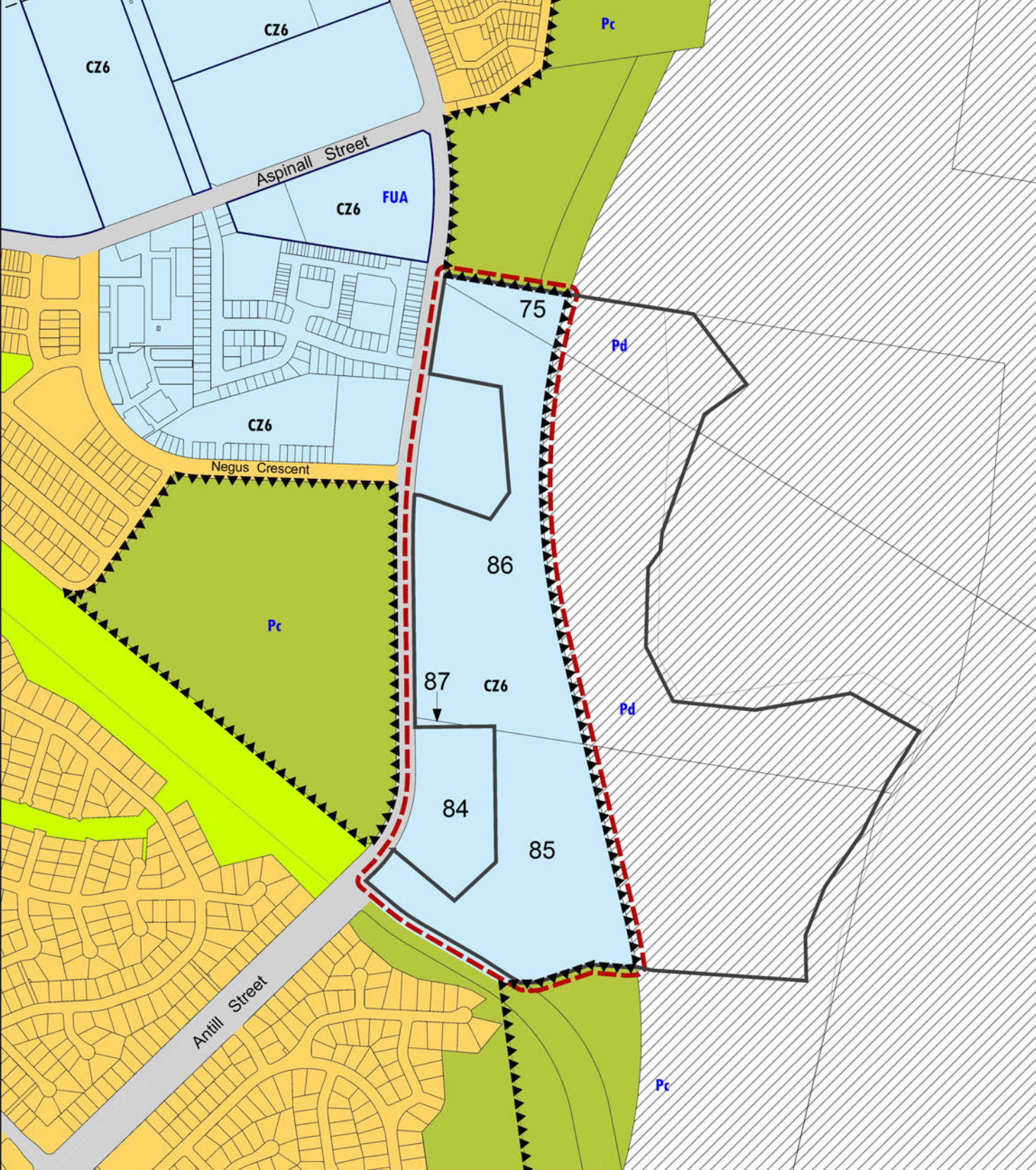
87

84

85

 Subject area

 High voltage powerlines



**Territory Plan Zones and Overlays**

Subject area      Horse paddock

**Designated Areas:**  
 See National Capital Plan

**Residential:**  
 RZ1 - Suburban

**Commercial:**  
 CZ6 CZ6 - Leisure and Accommodation

**Parks and Recreation:**  
 PRZ1 - Urban Open Space

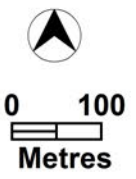
**Transport and Services:**  
 TSZ1 - Transport

**Non-Urban:**  
 NUZ3 - Hills, Ridges and Buffer

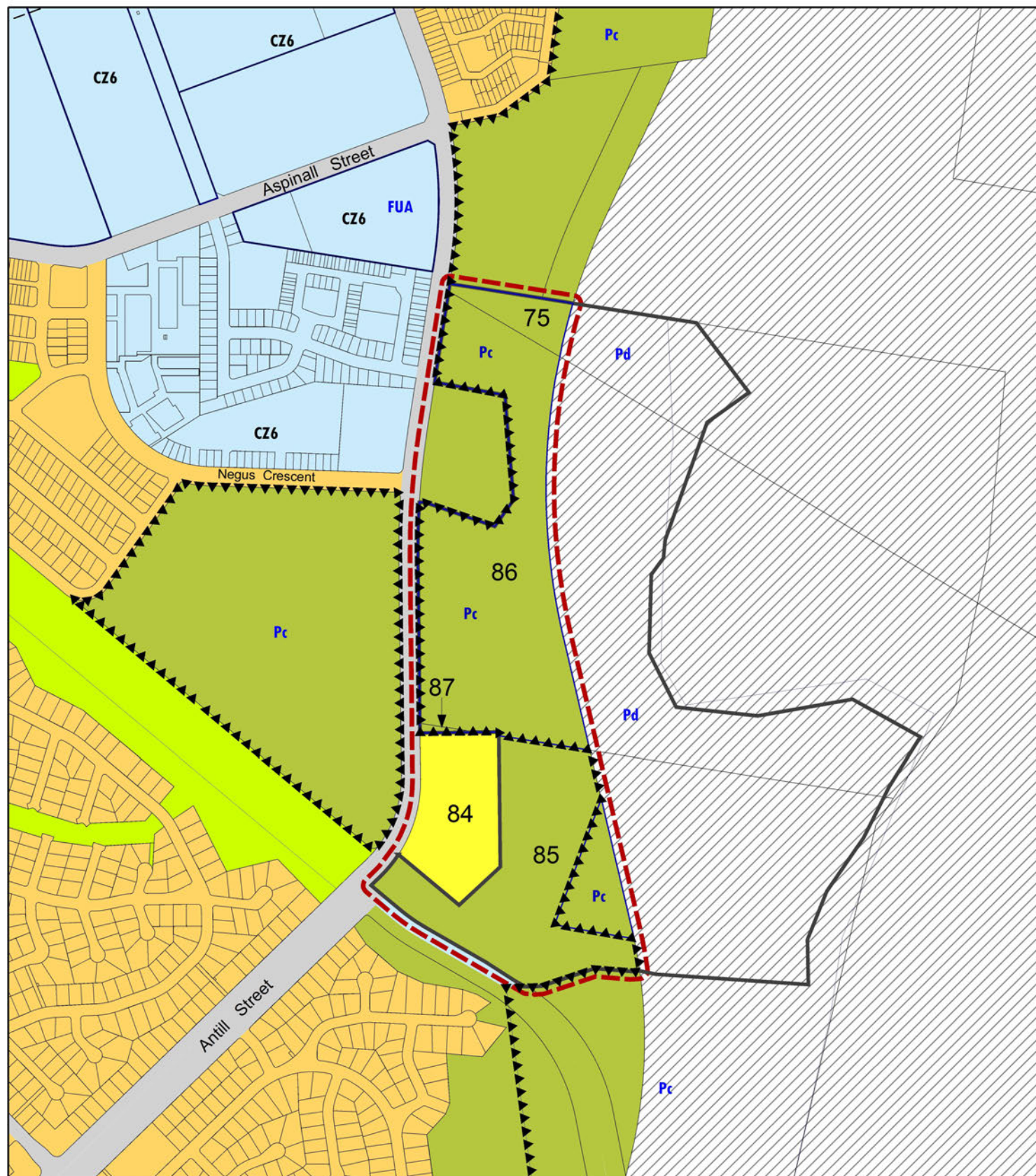
**FUA** Future Urban Area

**Public Land**, arrows point inwards and encompass the type of public land reserve listed below (see also Chapter 10 of the Planning and Development Act 2007)

**Pa-i** **Type of Public Land Reserve:** (see also Schedule 3 of the Planning and Development Act 2007)  
 Pc - a nature reserve  
 Pd - a special purpose reserve



**WATSON**



**Territory Plan Zones and Overlays**

Subject area    Horse paddock

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 See National Capital Plan

**Residential:**  
 RZ1 - Suburban

**Commercial:**  
 CZ6 - Leisure and Accommodation

**Parks and Recreation:**  
 PRZ1 - Urban Open Space

**Transport and Services:**  
 TSZ1 - Transport

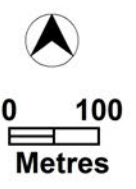
**Non-Urban:**  
 NUZ3 - Hills, Ridges and Buffer

**Community Facility:**  
 CFZ - Community Facility

FUA Future Urban Area

Public Land, arrows point inwards and encompass the type of public land reserve listed below (see also Chapter 10 of the Planning and Development Act 2007)

Pa-i  
**Type of Public Land Reserve:**  
 (see also Schedule 3 of the Planning and Development Act 2007)  
 Pc - a nature reserve  
 Pd - a special purpose reserve



**WATSON**

**From:** [Kaucz, Alix](#)  
**To:** [Ridsdale, Janine](#)  
**Subject:** FW: For Action: Assembly Resolution -Yellow Box Woodland Ecosystems - Protection  
**Date:** Thursday, 5 March 2020 12:56:56 PM  
**Attachments:** [EPSDD - Yellow Box Woodland Ecosystems - Protection.pdf](#)

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UNCLASSIFIED Sensitive: Cabinet

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**From:** Cameron, Lesley <[Lesley.Cameron@act.gov.au](mailto:Lesley.Cameron@act.gov.au)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 4 March 2020 2:18 PM  
**To:** Kaucz, Alix <[Alix.Kaucz@act.gov.au](mailto:Alix.Kaucz@act.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** FW: For Action: Assembly Resolution -Yellow Box Woodland Ecosystems - Protection

UNCLASSIFIED Sensitive: Cabinet

fyi

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**From:** Rutledge, Geoffrey <[Geoffrey.Rutledge@act.gov.au](mailto:Geoffrey.Rutledge@act.gov.au)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 4 March 2020 1:33 PM  
**To:** Cameron, Lesley <[Lesley.Cameron@act.gov.au](mailto:Lesley.Cameron@act.gov.au)>  
**Cc:** Crisp, Sarah <[Sarah.Crisp@act.gov.au](mailto:Sarah.Crisp@act.gov.au)>; Edgar, Olivia <[Olivia.Edgar@act.gov.au](mailto:Olivia.Edgar@act.gov.au)>; Fitzgerald, Bruce <[Bruce.Fitzgerald@act.gov.au](mailto:Bruce.Fitzgerald@act.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** RE: For Action: Assembly Resolution -Yellow Box Woodland Ecosystems - Protection

UNCLASSIFIED  
Sensitive: Cabinet

Lesley,

Can you keep us in the loop.

The Watson Community Association has already reached out to us and Minister Stephen-Smith about this, following The RiotAct article [https://the-riotact.com/win-for-woodland-reserve-as-mt-majura-protected-from-development/358910?utm\\_medium=facebook&utm\\_source=ra](https://the-riotact.com/win-for-woodland-reserve-as-mt-majura-protected-from-development/358910?utm_medium=facebook&utm_source=ra)

Minister Stephen-Smith and our Urban Renewal Team have been active with the Watson Community Association particularly with Section 74 and 76.

Geoffrey

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**From:** Brady, Erin <[Erin.Brady@act.gov.au](mailto:Erin.Brady@act.gov.au)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 4 March 2020 10:55 AM  
**To:** Cameron, Lesley <[Lesley.Cameron@act.gov.au](mailto:Lesley.Cameron@act.gov.au)>  
**Cc:** Crisp, Sarah <[Sarah.Crisp@act.gov.au](mailto:Sarah.Crisp@act.gov.au)>; EPSD Government Services <[EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au](mailto:EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au)>; Rutledge, Geoffrey <[Geoffrey.Rutledge@act.gov.au](mailto:Geoffrey.Rutledge@act.gov.au)>; Buckley, Jackelyn <[Jackelyn.Buckley@act.gov.au](mailto:Jackelyn.Buckley@act.gov.au)>; McKenzie, Brendan

<[Brendan.McKenzie@act.gov.au](mailto:Brendan.McKenzie@act.gov.au)>

**Subject:** FW: For Action: Assembly Resolution -Yellow Box Woodland Ecosystems - Protection

UNCLASSIFIED Sensitive: Cabinet

Lesley

Could you please allocate this one as a study to address the motion/consideration and for reporting back?

Can you get someone to map out the timing and proposed approach and let's discuss at our catch up .

Thank you

Erin

**Dr Erin Brady | Deputy Director-General**

**Land Strategy & Environment**

Ph: +61 2 6205 4522 | Email: [Erin.Brady@act.gov.au](mailto:Erin.Brady@act.gov.au)

**Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate | ACT Government**

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**From:** Ponton, Ben <[Ben.Ponton@act.gov.au](mailto:Ben.Ponton@act.gov.au)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, 4 March 2020 10:42 AM

**To:** Brady, Erin <[Erin.Brady@act.gov.au](mailto:Erin.Brady@act.gov.au)>

**Cc:** Rutledge, Geoffrey <[Geoffrey.Rutledge@act.gov.au](mailto:Geoffrey.Rutledge@act.gov.au)>; Cameron, Lesley <[Lesley.Cameron@act.gov.au](mailto:Lesley.Cameron@act.gov.au)>; Marcantonio, Laura <[Laura.Marcantonio@act.gov.au](mailto:Laura.Marcantonio@act.gov.au)>; Crisp, Sarah <[Sarah.Crisp@act.gov.au](mailto:Sarah.Crisp@act.gov.au)>; Kaucz, Alix <[Alix.Kaucz@act.gov.au](mailto:Alix.Kaucz@act.gov.au)>; EPSD Government Services <[EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au](mailto:EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au)>

**Subject:** FW: For Action: Assembly Resolution -Yellow Box Woodland Ecosystems - Protection

UNCLASSIFIED Sensitive: Cabinet

Hi Erin – another one for the Land, Planning and Building Policy team... please note the requirement to report back this year.

Geoffrey may also have an interest in this one from an Urban Renewal Perspective. Thanks.

Cheers.

B

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Ben Ponton | Director-General

**Phone +61 2 6207 8359**

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**From:** Darville, Pam <[Pam.Darville@act.gov.au](mailto:Pam.Darville@act.gov.au)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, 4 March 2020 9:10 AM

**To:** Ponton, Ben <[Ben.Ponton@act.gov.au](mailto:Ben.Ponton@act.gov.au)>

**Cc:** EPSD Government Services <[EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au](mailto:EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au)>; Pearce, HannahL <[HannahL.Pearce@act.gov.au](mailto:HannahL.Pearce@act.gov.au)>

**Subject:** For Action: Assembly Resolution -Yellow Box Woodland Ecosystems - Protection

UNCLASSIFIED Sensitive: Cabinet

Ben Ponton

Director-General

Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate

**Resolution of the Assembly 20 February 2020 – Crossbench Executive Members Business - Yellow Box Woodland Ecosystems - Protection**

On 2 March the Speaker wrote to the Minister for Planning and Land Management (letter attached) advising the Assembly had passed the above motion – **Yellow Box Woodland Ecosystems – Protection.**

This Resolution is a matter for the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate to progress.

If you have any queries concerning this advice please contact me on 62050543.

Cheers

**Pam Darville**

**Director – Assembly and Government Business Coordination**

Phone: +61 2 6205 0543 | Mobile: [REDACTED] | Email: [pam.darville@act.gov.au](mailto:pam.darville@act.gov.au)

Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate | ACT Government

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ACT 2601 [www.act.gov.au](http://www.act.gov.au)



## Speaker

Mr Mick Gentleman MLA  
Minister for Planning and Land Management  
Legislative Assembly for the ACT  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Minister

### **YELLOW BOX WOODLAND ECOSYSTEMS—PROTECTION**


At its meeting on Thursday, 20 February 2020, the Assembly passed the following resolution:

“That this Assembly:

- (1) notes:
  - (a) Yellow Box-Blakeley’s Red Gum Grassy Woodland (Yellow Box Woodland) is endangered in the ACT;
  - (b) unleased Territory land east of Antill Street, North Watson, contains significant Yellow Box Woodland conservation values, such as old growth, hollow bearing Yellow Box trees, as well as listed wildlife such as Rosenberg’s Monitor;
  - (c) the land east of Antill Street is currently zoned as CZ6—Leisure and Accommodation, which allows for dense residential development;
  - (d) preserving this land from development would protect the existing endangered Yellow Box Woodland, and provide a buffer between the urban environment and the remaining Mount Majura Nature Reserve; and
  - (e) the important conservation values of this area would be heavily impacted by Monash Drive if it were built, which the National Capital Authority has refused to remove from the National Capital Plan; and
- (2) calls on the ACT Government to:
  - (a) commit to preserving and protecting Yellow Box Woodland ecosystems in the ACT from damage and urban encroachment;
  - (b) investigate rezoning the unleased Territory land east of Antill Street (section 84 block 1, section 85 block 1 (part), section 86 block 1, section 87 block 1 and section 75 block 7 (part)) to protect it from development and preserve its Yellow Box Woodland; and

- (c) report to the Assembly on the investigation into the rezoning and the status of the Yellow Box Woodland by August 2020.”.

Yours faithfully



Joy Burch MLA  
Speaker

2 March 2020

**From:** [Kaucz, Alix](#)  
**To:** [Ridsdale, Janine](#); [Moser, Sonya](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Request for CNRF - 20/XXX - Cabinet - Response to Assembly Resolution of 20 February 2020 - Yellow Box Woodland Ecosystems - Protection  
**Date:** Friday, 13 March 2020 4:42:52 PM  
**Attachments:** [EPSDD - Yellow Box Woodland Ecosystems - Protection.pdf](#)  
[00. Cabinet Request No. form.obr](#)

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UNCLASSIFIED Sensitive: Cabinet

Hi Janine & Sonya

I'm not sure if this request to go to Cabinet in August means that we don't have to start preparing a TPV? I'll confirm with Leslie but it might be good to discuss with Parks first re intent to rezone to reserve.

Janine – I'm not sure if it would be Trish Bootes' area or Sophie's (or somebody elses) – one of them may be able to advise further if you gave them a call

Alix

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**From:** EPSD Government Services <EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Friday, 13 March 2020 12:15 PM  
**To:** Kaucz, Alix <Alix.Kaucz@act.gov.au>  
**Cc:** Buckley, Jackelyn <Jackelyn.Buckley@act.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Request for CNRF - 20/XXX - Cabinet - Response to Assembly Resolution of 20 February 2020 - Yellow Box Woodland Ecosystems - Protection

UNCLASSIFIED Sensitive: Cabinet

Hi Alix

Has this been discussed with you yet as it's been allocated to EPSDD for action?

At this stage we've set down a tentative Cabinet date for 18 August to meet the last Assembly sitting period, 25-28 August.

Could you let us know who in your team who will be working on it by filling in the Cab. request form? We'll then provide it to Minister Gentleman's office to agree to the Cabinet/Assembly date.

Thank you

Cara  
78449

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**From:** Brady, Erin <[Erin.Brady@act.gov.au](mailto:Erin.Brady@act.gov.au)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 4 March 2020 10:55 AM  
**To:** Cameron, Lesley <[Lesley.Cameron@act.gov.au](mailto:Lesley.Cameron@act.gov.au)>  
**Cc:** Crisp, Sarah <[Sarah.Crisp@act.gov.au](mailto:Sarah.Crisp@act.gov.au)>; EPSD Government Services

<[EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au](mailto:EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au)>; Rutledge, Geoffrey <[Geoffrey.Rutledge@act.gov.au](mailto:Geoffrey.Rutledge@act.gov.au)>; Buckley, Jackelyn <[Jackelyn.Buckley@act.gov.au](mailto:Jackelyn.Buckley@act.gov.au)>; McKenzie, Brendan <[Brendan.McKenzie@act.gov.au](mailto:Brendan.McKenzie@act.gov.au)>

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B

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Ben Ponton | Director-General

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**From:** Darville, Pam <[Pam.Darville@act.gov.au](mailto:Pam.Darville@act.gov.au)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 4 March 2020 9:10 AM  
**To:** Ponton, Ben <[Ben.Ponton@act.gov.au](mailto:Ben.Ponton@act.gov.au)>  
**Cc:** EPSD Government Services <[EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au](mailto:EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au)>; Pearce, HannahL <[HannahL.Pearce@act.gov.au](mailto:HannahL.Pearce@act.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** For Action: Assembly Resolution -Yellow Box Woodland Ecosystems - Protection

UNCLASSIFIED Sensitive: Cabinet

Ben Ponton  
Director-General  
Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate

**Resolution of the Assembly 20 February 2020 -- Crossbench Executive Members Business - Yellow Box Woodland Ecosystems - Protection**

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This Resolution is a matter for the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate to progress.

If you have any queries concerning this advice please contact me on 62050543.

Cheers

**Pam Darville**

**Director – Assembly and Government Business Coordination**

Phone: +61 2 6205 0543 | Mobile: [REDACTED] | Email: [pam.darville@act.gov.au](mailto:pam.darville@act.gov.au)

Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate | ACT Government

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ACT 2601 [www.act.gov.au](http://www.act.gov.au)

**From:** [McInnes, Clare](#)  
**To:** [Ridsdale, Janine](#); [Baines, Greg](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Yellow Box Woodland protection - north Watson  
**Date:** Friday, 20 March 2020 9:22:06 AM

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UNCLASSIFIED

Sensitive

Hi Janine and Greg,

As I can't make it to the catch up, here is some info to assist with discussion:

1. Site includes horse paddocks – will require consultation with Warren Schofield on implications
2. There is a resident in block 86
3. PCS currently undertakes some works on site to control rabbits as part of landscape scale approach
4. Consider risks to offset opportunities if place in reserve now.
5. Could manage as advanced offset.
6. We will need funds – can undertake costs analysis to inform cab sub

Cheers,

Clare

**Clare McInnes** | Director- Urban Reserves

ACT Parks and Conservation Service | Environment and Planning Directorate

Athllon Depot Cnr Athllon & Sulwood Dr Farrer

GPO Box 158 Canberra City ACT 2601

mobile: [REDACTED] | email: [clare.mcinnnes@act.gov.au](mailto:clare.mcinnnes@act.gov.au)

-----Original Appointment-----

**From:** Ridsdale, Janine <[Janine.Ridsdale@act.gov.au](mailto:Janine.Ridsdale@act.gov.au)>

**Sent:** Monday, 16 March 2020 2:38 PM

**To:** Ridsdale, Janine; Moser, Sonya; McInnes, Clare

**Cc:** Jeffress, Stuart; Baines, Greg; Lynch, Jasmyn; Botha, Johannes

**Subject:** Yellow Box Woodland protection - north Watson

**When:** Friday, 20 March 2020 9:30 AM-10:00 AM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney.

**Where:** DPMH, Conference Rm ,Level 3 North Building (12-20 People, Ceiling Screen, Wall White Board, Overhead Projector)

<< File: EPSDD - Yellow Box Woodland Ecosystems - Protection.pdf >>

Hi Clare

Territory Plan Section has received the attached advice regarding the Assembly Resolution that was passed on 20 Feb 2020 and has been tasked with preparing the cabinet submission to report back to the Assembly on the investigation into the rezoning and status of the Yellow Box Woodland by August 2020.

We would like to discuss this matter with PCS in terms of the investigation / study that would need to be undertaken into the site before preparation of the draft variation can commence and also PCS's advice on the declaration of a reserve and how it is going to be managed.

Many thanks,

Regards

Janine

**From:** [Mulvaney, Michael](#)  
**To:** [Ridsdale, Janine](#)  
**Cc:** [Baines, Greg](#); [Jeffress, Stuart](#); [Schofield, Warren](#); [Watts, Michaela](#); [Bootes, Trish](#)  
**Subject:** Watson horse paddocks  
**Date:** Thursday, 7 May 2020 10:55:27 AM  
**Attachments:** [Watson Horse Paddocks Ecological Assessment \(MM\).docx](#)

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UNCLASSIFIED

Janine

I understand Greg Baines has spoken to you about this report. I have been given little information about what is required other than I have tried to address the assembly resolutions. Hope this is what you are after.

Cheers Michael Mulvaney

## Watson Horse Paddocks – Ecological Assessment

### Block 1 Sections 85, 86 and 87 Watson and part Block 7 Section 75

Investigation by Dr Michael Mulvaney, Senior Environmental Planner, Conservator Liaison 23/3/2020

#### Background

I previously inspected the Watson/Hackett horse paddocks in September 2013. At that time the horse paddocks covered 67ha, of which the upper 40ha supported a mix of moderate condition Box Gum Woodland and high condition Open Forest. The vegetated 40ha are designated lands under the National Capital Plan.

Following this inspection and letters to the Minister from local community groups, about 20.5 ha of land mainly within the Hackett component was added to Mt Majura Nature reserve. (Territory Plan Variation 297 <https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/View/ni/2014-552/20141028-59322/PDF/2014-552.PDF>)

This left a portion of about 27 ha of public reserve (horse paddock) within the Commonwealth's designated lands (supporting Box Gum woodland and Open Forest) and a lower area of about 27 hectares consisting of Block 1 Sections 84, 85, 86 and 87 Watson and part Block 7 Section 75 Watson. These lands are zoned CZ6 Leisure and Accommodation under the Territory Plan and are not designated lands. In 2013 the understorey of these lands largely comprised of exotic grasses, (such as Phalaris and Cocksfoot) and herbs (Paterson's curse, clovers and Ribwort).

Section 84 is a 3.3. ha developed area of gardens and buildings and is the Ted Noff health facility.



**Map 1 – Current Land Zoning**

Light Blue = CZ6 investigation lands

White hashed black = designated land

Inside dark blue boundary = land added to Mt Majura Reserve in Territory Plan Variation 297

Land above (to the east) of the lower dark blue boundary line is Mt Majura Nature Reserve

Land below (to the west) of the dark blue boundary line is Watson Horse paddocks

Watson Woodlands is Section 72

My 2013 assessment recognised the current and potential significance of the lower area (CZ6) as woodland bird habitat and recommended that connections across the lands be further planted and incorporated into Mt Majura Nature Reserve. This recommendation was not enacted.

On 20<sup>th</sup> February 2020 the Legislative Assembly passed a resolution that amongst other things, called for an assessment to

- investigate rezoning the unleased Territory land east of Antill Street (section 84 block 1, section 85 block 1 (part), section 86 block 1, section 87 block 1 and section 75 block 7 (part)) to protect it from development and preserve its Yellow Box Woodland; and
- report to the Assembly on the investigation into the rezoning and the status of the Yellow Box Woodland by August 2020.

I have excluded Section 84 block 1 from this ecological assessment as it is occupied by the Ted Noff drug rehabilitation centre.

### **Vegetation (of CZ6 lands)**

The majority of the land can be classified as **u178** Yellow Box- Apple Box Tall Grassy Woodland of the South Eastern Highlands Bioregion, which is part of the ACT and Commonwealth Yellow Box – Blakely's Red Gum critically endangered woodland community listings. Yellow Box (*Eucalyptus melliodora*), Apple Box (*Eucalyptus bridgesiana*) and Blakely's Red Gum (*Eucalyptus blakelyi*) shade about 50% of the lands. There are 29 large hollow bearing Yellow Box trees, six large hollow bearing Apple Box trees, three large hollow bearing Blakely's Red gums, one hollow bearing Candle Gum (*Eucalyptus rubida*) and six dead trees with hollows.

There is a mix of tree ages and a few hundred trees, including saplings and seedlings. The shrub layer is very sparse with species including Hickory Wattles (*Acacia implexa*) and Kurrajongs (*Brachychiton populneum*).

Probably as a result of the very dry last three years the exotic pasture grasses that once dominated the understorey of the lands have markedly reduced in extent. Overgrazing by rabbits, Kangaroo's and horses has created 15 -20% bare earth across the lands. Presently the native annual Small Crumbweed (*Dysphania pumilio*) covers around 30-40% of the land, taking advantage of the bare earth and recent rainfall.

The definition of native vegetation under the *Nature Conservation Act 2014* and the criteria for consideration of vegetation as critically endangered Yellow Box – Blakely's Red Gum woodland under the Commonwealth's *Environment Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, both require that more than 50% of the perennial understorey be native. Thus, the extent of Small Crumbweed (an annual) is immaterial to how the vegetation is classified.

The perennial understorey of Watson Section 75 Block 7 is predominately native. Common native perennial understorey plants in this area include Slender Speargrass (*Austrostipa scabra subsp. falcata*), Redleg Grass (*Bothriochloa macra*), Nine-awned Grass (*Enneapogon nigricans*) and Hairy Panic (*Panicum effusum*).

These native perennial grasses also dominate much of Sections 85, 86 and 87, while another native grass, Weeping Grass (*Microlaena stipoides*) is also a dominant species, particularly within areas shaded by trees. Around 75% of the area currently meets both the definitions for being endangered Box Gum Woodland and native vegetation. Native grasses dominate the drier steeper and upper slopes, while exotic species including Phalaris (*Phalaris aquatica*), Cocksfoot (*Dactylis glomerata*) Paterson's Curse (*Echium plantagineum*) and Ribwort (*Plantago lanceolata*) occur within the drainage lines and on the lower slopes of Block 85.

It is important to note that vegetation is dynamic and that the percentage cover of perennial understorey species will change with climatic conditions and management actions. In this case native species will make

up a higher percentage of the understorey during dry and hot times, while wet and cool conditions will favour exotics.

It is also worth noting that the current condition of the Watson horse paddocks is like that of Watson woodlands at the time that these woodlands were first put under conservation management. Since that time restoration efforts have seen the development of an abundant sapling layer, a planted shrub layer and an understorey with both an increased native cover and diversity. In my opinion Watson horse paddocks are in a better condition and diversity than the initial case at Watson woodlands, and that the regeneration and habitat enhancements that have occurred there could easily be replicated at the horse paddocks.

Lists of species observed during a four-hour inspection are attached for Sections 75 (part7), Sections 86 + 87 and section 85. Most of the area has a low to moderate diversity of native plants and is in a low to moderate condition. A small part of section 85, in the south east, is fenced off from horses and supports a moderate Box Gum understorey diversity. No threatened or regional rare species were observed within the investigation lands, but a dam just to the south and another dam in Watson Woodlands are the only two recent known locations of Nardoo (*Marsilea mutica*) in the ACT and could possibly be translocated to a dam within the house paddock in Section 86.

Section 86 includes a house block and house paddock, which has been occupied for over 40 years by the current lease holder.



**Native grass on higher drier areas, exotic understorey in drainage lines, landscape consists of large trees over grassland.**



**Crumbweed (photo Michael Bedingfield)   Largely Crumbweed in paddock**



**Woodland connection across Section 86**

### House paddock showing signs of overgrazing



### Regional Context

Mt Majura is part of the largest remaining remnant of Yellow Box – Blakely’s Red Gum woodland anywhere. This large remnant includes woodland on Mt Ainslie to the south and woodland in the Gorooyarroo, Mulligan’s Flat and Kinleyside nature reserves to the north. This large woodland area is well connected to the wider landscape of south-eastern Australia via links to the Murrumbidgee and then Namadgi and then onto the Great Eastern Ranges ecological network, and through vegetation to the north-east of the ACT (Greater Gorooyarroo) and then into the South-West Flyway (a woodland connection across central NSW) (Mulvaney 2012)

Given its large size and good landscape connection, it is not surprising that the woodland complex of which the Watson horse paddocks are a small part, are a significant habitat of many threatened woodland species, both from a regional and national perspective. The complex is a key habitat area for woodland birds.

Much of the Box Gum woodland conserved within the ACT is on mid or upper slopes, with lower areas typically cleared for agriculture or developed for suburbs. From a woodland bird perspective, the best woodland habitat occurs lower in the landscape, where soils are deep and relatively moist and nutrient rich. Such soils produce large hollow-bearing trees bearing much nectar and pollen as well as extensive leaf growth and invertebrates. The hotspots for threatened and declining woodland birds within the ACT are all in these lower areas, including the Naas Valley and Kama, Mulligans Flat and Callum Brae nature reserves, as well as Campbell Park on the south-western lower slope of Mt Ainslie.

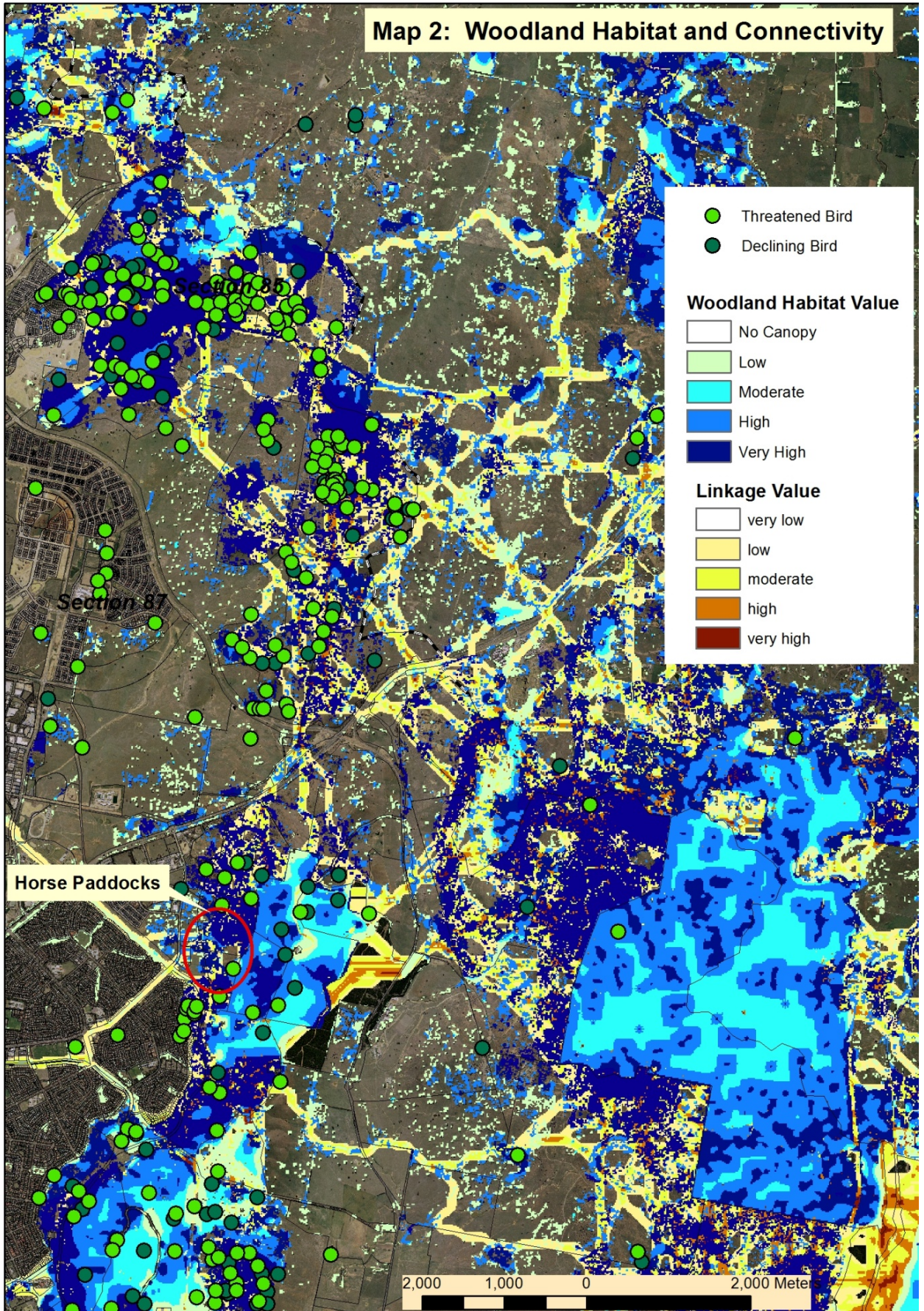
### Woodland bird habitat

The Watson horse paddocks are in a similar lower landscape position as Campbell Park and in addition provide the key connection to Watson Woodlands an 18ha patch of large, hollow bearing and productive 200 + year old trees, an important woodland bird habitat in its own right.

Threatened woodland birds that have been recorded within or close to the Watson horse paddocks include;

- Regent Honeyeater (nationally endangered)– the Watson area is one of the few regional recorded breeding locations of this species over the last few decades, while a bird visited Watson Woodlands in January 2020; and foraged in the woodland for about ten days (Bounds et al 1996)  
<https://canberra.naturemapr.org/Community/Sightings/Details/4248515>
- Superb Parrot (nationally vulnerable) – one of the two key breeding locations of this species in the ACT is 4km away within the wider woodland complex of which Watson horse paddocks are a part. Trackers attached to the wings of breeding birds, have shown that they will forage up to 11km from the nest. The Watson horse paddocks are each year utilised for foraging during and outside of the breeding season by this species. Local residents report seeing birds regularly foraging in the paddocks and drinking from a horse trough. Acacia's such as Silver Wattle (*Acacia dealbata*) which bear maturing green seed pods during spring/early summer are a key foraging resource. Silver Wattle occurs naturally within the horse paddocks. It is predicted that the ACT will become increasingly important for the Superb Parrot as a result of climate change (Rayner et al In Preparation).
- Swift Parrot (nationally endangered) – The Majura – Mt Ainslie area is one of the local hotspots for this bird in our region, and it is recorded from Watson Woodlands. Planting of winter flowering eucalypts can favour its presence;  
[https://biocache.ala.org.au/occurrences/search?q=lsid%3Aurn%3Aisid%3AAbiodiversity.org.au%3Aafd.taxon%3A3f12e573-a7b7-45e7-a6e4-aeae9bc3a9ed&fq=state%3A%22Australian+Capital+Territory%22#tab\\_mapView](https://biocache.ala.org.au/occurrences/search?q=lsid%3Aurn%3Aisid%3AAbiodiversity.org.au%3Aafd.taxon%3A3f12e573-a7b7-45e7-a6e4-aeae9bc3a9ed&fq=state%3A%22Australian+Capital+Territory%22#tab_mapView).
- Scarlet Robin (vulnerable in the ACT + NSW) – an altitudinal migrant that is common in Canberra's woodlands in winter. Fallen timber, shrubs and a diverse understorey provide both food and perching points for it to hunt from. It has recently recorded visiting the horse paddocks.;
- Brown Tree Creeper (vulnerable in the ACT + NSW) - is dependent on mature, native hollow-bearing eucalypts and their products (such as fallen limbs, coarse woody debris) for a range of ecological needs, nesting, roosting, feeding and for refuge from predators (Bounds 2019). There are historic records of this territorial species from Watson Woodland and Mt Majura, but the species is now extinct from the locality and from all the places in peri-urban Canberra in which it once occurred. Populations still occur in the south of the ACT, along the Murrumbidgee and within Namadgi. It is unclear whether, but hoped, that restoration of habitat will see it return to the Canberra area;
- Varied Sittella (vulnerable in the ACT + NSW) is dependent on eucalypts in a similar way as the Brown Tree Creeper. It is a sedentary or territorial species. In August 2019 a family group of five was photographed just to the north of the horse paddocks  
<https://canberra.naturemapr.org/Community/Sightings/Details/4233842>
- Gang Gang (vulnerable in NSW) As part of an ACT wide study trying to locate nest sites of this species, birds have recently been observed entering hollows in trees just on the southern boundary of the horse paddocks, and in a tree in Watson Woodlands, but the observations were a one-off and the closest known nest tree is in the south part of Mt Ainslie reserve. The horse paddocks do contain hollows of suitable dimensions for this species, while all known nest trees within the ACT are within 200m of the urban edge, so it is certainly potential habitat (details of the study design are at <https://canberra.naturemapr.org/Community/Species/Sightings/15084>)
- Speckled Warbler (vulnerable in NSW) there are several recent records of this species within 500m of the horse paddocks.

Map 2: Woodland Habitat and Connectivity



Map 3: Threatened bird locations within and near Watson horse paddocks



Unfortunately, the current open heavily grazed nature of the horse paddocks provides ideal habitat for the native Noisy Miner, which is common across the horse paddocks. The dominant presence of the Noisy Miner probably means that small and medium sized woodland birds are driven away from the horse paddocks. Larger birds such as Crimson and Eastern Rosellas, Australian Magpie, Sulphur-Crested Cockatoo, Galah, Kookaburra, Raven, Wood Duck, and Grey Butcherbird were all sighted within the horse paddocks and all may breed there.

All lands are heavily grazed by horses, kangaroos and rabbits. Shrubs and seedling/small sapling regrowth is limited, but has occurred in areas fenced from stock, suggesting that kangaroos and rabbits on their own will not prevent regeneration.

If grazing were reduced it is likely to result in widespread natural regeneration of eucalypt trees and wattles creating conditions less suited to the noisy miner and more suited to threatened woodland birds. Planting of shrubs could also assist in achieving this outcome. As indicated in Maps 2 and 3 the best connection between Watson Woodlands and Mt Majura is via section 86 and 87 and planted vegetation and remnant vegetation within the ground of the Ted Noffs facility.

While the Watson lower woodlands complex is unlikely to support a birdlife as abundant and diverse as Campbell Park, it has much potential and could become a more important woodland bird habitat than it already is, and would continue to be a significant component of a much larger and nationally significant habitat.

### **Other significant species**

#### Golden Sun Moth

The Golden Sun Moth (*Synemon plana*) is known to occur on the foothills of Mt Majura about 1km to the north-east of the horse paddocks. It has not been observed within the Watson horse paddocks but suitable food plants and habitat exist, particularly within section 75. It should be subject to a survey at the same time that moths are observed flying over the nearby recorded habitat. Replanting should avoid potential habitat in Section 75.

#### Rosenberg's Monitor

A population of the Rosenberg's Monitor, listed as vulnerable in NSW, occurs within Mt Majura-Mt Ainslie. There is a recent goanna record just to the south of the horse paddocks and another unconfirmed record just to the east. <https://canberra.naturemapr.org/Community/Sightings/Details/3370948> Rabbits are an important part of the Rosenberg's diet and it is likely that this goanna will hunt over part of the horse paddocks.

#### Other woodland species

In addition to birds many invertebrates and several species of microbat will utilise the linkage that the horse paddocks provide between Mt Majura and the Watson Woodlands. Migratory or nomadic animals observed moving through this area include the Caper White (*Belenois java*), Spotted Jezebel (*Delias aginippe*), Common Brown (*Heteronympha merope*), Marbled Xenica (*Geitoneura klugii*), and Dainty Swallowtail (*Papilio anactus*) butterflies, a number of scarab beetles, many species of moths and several bug species.

### **Summary of woodland values**

The Watson horse paddocks, within the CZ6 zoning, are part of large and significant woodland patch and provide a link between Watson Woodlands and Mt Majura. The paddocks either support endangered Box Gum woodland or vegetation that could be restored to this community. From a vegetation perspective most of the paddocks are in low condition and diversity, but from a woodland ecosystem perspective they provide important woodland bird and invertebrate habitat that could be improved through targeted management.



**Superb Parrot flock and Noisy Minor at horse trough**



**Gang Gangs inspecting tree hollow (Watson)**



**Varied Sittella, photographed by E.D. Mackay on Mt Majura near horse paddocks**



**Regent Honeyeater (Watson woodlands)  
(Mathew Frawley)**



**Rosenberg's Goanna photographed near horse paddocks  
(Waltraud Prix)**

### **The value of the Watson paddocks to the horse/pony riding community**

The Watson horse paddocks are one of 16 similar paddock areas across the ACT. These paddocks collectively accommodate 300 horses. There is currently a waiting list of 200 to agist a horse within the paddocks. It is difficult to address current demand. There are currently about a dozen horses within the Watson paddocks.

This horse number does not include the horses within the house block, within Section 86.

### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the lands be zoned NUZ3 Non Urban – Hills, Ridges and Buffer, as the objectives of this zoning best reflects the sentiment expressed in the Legislative Assembly resolution of 20 February 2020.

There is a house paddock of about 2.5 ha within section 86. I understand the current leaseholder has held the lease for the last 40 years and is [REDACTED]. An objective should be to withdraw this paddock from the lease area, and this should certainly occur prior to any transfer to a new leaseholder.

Three management options are detailed below. All would preserve and improve the current woodland values. Option 1 is likely to result in the greatest enhancement while option 3 the least

It is recommended that one or other of these management options be implemented. All options have the potential to be utilised as environmental offsets, but option one would provide a much larger offset credit, than the other options.

Any decision on the CZ6 lands should also consider the remaining ACT public lands within the designated lands. It would make sense to include these lands or at least a component of them in any reserve additions.

#### Option 1- Incorporate all lands into Mt Majura Reserve

This would allow for restoration and enhancement of woodland values across all of the lands. Management should have a focus on creating a shrubby understory in the areas of key habitat linkage (see map 1) and in improving both species and structural diversity across the former horse paddock areas. A key monitored outcome would be both an increase in the diversity and abundance of woodland birds within the Watson woodland complex, with the objective of having a similar diversity and abundance of woodland bird species as recorded at Campbell Park.

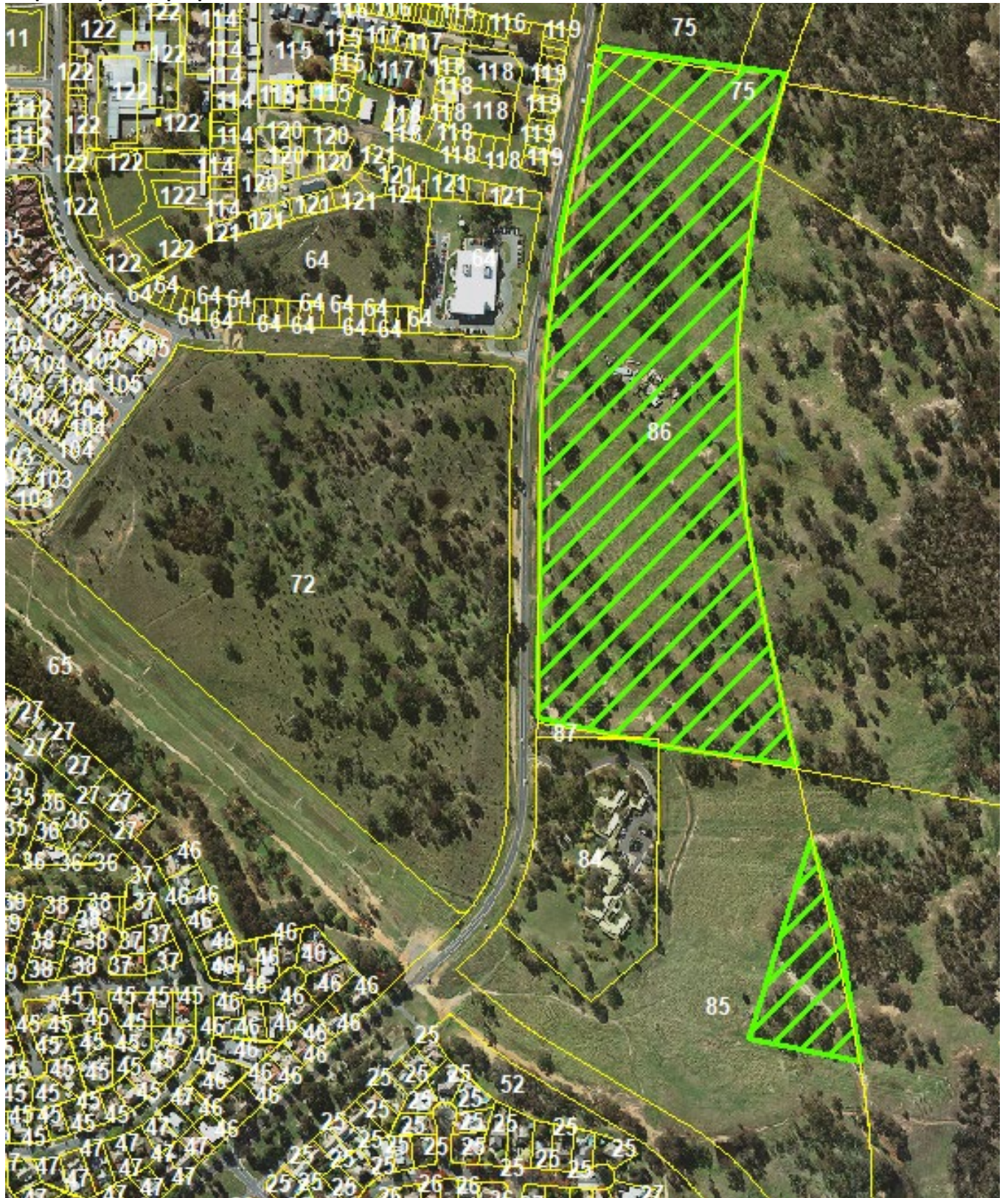
#### Option 2 – Northern half of lands be added to Mt Majura Nature Reserve, while southern part of lands remains horse paddocks

Section 75 and 86 and the currently fenced off section of Section 85 are added to Mt Majura Nature Reserve, while Section 87 and the rest of Section 85 be zoned open space and continue to be managed as horse paddock. This is because the southern part of the horse paddocks is in poorer condition is not currently acting as a connecting link, and the presence of the powerline across Section 85 restricts the extent and scope of restoration that can occur. While the powerline would probably prevent tree planting under the lines it would be possible for flowering shrub plantings to enhance habitat under the lines. This option also provides for some continuation of the current recreational horse use, though by reducing the lands by about half it would reduce the amount of horses that could be agisted by a similar proportion, possibly questioning the viability of the area to be managed as horse paddocks (see map 4).

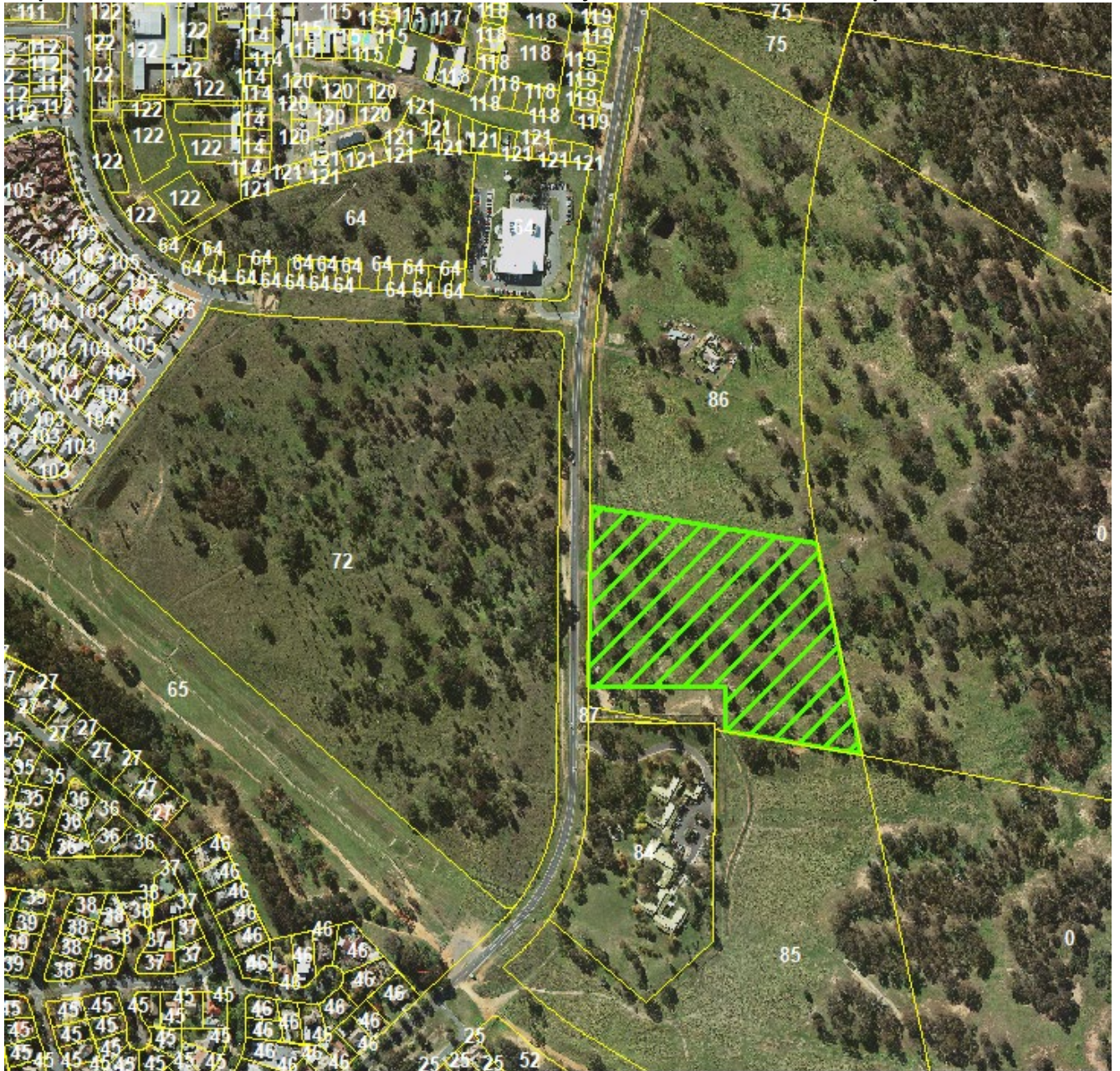
#### Option 3 – Addition of about 4.5ha of the southern portion of Section 86 to Mt Majura Nature Reserve

This provides for a connection of conservation lands across the horse paddocks to Watson woodlands. It would maintain the current horse agistment over most of the lands. It would probably maintain the current woodland values of the lands but not lead to major enhancement (see map 5).

Map 4 – Option 2 propose additions



Map 5 – Connection area that should be added to Mt Majura Nature Reserve under option 3



### References

Bounds J, (2018) Brown Treecreeper (*Climacteris picumnus*), its occurrence and status in the ACT, and dependence on mature, hollow-bearing eucalypts. *Canberra Bird Notes* 43(3): 109 – 121.

Bounds J, Brookfield M and Delahoy M 1996. Observations of a breeding colony of four pairs of Regent Honeyeaters at North Watson, Canberra, in 1995–96, *Canberra Bird Notes* 21(3): 41–55

Mulvaney, M. 2012. The Extent and Significance of Gungahlin’s Biodiversity Values. *Technical Report 24*. Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate, Canberra.

Laura Rayner, Michael Mulvaney, Ryu Callaway and Jennifer Smits (In Preparation) Foraging habitat selection by breeding superb parrots in Canberra: A report on management considerations. Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate

Site name:

Polygon ID:

Surveyor(s):

Date:

Cover/abundance score: 5 -> 75% 4 -> 50 -> 75% 3 -> 25 -> 50% 2 -> 25% 1 -> numerous/scattered < 5% + few (appr. 4-15) < 5% r solitary (appr. 1-3) < 5% Section Break (Continuous)

Table with 2 columns: Species and page no., and a small icon column. Lists various plant species such as Acaosella vulgaris, Avena sp., and Bromus sp.

Table with 2 columns: Species and page no., and a small icon column. Lists various plant species such as Plantago lanceolata, Poa annua, and Polygonum aviculare.

Table with 2 columns: Species and page no., and a small icon column. Lists various plant species such as Bursaria lasiocarpa, Caladenia caerulea, and Calceolophus citreus.

Table with 2 columns: Species and page no., and a small icon column. Lists various plant species such as Eucalyptus pauciflora, Eucalyptus vossii, and Euphorbia dallachiana.

Table with 2 columns: Species and page no., and a small icon column. Lists various plant species such as Pinelia curvis, Plantago gaudichaudii, and Poa labill.

Majura 86 +87 b1

Appendix B—species cover and abundance

Michael Mulvaney

23/3/2020

Site name:

Polygon ID:

Surveyor(s):

Date:

Cover/abundance score: 5-75% 4-50-75% 3-25-50% 2-5-25% 1-numerous/scattered &lt;5% + few (appr. 4-15) &lt;5% r solitary (appr. 1-3) &lt;5% Section Break (Continuous)

Species and page no.		Species and page no.		Species and page no.		Species and page no.		Species and page no.	
<i>Acetosella vulgaris</i> 124	1c	<i>Phalaris aquatica</i> 44	2c	<i>Bulbine bulbosa</i>		<i>Eucalyptus nortonii</i>		<i>Persicaria decipiens/prostrata</i>	
<i>Acacia baileyana</i> 46	Fc	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i> 128	1c	<i>Bursaria lasiophylla</i> (planted)	Fc	<i>Eucalyptus pauciflora/pohi/themo</i>		<i>Pimelia curvi/glauca/linifolia</i> 90	
<i>Acacia cultriformis</i> (planted)	Fc	<i>Poa annua/bulbosa</i> 46		<i>Caladenia caerulea/camea/cucull</i>		<i>Eucalyptus rubida</i>	r	<i>Plantago varia</i> 128	
<i>Arctotheca calendula</i> 88	1c	<i>Polygonumaniculare</i>	r	<i>Calcephalus citreus</i> 76		<i>Euphorbia galloclayana</i>	1c	<i>Poa labill/meionea/sieb.</i> 12	
<i>Avena</i> sp.	1c	<i>Prunus</i> sp.	r	<i>Callistemon sieberi</i> (planted)	r	<i>Euchiton</i> sp. (native) 130		<i>Podolepis hieracioides/jaceoides</i>	
<i>Acacia baormanni</i> (planted and seedings)	1c	<i>Pyracantha</i> sp. 58	r	<i>Carex antrusa/bichenoviana</i> 52		<i>Exocarpus cupressiformis</i>	Rc	<i>Pomaderris</i> sp.	
<i>Bromus</i> sp. 46	1c	<i>Rosa rubiginosa</i>	r	<i>Carex breviculmis/inversa</i> 52		<i>Galium gaudichaudii</i> 92		<i>Portulaca oleracea</i>	1c
<i>Amaranthus retroflexus</i>	1c	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	r	<i>Cassinia quinifolia</i>	Fc	<i>Geranium antra./solan./retro.</i> 118	r	<i>Pseudognaphalium luteoalbum</i>	
<i>Chenopodium album</i>	Fc	<i>Rumex crispus</i>	r	<i>Casuarina</i> sp.		<i>Glycine clandestina</i>	r	<i>Pterostylis</i> sp. 64	
<i>Celtis australis</i>	Fc	<i>Salix</i> sp.		<i>Chenopodium dummondii</i>		<i>Glycine tabacina</i> 112	1c	<i>Pultenaea micro/proc/subspic</i> 142	
<i>Cerastium</i> sp.		<i>Salvia verbenaca</i> 106	1c	<i>Cheilanthes aust./folia/sieberi</i> 138		<i>Gompholobium huegelii</i>		<i>Ranunculus lapp/papul/sessil</i>	
<i>Cyatodes monogyna</i>	Fc	<i>Sanguisorba minor</i> 136	1c	<i>Chloris truncata</i> 34	1c	<i>Gonocarpus tetragynus</i> 124		<i>Rubus parvifolius</i>	
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i> (Spear thistle)		<i>Sherardia arvensis</i>		<i>Chryscephalum aniculatum</i>	Fc	<i>Goodenia hederacea/pin/tifida</i> 70		<i>Rumex brownii</i> 124	1c
<i>Compa</i> sp.		<i>Silene gallica</i>		<i>Clematis microphylla</i>	Fc	<i>Grevillea alpina/lanig/juniperina</i>		<i>Rutidosia leptorhynchoides</i> 78	
<i>Crepis canillaris/foetida</i>		<i>Sonchus</i> sp. (Sow thistle)		<i>Comesperma ericinum/volubile</i>		<i>Haloragis heterophylla</i> 134		<i>Schoenus apogon</i> 52	
<i>Cynodon dactylon</i> 34	1c	<i>Solanum trifolium</i>	1c	<i>Convolvulus subscens</i> 120	r	<i>Hardenbergia violacea</i>		<i>Scleranthus biflorus/diander</i> 132	
<i>Cynurus echinatus</i>		<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>		<i>Craspedia variabilis</i> 82		<i>Helichrysum rutidolepis/scorpes</i>		<i>Senecio hisp/lus/quadridentatus</i>	
<i>Datura stramonium</i>	1c	<i>Tolpis umbellata</i> 88		<i>Crasula sieberiana/hebrici</i>		<i>Hibbertia obtusi/ripar./calyc.</i> 144		<i>Solanum cinereum/linearifolium</i>	
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i> 44	1c	<i>Trachypogon dubius</i>	r	<i>Crotondora amara</i> 140		<i>Hovea heterophylla</i> 114		<i>Solenogyne dominii/gunnii</i> 130	
<i>Echium plantagineum vulgare</i> 106	1c	<i>Trifolium</i> sp. 116	1c	<i>Cullen</i> (syn <i>Pteralis micraea/tenax</i> ) 114		<i>Hydrocotyle laxiflora</i> 134	Fc	<i>Sorghum leiocladon</i> 38	
<i>Eragrostis curvula</i> 42	1c	<i>Verbascum thansus/virgatum</i> 126		<i>Comboretus laus/lus/presilius</i> 88		<i>Hypericum graminum</i> 72		<i>Stachhouisia monogyna</i> 90	
<i>Erodium botrys/bract/cicutar</i> 104	2c	<i>Vicia</i> sp.		<i>Cymbopogon refractus</i>		<i>Hyppoxis hygrometrica</i> 62		<i>Stellaria pungens</i>	
<i>Festuca elatior</i> 44	1c	<i>Xanthium spinosum</i> 46	r	<i>Cynoglossum swainsoni</i>	1c	<i>Indigofera australis/ademijifolia</i>		<i>Styidium graminifolium</i> 122	
<i>Fumaria</i> sp.	1c	<i>Acacia baileyana/buxifolia</i>		<i>Cynoglossum australe</i>	r	<i>Isoetopsis graminifolia</i> 132		<i>Styphelia triflora</i>	
<i>Gnaphalium americanum</i> 130		<i>Acacia dealbata</i>	Fc	<i>Daviesia geni./lept/minu/ulic</i> 142		<i>Isotoma fluviatilis</i> 102		<i>Swainsona mont/recta/sericea</i> 110	
<i>Hirschfeldia incana</i>	1c	<i>Acacia genistifolia/gunnii</i>		<i>Desmodium perfoliatum/desmodiana</i>		<i>Joycea pallida</i> 18		<i>Thelymitra pauciflora/ixiodes</i> 66	
<i>Holcus lanatus</i> 42		<i>Acacia implexa</i>	1c	<i>Desmodium brachy/varians</i> 112		<i>Juncus australis</i> 48		<i>Themeda triandra</i> 10	
<i>Hordeum (Critesian)</i> sp. 46		<i>Acacia macarctii/melanoxylon</i>		<i>Diandella longifolia/revoluta</i> 56		<i>Juncus subsecundus/filicaulis</i> 48		<i>Thysanotus patersonii/tubero</i> 56	
<i>Hypericum perforatum</i> 72	1c	<i>Acacia parram/parram/parram</i>		<i>Dichelochne crinita/mix/vava</i> 26		<i>Kunzea ericoides/parvifolia</i>		<i>Tricoryne elatior</i> 62	r
<i>Hypochaeris glabra</i>		<i>Acacia rubida</i>	r	<i>Dichondra repens</i> 134		<i>Lepidosperma laterale</i>		<i>Triptilodiscus pygmaeus</i> 80	
<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i> 48	1c	<i>Acacia schinata</i> 136	Fc	<i>Dichopogon fimbriatus</i> 58		<i>Leptocarpus elong/squam.</i> 80		<i>Typha</i> sp.	
<i>Juncus bufonius/capitatus</i> 48		<i>Acrostichum serrulatum</i>		<i>Dillwynia sericea/phylicoides</i>		<i>Leucocorymbus albicans</i> 94		<i>Velleia paradoxa</i> 70	
<i>Lepidium</i> sp.	1c	<i>Agrostis cynosuata</i>		<i>Discaria pubescens</i> 142		<i>Leucopogon fletcheri/virg/micro</i>		<i>Veronica calycina/gracilis</i>	
<i>Ligustrum</i> sp.		<i>Ajuga australis</i> 106		<i>Diuris chrys/pis(syn-lanc)/hebrici</i> 68		<i>Linum marginale</i> 104		<i>Viola betonicifolia/hederacea</i> 100	
<i>Linaria arvensis/pellicerana</i> 104		<i>Allocasuarina vert/cumingh/lij</i>		<i>Diuris dendrobioides/punctata</i> 68		<i>Lissanthe strigosa</i> 140		<i>Vittadinia cuneata</i>	Fc
<i>Lolium</i> sp. 44		<i>Alternanthera</i> sp. 4	1c	<i>Diuris semilunulata/subhurea</i>		<i>Lomandra bract/fili/cori</i> 54		<i>Wahlbergia com</i>	1c
<i>Malus</i> sp.		<i>Amynna</i> sp.		<i>Dodonaea viscosa</i>		<i>Lomandra longifolia/multiflora</i> 54		<i>Wurmbia dioica</i> 60	
<i>Lucium serotissimum</i>	1c	<i>Aristida ramosa</i> 34	1c	<i>Dysphania pumila</i>	3c	<i>Luzula densiflora</i> 50		<i>Vittadinia muelleri</i>	Fc
<i>Malva</i> sp.	1c	<i>Arthropodium mille/minu</i> 58		<i>Eleocharis acuta/pucilla</i>		<i>Lyrum hyscopifolia</i>		<i>Wahlbergia lut sloa</i>	1c
<i>Marrubium vulgare</i>	1c	<i>Asperula conferta/scorparia</i> 92		<i>Elymus scaber</i> 20		<i>Melichrus waeolatus</i> 140		<i>Wahlbergia stri</i>	1c
<i>Modiola caroliniana</i>	1c	<i>Astroloma humifusum</i> 140		<i>Emmenanthe nigricans</i> 32	1c	<i>Mentha diemsmica</i>			
<i>Moenchia erecta</i>		<i>Astrorhiza ledifolia</i>		<i>Epilobium hillardisiamum</i> 120		<i>Microlaena stipoides</i> 22	1c		
<i>Mposotis discolor</i>		<i>Austrodanthonia</i> sp. 16	1c	<i>Eragrostis brownii/rachicarpa</i>		<i>Microseris lanceolata</i> 86			
<i>Nassella neesiana</i>	1c	<i>Austrostipa bigen</i>	1c	<i>Eriochilus cucullatus</i> 66		<i>Microtis unifolia</i> 64			
<i>Nassella trichotoma</i>		<i>Austrostipa scabra</i>	2c	<i>Erodium cymitum</i> 104	1c	<i>Mirbelia</i> sp. 142			
<i>Olea africana</i>		<i>Bossiaea buxifolia/prostrata</i> 142		<i>Eryngium ayinum</i> 108		<i>Monotoca scorparia</i>			
<i>Parentucellia latifolia</i> 122		<i>Bothriochloa macro</i> 24	2c	<i>Eucalyptus blakelyi</i>	1c	<i>Opercularia hispida</i>			
<i>Pavonychia brasiliiana</i>	1c	<i>Brachycthon populneum</i>	Fc	<i>Eucalyptus bridgesiana</i>	1c	<i>Oxalis exilis</i>	1c		
<i>Paspalum dilatatum</i>		<i>Brachycome het.donta/vigidula</i> 96		<i>Eucalyptus goniacalx/macro</i>		<i>Oxalis persmanni</i> 116			
<i>Petrophagia nanteuilii</i> 120		<i>Brachyloma daphnoides</i> 140		<i>Eucalyptus welliod</i>	1c	<i>Panicum effusum</i> 28			
		<i>Bracteantha viscosa</i> 84							

Site name: Majura s85-b11

Appendix B - species cover and abundance

Michael Mulvaney

Date: 23/3/2020

Cover/abundance score: 5-75% 4-50-75% 3-25-50% 2-5-25% 1-numerous/scattered <5% + few (appr. 4-15) <5% r solitary (appr. 1-3) <5% Section Break (Continuous)

Table with 5 columns of species names and their corresponding cover/abundance scores. Species include Acetosella-vulgaris, Acacia-decurrens, Anagallis-arvensis, etc.

**From:** [Schofield, Warren](#)  
**To:** [Ridsdale, Janine](#)  
**Cc:** [Moser, Sonya](#); [Terrplan](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Watson horse paddocks [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]  
**Date:** Wednesday, 13 May 2020 5:41:16 PM

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UNCLASSIFIED

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

As there is current pressure on other horse agistment complexes such as Curtin, Rose Cottage and Parkwood for development it would not be great timing to also remove this paddock from the system. There is a current commitment from ACT Government to retain the capacity of the Horse holding paddocks and finding alternative sites to establish replacement paddocks is virtually impossible due to land availability in the ACT. Whilst the importance of the identified environmental values in this area is noted, Michaels report does seem to lack a 4<sup>th</sup> option of the status que and no area is resumed from the horse paddock and this area is retained for its current purpose. The area could still be declassified for development and the ecological values and horses could be managed jointly.

The present contract for the management of horse paddocks has several years to run and continued removal of horse paddocks for development within this contract period (both urban and environmental) is causing financial pressures on the current contractor due to severely reduced horse numbers, thus heading the business towards unprofitability and putting the contractor in financial distress and they increasingly find it hard to meet contractual obligations for sustainable land management of the areas they manage for government.

Although the potential loss of 12 horses may not seem that great in the immediate area of Hackett/Watson it will have a ripple effect across the government horse agistment paddocks and ACT equestrian community who do have considerable political savvy and are able to attract the media and Minister when agitated.

Once again thanks for the opportunity for input and would appreciate being kept up to date on this issue.

Warren Schofield

Director  
ACT Biosecurity and Rural Services  
[Warren.schofield@act.gov.au](mailto:Warren.schofield@act.gov.au)  
Phone 02 620 784 80  
Mob [REDACTED]

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**From:** Ridsdale, Janine <Janine.Ridsdale@act.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 12 May 2020 12:32 PM  
**To:** Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>

**Cc:** Moser, Sonya <Sonya.Moser@act.gov.au>; Terrplan <Terrplan@act.gov.au>

**Subject:** FW: Watson horse paddocks [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi Warren,

The Territory Plan Section has been tasked with responding to the Legislative Assembly's Resolution of earlier this year to investigate the rezoning of unleased Territory land which includes the Watson Horse Paddocks to protect it from development and preserve its Yellow Box Woodland.

As you are aware, we have obtained some information on ecological values of the subject land from Michael Mulvaney and others in the Environment Division, EPSDD. Territory Plan Section would like to request your input and comments on this matter, especially with regards to the impact on the current horse agistment arrangements on these blocks, and the availability of other areas to accommodate these horses should the decision be made to include this area into the Majura nature reserve.

Your advice and feedback on this matter would be most appreciated.

Regards

Janine

Janine Ridsdale | Territory Plan Section

**Phone 02 6205 4060**

**Planning Land and Building Policy** | Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate | **ACT Government**

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9:30am-2:30pm Mon-Fri

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**From:** Mulvaney, Michael

**Sent:** Thursday, 7 May 2020 10:55 AM

**To:** Ridsdale, Janine <[Janine.Ridsdale@act.gov.au](mailto:Janine.Ridsdale@act.gov.au)>

**Cc:** Baines, Greg <[Greg.Baines@act.gov.au](mailto:Greg.Baines@act.gov.au)>; Jeffress, Stuart <[Stuart.Jeffress@act.gov.au](mailto:Stuart.Jeffress@act.gov.au)>; Schofield, Warren <[Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au](mailto:Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au)>; Watts, Michaela <[Michaela.Watts@act.gov.au](mailto:Michaela.Watts@act.gov.au)>; Bootes, Trish <[Trish.Bootes@act.gov.au](mailto:Trish.Bootes@act.gov.au)>

**Subject:** Watson horse paddocks

UNCLASSIFIED

Janine

I understand Greg Baines has spoken to you about this report. I have been given little information about what is required other than I have tried to address the assembly resolutions. Hope this is what you are after.

Cheers Michael Mulvaney

**From:** [Baines, Greg](#)  
**To:** [Ridsdale, Janine](#)  
**Cc:** [Sweaney, Mark](#); [McInnes, Clare](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Watson horse paddocks  
**Date:** Monday, 22 June 2020 1:02:26 PM

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UNCLASSIFIED

Hi Janine,

On Friday Mark indicated that they wouldn't have time to look at the costings. In lieu of a detailed site specific estimate of what would be required the best we can do is use a per hectare costing developed by Treasury. For the first 4yrs after reserve establishment management costs are about \$2,600/ha/pa, after this period the costs fall to about \$2,200/ha/pa. This estimate relates to the establishment and management of Offset reserves which may be more expensive to manage than non-offset reserves due to commitments we have with the Commonwealth. However, due to the condition of the Watson site I think these estimates will be reasonably close to what is required.

I hope this helps.

Regards  
Greg

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**From:** Ridsdale, Janine <[Janine.Ridsdale@act.gov.au](mailto:Janine.Ridsdale@act.gov.au)>  
**Sent:** Monday, 22 June 2020 12:23 PM  
**To:** Baines, Greg <[Greg.Baines@act.gov.au](mailto:Greg.Baines@act.gov.au)>  
**Cc:** Moser, Sonya <[Sonya.Moser@act.gov.au](mailto:Sonya.Moser@act.gov.au)>; Kaucz, Alix <[Alix.Kaucz@act.gov.au](mailto:Alix.Kaucz@act.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** RE: Watson horse paddocks  
**Importance:** High

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi Greg

We are needing to finalise the Cabinet Submission on this matter as it has been scheduled to go to Cabinet on the 18 Aug 2020, and we need to have it cleared well before then. Just chasing if Mark has been able to provide some info to you on the costings as yet.

Many thanks

Regards

Janine

---

**From:** Baines, Greg <[Greg.Baines@act.gov.au](mailto:Greg.Baines@act.gov.au)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 16 June 2020 11:59 AM  
**To:** Ridsdale, Janine <[Janine.Ridsdale@act.gov.au](mailto:Janine.Ridsdale@act.gov.au)>

**Subject:** RE: Watson horse paddocks

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi Janine,

Mark Sweaney was (PCS north area manager) was chasing this up. I will follow up with Mark and see what he has done. I know he is up to his knees in planning meetings at the moment but I will try and get a response by Friday.

Cheers  
Greg

---

**From:** Ridsdale, Janine <[Janine.Ridsdale@act.gov.au](mailto:Janine.Ridsdale@act.gov.au)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 11 June 2020 10:19 AM  
**To:** Baines, Greg <[Greg.Baines@act.gov.au](mailto:Greg.Baines@act.gov.au)>  
**Cc:** Moser, Sonya <[Sonya.Moser@act.gov.au](mailto:Sonya.Moser@act.gov.au)>; Kaucz, Alix <[Alix.Kaucz@act.gov.au](mailto:Alix.Kaucz@act.gov.au)>; Terrplan <[Terrplan@act.gov.au](mailto:Terrplan@act.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** FW: Watson horse paddocks

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi Greg,

Just wanting to follow up on this info, if you have had a chance to put some costings together as yet?

Many thanks again,

Regards

Janine

---

**From:** Ridsdale, Janine  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 27 May 2020 11:47 AM  
**To:** Baines, Greg <[Greg.Baines@act.gov.au](mailto:Greg.Baines@act.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** RE: Watson horse paddocks

UNCLASSIFIED

Thanks Greg, much appreciated. And any thoughts/comments you have on the option 4 proposal would be great, from an ecological/management perspective.

Would a week suffice? If you could have some figures back to be by Wednesday?

Many thanks again.

Regards

Janine

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**From:** Baines, Greg <[Greg.Baines@act.gov.au](mailto:Greg.Baines@act.gov.au)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 27 May 2020 10:42 AM  
**To:** Ridsdale, Janine <[Janine.Ridsdale@act.gov.au](mailto:Janine.Ridsdale@act.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** RE: Watson horse paddocks

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi Janine,

I will look into generating some rough costings for the three options. I am not sure that horse agistment and improving ecological values go hand in hand on the same block but I will think about it and if we feel it is doable I will cost that out as well. When do you need the costing by?

Cheers  
Greg

---

**From:** Ridsdale, Janine <[Janine.Ridsdale@act.gov.au](mailto:Janine.Ridsdale@act.gov.au)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 27 May 2020 10:32 AM  
**To:** Baines, Greg <[Greg.Baines@act.gov.au](mailto:Greg.Baines@act.gov.au)>  
**Cc:** Terrplan <[Terrplan@act.gov.au](mailto:Terrplan@act.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** FW: Watson horse paddocks

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi Greg,

I am currently putting together the info required for the Cabinet Submission in response to the Assembly's Yellow Box Woodlands Protection Resolution. In the Assembly Business Paper, there is a section on Financial impacts / Budget impacts. Are you able to provide me some ballpark figures for what would be the likely costs to PCS should parts of the area be transferred into the Reserve, based on Michael's 3 options in his paper (attached). If you could provide a breakdown of costs for each option (so that I can provide the subcommittee with a comparison of costs for the 3 options) that would be very useful. I will also be including a fourth option in the paper, based on Warren Schofield's feedback, whereby the lands could be rezoned to non-urban NUZ3 hills ridges and buffer zone (but not incorporated into nature reserve) but this will provide the safeguard that urban development is not permitted – and look at ways to manage the ecological values and horses jointly. If you could provide some thoughts (and costings) on this approach too, that would also be very helpful.

Many thanks for your assistance.

Regards

Janine

Janine Ridsdale | Territory Plan Section

**Phone 02 6205 4060**

**Planning Land and Building Policy** | Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate | **ACT Government**

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9:30am-2:30pm Mon-Fri

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**From:** Mulvaney, Michael <[Michael.Mulvaney@act.gov.au](mailto:Michael.Mulvaney@act.gov.au)>

**Sent:** Thursday, 7 May 2020 10:55 AM

**To:** Ridsdale, Janine <[Janine.Ridsdale@act.gov.au](mailto:Janine.Ridsdale@act.gov.au)>

**Cc:** Baines, Greg <[Greg.Baines@act.gov.au](mailto:Greg.Baines@act.gov.au)>; Jeffress, Stuart <[Stuart.Jeffress@act.gov.au](mailto:Stuart.Jeffress@act.gov.au)>;

Schofield, Warren <[Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au](mailto:Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au)>; Watts, Michaela

<[Michaela.Watts@act.gov.au](mailto:Michaela.Watts@act.gov.au)>; Bootes, Trish <[Trish.Bootes@act.gov.au](mailto:Trish.Bootes@act.gov.au)>

**Subject:** Watson horse paddocks

UNCLASSIFIED

Janine

I understand Greg Baines has spoken to you about this report. I have been given little information about what is required other than I have tried to address the assembly resolutions. Hope this is what you are after.

Cheers Michael Mulvaney

---

**From:** Tasker, Kirsten  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 21 July 2020 1:37 PM  
**To:** Moser, Sonya; Schofield, Warren  
**Cc:** Gianakis, Steven; Ridsdale, Janine; Kaucz, Alix; Thompson, Chris  
**Subject:** RE: Further information on the North Watson Horse Paddocks

**UNCLASSIFIED**

1. How many hectares are dedicated to horse paddocks in the subject area (see location plan below)? We are aware that an area of approximately 2.5 ha in section 86 is leased to [REDACTED]. **Approx. 20Ha is horse paddocks, 2.5Ha ( the house) is under short term lease to [REDACTED].**
2. Do you have a map indicating the fence lines, or more broadly the area used for horse adjustment paddocks?
3. How many horses are currently adjusted at the North Watson Horse Paddocks? (In your email it was suggested that there are 12 but on 20 July 2020, Kristen Tasker suggested in an email to Steve G that there are less than 10.
4. You indicated that there are several years to run regarding the contract for the management of these horse paddocks, it would be helpful if you could provide the contract end date. **Territory agistments contract runs until Nov 2021**

If you need more information just ask,

Cheers

**Kirsten Tasker**

Rural Programs Co-ordinator

ACT Parks and Conservation Service

500 Cotter Road Weston Creek ACT 2611

Ph 02 620 75149 | Mob: [REDACTED] Fax: 02 6207 2544 |

Email: [Kirsten.tasker@act.gov.au](mailto:Kirsten.tasker@act.gov.au)

Web: <http://www.environment.act.gov.au/>



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**From:** Moser, Sonya <Sonya.Moser@act.gov.au>

**Sent:** Tuesday, 21 July 2020 1:02 PM

**To:** Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>

**Cc:** Gianakis, Steven <Steven.Gianakis@act.gov.au>; Ridsdale, Janine <Janine.Ridsdale@act.gov.au>; Kaucz, Alix <Alix.Kaucz@act.gov.au>; Tasker, Kirsten <Kirsten.Tasker@act.gov.au>; Thompson, Chris <Chris.Thompson@act.gov.au>

**Subject:** Further information on the North Watson Horse Paddocks

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi Warren

Thank you for your email of 13 May 2020 in response to our request for information about the North Watson Horse Paddocks.

I was wondering if you could provide the following further information as we have been requested to make some changes to the cab-sub.

1. How many hectares are dedicated to horse paddocks in the subject area (see location plan below)? We are aware that an area of approximately 2.5 ha in section 86 is leased to an [REDACTED].
2. Do you have a map indicating the fence lines, or more broadly the area used for horse adjustment paddocks?
3. How many horses are currently adjusted at the North Watson Horse Paddocks? (In your email it was suggested that there are 12 but on 20 July 2020, Kristen Tasker suggested in an email to Steve G that there are less than 10.
4. You indicated that there are several years to run regarding the contract for the management of these horse paddocks, it would be helpful if you could provide the contract end date.

This cabinet response has now become somewhat urgent, so a quick response would be appreciated.

Happy to discuss.

Thanks and regards

Sonya



Sonya Moser | Director Planning Policy | Territory Plan

Phone: 02 6207 2326 | email: [sonya.moser@act.gov.au](mailto:sonya.moser@act.gov.au)

Planning, Land & Building | Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate | ACT Government

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**From:** [Gianakis, Steven](#)  
**To:** [Thompson, Chris](#); [Moser, Sonya](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Gov response to resolution - Yellow Box Woodland Ecosystems - Protection of North Watson  
**Date:** Tuesday, 21 July 2020 5:00:25 PM

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Hi Sonya and Chris

Anne has provided some Planning Strategy wording below.

My thoughts, not responding to Erin request at this stage are:

- Around 75% of the CZ6 zoned area currently meets EPBC Act definition of endangered Box Gum Woodland community. This percentage will fluctuate over time but could “easily” be rehabilitated to EPBC Act woodland, if the percentage drops below 75%. This could also occur through natural regeneration. (Michael’s advice)
- Any development on the 75% will trigger the need for offsetting of an alternative site with similar environmental values in the ACT. Offset requirements are significantly higher than 1:1.
- Development will need to be protected through bushfire asset protection zones (presumably 60m IAPZ and 0m OAPZ, as the site is located adjacent to a nature reserve). The IAPZ would also trigger the need for offsetting.
- If no development occurs, the land will become an avoidance area and be used as an offset for other development elsewhere in the ACT. On this basis, any rezoning would only be triggered after a statutory environmental approval process that triggers the need for the offset to occur. No rezoning in the short term.
- If a rezoning was to occur without being associated with an offset for development elsewhere in the ACT, regardless whether the rezoning is to HRB or HRB nature reserve, the ACT would have “lost” a large offset credit as a future offset. That is, only a small credit could be realised over the land, if the rezoning has already occurred.
- PCS cost to establish an offset is probably between \$2000 and \$4000/ha/year depending on a whole lot of factors.
- Also we probably need for information about withdrawing the paddock out of the 2.5ha short term rural lease (Oldfield) to put it into the reserve.
- In relation to Michael’s option 2 – northern half rezone to HRD/southern portion rezone to UOS. Q – is horse paddocks permitted on UOS?

Discuss tomorrow.

Cheers,  
Steven

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**From:** Moroney, Anne <Anne.Moroney@act.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 21 July 2020 11:27 AM  
**To:** Gianakis, Steven <Steven.Gianakis@act.gov.au>  
**Subject:** FW: Gov response to resolution - Yellow Box Woodland Ecosystems - Protection of North Watson

UNCLASSIFIED Sensitive

Hi Steven

[Assembly motion on Yellow Box Woodland Ecosystems – Protection](#)

Regarding 2(b) investigate rezoning the unleased Territory land east of Antill Street Watson to protect it from development and preserve its Yellow Box Woodland:

- The ACT Planning Strategy 2018 sets a vision of Canberra as a sustainable, competitive and equitable city that respects Canberra's unique legacy of a city in the landscape, while being responsive to the future and resilient to change.
- Canberra's continued development as a compact and efficient city provides increased diversity in where and how people live, while making the best use of existing land, infrastructure and assets to provide high quality living. The Planning Strategy's key strategic direction for managing sustainable urban growth by working towards achieving up to 70% of new housing within Canberra's existing urban footprint.
- The unleased Territory Land east of Antill Street in Watson forms part of Canberra's urban areas in the Planning Strategy's Policy Plan. This is in line with the National Capital Plan's General Policy Plan – Metropolitan Canberra. Areas within Canberra's existing urban footprint have the capacity and locational attributes to accommodate increased housing choice, while upholding the qualities Canberrans value such as access to green spaces and unique neighbourhood character.
- As the precinct is identified as part of Canberra's urban area, any investigation into the appropriate future zoning for this precinct will need to consider many factors for this area's future use, including its relationship to existing Canberra Nature Park, recreational users (including equestrian), management of the urban edge and its integration with existing residential, community and commercial uses in Watson and Hackett.

Let me know if you would like me to expand the last dot point

thanks

Anne

-----Original Message-----

From: Gianakis, Steven <[Steven.Gianakis@act.gov.au](mailto:Steven.Gianakis@act.gov.au)>  
Sent: Tuesday, 21 July 2020 10:07 AM  
To: Moroney, Anne <[Anne.Moroney@act.gov.au](mailto:Anne.Moroney@act.gov.au)>  
Cc: Moser, Sonya <[Sonya.Moser@act.gov.au](mailto:Sonya.Moser@act.gov.au)>  
Subject: Gov response to resolution - Yellow Box Woodland Ecosystems - Protection of North

Watson

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi Anne

Sorry to ask, I'm now helping Sonya with the attached resolution. We discussed with Erin yesterday and Erin has requested some further information that we are working on.

Could you please provide a short paragraph on what the Planning Strategy indicates/implies etc about these blocks in Watson?

Maybe its just the undeveloped blocks are located with the existing urban area and as such and consistent with the PS could be used for urban intensification.....

Cheers,  
Steven

Steven Gianakis has sent you a copy of "20200302 - Speaker to PLM Minister - Yellow Box Woodland Ecosystems - Protection North Watson copy" (A25975626) v1.0 from Objective.

**From:** [Moser, Sonya](#)  
**To:** [Ridsdale, Janine](#); [Thompson, Chris](#); [Kaucz, Alix](#)  
**Subject:** Please review  
**Date:** Thursday, 23 July 2020 10:36:42 PM  
**Attachments:** [00. Information brief for Minister - FIN.obr](#)  
[Attachment 1 - Assembly Business Paper.obr](#)  
[Attachment 4 - Cabinet Brief.obr](#)  
[Attachment A - Response to Resolution.obr](#)

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UNCLASSIFIED Sensitive: Cabinet

Hi Janine

I have had a go at updating the attached documents.

I didn't even realise the cabinet brief was a thing until I was about to leave!

Please check for grammar and consistency.

Chris has prepared another map that should be saved identifying the electrical infrastructure, Ted Noffs Facility and the homestead and its curtilage. You may wish to use this but it was certainly helpful in identifying options for the zoning/development analysis.

Chris

Thanks for map preparation. Can you please make minor changes to what is on the map I have put on your desk and insert into attachment 1 and attachment A (see above), one of these documents also needs figures to be renumbered.

I have realised that although I put information about the Planning strategy into the Zoning and development assessment, it does not seem to be mentioned in any of the papers, so might be a good idea to make reference somewhere.

Alix

Just to inform you that we had a meeting with Joel Hankinson from the Cabinet office today and he was concerned about the consideration of removing the horse paddocks because it is already a sensitive issue. Janine and I explained our recent change in direction and he appeared to be happier with that approach and said he would take another look when it comes through officially.

Happy to take phone calls tomorrow if you need.

Cheers

Sonya

**Sonya Moser | Director Planning Policy | Territory Plan**

Phone: 02 6207 2326 | email: [sonya.moser@act.gov.au](mailto:sonya.moser@act.gov.au)

**Planning, Land & Building | Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate | ACT Government**

Dame Pattie Menzies House, 16 Challis Street, Dickson | GPO Box 1908 Canberra ACT 2601 | [www.planning.act.gov.au](http://www.planning.act.gov.au)

**From:** [Heckenberg, Mark](#) on behalf of [Contaminated Sites](#)  
**To:** [Ridsdale, Janine](#)  
**Cc:** [Moser, Sonya](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Watson Horse paddocks [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]  
**Date:** Friday, 24 July 2020 8:12:33 AM

---

Hi Janine,

None of the sites listed below are on the [Register of contaminated sites](#) under section 21A of the [Environment Protection Act 1997](#). Please note, however, that there are strict triggers which place sites on the Register.

-  
Whilst the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has no specific information on contamination of the blocks listed below there is the potential for contamination associated with past activities at the sites.

If a change of use is proposed for these blocks the sites must be assessed for potential contamination from past activities in accordance with [Information Sheet 7 - Guidance for Undertaking Preliminary Contamination Investigations for Development/Lease Variation Purposes](#) and the [Contaminated Sites Environment Protection Policy](#).

-  
Regards

**Mark Heckenberg | Manager, Contaminated Sites**  
Phone: 02 6207 2151 | Email: [mark.heckenberg@act.gov.au](mailto:mark.heckenberg@act.gov.au)  
**Office of the Environment Protection Authority | Access Canberra | ACT Government**  
GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601 | <http://www.act.gov.au/accesscbr>

---

**From:** Ridsdale, Janine  
**Sent:** Thursday, 23 July 2020 11:06 AM  
**To:** Contaminated Sites <[ContaminatedSites@act.gov.au](mailto:ContaminatedSites@act.gov.au)>  
**Cc:** Moser, Sonya <[Sonya.Moser@act.gov.au](mailto:Sonya.Moser@act.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** Watson Horse paddocks  
**Importance:** High

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi Mark,

Territory Plan Section, EPSDD is currently preparing a response to an Assembly Resolution regarding the Watson horse paddocks, namely unleased Territory land east of Antill Street in Watson (section 84 block 1, section 85 block 1 (part), section 86 block 1, section 87 block 1 and section 75 block 7 (part)). Would it be possible to advise if any or all of this land is on the contaminated lands register, or has been identified as having contamination issues?

Many thanks for your assistance.

Regards

Janine

Janine Ridsdale | Territory Plan Section

**Phone 02 6205 4060**

**Planning Land and Building Policy** | Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate | **ACT Government**

Dame Pattie Menzies House, Challis Street, Dickson | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601 | [www.environment.act.gov.au](http://www.environment.act.gov.au)  
9:30am-2:30pm Mon-Fri

## Yellow Box Woodland protection – north Watson (Response to Assembly Resolution 20200220)

Note: the ecological assessment was done in 2013 (7 years ago) and needs to be updated, especially in the light of the recent drought and the impacts on native fauna and flora.

### Regional context:

Mt Majura is part of the largest remaining remnant of Yellow Box – Blakely's Red Gum woodland anywhere. This large remnant includes woodland on Mt Ainslie to the south and woodland in the Gorooyarroo, Mulligan's Flat and Kinleyside nature reserves to the north. This large woodland area is well connected to the wider landscape of south-eastern Australia via links to the Murrumbidgee River Corridor and then Namadgi National Park and then onto the Great Eastern Ranges ecological network, and through vegetation to the north-east of the ACT (Greater Gorooyarroo) and then into the South-West Flyway (a woodland connection across central NSW) (Mulvaney 2012).

Given its large size and good landscape connection, the woodland complex of which the Watson horse paddocks are a small part, are a significant habitat of many threatened woodland species, both from a regional and national perspective. The complex is a key habitat area for woodland birds.

Threatened woodland birds that have been recorded within or close to the Watson horse paddocks include: Regent Honeyeater (nationally endangered); Superb Parrot (nationally vulnerable); Swift Parrot (nationally endangered); Scarlet Robin (vulnerable in the ACT and NSW); Brown Tree Creeper (vulnerable in the ACT and NSW - but the species is now extinct from the locality and from all the places in peri-urban Canberra in which it once occurred. Populations still occur in the south of the ACT, along the Murrumbidgee and within Namadgi. It is unclear whether, but hoped, that restoration of habitat will see it return to the Canberra area); Varied Sittella (vulnerable in the ACT and NSW); Gang Gang (vulnerable in NSW); Speckled Warbler (vulnerable in NSW).

Unfortunately, the current open heavily grazed nature of the horse paddocks provides ideal habitat for the native Noisy Miner, which is common across the horse paddocks. If grazing were reduced it is likely to result in widespread natural regeneration of eucalypt trees and wattles creating conditions less suited to the noisy miner and more suited to threatened woodland birds. Planting of shrubs could also assist in achieving this outcome.

### Other significant species

Golden Sun Moth; Rosenberg's Monitor

Many invertebrates and several species of microbat will utilise the linkage that the horse paddocks provide between Mt Majura and the Watson Woodlands. Migratory or nomadic animals observed moving through this area include the Caper White (*Belenois java*), Spotted Jezebel (*Delias aginippe*), Common Brown (*Heteronympha merope*), Marbled Xenica (*Geitoneura klugii*), and Dainty Swallowtail (*Papilio anactus*) butterflies, a number of scarab beetles, many species of moths and several bug species.

### The value of the Watson paddocks to the horse/pony riding community

The Watson horse paddocks are one of 16 similar paddock areas across the ACT. These paddocks collectively accommodate 300 horses. There is currently a waiting list of 200 to agist a horse within the paddocks. It is difficult to address current demand. There are currently about a dozen horses within the Watson paddocks. (check most recent stats 2020)

Block and Section details	Site factors / constraints / assessment (MM research)	Recommendations
<b>Section 84 Block 1</b>		
	<p>Zoned CZ6 Leisure and Accommodation under the Territory Plan and are not designated lands</p> <p>Understorey of these lands largely comprised of exotic grasses, (such as Phalaris and Cocksfoot) and herbs (Paterson’s curse, clovers and Ribwort).</p> <p>Section 84 is a 3.3. ha developed area of gardens and buildings and is the Ted Noffs Foundation health facility.</p>	<p>Section 84 block 1 excluded from this ecological assessment as it is occupied by the Ted Noffs drug rehabilitation centre.</p> <p>Not included in rezoning and inclusion in nature reserve.</p>
<b>Section 85 Block 1 (part)</b>		
	<p>Zoned CZ6 Leisure and Accommodation under the Territory Plan and are not designated lands</p> <p>The majority of the land can be classified as u178 Yellow Box-Apple Box Tall Grassy Woodland of the South Eastern Highlands Bioregion, which is part of the ACT and Commonwealth Yellow Box – Blakely’s Red Gum critically endangered woodland community listings</p> <p>Understorey of these lands largely comprised of exotic grasses, (such as Phalaris and Cocksfoot) and herbs (Paterson’s curse, clovers and Ribwort). (2013, MM)</p>	<p>The Watson horse paddocks, within the CZ6 zoning, are part of large and significant woodland patch and provide a link between Watson Woodlands and Mt Majura. The paddocks either support endangered Box Gum woodland or vegetation that could be restored to this community. From a vegetation perspective most of the paddocks are in low condition and diversity, but from a woodland ecosystem perspective they provide important woodland bird and invertebrate habitat that could be improved through targeted management.</p>
	MM 2013 assessment recognised the current and potential significance of the	It is recommended that the lands be rezoned Non-Urban Zone NUZ3 – Hills, Ridges and

	area as woodland bird habitat and recommended that connections across the lands be further planted and incorporated into Mt Majura Nature Reserve. Not enacted.	Buffer, as the objectives of this zoning best reflects the sentiment expressed in the Legislative Assembly resolution of 20 February 2020.
<b>Section 86 Block 1</b>		
	Zoned CZ6 Leisure and Accommodation under the Territory Plan and are not designated lands	The Watson horse paddocks, within the CZ6 zoning, are part of large and significant woodland patch and provide a link between Watson Woodlands and Mt Majura. The paddocks either support endangered Box Gum woodland or vegetation that could be restored to this community. From a vegetation perspective most of the paddocks are in low condition and diversity, but from a woodland ecosystem perspective they provide important woodland bird and invertebrate habitat that could be improved through targeted management.
	The majority of the land can be classified as u178 Yellow Box-Apple Box Tall Grassy Woodland of the South Eastern Highlands Bioregion, which is part of the ACT and Commonwealth Yellow Box – Blakely’s Red Gum critically endangered woodland community listings	
	Understorey of these lands largely comprised of exotic grasses, (such as Phalaris and Cocksfoot) and herbs (Paterson’s curse, clovers and Ribwort).	
	Section 86 includes a house block and house paddock (of about 2.5 ha), which has been occupied for over 40 years by the current lease holder.	It is understood that the current leaseholder has held the lease for the last 40 years and is [REDACTED]. An objective should be to withdraw this paddock from the lease area, and this should

		certainly occur prior to any transfer to a new leaseholder.
	MM 2013 assessment recognised the current and potential significance of the area as woodland bird habitat and recommended that connections across the lands be further planted and incorporated into Mt Majura Nature Reserve. Not enacted.	It is recommended that the lands be zoned NUZ3 Non Urban – Hills, Ridges and Buffer, as the objectives of this zoning best reflects the sentiment expressed in the Legislative Assembly resolution of 20 February 2020.
<b>Section 87 Block 1</b>		
	Zoned CZ6 Leisure and Accommodation under the Territory Plan and are not designated lands	The Watson horse paddocks, within the CZ6 zoning, are part of large and significant woodland patch and provide a link between Watson Woodlands and Mt Majura. The paddocks either support endangered Box Gum woodland or vegetation that could be restored to this community. From a vegetation perspective most of the paddocks are in low condition and diversity, but from a woodland ecosystem perspective they provide important woodland bird and invertebrate habitat that could be improved through targeted management.
	The majority of the land can be classified as u178 Yellow Box-Apple Box Tall Grassy Woodland of the South Eastern Highlands Bioregion, which is part of the ACT and Commonwealth Yellow Box – Blakely’s Red Gum critically endangered woodland community listings	
	Understorey of these lands largely comprised of exotic grasses, (such as Phalaris and Cocksfoot) and herbs (Paterson’s curse, clovers and Ribwort). (2013, MM)	
	MM 2013 assessment recognised the current and	It is recommended that the lands be rezoned NUZ3 Non

	potential significance of the area as woodland bird habitat and recommended that connections across the lands be further planted and incorporated into Mt Majura Nature Reserve. Not enacted.	Urban – Hills, Ridges and Buffer, as the objectives of this zoning best reflects the sentiment expressed in the Legislative Assembly resolution of 20 February 2020.
<b>Section 75 Block 7 (part)</b>		
	Zoned CZ6 Leisure and Accommodation under the Territory Plan and are not designated lands <b>check</b>	The Watson horse paddocks, within the CZ6 zoning, are part of large and significant woodland patch and provide a link between Watson Woodlands and Mt Majura. The paddocks either support endangered Box Gum woodland or vegetation that could be restored to this community. From a vegetation perspective most of the paddocks are in low condition and diversity, but from a woodland ecosystem perspective they provide important woodland bird and invertebrate habitat that could be improved through targeted management.
	The majority of the land can be classified as u178 Yellow Box-Apple Box Tall Grassy Woodland of the South Eastern Highlands Bioregion, which is part of the ACT and Commonwealth Yellow Box – Blakely’s Red Gum critically endangered woodland community listings	
	Understorey of these lands largely comprised of exotic grasses, (such as Phalaris and Cocksfoot) and herbs (Paterson’s curse, clovers and Ribwort). (2013, MM)	
		It is recommended that the lands be rezoned NUZ3 Non Urban – Hills, Ridges and Buffer, as the objectives of this zoning best reflects the

		sentiment expressed in the Legislative Assembly resolution of 20 February 2020.
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## OPTIONS

Three management options suggested. All would preserve and improve the current woodland values. Option 1 is likely to result in the greatest enhancement while option 3 the least.

It is recommended that one or other of these management options be implemented. All options have the potential to be utilised as environmental offsets, but option one would provide a much larger offset credit, than the other options. (check if possible to use as a future offset)

Any decision on the CZ6 lands should also consider the remaining public reserve area within the designated lands. It would make sense to include these lands or at least a component of them in any reserve additions. (NCA matter if designated land).

### Option 1- Incorporate all lands into Mt Majura Reserve

This would allow for restoration and enhancement of woodland values across all of the lands. Management should have a focus on creating a shrubby understory in the areas of key habitat linkage (see map 1) and in improving both species and structural diversity across the former horse paddock areas. A key monitored outcome would be both an increase in the diversity and abundance of woodland birds within the Watson woodland complex, with the objective of having a similar diversity and abundance of woodland bird species as recorded at Campbell Park.

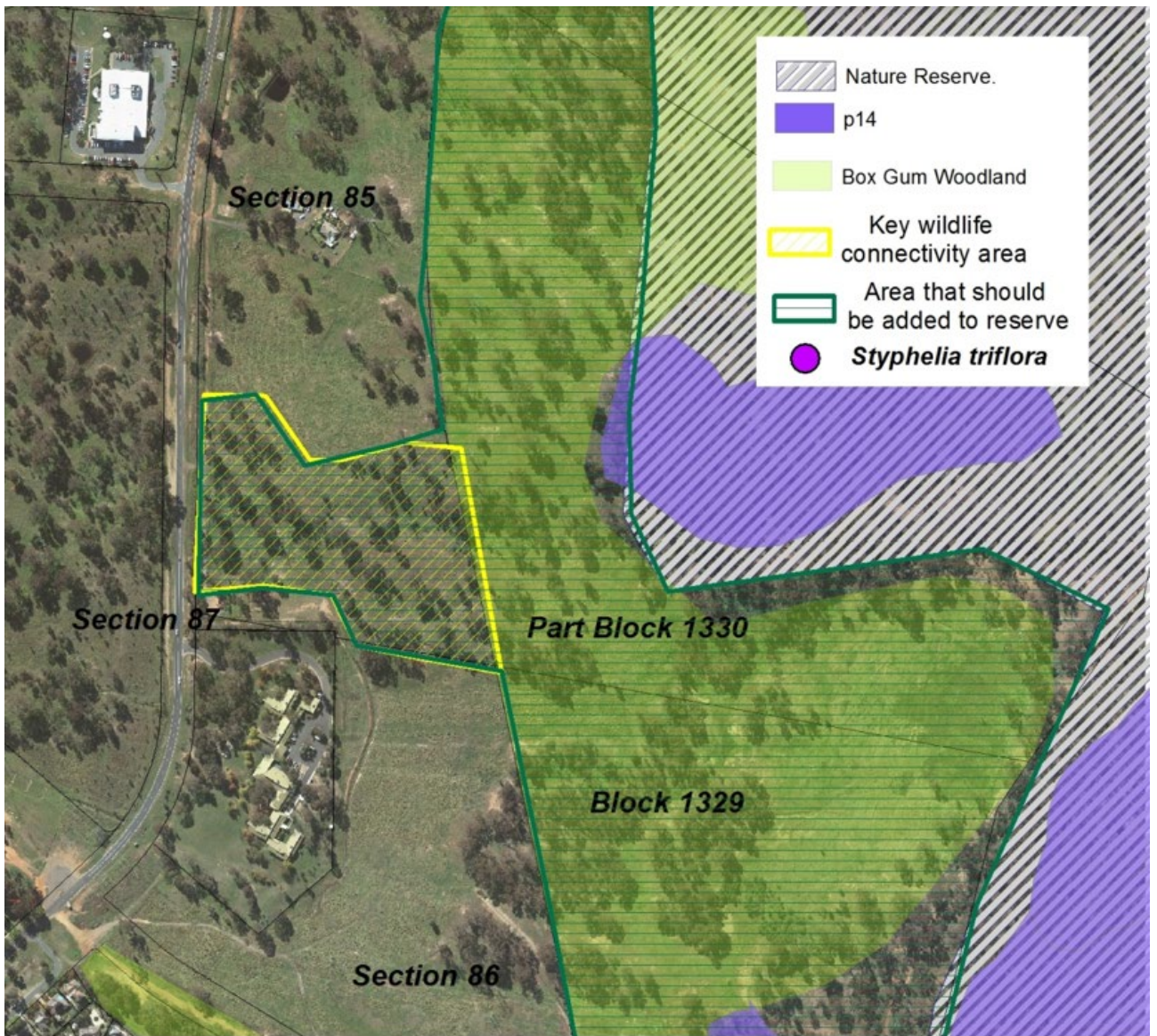
### Option 2 – Northern half of lands be added to Mt Majura Nature Reserve, while southern part of lands remains horse paddocks

Section 75 and 86 and the currently fenced off section of Section 85 are added to Mt Majura Nature Reserve, while Section 87 and the rest of Section 85 be zoned open space and continue to be managed as horse paddock. This is because the southern part of the horse paddocks is in poorer condition is not currently acting as a connecting link, and the presence of the powerline across Section 85 restricts the extent and scope of restoration that can occur. This option also provides for some continuation of the current recreational horse use, though by reducing the lands by about half it would reduce the amount of horses that could be agisted by a similar proportion, possibly questioning the viability of the area to be managed as horse paddocks.

### Option 3 – Addition of about 5ha of the southern portion of Section 86 to Mt Majura Nature Reserve

This provides for a connection of conservation lands across the horse paddocks to Watson woodlands. It would maintain the current horse agistment over most of the lands. It would probably maintain the current woodland values of the lands but not lead to major enhancement.

### **Map – Connection area that should be added to Mt Majura Nature Reserve under option 3**



Territory Plan Implications

The rezoning of land from CZ6 to NUZ3 and introduction of a public land reserve overlay of Pc – a nature reserve will require a variation to the Territory Plan.

Source:

Investigation by Dr Michael Mulvaney, Senior Environmental Planner, Conservator Liaison 23/3/2020

# PROPERTY DETAILS

PROPERTY NAME: HACKETT Paddock

OWNER: Territory Agreement

ROADSIDE ADDRESS: Aerial Street WATSON

LAT/LONG (Entrance road): -45.239000, 148.739407

CONTACT: [REDACTED]

PHONE (W): [REDACTED]

(F) 02 [REDACTED]

MOBILE: [REDACTED]

SIZE: 52.53 Ha

NO. OF HORSES: 8

PROPERTY TYPE: Government

PIC: NH 760 816



**ACT**  
GOVERNMENT



Department of Planning and  
Economic Development



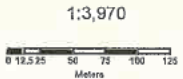


**Legend**

**ACCESS**

-  Access Gate
-  Horse Paddocks

Date: 22/06/2018

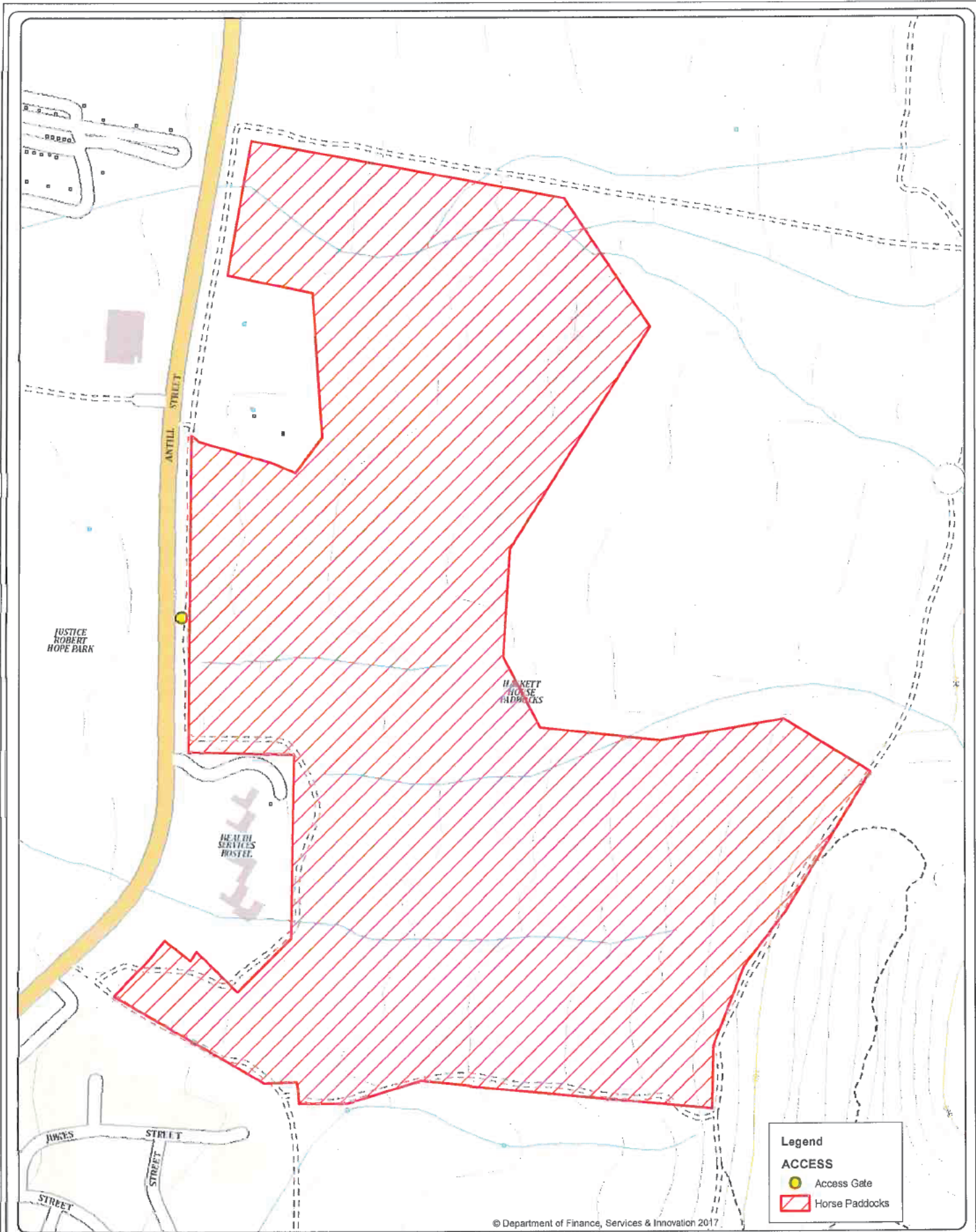


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 Geocentric datum Australia  
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Date: 25/06/2018



1:3,970



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**2020**

**THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE  
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

**ACT GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION OF  
20 FEBRUARY 2020 on YELLOW BOX WOODLAND ECOSYSTEMS -  
PROTECTION**

**TABLING STATEMENT**

**Mick Gentleman MLA  
Minister for Planning and Land Management**

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to table the ACT Government response to the Assembly resolution of 20 February 2020, on the protection of yellow box woodland ecosystems. The resolution called on the Government to commit to preserving and protecting Yellow Box Woodland from damage and urban encroachment. It also called on the Government to investigate rezoning of unleased Territory Land, east of Antill Street known as the Watson horse paddocks and to protect and preserve its Yellow Box Woodland community.

The Government maintains an ongoing commitment to conserving and protecting woodlands in the ACT. Thirty-seven percent of the endangered Yellow Box Blakey's Red Gum ecological community is currently protected within our reserves. The percentage of protected woodland continues to increase as the Government implements its environmental offset policy.

Investigation into the potential rezoning of the site considered a range of matters including an examination of the planning context, reviewing the previous ecological assessment, identifying site constraints and undertaking a zoning analysis, to inform the most appropriate future zone for the site.

The site has been identified as having ecological value and there is potential for regeneration of the woodland community that has been degrading by grazing. To protect the site's ecological value, a zone that supports environmental protection is likely to be appropriate. Further investigations and considerations will determine the most appropriate future zoning and land use for the site.

Consistent with the ACT Native Woodland Conservation Strategy of 2019, the Government remains committed to the preservation and regeneration of endangered Yellow Box Blakey's Red Gum ecological communities.

Madam Speaker, I commend the ACT Government response to the Assembly resolution on the protection of yellow box woodland ecosystems to the Assembly.