



**From:** [Kandola, Shobaz](#)  
**To:** [GENTLEMAN](#); [Pinkas, Ellen](#); [Turner, Alicia](#); [EPSDD DLO](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Meeting request  
**Date:** 22 January 2021 16:23:04

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Yep - can you let her know we're meeting in our capacity as PCS minister.

Karley, we'll need a meeting brief. Harles will come back with topics from Cons Council. PCS shouldn't brief on any topics not in their space. These items in the brief can simply say refer to relevant minister.

Thanks all

SK

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**From:** Drake, Harley <Harley.Drake@act.gov.au> on behalf of GENTLEMAN <GENTLEMAN@act.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 22, 2021 4:20:44 PM  
**To:** Kandola, Shobaz <Shobaz.Kandola@act.gov.au>; Pinkas, Ellen <Ellen.Pinkas@act.gov.au>  
**Subject:** FW: Meeting request  
Good to set up?

---

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@conservationcouncil.org.au>  
**Sent:** Friday, 22 January 2021 3:23 PM  
**To:** GENTLEMAN <GENTLEMAN@act.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Meeting request

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the ACT Government. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon,  
Please find attached correspondence from the Conservation Council ACT Region.  
Best wishes,

[REDACTED]  
*Executive Director*

tel: 02 6229 3202  
mob: [REDACTED]  
[conservationcouncil.org.au](http://conservationcouncil.org.au)  
Follow us on Facebook and on Twitter.

14/26 Barry Drive, Canberra, ACT, 2601  
(GPO Box 554, Canberra ACT, 2601)



**From:** [Drake, Harley](#) on behalf of [GENTLEMAN](#)  
**To:** [EPSDD DLO](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Meeting request  
**Date:** 22 January 2021 16:34:17  
**Attachments:** [GENTLEMAN RE New Assembly meeting request 20.01.2021-2.pdf](#)

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FYI

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**From:** Drake, Harley **On Behalf Of** GENTLEMAN  
**Sent:** Friday, 22 January 2021 4:21 PM  
**To:** Kandola, Shobaz <[Shobaz.Kandola@act.gov.au](mailto:Shobaz.Kandola@act.gov.au)>; Pinkas, Ellen <[Ellen.Pinkas@act.gov.au](mailto:Ellen.Pinkas@act.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** FW: Meeting request  
Good to set up?

---

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED][@conservationcouncil.org.au](mailto:[REDACTED]@conservationcouncil.org.au)>  
**Sent:** Friday, 22 January 2021 3:23 PM  
**To:** GENTLEMAN <[GENTLEMAN@act.gov.au](mailto:GENTLEMAN@act.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** Meeting request

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the ACT Government. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon,  
Please find attached correspondence from the Conservation Council ACT Region.  
Best wishes,

[REDACTED]  
*Executive Director*

tel: 02 6229 3202  
mob: [REDACTED]  
[conservationcouncil.org.au](http://conservationcouncil.org.au)  
Follow us on Facebook and on Twitter.

14/26 Barry Drive, Canberra, ACT, 2601  
(GPO Box 554, Canberra ACT, 2601)



**From:** [EPSD Government Services](#)  
**To:** [EPD Ministerials - Environment](#)  
**Cc:** [Walker, IanS](#); [Malouf, Chris](#)  
**Subject:** FOR ACTION: Due to GS 5/2 - 21/08343 Ministerial-Meeting Brief - Gentleman - Conservation Council - 17 February 2021  
**Date:** 29 January 2021 14:57:00  
**Attachments:** [21\\_08343 Ministerial-Meeting Brief - Gentleman - Conservation Council - 17 February 2021.obr](#)

UNOFFICIAL

**Ministerial Correspondence / Brief Request Form**  
**21/08343 Ministerial-Meeting Brief - Gentleman - Conservation Council - 17 February 2021**

	Due
To Minister's office	10/02/2021
Director-General	
Deputy Director-General	08/02/2021
Government Services	05/02/2021

**To:**

Climate Change and Sustainability	Urban Renewal	Office of the Director-General	Chief Operating Officer
Planning, Land and Building	Planning Delivery	Office of the Deputy Director-General	City Renewal Authority
Building Policy	<b>Parks and Conservation Service</b>	Utilities Technical Regulator	Suburban Land Agency

**Response By:**

Minister	Director-General	Deputy Director-General
Chief Minister	Directorate	

**Action Required:**

Reply to Correspondence	Directorate Input	Questions and Answers
Information Brief	Officer to attend***	Media Alert / Media Release**
<b>Meeting Brief*</b>	For Information Only	Speech**
Caveat Brief	For Appropriate Action	Speaking Notes**
Arrangements Brief*	Phone Constituent/ Provide Report	Talking Points (as dot points)**

**\*For up to date meeting/event timing, please see the calendar confirmation email in the attached Objective File.**

**\*\* In consultation with EPSDD Media.**

**\*\*\*Exec will advise you who is required to attend.**

**Further Information:**

Aimie - x72156

**From:** [EPSD Government Services](#)  
**To:** [EPSDD DLO](#)  
**Subject:** KARLEY: EPSD 21-08343 Meeting Brief - Conservation Council - 17 February 2021  
**Date:** 12 February 2021 09:34:00  
**Attachments:** [21\\_08343 Ministerial-Meeting Brief - Gentleman - Conservation Council - 17 February 2021.obr](#)

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OFFICIAL

Hi Karley,

Please see attached meeting brief for Minister Gentleman – Cleared to progress by DDG Rutledge.

**Critical Date: 17 February**

**The attached contains PUP, SP & ENV input**

Thanks,

Aimie - x72156

---

**From:** Rutledge, Geoffrey <Geoffrey.Rutledge@act.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 23:10  
**To:** EPSD Government Services <EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au>  
**Cc:** Brady, Erin <Erin.Brady@act.gov.au>; Crisp, Sarah <Sarah.Crisp@act.gov.au>; Vest, Petra <Petra.Vest@act.gov.au>; EPSDD Ministerials and Corro Executive Office <EPSDDMinisterialsandCorroExecutiveOffice@act.gov.au>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR DDG CLEARANCES (10/2): 21/08343 Ministerial-Meeting Brief - Gentleman - Conservation Council - 17 February 2021

OFFICIAL

Approved as amended.

Having reviewed the brief. I think I can be the EPSDD rep alone.

Thanks all.

Geoffrey

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**From:** EPSDD Ministerials and Corro Executive Office <[EPSDDMinisterialsandCorroExecutiveOffice@act.gov.au](mailto:EPSDDMinisterialsandCorroExecutiveOffice@act.gov.au)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 3:40 PM  
**To:** Rutledge, Geoffrey <[Geoffrey.Rutledge@act.gov.au](mailto:Geoffrey.Rutledge@act.gov.au)>  
**Cc:** Brady, Erin <[Erin.Brady@act.gov.au](mailto:Erin.Brady@act.gov.au)>; Crisp, Sarah <[Sarah.Crisp@act.gov.au](mailto:Sarah.Crisp@act.gov.au)>; EPSDD Ministerials and Corro Executive Office <[EPSDDMinisterialsandCorroExecutiveOffice@act.gov.au](mailto:EPSDDMinisterialsandCorroExecutiveOffice@act.gov.au)>; Vest, Petra <[Petra.Vest@act.gov.au](mailto:Petra.Vest@act.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** FOR DDG CLEARANCES (10/2): 21/08343 Ministerial-Meeting Brief - Gentleman - Conservation Council - 17 February 2021

OFFICIAL

Hi Geoffrey

Meeting brief for your priority clearance please, this is for a meeting with Minister Gentleman and the Conservation Council next Wednesday 17 February, it's overdue to the MO.

The brief has input from Planning and Urban Policy, Strategic Planning and TCCS.

Erin, sending this to you as an FYI - this brief has PUP input on Western Edge and SP input on the EPBC review. Sarah advised that given your capacity and the need to get it to the MO, this should go on Geoffrey's clearance only.

As Western Edge is one of the items for discussion, could we possibly have Lesley attending this meeting? Noting that you've got a clashing Minister meeting at the same time.

If you are happy for Lesley to attend I'll update the brief and advice the MO that Lesley and Geoffrey will also be in attendance.

Thanks  
Olivia

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**From:** EPSD Government Services <[EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au](mailto:EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 12:30 PM  
**To:** EPSDD Ministerials and Corro Executive Office  
<[EPSDDMinisterialsandCorroExecutiveOffice@act.gov.au](mailto:EPSDDMinisterialsandCorroExecutiveOffice@act.gov.au)>  
**Cc:** Vest, Petra <[Petra.Vest@act.gov.au](mailto:Petra.Vest@act.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** FOR DDG CLEARANCES (10/2): 21/08343 Ministerial-Meeting Brief - Gentleman - Conservation Council - 17 February 2021

OFFICIAL

Hi Liv

Please see attached brief for Geoffrey's clearance – **this also input from PUP & SP.**

This was due 10/2 for a meeting in 17 Feb.

Petra – the line area's put Ian in as a rep so Karley's checking if the MO actually want a rep or not.

Thanks

Erica

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**From:** Walker, IanS <[IanS.Walker@act.gov.au](mailto:IanS.Walker@act.gov.au)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 10:05 AM  
**To:** EPSD Government Services <[EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au](mailto:EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au)>; EPD Ministerials - Environment <[EPDMinisterials-Environment@act.gov.au](mailto:EPDMinisterials-Environment@act.gov.au)>  
**Cc:** Watts, Michaela <[Michaela.Watts@act.gov.au](mailto:Michaela.Watts@act.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** RE: 21/08343 Ministerial-Meeting Brief - Gentleman - Conservation Council - 17 February 2021

OFFICIAL

Updated and cleared

**Ian Walker**

Executive Group Manager | Environment

ph: +61 2 6205 9027 m: [REDACTED] e: [IanS.Walker@act.gov.au](mailto:IanS.Walker@act.gov.au)

Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate

Naas Neighbourhood, Level 2, 480 Northbourne Avenue, Dickson | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2602

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

*We acknowledge and celebrate the Ngunnawal peoples whose traditional lands we work on and pay our respect to elders past and present*

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**From:** EPSD Government Services <[EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au](mailto:EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 9:28 AM  
**To:** EPD Ministerials - Environment <[EPDMinisterials-Environment@act.gov.au](mailto:EPDMinisterials-Environment@act.gov.au)>  
**Cc:** Watts, Michaela <[Michaela.Watts@act.gov.au](mailto:Michaela.Watts@act.gov.au)>; Walker, IanS <[IanS.Walker@act.gov.au](mailto:IanS.Walker@act.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** 21/08343 Ministerial-Meeting Brief - Gentleman - Conservation Council - 17 February 2021  
**Importance:** High

OFFICIAL

Hi All,

TCCS input has been received for the attached and saved to file.

Thanks,

Aimie - x72156



**ACT**  
Government

Environment, Planning and  
Sustainable Development

**Ministerial Meeting Brief Coversheet**

MINISTER	<b>Minister for Planning and Land Management - Mick Gentleman MLA</b>
SUBJECT	Meeting with the Conservation Council – ACT and Region
OBJECTIVE NUMBER	21/08343
<b>CRITICAL DATE FOR MINISTER'S SIGNATURE*</b>	<b>Wednesday, 17 February 2021</b>
MEETING DATE	Wednesday, 17 February 2021

	Cleared By	Date
Director-General		
Deputy Director-General	Geoffrey Rutledge	11/02/2021
Government Services	Erica Hurrell	11/02/2021
Executive Group Manager	Ian Walker	11/02/2021
Contact Officer: Michaela Watts	Telephone No: 71831	

<p>Further Action/Comment:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Signature</p>
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*\*All briefs must list a critical date (ie when the Minister is required to sign, even if considered routine)*



**ACT**  
Government

Environment, Planning and  
Sustainable Development

MEETING BRIEF

**To:** Minister for Planning and Land Management

**Tracking No.:** 21/08343

**From:** Executive Group Manager, Environment, Heritage and Water

**Date of meeting:** Wednesday, 17 February 2021

**Subject:** Meeting with the Conservation Council – ACT and Region

**Critical Date:** 17 February 2021

- DDG, Environment, Water and Emissions Reduction 11/02/21

**Purpose of the meeting**

To meet with the Minister and discuss matters within his capacity as Minister for Parks and Land Management.

**Recommendations**

That you **note** the possible discussion topics for your meeting with Helen Oakey, Executive Director, Conservation Council.

**Noted / Please Discuss**

Mick Gentleman MLA ...../...../.....

Minister’s Office Feedback

Signatory Name: Ian Walker

Phone: x59027

Action Officer: Michaela Watts

Phone: x71831

<b>Purpose of the meeting:</b>	Background information on each discussion item is at <u>Attachment A</u> .
<b>Attendees:</b>	Helen Oakey – Executive Director, Conservation Council Gordon McAllister – Board President, Conservation Council
<b>Directorate representative in attendance:</b>	Nil.
<b>Day / date:</b>	Wednesday, 24 February 2021
<b>Time:</b>	12.00pm-12.30pm
<b>Venue:</b>	Minister’s Office
<b>Background:</b>	The Minister meets with the Conservation Council regularly about various issues. [REDACTED] More information about each topic identified by the Conservation Council for discussion is detailed in <u>Attachment A</u> .
<b>Discussion:</b>	Four keys topics have been raised: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Protect areas of moderate to high conservation value across the ACT, including the areas proposed for future development in the Western investigation area, and put in place enhancement / management measures early.</li> </ol> [REDACTED]
<b>Consultation Internal:</b>	Input was received from: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ACT Parks and Conservation Service</li> <li>2. Strategic Planning and Reform, Planning and Urban Policy</li> <li>3. Impact Assessment, Statutory Planning</li> <li>4. Office of the Conservator of Flora and Fauna, Environment</li> </ol>
<b>Cross directorate:</b>	[REDACTED]
<b>External:</b>	Nil.
<b>Media implications:</b>	Nil.

## Items to be discussed

### 1.1 Topic: Protect areas of moderate to high conservation value across the ACT, including the areas proposed for future development in the Western investigation area, and put in place enhancement / management measures early.

Conserving and protecting areas of high environmental values is very important to the ACT Government though this needs to be considered in a holistic manner and in a regional context, not necessarily on a site by site or a case by case situation.

There are a number of ways to protect environmental values and not all areas need to be formalised into the conservation estate.

### 1.2 Policy Position

The Government has already flagged its intentions to carefully consider environmental values in the area to the west of Canberra through the ACT Planning Strategy. This will be undertaken through the Western Edge investigations, specifically as following:

**Strategic Direction 1.2** Investigate the potential for new residential areas to the west of the city to meet future housing need.

#### Action 1.2.1

Undertake environmental, infrastructure and planning studies for the western edge of the city to identify suitable areas for:

- potential urban areas (excluding Central Molonglo);
- nature reserves;
- environmental offset and potential environmental offset areas;
- the consideration of cultural and heritage values; and
- other uses, for example rural, broadacre, major infrastructure, transport and services.

**Strategic Direction 3.5** Protect biodiversity and enhance habitat connectivity to improve landscape resilience

#### Action 3.5.1

Identify and establish environmental offset areas within planning processes to mitigate any unavoidable impacts of development on ecosystems and biodiversity of national significance and other protected matters.

#### Action 3.5.2

Incorporate consideration of natural habitat and conservation areas into urban planning and design processes to promote habitat connectivity and support the establishment of biodiversity refuges.

### 1.3 Suggested Talking Points

- The Western Edge investigation area is approximately 9,800 hectares and includes land generally bordered by the Murrumbidgee River and the existing urban areas of Belconnen, Molonglo Valley, Weston Creek and Kambah.
- The Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) earlier this year commenced a two-year scoping and preliminary investigations program into the suitability of parts of the Western Edge for potential urban uses and for environmental conservation. More detailed

studies and investigations will also be needed in the coming years to better refine where these may occur.

- As more information becomes available in the coming years, I will work with my colleague, the Minister for the Environment, to ensure that biodiversity and conservation values are given the highest consideration in future deliberations about the use of land in the Western Edge. Stakeholders and community will also be engaged.

**2.1 Topic: Ensure adequate funding for biodiversity enhancement and climate resilience in nature parks and reserves.**

Questions may arise around:

1. Ensuring investment in Namadgi National Park is focused on supporting the recovery of environmental values.
2. Commitment to supporting grass roots community initiatives that deliver environmental outcomes.
3. Ensuring investment in environmental initiatives take account of building climate change resilience.









**Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate**

**To:** Minister for Planning and Land Management Tracking No.: 21/146233

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**Date:** 11 February 2021

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**From:** Executive Group Manager, Planning and Urban Policy

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**Subject:** Planning Strategy Implementation – Western Edge Investigation Update

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**Critical Date:** 11 March 2022

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**Critical Reason:** To provide you with an update on work

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- DG .../.../...
- DDG, Planning and Sustainable Development .../.../...

**Recommendations**

That you:

1. Note the information contained in this brief.

**Noted / Please Discuss**

Mick Gentleman MLA ...../...../.....

Minister's Office Feedback

## Background

1. The *ACT Planning Strategy 2018* (Planning Strategy) included a commitment to investigate the opportunities to provide future greenfield development in the Western Edge, once Gungahlin and the Molonglo Valley are developed.

2. Specifically, the Planning Strategy states:

### Strategic Direction 1.2

*Investigate the potential for new residential areas to the west of the city to meet future housing need.*

### Action 1.2.1

*Undertake environmental, infrastructure and planning studies for the western edge of the city to identify suitable areas for: a. potential urban areas b. nature reserves c. environmental offset and potential environmental offset areas d. the consideration of cultural and heritage values e. other uses, for example rural, broadacre, major infrastructure, transport and services.*

3. The 2019-20 ACT Budget (EPSDD E22) allocated \$1.15 million over two years for scoping and preliminary studies to assist in determining the long-term use of land to the west of Canberra – referred to as Western Edge investigations.
4. The Western Edge investigation area is approximately 9,800 hectares and is bordered by the Murrumbidgee River and the existing urban areas of Weston Creek, Molonglo Valley and Belconnen.
5. The budget has been reprofiled into 2021/22 and 2022/23 and is planned for delivery across three phases as detailed in Attachment A.
6. The following Phase One preliminary investigations have been completed:
  - Preliminary Contamination Assessment
  - Preliminary Geotechnical and Hydrogeological Assessment
  - Preliminary Water Values and Environmental Hydrology
  - Preliminary Cultural Heritage Assessment
  - Preliminary Ecological Review and Assessment
  - Landscape Character Values and Visual Assessment
  - Preliminary Bushfire Risk Assessment
  - Preliminary Air Quality Assessment
  - Existing Infrastructure Capacity

## Issues

7. The project has progressed to Phase Two investigations and procurement.
8. A Statement of Requirements (SOR), via select tender, was issued on 17 January 2022 for an Urban Capability and Suitability Assessment. The purpose of the assessment is to undertake more detailed consideration of physical constraints and areas requiring environmental consideration and protection.
9. It is expected that a consultant will be appointed by the end of February 2022 with a final report due in July 2022.

10. Additional technical studies providing further information on ecological and aquatic values and more detailed cultural heritage assessment are also planned during the remainder of 2021/22.
11. Ecological and aquatic values in the area are a significant issue and the current level of knowledge of these is relatively low, particularly that of aquatic values, thus the need for the additional studies. These studies may need to continue into future years to ensure that there is sufficient knowledge of the values to support future Commonwealth and ACT statutory environment approvals. Additional budget funding may be required to fund these.
12. The third phase of works in 2022/23 will involve preparing a draft structure plan and potentially undertaking the further studies nominated in Attachment A.

### **Financial Implications**

13. The budget funding has been reprofiled into 2021/22 and 2022/23. Further budget funding will be required to deliver and complete the overall project including the application fee for a Commonwealth's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* strategic assessment. The Commonwealth has moved to a fee for service model.

### **Consultation**

#### Internal

14. An EPSDD Project Control Group has been established to coordinate the Western Edge investigations. The group comprises representatives from Strategic Planning, Development and Implementation, Environment, and Parks and Conservation Services and reports to the Executive Group Manager, Planning and Urban Policy.

#### Cross Directorate

15. Transport Canberra and City Services, EvoEnergy and Icon Water have previously been briefed on the commencement of the Western Edge investigations and will be engaged, as required, through further studies. A briefing on the Western Edge investigations was last provided to the Suburban Land Agency in August 2020.

#### External

16. It is expected that engagement through the Capability and Suitability Assessment will only occur with key external stakeholders such as the ANU Stromlo Observatory, the National Capital Authority, utility providers and with Representative Aboriginal Organisations. Public consultation is proposed to occur in 2022/23.

### **Work Health and Safety**

17. All consultants will be required to follow COVID-19 precautions and requirements.

### **Benefits/Sensitivities**

18. The Western Edge investigations are in response to an action of the Planning Strategy

### **Communications, media and engagement implications**

19. Talking points will be prepared prior to the Request for Tender being listed on the contracts register.

UNCLASSIFIED

20. EPSDD's western edge web page will also be updated to reflect the status of the project.

Signatory Name: Steven Gianakis

Phone: 71741

Action Officer: Karen Wright

Phone: 76316

**Attachments**

Attachment	Title
Attachment A	Presentation on Western Edge Investigations and project phases

**From:** [EPSDD DLO](#)  
**To:** [EPSDD PlanningUrbanPolicy](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Corro re Western Edge  
**Date:** 11 February 2022 17:33:00

---

OFFICIAL

Hi there,

I don't know the specific piece of corro that Louise is referring to below, I can find out if you would like me to? - the point is she is requesting consistency.

If you could please action this feedback

Thanks

Christy

Christy Fox | Directorate Liaison Officer

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

---

**From:** Crossman, Louise <Louise.Crossman@act.gov.au>

**Sent:** Friday, 11 February 2022 1:49 PM

**To:** EPSDD DLO <EPSDDDLO@act.gov.au>

**Subject:** Corro re Western Edge

Hi Christy/Lisa

Can you please check in with the team about the correspondence on the Western Edge/Bluett's Block/Blewitt's Block – this corro refers to the Denman Prospect land as Blewitt's Block but previously the Minister had said Bluett's Block was 402 and 403 Stromlo. I don't mind which option we go for but I'd like us to be consistent in this one as it's likely to be an issue for a while.

Louise

**Louise Crossman** (she/her)

Senior Adviser – Planning and Land Management

**Office of Minister Mick Gentleman MLA**

ACT Government

t: 02 620 57184 | m: [REDACTED]



**ACT**  
Government

Environment, Planning and  
Sustainable Development

**Ministerial Correspondence Coversheet**

MINISTER	<b>Chief Minister - Andrew Barr MLA</b>
SUBJECT	Bluetts Block
CORRESPONDENT	██████████
OBJECTIVE NUMBER	22/20135
<b>DUE DATE TO MINISTER'S OFFICE</b>	<b>08/03/2022</b>
Electronic Copy Provided to CMO	<b>YES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>NO</b> <input type="checkbox"/>

	Cleared By	Date
Director-General		
A/g Deputy Director-General	Jim Corrigan	10/03/2022
Government Services	Ashleigh Savage	09/03/2022
Business Manager (Obo EGM)	Laura Marcantonio	08/03/2022
Contact Officer: Steven Gianakis	Telephone No: 71741	

<p>Further Action/Comment:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Signature</p>
---

[REDACTED]

Dear Andrew Barr,

I'm [REDACTED] and I'm 10 years old. I believe that Canberra should stay the bush capital and not become "the big capital city" which is big news coming from a 10 year old, I mean sure it's nice that people are wanting to move to Canberra and that means you have to build more houses, but you don't have to destroy so much, like Bluetts Block! What's the point if you are wanting to build human homes but in the making you're gonna DESTROY HEAPS OF ANIMAL HOMES (sorry about the all caps what can I say I'm a kid). Most animals were around before us.

Bluetts Block is like the LAST (putting emphasis on last) piece of bush in Molonglo valley and it makes a nice sightseeing spot for the drive back home. I mean if you HAVE TO build more houses there's plenty of farmland nearby to build on instead of having to destroy the bush and animal homes and... other stuff.

Yours truly [REDACTED]

**From:** [EPSD Government Services](#)  
**To:** [EPSDD DLO](#)  
**Subject:** TASH: EPSD 22-20135 Corro - [REDACTED] - Bluetts Block  
**Date:** 10 March 2022 13:57:00  
**Attachments:** [22\\_20135\\_Ministerial-Correspondence - Barr - Evie Brodrick- Bluetts Block.obr](#)

---

Hi Tash,

Please see attached Correspondence for Chief Minister – Cleared to progress by A/g DDG Corrigan.

Note: The team have provided a response from the CM and A/g CM depending on when this one will get signed.

Thanks,

**Aimie Burns** | Ministerial Liaison Officer – Government Services  
Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate  
ACT Government | PH: 6207 2156 | [www.environment.act.gov.au](http://www.environment.act.gov.au)

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

From: EPSDD Ministerials and Corro Executive Office  
<[EPSDDMinisterialsandCorroExecutiveOffice@act.gov.au](mailto:EPSDDMinisterialsandCorroExecutiveOffice@act.gov.au)>  
Sent: Thursday, 10 March 2022 12:14  
To: EPSD Government Services <[EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au](mailto:EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au)>  
Cc: EPSDD Ministerials and Corro Executive Office  
<[EPSDDMinisterialsandCorroExecutiveOffice@act.gov.au](mailto:EPSDDMinisterialsandCorroExecutiveOffice@act.gov.au)>  
Subject: DDG CLEARANCE (11/3)- OVERDUE TO MO - 22/20135 Ministerial-Correspondence - BARR - [REDACTED] - Bluetts Block (qA1055468)  
OFFICIAL

Hi GS

Please see below DDG clearance on this one.

I note that there are two letters, but only one will be signed depending on whether it's the CM or a/g CM.

Many thanks,

Brodie Ferson | A/g Executive Officer to Dr Erin Brady, Deputy Director-General, Planning and Sustainable Development Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate | ACT Government Phone (02) 620 54615 | Email: [brodie.ferson@act.gov.au](mailto:brodie.ferson@act.gov.au) Level 4, 480 Northbourne Avenue, Dickson | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2602

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

From: Corrigan, Jim <[Jim.Corrigan@act.gov.au](mailto:Jim.Corrigan@act.gov.au)>  
Sent: Thursday, 10 March 2022 11:59 AM  
To: EPSDD Ministerials and Corro Executive Office  
<[EPSDDMinisterialsandCorroExecutiveOffice@act.gov.au](mailto:EPSDDMinisterialsandCorroExecutiveOffice@act.gov.au)>  
Cc: Ferson, Brodie <[Brodie.Ferson@act.gov.au](mailto:Brodie.Ferson@act.gov.au)>  
Subject: RE: FOR DDG CLEARANCE (11/3)- OVERDUE TO MO - 22/20135 Ministerial-Correspondence - BARR - [REDACTED] - Bluetts Block (qA1055468)  
OFFICIAL

Brodie

Cleared, thanks

Jim

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

From: EPSDD Ministerials and Corro Executive Office  
<[EPSDDMinisterialsandCorroExecutiveOffice@act.gov.au](mailto:EPSDDMinisterialsandCorroExecutiveOffice@act.gov.au)>  
Sent: Thursday, 10 March 2022 9:24 AM

To: Corrigan, Jim <[Jim.Corrigan@act.gov.au](mailto:Jim.Corrigan@act.gov.au)>

Cc: EPSDD Ministerials and Corro Executive Office  
<[EPSDDMinisterialsandCorroExecutiveOffice@act.gov.au](mailto:EPSDDMinisterialsandCorroExecutiveOffice@act.gov.au)>

Subject: FOR DDG CLEARANCE (11/3)- OVERDUE TO MO - 22/20135 Ministerial-Correspondence  
- BARR - [REDACTED] - Bluetts Block (qA1055468)

OFFICIAL

Hi Jim

Please see attached corro for your review and clearance by Friday, 11 March if possible.

The EGM is away, so sending to you for exec clearance.

You will note there are two responses (one from the CM and another from the a/g CM)  
depending on acting arrangements. Only one will be signed.

The constituent is 10 years old, so the tone of the letter been pitched accordingly.

Many thanks,

Brodie Ferson | A/g Executive Officer to Dr Erin Brady, Deputy Director-General, Planning and  
Sustainable Development Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate |  
ACT Government Phone (02) 620 54615 | Email: [brodie.ferson@act.gov.au](mailto:brodie.ferson@act.gov.au) Level 4, 480  
Northbourne Avenue, Dickson | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2602

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

From: EPSD Government Services <[EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au](mailto:EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au)>

Sent: Wednesday, 9 March 2022 12:30 PM

To: EPSDD Ministerials and Corro Executive Office  
<[EPSDDMinisterialsandCorroExecutiveOffice@act.gov.au](mailto:EPSDDMinisterialsandCorroExecutiveOffice@act.gov.au)>

Subject: BRODIE: FOR URGENT DDG CLEARANCE - OVERDUE TO MO - 22/20135 Ministerial-  
Correspondence - BARR - [REDACTED] - Bluetts Block (qA1055468)

OFFICIAL

Hi Brodie,

Please find attached for DDG clearance. Please note there are two responses in there, one for  
A/g CM and one for CM depending on the office's preferences.

This is now overdue to the MO (yesterday was the due date), so it would be great to get it there  
ASAP.

Thanks.

Ashleigh Savage | Director, Government Services

Phone: (02) 6205 5649 | Email: [Ashleigh.Savage@act.gov.au](mailto:Ashleigh.Savage@act.gov.au) Environment, Planning and  
Sustainable Development Directorate | ACT Government

480 Northbourne Avenue Dickson ACT 2602 | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601

[www.environment.act.gov.au](http://www.environment.act.gov.au) | [www.planning.act.gov.au](http://www.planning.act.gov.au)

I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the ACT, the Ngunnawal people.

I acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of  
this city and this region.

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

From: Marcantonio, Laura <[Laura.Marcantonio@act.gov.au](mailto:Laura.Marcantonio@act.gov.au)>

Sent: Tuesday, 8 March 2022 5:40 PM

To: EPSD Government Services <[EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au](mailto:EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au)>

Cc: EPSDD PlanningUrbanPolicy <[EPSDDPlanningUrbanPolicy@act.gov.au](mailto:EPSDDPlanningUrbanPolicy@act.gov.au)>

Subject: 22/20135 Ministerial-Correspondence - BARR - [REDACTED] - Bluetts Block (qA1055468)

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Hi GS - can this corro go through DDG for review please?

Thanks

Laura

Laura Marcantonio has sent you a link to "22/20135 Ministerial-Correspondence - BARR - [REDACTED] - Bluetts Block" (qA1055468) from Objective.

Open in Navigator

Double click on the attachment

Open in ECM for Browser

<https://objective.act.gov.au/#/documents/qA1055468/details>



**Andrew Barr MLA**  
Chief Minister  
Treasurer  
Minister for Climate Action  
Minister for Economic Development  
Minister for Tourism  
  
Member for Kurrajong

---

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your letter to me of 21 February 2022, about Bluetts Block in the Molonglo Valley.

I am impressed by and share your passion for our environment. The ACT Government hasn't made any decisions about the future of Bluetts Block. When we are planning for additional houses in Canberra, the ACT Government makes sure it looks very closely at what animals, especially the threatened ones, are making their homes on the land.

Since 2011, the ACT Government has made 22 new environmental conservation areas, which is about 2,326 hectares of land. To understand the size of this land, if you think about the size of our local National Zoo and Aquarium – the 22 conservation areas in total, are the size of 122 zoos!

These conservation areas are designed to protect threatened animals and plants. Also, importantly, it means that these areas will always be there for the homes of animals and will never have houses built on them.


The ACT Government will make more conservation areas available for plants, animals and their homes in the future if our work determines the animals and plants need it.

This is exactly what will happen at Bluetts Block. The ACT Government will do studies on the land in the coming years to identify what animals and plants are there, and how much land, if needed, will be kept just for the animals and plants.

This work will tell us more about what the future holds for Bluetts Block.

---

ACT Legislative Assembly London Circuit, GPO Box 1020, Canberra ACT 2601

 @ABarrMLA

 +61 2 6205 0011

 barr@act.gov.au

 AndrewBarrMLA

 andrewbarrmla

Thank you for taking the time to write to me.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Barr  
Chief Minister

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**Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate****To:** Minister for the Environment

Tracking No.: 22/21211

**To:** Minister for Planning and Land Management**Date:** 25 March 2022**From:** Director General, Ben Ponton**Subject:** Environmental Studies for the Western Edge**Critical Date:** **Routine****Critical Reason:** In the normal course of business

- DG 29/03/22
- DDG, Planning and Sustainable Development 25/03/22
- DDG, Environment, Water and Emissions Reduction 25/03/22

**Recommendation**That you **note** the information contained in this brief;

Rebecca Vassarotti MLA

**Noted / Please Discuss**

20/4/2022

**Minister's Office Feedback**

Thank you for this comprehensive brief. As discussed in planning sub committee, there is significant community interest in areas contained within the study area. I am keen to explore how we can provide information into the public domain, particularly around environmental values in particular areas that are known to provide a context to future decision making process. I also note with interest the work occurring around the biodiversity tool, and the importance of connectivity considerations when considering the impacts of potential development of this type. I am keen to see how these will be integrated into future stages of the process.

**Noted / Please Discuss**

Mick Gentleman MLA



29/4/2022

**Minister's Office Feedback**

According to this brief, decisions about the Western Edge, whether these relate to development or environmental protection, will require Cabinet and Budget considerations. Early information is therefore likely to be cabinet-in-confidence. Can officials please ensure that Western Edge studies and materials are appropriately marked as cabinet in confidence.

## Background

1. Minister Vassarotti's office requested information on environmental studies and values in relation to the Western Edge Investigation area (WEIA) and Denman Prospect Section 1, Block 12, specifically:
  - a. What are the known environmental values for this area?
  - b. For the environmental assessments, what is the scope outlined in the scoping study?
  - c. What inputs from Environment and the Conservator have been provided to date, and what are the next stages at which input will be provided?
  - d. Update on timeframes and processes, noting the previous briefing that was given in 2021.
  - e. How has information from the urban biodiversity tool been input into environmental studies?
  - f. What buffers have been recommended to protect the environmental values above?
2. Roles and responsibilities of Minister Gentleman and Minister Vassarotti are broken down in the following ways:
  - a. Minister Gentleman: oversight of the planning and land management portfolios in EPSDD, which includes responsibility for the WEIA and associated investigations and planning for future recommendations to Government on land use. Additionally, these portfolios include fire management responsibilities and protection of assets (environment, built and cultural) from fire; undertaken by the ACT Parks and Conservation Service.
  - b. Minister Vassarotti: oversight of the environment and heritage portfolios within the Environment, Heritage and Water Division (EHW) in EPSDD, that provide regulatory, policy, planning functions and technical advice and expertise on natural resource management, biosecurity, biodiversity, conservation research, evaluation and heritage conservation along with environment protection policy.
3. The information in this brief is provided in relation to the Western Edge Investigation Area (refer Attachment A) and Section 1, Block 12 Denman Prospect and areas of land in proximity that are often referred to as Bluett's and Blewitt's Blocks (refer Attachment B). The relationship between these two areas is shown in Attachment C.

## Issues

### Western Investigation Area Work

4. The project work at present is proposed to be undertaken in five phases to get to potential land release identification (should that be an outcome of earlier phases). Funding was provided in the 2019-20 budget and the work has been delayed due to COVID impacts and seasonal requirements for some studies.

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- a. Phase One - preliminary investigations have been completed (refer para 25).
  - b. Phase Two - 2021-22 investigations and procurement. The project has progressed to this phase.
  - c. Phase Three - investigations in 2022-23 may progress to consideration of preliminary land use options and undertaking the further ecological studies (subject to available budget funding of \$230,000 and the outcomes and the recommendations of the 2021-22 studies).
  - d. Phase four - Statutory Processes 2023-24 may involve territory plan variations, an EPBC strategic report, Ecological survey, cultural heritage assessment, infrastructure investigations and National Capital Plan Amendment (if required).
  - e. Phase five – Statutory Approvals 2024-25 and onward - may require EPBC approval, ACT EIS process, capital works investigations commence and targeted studies for specific land release locations.
5. Further budget funding will be required to further progress the Western Edge investigations and undertake further environmental surveys and this will be subject to normal Budget considerations.
6. In relation to the WEIA there are no statutory environmental and planning approval processes within the current three phases, over the next 18 months. Statutory approval processes would occur after 2022-23 (depending on outcomes of work) and would need to be based on sufficient information and evidence.
7. In relation to the deferred area, it is anticipated that a revised request for an exemption from an EIS (as per current planning legislation, noting proposed changes to this process are anticipated in the Planning Bill 2022) for Section 1, Block 12 will be submitted, which will again be reviewed by the Conservator.

Known environmental values of the WEIA (Minister Gentleman portfolio area work)

8. A Preliminary Ecological Review and Assessment of the WEIA was commissioned by EPSDD and undertaken in 2020-21. Known significant ecological values identified in the Ecological Review and Assessment include:
- a. Natural Temperate Grassland, a critically endangered ecological community
  - b. Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Woodland, a critically endangered ecological community
  - c. vegetation maintaining local and regional habitat connectivity
  - d. five threatened flora species
  - e. 47 rare and uncommon flora species
  - f. 12 threatened bird species including 513 hectares (ha) of confirmed Superb Parrot (*Polytelis swainsonii*) breeding habitat, and an additional 423ha of potential breeding habitat

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- g. 16 rare or conservation dependent bird species
- h. Pink-tailed Worm-lizard (*Aprasia parapulchella*), including 617ha of confirmed habitat, and an additional 73ha of potential habitat
- i. Golden Sun Moth (*Synemon plana*), including 105ha of confirmed habitat, and additional potential habitat
- j. Small Ant-blue Butterfly (*Acrodipsas myrmecophila*)
- k. three threatened fish species.

9. The Ecological Review and Assessment recommended:

- a. additional flora and fauna surveys to appropriately identify and describe the significant ecological values that occur in the WEIA;
- b. engaging experts to conduct additional reviews and analysis, particularly with respect to aquatic ecology and habitat connectivity; and
- c. engaging with the relevant groups in Environment Heritage and Water (EHW) within EPSDD to:
  - i. address fundamental issues on the overall impact of urban development on the ecological values that occur in the WEIA; and
  - ii. identify potential conservation / future offset areas.

10. In consultation with EHW it was further recommended, on the basis of the above study, that the following additional studies were required:

- a. significant tree assessment – regarding superb parrot
- b. significant tree assessment – other
- c. survey for birds of conservation concern
- d. survey for hollow-dependent fauna (microbats, gliders, treecreepers)
- e. assessment of functional connectivity (for individuals and populations) - patch size, distance (with respect to key groups) with recommendations from the urban biodiversity tool valuable input into this assessment
- f. assessment of habitat features and function - e.g., surface rock, coarse woody debris, tree regeneration and health, to enable evaluation of habitat quality/suitability
- g. assessment of importance of areas at the Territory and National scale under climate change scenarios for key taxa of conservation concern (e.g. microbats, birds).

11. Recommendation (g) is viewed as critical information for supporting resilience of biodiversity to expected climate change and supporting functional habitat and connectivity into the future.

Known environmental values of Denman Prospect Section 1, Block 12

12. The vegetation of Denman Prospect Section 1 Block 12 is characterised by a relatively intact dry sclerophyll forest of moderate to high diversity on the upper slopes of the ridge, and a highly disturbed open woodland with scattered remnant and regenerating eucalypts in the low-lying areas.

13. None of this vegetation meets the criteria of an endangered ecological community.
14. Attachment B shows known environmental values for Bluetts Block and Blewitts Block, including the deferred area at Section 1, Block 12.
15. The site provides contiguous habitat adjoining what are our only recently recorded native small mammal populations in Canberra Nature Park (outside of Mulligans Flat/ Gorooyaroo). One Common Dunnart record is very close to the boundary, making it unlikely that the area is not used to some extent by this population.
16. More broadly, the site buffers the communities of Blocks 402/403; without this, these blocks will experience greater edge effects related to the urban area (e.g., weeds, off-target rodenticides, recreational impacts, dogs, light pollution, and adverse changes to microclimate).
17. A single Hoary Sunray (*Leucochrysum albicans* var. *tricolor*) plant was recorded during the spring 2021 targeted surveys. This species is listed as Endangered under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).
18. 14 species of orchid have been found within the block. All are Protected Native Species under the *Nature Conservation Act 2014* (NC Act), and three are considered rare in the ACT.
19. 27 mature remnant trees occur in the area of disturbed woodland. Some of these trees have habitat hollows.
20. Three coconut ant nests have been recorded in remnant woodland trees, which are critical for the survival of the nationally rare Small Ant-blue Butterfly.
21. In addition to many common native birds, several EPBC Act and/or NC Act listed birds, and numerous other species considered conservation dependent in the region, may forage and potentially breed in the study area, including:
  - a. Brown Treecreeper (*Climacteris picumnus victoriae*),
  - b. Varied Sittella (*Daphoenositta chrysoptera*),
  - c. Little Eagle (*Hieraaetus morphnoides*),
  - d. Hooded Robin (*Melanodryas cucullata cucullate*),
  - e. Scarlet Robin (*Petroica boodang*), and
  - f. Superb Parrot.
22. A single record of Pink-tailed Worm-Lizard has been recorded.

Ongoing Investigations

23. Consultants are currently being procured to undertake work in Phase two of the WEIA work including:

- a. Land Use Capability and Suitability Assessment, in broad terms that will consider:
  - i. Undertaking a land capability assessment;
  - ii. Identifying land areas and boundaries and potential uses;
  - iii. Undertaking a land suitability assessment;
  - iv. Developing potential land use scenarios and analysis; and
  - v. Recommendations for next steps and further work.
- b. Aquatic and Riparian Literature Review (desktop study), in broad terms:
  - i. Reviewing and identifying aquatic and riparian values and impacts;
  - ii. Identifying and mapping environmental and ecological values; and
  - iii. Recommending future aquatic and riparian surveys.

24. In addition, it is expected that further studies will be procured this financial year, subject to available funding, as follows:

- a. Environmental surveys (targeted) consistent with best practice methodologies and EPBC criteria.
- b. Cultural Values Assessment.
- c. Aquatic and Riparian Benchmarking Study.

25. The following investigations have been completed as part of Phase 1. Noting these were preliminary and first phase, they have in many cases resulted in recommendations for further investigation:

- a. Preliminary Air Quality Assessment Report
- b. Preliminary Contamination Assessment
- c. Preliminary Geotechnical and Hydrogeological Assessment
- d. Water Values and Environmental Hydrology Assessment
- e. Preliminary Cultural Heritage Assessment
- f. Landscape Character Values and Visual Assessment
- g. Preliminary Bushfire Risk Assessment
- h. Preliminary Ecological Review and Assessment
- i. Preliminary Assessment of Engineering Infrastructure Opportunities and Constraints.

Inputs from Environment Heritage and Water (EHW) and the Conservator of Flora and Fauna – Minister Vassarotti portfolio responsibility

26. While the Western Edge Investigations Project is being led by the Planning portfolio, the detailed work is being shared by Strategic Planning working with EHW. This includes:

- a. EHW representatives on the Western Edge Project Control Group (PCG)
- b. EHW review of and contribution to Western Edge consultancy briefs and provision of comments.

27. EHW will continue to work with Strategic Planning on the detailed work and provide input.

#### Statutory Processes

28. The Conservator of Flora and Fauna recently provided comment on a request for exemption from an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for an Estate Development Plan for the Denman Prospect 2 Estate, located at Section 1, Block 12 (the previously deferred area).

29. The Conservator did not support the application as the proposed works were unclear and the application had not comprehensively considered:

- a. Potential Pink-tailed Worm-lizard habitat
- b. Mitigation measures in relation to impacts on protected orchids; and
- c. Assessment and consideration of impacts beyond the holding lease in relation to bushfire risk mitigation measures.

#### Utilisation of the Urban Biodiversity Tool

30. The urban biodiversity tool at its current stage of development does not encompass the whole WEIA. The relevant GIS files from preliminary investigations have been provided to guarantee integration with the urban biodiversity tool as it develops and to support future iterations that can inform work on the Western Edge.

31. Input and advice from EHW in respect to urban biodiversity and habitat connectivity will continue to be provided and inform the outcomes of the WEIA project.

#### Buffers

32. No areas have yet to be determined for land use, change or development, and as such, no buffers have been identified or recommended.

33. These will in part, be informed by the findings of the Land Use Capability and Suitability Assessment and by environmental surveys.

34. There will also be a need for future developers (depending on outcomes of work and land use proposals) to incorporate required bushfire Asset Protection Zones entirely within the development footprint. This is to avoid bushfire fire management activities impacting Blocks 402 and 403 further to that already required for protection of the existing Denman Prospect development.

35. The Parks and Conservation Service in line with requirements of the strategic bushfire management plan undertake works on public land on the western edge and provide advice on fire risks this will include as part of the WEIA.

#### **Financial Implications**

36. The current WEIA work is budget funded as noted earlier but continuing phases will require further funding.

**Consultation**

Internal

37. Conservation Research and Evaluation, Conservator, the Parks and Conservation Service and Strategic Planning across EPSDD contributed to the development of this brief.

Cross Directorate

38. Nil.

External

39. Nil.

**Work Health and Safety**

40. There are no work health and safety considerations associated with this brief.

**Benefits/Sensitivities**

41. The Western Edge investigations are in response to an action of the ACT Planning Strategy 2018.

42. The WEIA contains significant ecological values and any development areas proposed would need to be carefully considered.

**Communications, media and engagement implications**

43. There is significant community interest in Bluetts/Blewitts Block and this is likely to continue as the investigation progresses.

44. No communications are anticipated at this time.

Signatory Name: Ben Ponton Phone: 6207 8359  
Action Officer: Eliza Larson Phone: 6207 7009

**Attachments**

Attachment	Title
Attachment A	Map – Western Edge Investigation Area
Attachment B	Bluetts and Blewitts Block Values Map
Attachment C	Western Edge Investigation Area and Denman Prospect

