



Ms Erin Murphy
Team Leader
Regional Assessments,
Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
By email: Erin.Murphy@dpie.nsw.gov.au

Our reference: DOC 24/72883
EF 23/13685

Dear Erin,

DA referral – Sonnblick Lodge demolition, 10 Bobuck Lane, Thredbo – DA 24/448

We refer to the above development application (DA) forwarded to the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) for provision of comments in accordance with Chapter 4 of the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Precincts - Regional) 2021* (SEPP).

As requested, NPWS has reviewed the DA documentation. Based on that review, we make the following comments, having considered matters required by the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*, the *Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management 2006* (KNP PoM), the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act) and other relevant legislation. We request that the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) consider our comments in its assessment.

1. Leasing/licensing and KNP PoM

- 1.1 NPWS Visitor Engagement & Revenue Branch (VERB) has advised that the proposed works are permissible under the head lease with Kosciuszko Thredbo Pty Limited (KT) for the Thredbo Alpine Resort. However, the demolition of an existing building is a matter requiring lessor's consent under the head lease. VERB has accepted the DA referral as a request for lessor's consent and will contact KT separately about the matter.
- 1.2 The relevant provisions of the KNP PoM have been considered and we believe that the proposed works are consistent with the management objectives for section 10.2 (Alpine Resorts Management Units), section 10.4 (Thredbo Management Unit) and section 11.6 (Environmental Quality).

2. BC Act

- 2.1 The proponent has demonstrated consideration of the BC Act in the DA. As proposed, NPWS concurs that the development does not trigger the Biodiversity Offset Scheme under the BC Act. We generally agree with the assessment provided in the BOS Evaluation Report for the development, although we note that the BOS Evaluation Report does not acknowledge the potential presence and impacts to the Broad-toothed Rat (*Mastacomys fuscus mordicus*), which is known to occur in the area and is listed as vulnerable under the BC Act and endangered under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) as of 15 November 2023.
- 2.2 NPWS has considered the potential impacts of the development on the Broad-toothed Rat. We consider that adverse impacts to the species are unlikely, provided the Site Environmental Management Plan (SEMP) is updated as per our comments below and the measures in the SEMP are followed. Given potential impacts can be managed, we do not consider an amendment to the BOS Evaluation Report is required for this DA.

Notwithstanding, we do expect that all future DAs in Thredbo which impact suitable habitat for the Broad-toothed Rat will assess the potential impacts to the species, undertake a Test of Significance and include specific and relevant mitigation measures.

3. Environmental values of Kosciuszko National Park

- 3.1 In order to assist in minimising impacts of the proposed development on the environmental values of Kosciuszko National Park, NPWS recommends that DPHI address the general environmental management measures set out in paragraphs 3.2 to 3.3 in its consent conditions.

Protection of native vegetation

- 3.2 The statement in table 6.3 of the SEMP that: “[r]easonable and practicable native fauna management measures will be implemented to avoid environmental harm and nuisance to native fauna, known habitats and breeding places” is not adequate to address fauna protection measures that must be implemented for the development. The statement is subjective and does not provide for prescriptive and actionable fauna protection measures. NPWS recommends that the table is updated to include fauna egress measures from all open excavations and any other prescriptive and actionable fauna protection measures relevant to the scope of works.

Demolition and rehabilitation period

- 3.3 Excavation and construction works must cease by 30 April, with rehabilitation and stabilisation works able to continue until 31 May. NPWS is comfortable with DPHI extending these timeframes on an ad hoc basis where weather and site conditions allow, e.g. where:
- (i) initial rehabilitation and stabilisation works can occur prior to snow accumulation; and
 - (ii) development related machinery and equipment traffic will not disturb wet ground.

4. Cultural values of Kosciuszko National Park

- 4.1 In order to avoid or mitigate impacts to the cultural values of KNP, NPWS recommends that DPHI address the measures set out in paragraphs 4.2 to 4.4 in its consent conditions.

Aboriginal cultural heritage

- 4.2 We note that the potential for impacts on Aboriginal cultural heritage has been addressed by the proponent in the statement of environmental effects accompanying the DA. We consider that the due diligence assessment has followed a suitable process. As works are on a previously disturbed site, we concur that the potential for impacts is unlikely.
- 4.3 In the event that an Aboriginal object is uncovered during completion of the works, we request that work ceases in the relevant area of the site and that the object is protected from harm. The NPWS must then be notified to arrange for assessment of the object.

Historic heritage

- 4.4 We note that the structure which is the subject of the DA is not listed as a heritage item in the SEPP. We do not consider that the development will impact any surrounding heritage items. No immediately neighbouring lodges are listed as heritage items.

5. Other matters

Miscellaneous considerations

5.1 We note that NPWS has also considered the following matters in its assessment:

- (i) That there is no change proposed to stormwater drainage;
- (ii) That there is no requirement for realigning water pipes to the subject site or altering mains water supply;
- (iii) That the works have no public health components, including in relation to food safety; and
- (iv) That there are no potential impacts of the proposed development on NPWS facilities, infrastructure and park management.

If you have any further enquiries about this matter please contact the NPWS Assessment Coordinator, Sarah Collum on 02 6450 5684 or at sarah.collum@environment.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Kelsey Boreham
Principal Project Officer
Park Operations Projects, NPWS
31 January 2023