

ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT – MOUNTAIN ASH ROAD, GUNDARY (JULY 2022)

JWA PTY LTD ECOLOGICAL CONSULTANTS

REVIEWER: BRIAN FAULKNER

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REVIEW DATE: 5/08/2022

REVIEW COMMENTS

The report is well researched and presented.

Desktop surveys have been conducted appropriately utilizing relevant online databases, including EPBC Protected Matters Search Tool, BioNet Atlas, ALA, eBird, BVM, NVR, NSW Fisheries, and SEED.

Threatened ecological communities and threatened species predicted or known to occur within 10 km of the study area have been correctly identified and evaluated.

Flora and fauna field surveys have been conducted appropriately and in line with relevant NSW Government DPE Environment and Heritage guidelines.

Ecological communities, flora and fauna lists derived from surveys are consistent with what would be expected for the locality.

Habitat values and landscape connectivity have been assessed.

Potential impacts of the proposed activity have been identified and evaluated.

Commonwealth and NSW State legislative requirements have been identified and addressed.

The majority of the site has been determined to have been previously cleared of native vegetation due to agricultural activity and it is now dominated by exotic pasture and weed species. The land is currently used primarily for grazing livestock.

The proposed activity will not require entry into the BOS:

- No parts of the land are flagged on the Biodiversity Values Map.
- The BOS area clearing threshold for native vegetation will not be triggered.
- The proposed activity is not likely to have a significant adverse impact on any threatened species or ecological communities.

A small area of degraded Box Gum Woodland has been identified as being present in the north western part of the land. An assessment of significance has determined that the proposed activity is not likely to have a significant impact on this remnant vegetation, but as an added safeguard the report recommends that this area be protected by a Covenant Management Plan (CMP). Watercourses and drainage lines are also recommended to be protected by the CMP.

No threatened flora species were found during field surveys. The assessment has determined that there is a small chance Button Wrinkelwort (*Rutidosia leptorhynchoidea*) and Small Purple Pea (*Swainsona recta*) could be present in the remnant woodland area, but if these are present they will not be adversely impacted by the proposed activity.

Two threatened fauna species, both microbats, were identified by use of Anabat acoustic detectors. Based on bat calls recorded, Large Bent-winged Bat (*Miniopterus orianae oceanensis*) was confirmed on the site and Eastern False Pipistrelle (*Falsistrellus tasmaniensis*) was determined to be highly probably present.

The Large Bent-winged Bat utilises caves as its primary roosting habitat, but also uses derelict mines, storm-water tunnels, buildings and other man-made structures. These are not present in the project area and the proposed activity will not impact on any roosting sites for this species.

The Eastern False Pipistrelle generally roosts in eucalypt hollows, but has also been found under loose bark on trees or in buildings. Roosting habitat for this species will not be impacted by the proposed activity.

Both threatened bat species are utilising the site for foraging and the proposed activity is not likely to have a significant adverse impact on their access to or use of the area.

The conclusion of the report that, provided the remnant Box Gum Woodland and watercourses/drainage lines are retained, buffered and protected by a CMP, the proposed activity will not have any significant adverse impacts on biodiversity is supported.