

## Memorandum

---

**To** Belinda Scott, Senior Planning Officer  
**cc.** Elizabeth Kinkade, Director Land Release  
**From** Robert Black Executive Director, Strategies and Land Release  
**Date** 30/05/2012 **File no** 11/01973

---

**Subject: North West Growth Centre water related services for first release precincts – MOD 3**

### Comment

The Strategies and Land Release (SLR) team has reviewed the modification assessment report prepared by Sydney Water, with regard to the relevant biodiversity measures (RBMs) of the Growth Centres Biodiversity Certification. Please note, the comments in this Memorandum only consider impacts to vegetation within the Growth Centres.

### Existing Native Vegetation (ENV)

- The modification application includes a Modification Assessment Report (MAR) and an Ecological Impact Assessment for the amended proposal. SLR notes that there are inconsistencies between the two documents, in particular the amount of ENV in non-certified areas that will be impacted as a result of the proposal.
- The Ecological Impact Assessment indicates that 0.67 ha of ENV in non-certified areas would be directly impacted as a result of the project and would need to be offset in accordance with the RBMs outlined in the Biodiversity Conservation Order.
- However, the MAR indicates that 0.4 ha of ENV would be impacted in non-certified areas as a result of the modification. Of this, 0.28 ha was already calculated as part of the vegetation to be cleared under the approved project and included in the existing offset package. Therefore, according to the MAR only 0.12 ha of additional ENV would be impacted in non-certified areas and would need to be offset as a result of the modified proposal.
- Clarification is required regarding the amount of ENV that is to be impacted in non-certified areas, as a result of the modified proposal.
- However, for the purposes of this submission the area of impacted ENV as identified in the MAR has been used.

### Fragmentation of ENV

- SLR has had previous discussions with Sydney Water with regard to the fragmentation of ENV as a result of its projects, and has informed Sydney Water of the requirement to offset all impacts associated with a proposal.
- If a proposal results in a patch of ENV being reduced to below 0.5 ha this area can no longer be identified as ENV and counted towards the 2000 ha required to be protected under RBM 6 of the Biodiversity Certification. Therefore, these areas must also be included in the calculation of vegetation impacted by the proposal and offset accordingly.
- Existing fragmentation of ENV in the area is due to road corridors, urban development and discontinuous vegetation patches along corridors. Sydney Water considers it unlikely that the construction works would result in any significant increase in existing fragmentation and that fragmentation of ENV as a result of

construction of infrastructure would be temporary as Sydney Water has committed to restoring impacted areas, thus mitigating any long-term impacts.

- Notwithstanding, Sydney Water has identified an additional 0.86 ha of ENV in non-certified areas to be impacted due to fragmentation as a result of construction works. Figure 7 of the MAR shows the extent of indirect impacts through fragmentation of ENV in non-certified areas.
- The Department considers that the area of ENV fragmented as a result of the proposal should be included in the calculation of vegetation required to be offset.

### Offset

- Under the approved project Sydney Water secured 3.19 ha of vegetation at Riverstone WWTP prior to construction commencing for Package 1 of the project. This is 0.02 ha more than the area of ENV impacted.
- As discussed above the MAR identified 0.12 ha of ENV required to be offset as a result of the proposal.
- RBM 8 requires ENV to be offset at a rate of 1:1 for a direct offset, or at a rate of 3:1 for revegetation. Therefore, Sydney Water would be required to provide an offset of either 0.12 ha of ENV in certified areas or 0.36 ha of land to be revegetated within the Growth Centres.
- With the addition of 0.86 ha ENV impacted due to fragmentation, the total area of vegetation required to be offset is 0.98 ha. This therefore requires an offset of 0.98 ha of ENV in certified areas or 2.94 ha of land to be revegetated.
- While Sydney Water has committed to providing offsets in accordance with the Biodiversity Certification it has not identified any specific properties or areas that could be used as an appropriate offset. Therefore, it is requested that the conditions of approval require a detailed offset strategy to be prepared by Sydney Water in accordance with RBM 8 and 11 of the Biodiversity Certification, and that SLR be given the opportunity to comment on the strategy, once received by the Department.
- Providing offsets in accordance with the Biodiversity Certification will ensure compliance with the Growth Centres Strategic Assessment also. This is important in ensuring that all agencies continue to benefit from the Strategic Assessment.

### Conservation Area

- The extension of the Edmund Street drinking water pipeline is proposed to run through the conservation area, as shown on Figure 3 of the MAR. Sydney Water proposes to trench the pipeline along the road verge, and to underbore beneath vegetation and the drainage line.
- A wastewater pipeline to service the Riverstone Scheduled lands area is also proposed to run through the conservation area. Sydney Water proposes to underbore a section of the pipeline and to trench the upstream section of the pipeline and launch pit along Hobart Road, to avoid clearing any vegetation within the conservation area.
- The conservation area is identified with red hatching on the Biodiversity Certification Maps. In lands marked by red hatching, ENV must not be cleared unless in accordance with a plan of management or unless such clearance has been agreed to by OEH.
- Should Sydney Water be required to clear any vegetation within the conservation area as a result of these works approval must be sought from OEH and the Strategies and Land Release team, and the appropriate offsets secured prior to any impact occurring.

If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact Haley Rich.

 7.6.2012

**Robert Black**  
Executive Director

Haley Rich  
98601513