

1st November 2021

To whom it may concern,

Narla Environmental (Narla) has been engaged to provide a letter of support following desktop review, for the widening of Vines Drive and treatment at Clydesdale Road and Londonderry Road interface, associated with the State Significant Development Application for the proposed Centre of Excellence (**Figure 1**).

Narla have produced this correspondence in order to assess any potential impacts associated with the proposed works on terrestrial ecology (biodiversity), particularly threatened species, populations and ecological communities in the area impacted by the proposed widening of Vines Drive. It should be noted this desktop report is limited to information accessible through online resources and provided by the proponent. No on-site assessment was conducted, however this assessment draws upon Narla's knowledge of the surrounding area through works completed to date on the associated Biodiversity Development Assessment as well as the Arboricultural Impact Assessment prepared for the road upgrade (Sturt Noble 2021). A thorough literature review of local information was also undertaken including searches using NSW Wildlife Atlas (DPIE 2021) and the Commonwealth Protected Matters Search Tool (DAWE 2021) to identify all current threatened flora and fauna, as well as migratory fauna records within a 10km x 10km cell centred on the Subject Property. These data were used to assist in establishing the presence or likelihood of occurrence of any ecological values on or adjacent to the proposed impact area.

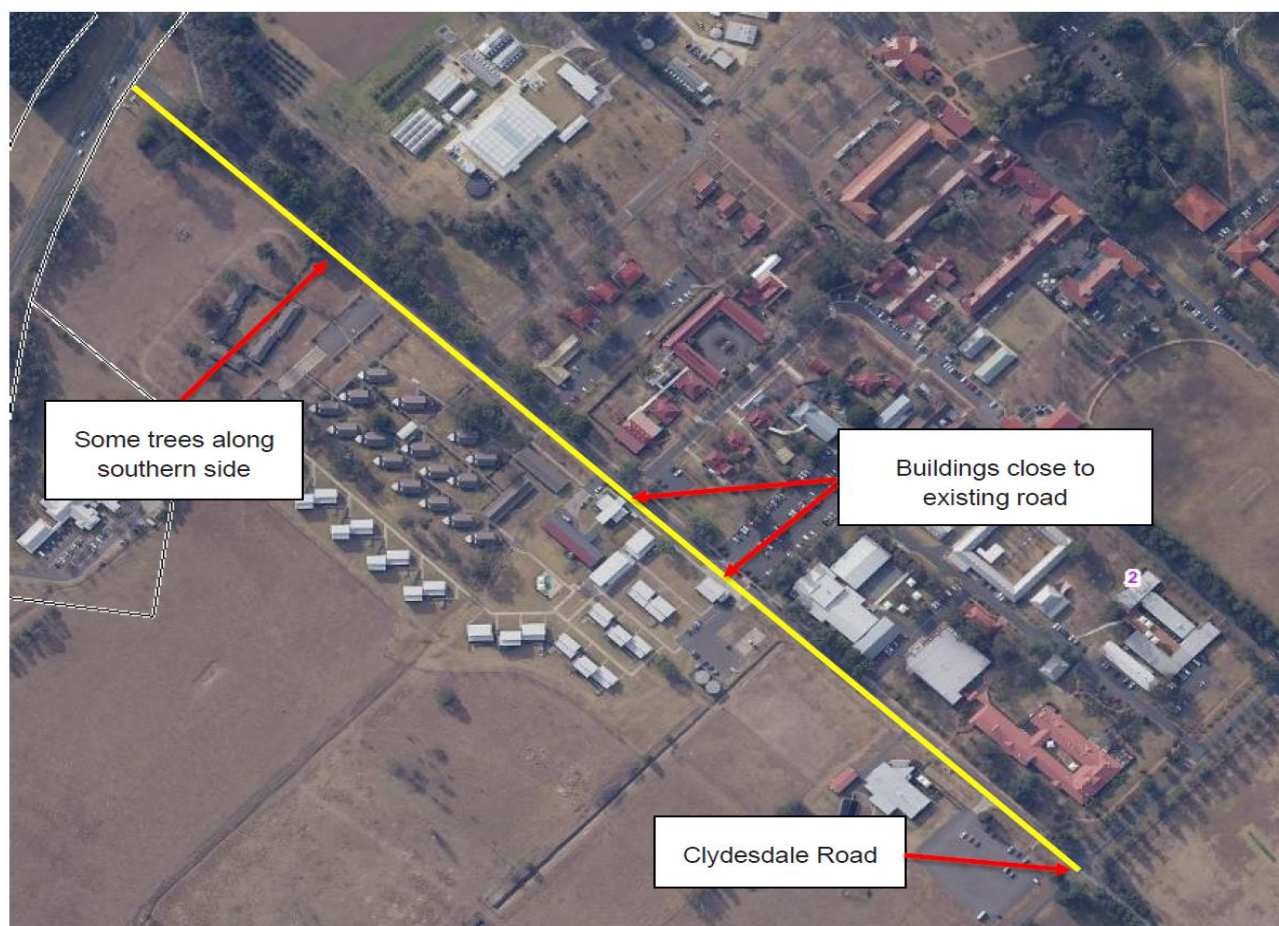


Figure 1. Proposed impact area along Vines Drive.

Threatened Species

A BioNet search of all threatened flora and fauna species within 5km of the Subject Site was conducted (DPIE). No threatened flora or fauna has been recorded within the impact area to date. It is considered highly unlikely that any threatened species will occur within the area to be impacted by the proposed road widening as the vegetation is typical of a road nature strip. Having regards to the above it is considered that the proposed the works are unlikely to significantly impact upon threatened species or their habitats.

Native Vegetation

No historical vegetation mapping has mapped the vegetation within the impact area. However the remnant vegetation mapping of the Cumberland Plain (DPIE 2010) revealed the presence of the following vegetation communities within the broader locality:

- Cumberland Shale Plains Woodland;
- Castlereagh Scribbly Gum Woodland; and
- Castlereagh Shale-Gravel Transition Forest.

Site investigations on other sections of the Centre of Excellence project, conducted by Narla Environmental also revealed the presence of -Riverflat Eucalypt forest.

Aerial imagery from August 2020 (Nearmaps), shows the majority of the impact area as containing typical managed roadside grassland vegetation, however some trees are present. The Arboricultural Impact Assessment for the Vines Drive Upgrade (Sturt Noble 2021) has revealed that three (3) *Casuarina glauca*'s will require removal to accommodate the work. These trees are likely to confirm to the Riverflat Eucalypt Forest that Narla identified in the adjoining areas of the site.

A site assessment is required to confirm the identification of these trees and assign them to vegetation community, which is proposed to be completed on the 8th of November 2021. The site assessment will also confirm whether any habitat features are present in this vegetation.

Conclusion

In summary, the proposed works will likely require the removal of largely inconsequential roadside grassland. However a site assessment should be conducted to determine the ecological value of the vegetation present, especially in the areas where trees are present as it is possible that the trees may form part of one the threatened ecological communities which are located in the locality. Whilst all trees should be avoided if possible it is considered the removal of this small stretch of vegetation is unlikely to result in a significant impact to any threatened ecological communities or threatened species.

Following the assessment on the 8th of November, impacts associated with this new area should be incorporated into an updated Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR), so that the impacts can be adequately assessed and offset if necessary.

Yours sincerely,

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