



Office of
Environment
& Heritage

Your reference: 14/10390
Our reference: DOC15/20862
Contact: Rachel Lonie 9995 6837

Mr Michael File
Director Urban Renewal
Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

Attention: Emma Hitchens / Anna Johnston

Dear Mr File

I refer to your correspondence to the Office of Environment and Heritage dated 20 January 2015 seeking comment in accordance with Section 34A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* on a proposal by the Sydney Olympic Park Authority to amend the Sydney Olympic Park State Significant Site listing in the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Development) 2005*.

The Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) provides comments in Attachment 1.

Should you have any queries in regard to this correspondence please contact Rachel Lonie, Senior Operations Officer, on 9995 6837 or by email at rachel.lonie@environment.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

S. Harrison 24/02/15

SUSAN HARRISON
Senior Team Leader, Planning
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ATTACHMENT 1

Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) comment on a proposal to amend the Sydney Olympic Park State Significant Site listing in the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Development) 2005*.

The proposed amendment will introduce a number of additional permitted uses with consent to the RE1 Public Recreation zone. The RE1 zoned lands include the parklands of Bicentennial Park, Wentworth Common, the Newington Armament Depot, Blaxland Riverside Park and Wilson Park. The Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) has considered whether this will have a significant effect on critical habitat or threatened species, populations or ecological communities.

The Sydney Olympic Park (SOP) site includes many significant wetlands that provide habitat for a range of threatened and migratory bird species as well as endangered ecological communities. The RE1 lands adjoin some important wetlands, including the Newington Nature Reserve. The additional uses could place pressure on the limited open space areas within the SOP. OEH does not raise any significant concerns regarding this amendment however there are several issues discussed below regarding the potential for increased and intensified development in RE1 lands and possible impacts on nearby environmentally sensitive habitats.

The Statement of Intended Effect suggests that the proposed amendment will promote a greater range of active uses in public recreation areas and be consistent with permitted uses in RE1 land in the adjoining local government areas of Auburn and Canada Bay. These local government areas are not necessarily comparable. The SOP has relatively extensive open space areas that cater not just for local residents but a much broader range of recreational users (including significant weekend visitation, weekday workers and visitors associated with major sporting and other events).

Some of the additional uses (such as child care centres, function centres, places of public worship, public administration buildings and respite day care centres) may offer community benefits, but will not in themselves promote a greater range of active uses. Rather, they may reduce the open space area available for active recreational uses that is already in high demand and increase the built areas within the RE1 areas with potential water quality impacts, reduced natural infiltration and reduced native vegetation and grassland areas.

The State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Development) 2005 (Major Development SEPP) includes mapping and associated development control for land within an '*Environmental Conservation Area*'. The consent authority is required to consider the likely effect of proposed development within the designated areas and whether this will reduce significantly the ecological value of that area. This overlay includes some of the RE1 zoned land which would protect some of the environmental values within the RE1 lands including managing a buffer to wetlands and other conservation zoned land. However, there are some RE1 areas such as Wilson Park that appear to have environmental values that are not protected through the overlay and associated provision.

The merits and environmental impacts of any of these permitted uses will need to be assessed in accordance with the RE1 zone objectives. The current objectives for the RE1 zone include "*protection and enhancement of the natural environment for recreational purposes*". OEH recommends consideration is given to adding zone objectives such as those in adjoining council areas that specifically recognise and protect the environmental values. Examples from the adjoining councils that could be considered are:

- *to conserve public open space that enhances the scenic and environmental quality of the area (as per Canada Bay LEP 2013)*
- *to protect open space at riparian and foreshore locations (as per Auburn LEP 2010)*

OEH has also considered the *Newington Armament Depot and Nature Reserve Conservation Management Plan*. The plan includes a map depicting a buffer zone around the perimeter of the Newington Nature Reserve (Figure 3.3 page 32). It appears the environmental conservation area mostly aligns with the buffer areas and the SEPP development control should ensure that consideration is given to possible impacts on the adjoining environment zoned lands that include the Newington Nature Reserve. This should ensure that an adequate buffer to development is maintained for these environmentally sensitive lands.

OEH does however note that the predicted sea level rise is expected to impact on the Newington Nature Reserve (NR) wetland as shown in Figure 7-2 of the *Newington Armament Depot and Nature Reserve Conservation Management Plan*. The predicted best case scenario (0.5 metres by 2100) shows that the sea level rise will affect the entire northern portion of the NR while the worst case scenario (1.1 metres by 2100) shows the impact will extend further to include some of the adjoining lands including some of the RE1 land. OEH recommends that consideration is given to accommodate the future landward migration of the wetland habitat. Current open space in the RE1 zone may be required to provide an area into which wetland species can colonise and in time establish a functioning wetland as conditions change as a result of climate change and current wetland areas are lost.

(End of Submission)

