



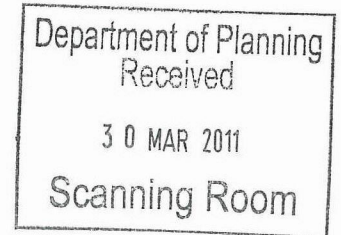
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File: Letter to DoP MP10_0090 Minmi Newcastle Link Road

Your Ref: MP 10_0090
Our Ref: A521743



Dear Ms Johnston

Subject: State Significant Site Concept Plan – Minmi, Newcastle Link Road North and South Residential Development (MP 10_0090)

Thank you for your letter dated 24 February inviting submissions on the above project. The CMA has previously made comments in 2009 and updates aspects of that submission here.

1. Native vegetation - Corridors

It is difficult to review the corridors for this proposal for a number of reasons:

- There is not enough information on the value of regional corridors within the EA.
- The design layouts show riparian corridors, but no detail on these is given.
- The linkages between local corridors across the development site and surrounding land is not addressed.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposed transfer of the Stockrington land and the land at Minmi will significantly add to the regional corridors, no discussion has been provided of the impact of the existing roads and the proposed link road. The CMA considers the proposed F3 link road through the Stockrington land to be a significant impediment to wildlife movement. Actions to mitigate or overcome these barriers should be provided in the Concept Plan.

The conservation lands include significant areas of cleared area or weeds. It is noted that the weeds will be addressed prior to transfer to the State through the voluntary planning agreement. Inclusion of a costed management plan including management of risk of weed invasion from cleared infrastructure corridors would be beneficial in the long term.

The development falls within a key fauna corridor for climate change as described by the Department of Environment and Climate Change in the report *Fauna Corridors For Climate Change, Landscape Selection Process - Key Altitudinal, Latitudinal and Coastal Corridors for response to Climate Change, 2007*. The CMA is concerned about the constriction of climate change retreat corridors as set out by this proposal. No assessment has been made of the viability of the corridors proposed with particular reference to climate changes retreat pathways.

2. Riparian corridors and stormwater

The CMA supports the proposal to exclude open space and asset protection zones from riparian buffer areas. However, the Plan states "*The proposed riparian corridors allow for the conveyance of stormwater design requirements and provide habitat opportunities.*" It is not clear what is meant by conveyance of stormwater design requirements. More detail should be provided in this section to describe what stormwater infrastructure is proposed and how it will impact on the ecosystem of the riparian corridors.

To improve urban stormwater management, the Hunter-Central Rivers Catchment Action Plan includes the following guiding principles. It is recommended these are considered in the water cycle planning.

- The reuse of stormwater before it enters rivers and estuaries should be supported where appropriate (i.e. better collection and infiltration of rainwater) and better management of stormwater itself (e.g. constructed wetlands, temporarily storing stormwater).
- The hydrological regimes of waterways impacted by stormwater should be managed to mimic appropriate cycles. For example, downstream peak discharges, low flows and drying cycles should be managed to ensure that they do not impact downstream waterways and wetlands.
- Urban planning should have a catchment based approach to stormwater management.

3. Impact of rezoning

Within the development land several riparian corridors have been proposed. The EA indicates there is potential to rezone these areas to E2. However, there is no commitment to protect these areas through appropriate zoning. It is recommended that these areas be zoned E2 – Environmental Management

4. Surface water and groundwater quality

The CMA is concerned about the information provided for Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD). Although the WSUD report highlights the value of the Hexham wetlands downstream of the development it does not outline WSUD information to sufficiently assess whether the Hexham wetlands will receive water from the development at the required standard for quality, quantity and frequency.

The CMA notes the rainfall increase prediction over the next 100 years.

5. Additional comments

The Concept Plan often uses the term “where possible” and “potential”. Some indication of what this constitutes would be useful. That is, what is the threshold condition for when the intentions for environmental protection of the Concept Plan are overruled in favour of the development?

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact Cal Cotter, Catchment Coordinator on 49384935.

Yours sincerely



Dean Chapman
for Fiona Marshall
General Manager

24 March 2011