

REPORT ON CONSULTATION

# DRAFT AMENDMENT 77 – ELM GROVE CAMPSITE

DECEMBER 2012

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# Introduction

## Purpose and background

The ACT Government is developing a ‘Centenary Trail’ as an enduring means of acknowledging and celebrating Canberra’s centenary. The trail will be a 140 kilometre self-guided loop trail for walkers and cyclists. It will take users on a journey between urban and rural environments and past iconic sites around the National Capital.

The Centenary Trail is designed to be a seven day walk or a three day cycle. The trail will be linked to accommodation and support services to allow walkers and cyclists to eat, sleep and enjoy Canberra’s landscapes within varying budgets and tastes.

Accommodation options promoted to trail users will range from camping to more formal commercial options adjacent to the trail. There are some sections of the proposed trail alignment where accommodation options are limited. This includes the area between Watson and Hall Village. A campsite is proposed to be constructed within the Gungahlin eucalypt plantation nearby to the historic Elm Grove homestead to address this deficiency.

On 10 August 2012, the NCA agreed to prepare a draft Amendment to the National Capita Plan (the Plan) to allow overnight camping at part Block 624 Gungahlin. The campsite would be known as the ‘Elm Grove campsite’.

## Existing National Capital Plan provisions

The Plan lists the permitted uses within the each land use category. In relation to overnight camping in the Hills, Ridges and Buffer Spaces, the Plan states:

*The range of uses permitted in the Hills, Ridges and Buffer Spaces part of the National Capital Open Space System will be the following:*

* *Overnight Camping (Stromlo Forest Park only);*

## Effect of the Draft Amendment to the National Capital Plan

The addition of ‘Elm Grove campsite’ to areas where ‘Overnight Camping’ is a permitted use will allow the ACT government to construct modest infrastructure to support the Centenary Trail.

The ACT Government has advised that the proposed campsite would provide camping facilities for users of the Centenary Trail. This may include a shade structure, picnic tables, solar power supply, a single environmentally friendly toilet, signage and a small water tank.

# Consultation

On 7 September 2012, the NCA released DA77 for public comment. On 8 September, a notice was published in *The Canberra Times* (Attachment 1). On 5 September, a notice was published in the *Commonwealth Notices Gazette* (Attachment 2). A media release was provided to national media outlets advising DA77 was open for public comment.

In accordance with the NCA’s Commitment to Community Engagement (August 2011) the period for public comment ran for 30 business days, concluding on 19 October 2012. Hard copies of DA77 were made available to the public at the National Capital Exhibition, as well as the NCA offices. DA77 and supporting documentation were available on the NCA’s Have Your Say website.

Key activities during the consultation period of DA77 included:

* On 12 September 2012, the NCA referred DA77 to the following stakeholders:
	+ ACT Government Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate
	+ ACT Government Territory and Municipal Services Directorate
	+ Gungahlin Community Council.
* On 12 September 2012, a request for an exemption to undertake a Regulation Impact Statement was sought from the Office of Best Practice Regulation.
* On 24 September 2012, the Office of Best Practice Regulation advised no Regulation Impact Statement would be required for DA77.
* On 19 September 2012, the NCA held a public information session at the NCA offices. No members of the public attended the session.
* On 19 October 2012, the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate provided a response to the draft amendment. There was no objection to DA77 proceeding.

# Key issues

The NCA received two written submissions (both from the ACT Government) in response to DA77. Each submission was acknowledged by the NCA.

A summary of the key issues raised during the public consultation process and the NCA’s response is outlined below. A summary of each submission is included in Attachment 3, together with a detailed NCA response.

## Ecological Communities

**Comments Received**

The Conservator of Flora and Fauna of the ACT Government noted a number of ecological communities that are protected by legislation. It was recommended that negative impacts on these communities brought about by the development of the campsite should be minimised.

**NCA response**

The level of protection for threatened species or communities is not affected by DA77.

No change to DA77 is recommended.

## Heritage

**Comments Received**

The Act Heritage Unit advised that the proposed campsite with its facilities and its location as indicated in the document are located away from Elm Grove Homestead and therefore the campsite is unlikely to generate detrimental heritage impacts. Nevertheless, the ACT Heritage Council would be an interested party and therefore should be consulted during the planning of the campsite.

**NCA response**

Under current practice development applications on the site will be referred to the ACT Heritage Unit for comment.

No change to DA77 is recommended.

# Recommended changes

No changes to DA77, as released for public consultation, are recommended.

# Conclusion

On 7 September 2012, DA77 was released for public consultation. The public consultation period ran for six weeks in accordance with the NCA’s Commitment to Community Engagement (August 2011), concluding on 19 October 2012.

Two written submissions were received in response to DA77. In response to submissions, no changes have been recommended to DA77.

# Attachments

1. Notice of release of Draft Amendment 77 for public comment published in *The Canberra Times*.
2. Notice of release of Draft Amendment 77 for public comment published in the *Commonwealth Notices Gazette*.
3. Summary of submissions and NCA response.

## Attachment 1 – Canberra Times notice

### Canberra Times Advertisement for Draft amendment 77 - Elm Grove. Advertisment show proposed site of campground in relation to northern ACT.

Attachment 1 - Canberra Times notice

## Attachment 2 – Commonwealth Notices Gazette notice



Attachment 2 - Commonwealth Notices Gazette notice

## Attachment 3 – Summary of submissions

Note: Details of each submitter have only been reproduced in this table where a submitter has granted permission for their name and/or address to be used by the National Capital Authority for the purposes of the Report on Consultation for Draft Amendment 77.

| **Submission No.** | **Details of submitter** | **Key points raised in submission** | **NCA consideration** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1** | Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS) Directorate of ACT Government. | Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS) has reviewed the Draft Amendment 77 - Elm Grove Block 624 Gungahlin. We understand that the purpose of the Amendment is to include 'overnight camping' as permitted use within the Hills, Ridges and Buffer Spaces of the National Capital Open Space System (NCOSS) under the National Capital Plan.Based on the documentation presented TAMS supports the intent of this Draft Amendment.Please note that TAMS would like to provide comment on any future Development Applications to assess the possible impacts on nearby Heritage Precinct by the construction of proposed campsite. | Noted. The ACT Government’s Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate will be responsible for assessing any development applications on the site.  |
| **2** | Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate (ESDD) of the ACT Government.  | The ESDD has considered DA77 and advises that it has no objections to the proposal. The following comments were provided during circulation of DA77.  | Noted. |
| **ACT Heritage**The Act Heritage Unit advises that the proposed campsite with its facilities and its location as indicated in the document are located away from Elm Grove Homestead and therefore the campsite is unlikely to generate detrimental heritage impacts. Nevertheless, the ACT Heritage Council would be an interested party and therefore should be consulted during the planning of the campsite.Consequently, the Heritage Unit advises that it does not raise any objection to the proposed Draft Amendment 77 for Elm Grove campsite. | Noted. Under current practice development applications on the site will be referred to the ACT Heritage Unit for comment.  |
| **Conservator of Flora and Fauna**The site is within stringy bark-scribbly gum forest/secondary grassland that is probably of low conservation value. Threatened woodland birds including the brown tree creeper and white-winged triller have been recorded in the near vicinity as have other regionally declining birds such as the speckled warbler. These birds are currently likely to breed in bushland in and around the site. | Noted. The level of protection for threatened species or communities is not affected by DA77. |
| There are nearby records of regionally uncommon plants, while endangered box gum woodland occurs within about a kilometre of the site on the ACT side of the border and may be closer within NSW. The Golden sun moth has been recorded within 1.3km of the proposed site. | Noted. The level of protection for threatened species or communities is not affected by DA77. |
| The Gungahlin area has usually been recorded in secondary dry forest grassland. It is understood that that the proposed camp site is accessible by tracks through the eucalypt plantation and that these could be graded to provide access to the site. Therefore any offsite impacts may be quite low and no objections to the proposal are raised at this time. | Noted. |