

Notice of Approved Boundary Change

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Conservation Area 32

Conservation Area 32- Craigieburn Road West, Wollert

Key Messages

- The Biodiversity Conservation Strategy outlines that the boundaries of conservation area 32 will be revised at the Precinct Structure Planning phase.
- On-ground surveys have been conducted for the reserve area, and using criteria consistent with the Melbourne Strategic Assessment prescriptions and the Guidance note for the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, DELWP sought and received approval from the Minister for the Department of Environment for changes to the boundary of the conservation area
- The approved boundary adjustment;
 - removes two small isolated areas of Natural Temperate Grassland (0.51ha) which according to the prescription for this community do not require protection within conservation area 32
 - does not remove habitat for any other matters of national environmental significance
 - removes 31.120 ha of land from the conservation area,
 - provides an effective management area to maintain the site's biodiversity values.
- The stony knoll and an additional linking area removed from the conservation area will remain as open space within the precinct.

Summary

The Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (BCS) identifies several conservation areas that require on-ground surveys to confirm the boundaries and determine the protection and management requirements of these areas. Conservation area 32 was designated as a nature conservation area based on estimated data and the BCS outlines the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning's (DELWP) intention to finalise the boundaries of this conservation area following on-ground surveys.

On-ground surveys for conservation area 32 were recently conducted by a suitably qualified consultant. DELWP had also invited submissions for additional data for this conservation area through the boundary change public consultation process, although no additional data was received. The on-ground survey data for conservation area 32 was analysed against the appropriate boundary change criteria and DELWP proposed that sections of the boundary be altered to minimise the unnecessary protection and management of areas of low biodiversity value. The Minister for the Department of Environment approved the proposed changes to the boundary of conservation area 31.

The approved boundary results in the removal of two small isolated areas of Natural Temperate Grassland (total of 0.51ha) located along the conservation area boundary. These two areas are of moderate quality and have habitat scores of 26 and 35. The majority of these patches are covered by the Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO) for the widening of Craigieburn Rd. A very small section outside of this PAO is removed as its location and size make

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it very difficult to manage and maintain. No other matters of national environmental significance are impacted by the approved boundary change.

The Wollert Precinct Structure Plan identifies land for active open space to the north east of conservation area 32 and the intention to deliver a shared pedestrian/ cycle path along Curly Sedge Creek and beyond. Part of the land removed from the conservation area will be retained as local open space to allow this proposed cycle path link. The stony knoll included in the area removed from conservation area 32 will also be retained as a 'green link' between the active open space area and conservation area 32.

Background Information and relevant commonwealth approvals

Table 1 provides information on the conservation area

Key Information	
Conservation area name and number	BCS Conservation Area 32 – Craigieburn Road West, Wollert
Type of conservation area	Nature Conservation
Precinct name	Wollert Precinct
Stage	Precinct Structure plan is in the late draft stages – (Planning Panel hearings have been completed)
Council area	City of Whittlesea
Applicant	DELWP on behalf of MPA/Council/landowners
Property addresses	470 Craigieburn Road, Wollert 450 Craigieburn Road, Wollert, Lot 1, TP 159630 355 Vearings Road, Wollert, Lot 2, TP 830816
Were new surveys undertaken to inform the proposal?	Yes – surveys of native vegetation, scattered trees and Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES)

Any change to the boundary of conservation area 32 that results in a net loss of area will required approval from the Commonwealth Minister of the Department of Environment. The approval conditions relating to this condition are identified in the table below

Table 2 provides information on the commonwealth approval conditions for changes to conservation area boundaries

MSA Commonwealth approval	
Relevant approval	September 2013
Relevant approval condition	Condition 4
Is approval required?	Yes
Reason approval is required	Condition 4 requires Commonwealth Ministerial approval of boundary changes to Conservation Area 32.



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Approved Boundary Changes and Assessment Criteria

The BCS identifies that a review of the boundaries of conservation area 32 may be necessary at the precinct structure planning stage. The boundaries of conservation area 32 were based on 'estimated' modelled data and on-ground surveys are required to confirm boundaries of the conservation area.

The BCS specifies that any changes to the boundary of CA 32;

- should generally be similar to that shown in the BCS
- must protect populations and high quality habitat matters of national environmental significance under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
- must be to the satisfaction of DEPI (DELWP)

Surveys were recently conducted within conservation area 32 by a suitably qualified consultant, and analysis of the data against the boundary change criteria resulted in the approved changes to the boundaries of the conservation area. The approved changes refine three sections of the boundary to remove areas of low biodiversity value that do not need to be protected according to the MSA prescriptions. The approved boundary avoids the unnecessary protection and management of land with limited biodiversity value and non-native vegetation.

Approved changes to the boundary of conservation area 32 met the criteria provided in table 3 below. A map of the MNES within the conservation area and the approved boundary change are provided as appendix 1.

Table 3 provides information on how the approved boundary change meets the boundary change criteria

Boundary Change Criteria

Changes to the boundaries of these conservation areas are considered necessary if the adjustment is required to address one or more of the following site specific issues:

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| <p>A. It is an area of low biodiversity value for matters of national environmental significance or not required under the MSA Prescriptions</p> | <p>The approved changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Provides an effective management area to maintain the site's biodiversity values.▪ Protects all mapped records of Curley Sedge. The boundary follows the alignment of the Curly Sedge Creek with a 35m buffer that expands to incorporate native vegetation patches and an Aboriginal cultural heritage site. (Northeast section of conservation area).▪ Removes two small isolated areas of Natural Temperate Grassland (NTG) (0.51ha) located along the southern boundary of the conservation area. The majority of these patches are covered by the Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO) for the widening of Craigieburn Rd. A very small section outside of this PAO will be removed as its location and size would make it very difficult to manage and maintain. The prescriptions for Natural Temperate Grassland do not require conservation areas within the Urban Growth Boundary to be protected for this community as all offset requirements are met through the protection and management of the Western Grassland Reserve. |
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- Do not impact any other matters of national environmental significance.
- Protects all plant species of national environmental significance and the majority of recorded plants of State significance. Some mapped records of the Western Golden Tip (listed as rare in Victoria) located in non-native vegetation or in small patches of native-vegetation will be removed. However the approved boundary will protect the majority of the site's records in areas of larger, better condition native vegetation. There is no obligation to protect this species under the Melbourne Strategic Assessment.
- Provides that the stony knoll and an additional linking area removed from the conservation area will remain as open space within the precinct.

B. The adjustment is required to address one or more of the following site specific issues:

- urban infrastructure shown in the Growth Corridor Plans (GAA, 2013);
 - existing or proposed new infrastructure of state significance;
 - urban planning objectives of a precinct structure plan, such as appropriate urban form, roads, bridges, water management and other infrastructure;
 - land made inaccessible as a result of a conservation area;
 - existing buildings or other infrastructure on or near the boundary of a conservation area;
 - final requirements of regional (metropolitan) park planning processes
 - Errors in mapping
- Adjusts the boundary's southern boundary to remove the Public Acquisition Overlay area for the expansion of Craigieburn Road.



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Commonwealth Government Approval

DELWP is satisfied that the boundary change meets the boundary change criteria identified in the Guidance note: Implementing the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for Melbourne's Growth Corridors. The Minister of the Department of Environment has approved the boundary change proposal.



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Appendix 1: Map of proposed boundary change and site values, which has been approved by the Commonwealth

