

Use of more appropriate local data

in accordance with section 2.4.3 of the Environmental Outcomes Assessment Methodology

Case Number: 4625

PVP type : Development

Proposed development: To clear 1.45 hectares of native vegetation to establish orchards and produce gardens.

Use of more appropriate local data

Made on (date) The date of the signature below.

The accredited expert recommends that more appropriate local data be substituted for the data in the PVP Developer in relation to: The estimated percentage increase in population that can be expected in response to a proposed management actions, as measured by either an increase in the number of individuals, or habitat amount or key habitat feature.

Use of more appropriate local data made to the following Assessment Methodology:

Biodiversity and Threatened Species

- Salinity
- Land and Soil
- Water Quality

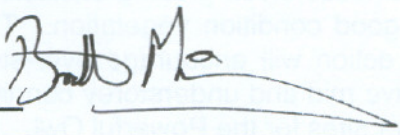
Reasons for use of more appropriate local data: See Attachment 1

Assessment Protocols Not applicable

Accredited Expert Vanessa Allen (Biodiversity and Threatened Species)

Signed 

**Acting General Manager
Southern Rivers Catchment
Management Authority** Brett Miners

Signed 

Note 1. Details of the use of more appropriate local data are required by Clause 29 Regulations to be published and any reports made publicly available.

Attachment 1 – Reasons for using more appropriate data

The areas to be cleared (0.51 hectares and 0.94 hectares) are White Stringybark Dry Grass Forest in moderate to good condition with lower than benchmark over-storey cover. The offset area of 22.75 hectares is White Stringybark Dry Grass Forest, also in moderate to good condition.

Outcomes of running the Threatened Species Tool within PVP developer have resulted in a red light due to:

1. The current breeding habitat prescriptions for the Square-tailed Kite, and
2. The current response to management actions for the Square-tailed Kite and the Powerful Owl.

The Accredited Expert is of the opinion that these red lights are unnecessary and that “more appropriate local data” should be used in this case, as described below. Note, all of the “more appropriate local data” used is based on revised prescriptions provided by the Department of Conservation and Climate Change (DECC), dated 9/10/2006. These revised prescriptions have not yet been incorporated into the Threatened Species Tool.

1. The vegetation to be cleared has trees within 100m of a permanent creek, there are no trees with stick and twig nests. Currently used text within the threatened species tool allows for the loss of 10% of foraging habitat and no loss of breeding habitat. Revised prescriptions allow for a 5% loss of mature trees within 100m of permanent and ephemeral watercourses and no loss of trees with stick and twig nests. This revision protects the core-breeding habitat, whilst allowing some loss (with offsets) in other habitat.
2. The current response to ‘domestic stock grazing exclusion’ by the Square-tailed Kite is a value of 2 in moderate to good condition vegetation. The revised response has a greater value of 5. This action will encourage over-storey regeneration. The benefit will be through the increase in habit for Square-tailed Kite prey – canopy dwelling birds.
3. The current response to ‘retention of all dead (and alive) timber’ by the Square-tailed Kite is a value of 2. The revised response has a greater value of 5. This action is expected to have a positive effect through benefit to prey species.
4. The current response to ‘domestic stock grazing exclusion’ by the Powerful Owl is a value of 2 in moderate to good condition vegetation. The revised response has a greater value of 10. This action will encourage over-storey regeneration and also general improvement in native mid and understorey condition that provides habitat for prey and also roosting/shelter sites for the Powerful Owl.

Recommendation:

Due to the above reasons, it is recommended that the revised response to management action values for the Square-tailed Kite and the Powerful Owl and the prescriptions for breeding habitat loss for the Square-tailed Kite be used, thus making ‘on property’ offsets possible for the proposed clearing.

It is the opinion of the accredited expert that this proposal would maintain or improve environmental outcomes for all threatened species and that the Property Vegetation Plan is approved on this basis.