



**File Code: PS.TPS 4.3.034**

11 June 2025

Senator the Hon Murray Watt MP  
Minister for the Environment and Water  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister Watt

**Update on reconsideration of EPBC approval for North Stoneville Townsite Development (EPBC2018/8382)**

On behalf of Council, I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your successful re-election and appointment as the Minister for the Environment and Water.

I am writing to seek an update on correspondence dated 23 December 2024 from the Nature Positive Office, regarding the previous Minister Plibersek's undertaking to consider the Shire of Mundaring Council request that the **approval** 2018/8382 SP34 North Stoneville Townsite Development be revoked under Section 145(2)(b) of the EPBC Act.

The initial correspondence to Minister Plibersek dated 28 October 2024 outlined that the EPBC Act approval was classified as a controlled action and assessed in light of its potential impact on matters of national environmental significance (MNES), particularly concerning:

- Carnaby's Black Cockatoo (Endangered)
- Baudin's Black Cockatoo (Endangered)
- Forest Red-tailed Black Cockatoo (Vulnerable)
- Chuditch (Vulnerable)
- Star Sun Orchid (Endangered) Leafless Rock Wattle (Vulnerable)
- Carter's Freshwater Mussel (Vulnerable)
- Zigzag Grevillea (Vulnerable)



## Environmental Impact on Local Natural Area

The Mundaring Shire Council has long been concerned about the protection of the Local Natural Area (LNA) within the EPBC 2018/8382 area. This concern prompted our request to the State Government to amend the Metropolitan Regional Scheme to rezone the land from Urban to Rural, ensuring the future protection of the LNA. The State Government is currently awaiting a decision in relation to Structure Plan 34 (SP34) from the State Administrative Tribunal (SAT) before proceeding with this amendment request.

The LNA in question is classified as Dwellingup and Yarrigal 1 vegetation. Although the recent request for further information and response from the applicant's consultant JBS&G (2024) indicates that these vegetation communities are overrepresented within the Commonwealth's retention threshold, they are nonetheless at high risk of development and fragmentation in the Perth Hills. The Shire's Local Biodiversity Strategy emphasises the priority for conservation and protection of LNA within the North Stoneville site.

Species such as the Star Sun Orchid, categorised as vulnerable, further illustrate the biodiversity importance of this area. Notably, the flora and vegetation survey for this species, conducted in 2016 and 2017, suggests that the habitat may not be sustainable. Given the time elapsed, we believe that more recent surveys are required to adequately assess the current impact on vulnerable flora species and deem that a new flora and vegetation survey is warranted.

## Endangered Black Cockatoos

The Mundaring community are gravely concerned about the impact of habitat destruction for the endangered Carnaby, Baudin, and vulnerable Forest Red-tailed Black Cockatoo and Chuditch. The proposed loss of over 60,000 trees threatens local biodiversity, with numerous species depending on this ecosystem for food and shelter.

The SP34 EPBC decision, coincides with evidence in and around the Perth area (including the Perth Hills), of a chronic food shortage for Endangered Black Cockatoos following an unprecedented hot and dry Summer (2022/23), that has severely interrupted and curtailed seed production on which Black Cockatoos rely on for food. Wildlife officers are reporting that Black Cockatoos are suffering or dying from the effects of this food shortage. The 2022/23 summer drought has left thousands of trees, many of which are important habitat and food sources for Endangered Black Cockatoos, standing dead or dying across Perth, the Darling Scarp, (the Perth Hills) and further south in WA.



The scale of this environmental emergency cannot be ignored alongside a decision to allow 60,000 healthy trees to be destroyed in an area that supports Black Cockatoos.

While the EPBC 2018/8382 outlines requirements for clearing black cockatoo habitat, we believe that the assessment of potential nesting trees—those that may not currently possess hollows but could develop them—has not been sufficiently addressed. The North Stoneville site falls within a confirmed breeding and roosting buffer. The potential removal of these trees could severely impact known black cockatoo populations given that breeding trees can take over 100 years to develop. We believe that further comprehensive surveys are necessary to accurately assess the presence of potential habitat trees. The current methodologies used in the Response to Request for Additional Information (JBS&G, 2024) seem inadequate for the scale of this development and its potential effects on MNES.

Further, consequential and cumulative impacts of clearing black cockatoo habitat should take into consideration Asset Protection Zones and bushfire mitigation requirements of surrounding properties within the 6-12km radius of the North Stoneville site. This consideration of clearing for bushfire mitigation may increase the inherent risk rating.

Additionally, we request that the most current cumulative habitat loss be considered. In 2021 more than 11,000 hectares of biodiverse environment, including Black Cockatoo habitat, was destroyed or severely damaged in the Wooroloo Bushfire and swathes of this region remain destroyed, damaged or still recovering, which places further pressures on Black Cockatoos in this region.

## **Offset Proposal**

The Shire is also concerned that the developer's offset proposal is located approximately 184 kilometres from the development site.

While we appreciate the intentions of nature-positive offsets, we believe the proposed site in Williams does not adequately represent the ecological characteristics of North Stoneville and is outside the black cockatoo breeding area of the Perth Hills.

Environmental sustainability is a key strategic priority for the Shire of Mundaring and our community, reflected in our commitment to addressing valid concerns regarding the ecological impact of the proposed North Stoneville development.



In light of these significant environmental considerations, we respectfully request your reconsideration of EPBC approval 2018/8382 under Section 145(2)(b) of the EPBC Act 1999.

Thanking you in advance for your consideration.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paige McNeil".

**Paige McNeil**  
**Shire President**



**Email:**  
PresMcNeil@mundaring.wa.gov.au  
**Ph:** 0414 799 659