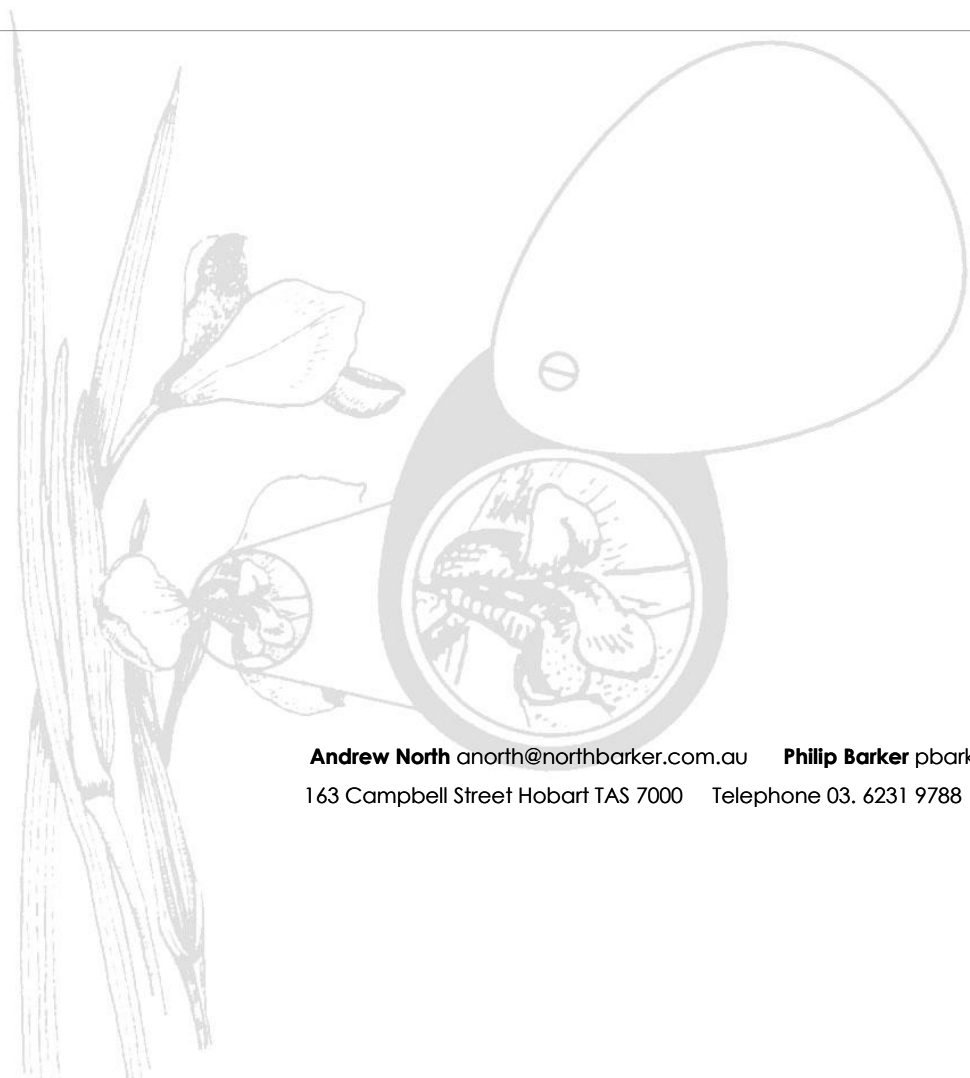


Ecclestone Road Subdivision Proposal

Comment on tree hollows

21/05/2020

6ty°
SIX001



Introduction:

A 22-lot subdivision is planned for a portion of a 36-ha lot on Ecclestone Road in Riverside. The development would involve the clearing of native vegetation including potential threatened fauna habitats. In response to advertising of the Development Application, representations have been made with a focus on the natural values. An addendum to the Natural Values Assessment was submitted to respond to these representations¹. Included in the addendum is an area proposed to be set aside as a conservation area.

Since the publication of the addendum, the site was revisited by a North Barker ecologist with one of the representors (on 05/05/2020). The aim of this visit was for the representor to share her knowledge of the site with the NBES ecologist, particularly her knowledge of the location of hollow bearing trees suitable for masked owl (*Tyto novaehollandiae castanops*; listed as endangered under the *Tasmanian Threatened Species Protection Act 1995* and vulnerable under the *Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*).

During the initial survey, a single tree with hollows potentially suitable for masked owl was recorded. Additional large trees with small hollows were noted (near proposed lot 43 for example), but hollows in these trees were not deemed suitable for masked owl, especially based on the size of the entrance being < 15 cm diameter².

Result:

During the May 2020 survey an additional 10 trees with potential suitable hollows were recorded; these are numbered in Figure 1 below (spatial data provided in Table 1). With management, most of these trees may be avoided. Trees 1 to 4 are in the conservation area and so will not be implicated by this proposal. Trees 5 and 8 are in the balance (i.e. an area with no design at present) and it remains unclear how they may be implicated. Trees 6, 7 may potentially be avoided as they are near the rear of two lot boundaries. Similarly, tree 9 is near a lot boundary, and with careful management may be avoided. Trees 10 and 11 are near the road/front of lots and impact is expected.

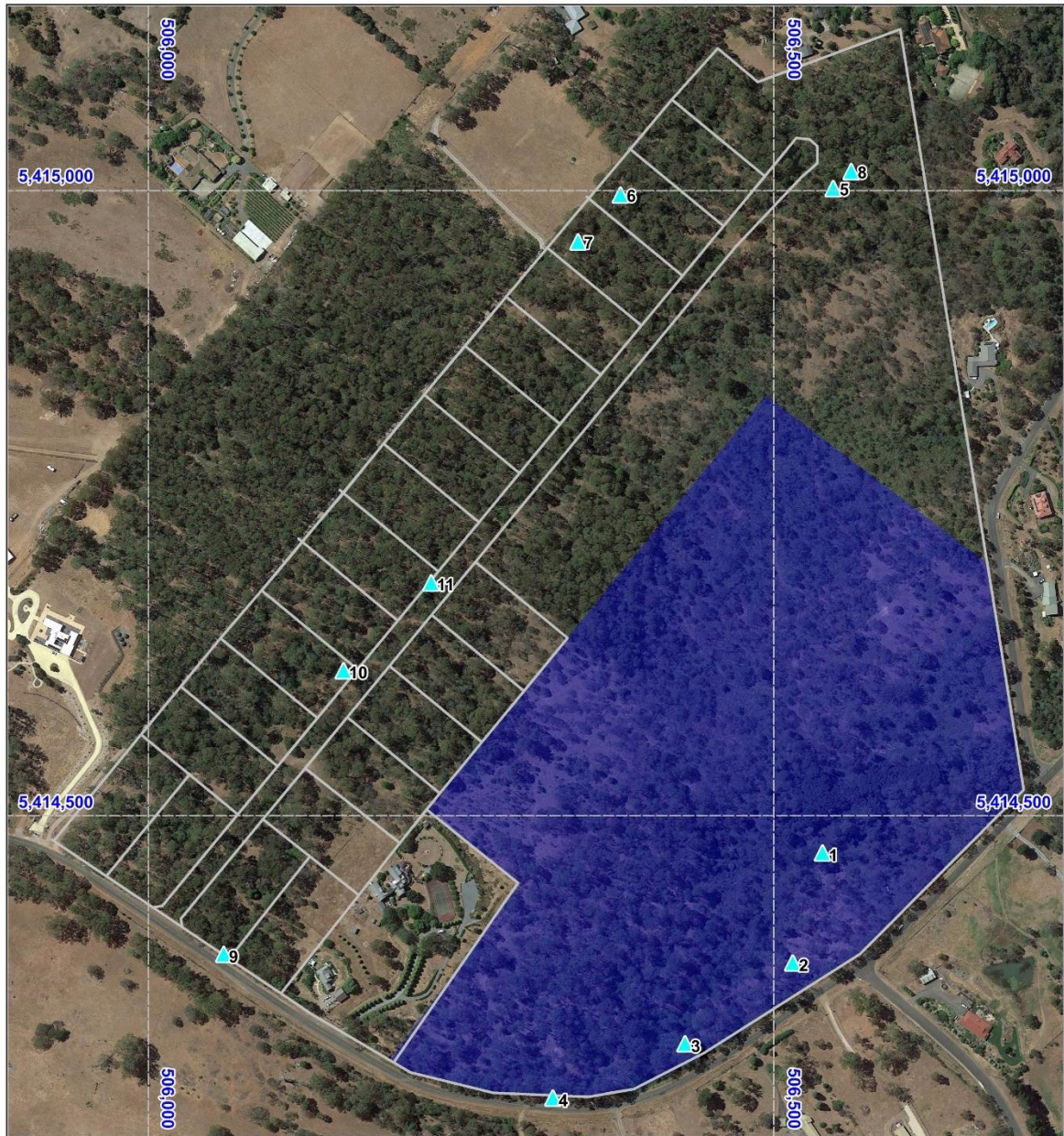
Conclusion:

Although hollows may appear suitable from the ground, hollows with the qualities suitable for masked owl breeding are relatively rare in the landscape. Accordingly, not all trees with hollows will be suitable. Additionally, given this species has a low abundance and large territory size (~2000 ha), even trees that are suitable may not be utilised³. Regardless, to avoid any potential impact to this species, all trees with potentially suitable hollows should be inspected prior to any disturbance to that tree.

¹ North Barker Ecosystem Services 2020, *Ecclestone Road subdivision Natural Values Assessment – Response to Representations – Addendum*, 5th February 2020

² FPA 2016 *Fauna Technical Note No. 17: Identifying masked owl habitat*

³ Todd, M, 2012, *Ecology and habitat of a threatened nocturnal bird, the Tasmanian Masked Owl*. Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (unpublished).



▲ tree with hollow/s potentially suitable for masked owl
 proposed conservation area

0
200
 metres

Base data from theLIST, © State of Tasmania
 Datum: GDA94, AHD Grid: MGA Zone 55
 SIX001 21/05/2020

The mapping has been undertaken using a hand held GPS and subjective interpretation. Consequently it should be considered indicative only.

Table 1: Location data for trees mentioned in this comment (data in GDA94 MGA55)

Tree number	Easting	Northing
1	506539	5414470
6	506377.5	5414996
7	506343.3	5414959
8	506561.9	5415015
5	506547.5	5415002
2	506515.1	5414382
3	506429	5414317
4	506323.3	5414274
9	506060.1	5414389
10	506155.8	5414616
11	506226	5414686