

EPA recommends Kenwick rezoning should not proceed

The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) has recommended amendments by the City of Gosnells to rezone 257ha of land in Kenwick from 'General Rural' to 'Business Development' should not be implemented.

In its report the independent EPA stated that Amendments 166 and 169 to the City of Gosnells Town Planning Scheme 6 were not likely to be consistent with its objectives for inland waters, flora and vegetation, terrestrial fauna or the principles of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act).

EPA Chair Professor Matthew Tonts said that like other proposals and amendments across Perth, this assessment highlighted the challenges of persistent development on the Swan Coastal Plain.

Professor Tonts said that scheme amendments in the metropolitan area were typically constrained and often located in or adjacent to sensitive environments where the cumulative loss of threatened flora, native vegetation and threatened fauna habitat was a key issue.

“The extraordinarily biodiverse, internationally-significant Greater Brixton Street Wetlands (GBSW) are located within and adjacent to the amendment areas.” he said. “Other environmental values impacted include conservation category wetlands, threatened ecological communities, threatened flora, threatened fauna habitat and poorly represented vegetation complexes.”

In the case of scheme amendments referred under section 48A of the EP Act, both the Environment Minister and the Planning Minister must agree on whether or not the scheme amendment should be implemented, and any conditions that should apply.

Professor Tonts said this had prompted the EPA to take the unusual step of providing suggested implementation conditions despite not recommending the scheme amendments for approval.

“This means that if the relevant Ministers are of the view that the amendments should be implemented then the EPA has provided conditions to ensure the best possible environmental outcome,” he said.

Amendment 166 is approximately 69ha and is generally bounded by Brook, Coldwell, Grove and Welshpool roads. Amendment 169 is about 188ha and is bounded by Brook, Boundary, Bickley, Victoria roads and Tonkin Highway. Land in the amendment areas consists primarily of privately owned small rural lots.

The EPA report reiterated the need for better protection through acquisition and expansion within the GBSW and its buffers.

“A high level of protection and a coordinated management approach is required to improve long term management with a framework that considers cumulative effects and includes strategic restoration and enhancement,” Professor Tonts said.

The EPA’s report to the Minister for Environment is now open for a three-week public appeal period, closing 24 April. Appeals should be directed to the [Office of the Appeals Convenor](#). EPA Report 1757 can be found on the [EPA website](#).

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