

***Environmental Protection Act 1986***

**Section 41A(3)**

**STATEMENT OF REASONS**

**CONSENT TO UNDERTAKE MINOR or PRELIMINARY WORKS**

**Proposal**                      Perth Groundwater Replenishment Scheme Stage 2

**Proponent**                  Water Corporation

**Decision**

For the reasons outlined below, I, on behalf of the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), have determined to consent to the minor or preliminary works outlined in Schedule 1 attached to this Statement of Reasons.

**Background**

On 3 November 2016, the Water Corporation referred the Perth Groundwater Replenishment Scheme Stage 2 to the EPA under section 38 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act). The proposal includes the duplication of the existing advanced water recycling plant (AWRP) at the Beenyup Wastewater Treatment Plant site and the construction of two water recharge sites and pipeline infrastructure along a 12.8 kilometre (km) route through the suburbs of Woodvale, Wanneroo, Ashby and Neerabup. The proposal seeks to recharge an additional 14 gigalitres of recycled wastewater to the Leederville and Yarragadee aquifers.

The EPA determined to assess the Proposal at the level of 'Referral Information' on 25 January 2017 and is yet to publish its assessment report.

In advance of a decision or agreement in relation to whether or not the proposal may be implemented under section 45 of the EP Act, the proponent has sought the EPA's consent to undertake minor or preliminary works related to the proposal.

**Relevant Statutory and Administrative Provisions**

After the EPA decides to assess a proposal, and before a decision or agreement is made under s45 of the EP Act, all persons are prohibited from implementing a proposal, and relevant decision making authorities are prohibited from making a decision which would allow the proposal to be implemented, *except* in relation to minor or preliminary works which the EPA has consented may be implemented (refer sections 41(4) and 41A(3) of the EP Act).

If the EPA consent to the minor or preliminary works being done, the person proposing to undertake those works may still need to obtain other authorisations from other decision making authorities.

Section 3.5 of the *Environmental Impact Assessment (Part IV Divisions 1 and 2) Procedures Manual 2016* guides what information the EPA requires from a person wanting to undertake minor or preliminary works.

In considering the request for consent, I considered whether the:

- work is associated with the implementation of the proposal
- potential environmental impacts of the work are significant
- work would constitute the irreversible substantial implementation of the proposal, and
- work is justified.

### **Materials considered in making this decision**

In determining whether to consent to the minor or preliminary works I have considered the following:

1. the document *Perth Groundwater Replenishment Scheme Stage 2 Assessment No: 2111 - Supporting information for request to undertake preliminary work under S41A(3)*, May 2017, Water Corporation (Rev 4, AQUADOC ID: 16522084) (hereafter called the supporting documentation) that provided:
  - a. the location, scope, timing and methodology of the proposed work
  - b. the relationship of the proposed work to the proposal
  - c. details of consultation undertaken with relevant stakeholders
  - d. the environmental justification for undertaking the work
  - e. information demonstrating that the work is associated with the implementation of the proposal
  - f. details of the potential environmental impacts caused or likely to be caused by the work and how the potential impacts will be managed
  - g. details of decommissioning and rehabilitation works which would be carried out should the overall proposal not be implemented, and
  - h. information explaining how the impact from proposed works would be reversed if the proposal is not implemented.
2. spatial data provided by Water Corporation showing the location and area of the work, and
3. supporting documentation for the proposal supplied by Water Corporation at the time of Referral: *Perth Groundwater Replenishment Scheme – Stage 2 Referral – Supporting Document*, October 2016, Water Corporation (Version 3).

### **Consideration**

#### **1. Proposed work associated with the implementation of the proposal**

The proposed preliminary works are the construction of an access track and drilling pad within Lot 500 on Plan 64576 located within Yellagonga Regional Park (Bush Forever Site 299) and the Ashley Road Reserve. The scope of the proposed works are detailed in section 2.2 of the supporting documentation.

The proposed access track is required for machinery associated with the construction of the southern recharge site. The proposed drilling pad is required to provide a stable base for the drill rigs which will be used to install the reinjection bore at the southern recharge site. The drilling pad is also required to provide a stable base for the water tanks, which will store waste water abstracted during the construction of the reinjection bore.

The proposed access track and the drill pad will be permanent infrastructure and allow the proponent to access the recharge pump station, recycled water tank and recharge and monitoring bores for maintenance and monitoring purposes once the proposal is implemented.

I, as the delegate of the EPA, consider the proposed works are associated with the implementation of the proposal currently being assessed by the EPA.

## **2. Significance of the potential environmental impacts**

The proposed works are unlikely to result in significant environmental impact, nor would they likely amount to irreversible impacts or environmental harm.

The total area of the proposed works is 1.28 hectares (ha) of predominately cleared land. The proposed works involve limited clearing of two pine trees within the pine seed orchard and approximately 12 regrowth *Acacia* saplings, which are not a Priority or Declared Rare species of flora.

The loss of two pine trees constitutes the loss of foraging habitat for black cockatoo species. However within four kilometres of the proposal site, approximately 2,543 ha of foraging habitat has been mapped. Therefore the additional loss of two pine trees within the pine seed orchard is unlikely to have a significant impact on foraging resources for black cockatoo species.

Pinewood is susceptible to European House Borer (EHB), which is a pest that can infest and compromise the structural integrity of buildings. EHB is managed by the Department of Agriculture and Food (the Department) through regulations regarding the movement, storage, treatment and disposal of untreated pinewood. To manage the risk of EHB the proponent has proposed a series of management actions that are consistent with the Department's protocols.

The proponent has also identified other potential environmental impacts and has proposed management actions to minimise these impacts (refer Section 5 of the supporting documentation). Considering the scale of the proposed works and the proponents proposed management actions to minimise impacts, it is considered unlikely that the proposed works will have a significant impact on the environment.

### **3. Proposed work would constitute irreversible substantial implementation of the proposal**

The proposed works do not include the drilling of the injection bores or the installation of any other infrastructure apart from the access track and drill pad. Should the proposal not be approved, rehabilitation of the preliminary works area would involve:

- removal of the limestone base of the access track and drill pad, and
- reinstatement of the topsoil and landform to original condition.

It is therefore considered that the work is reversible and would not irreversibly lead to substantial implementation of the proposal.

### **4. Proposed work is justified in extent and timing**

The requested preliminary works are justified and necessary in order for the proponent to avoid construction of the works within the wettest part of the year, which increases the likelihood of erosion and spreading of disease such as dieback. The commencement of works within more favourable conditions, such as pre winter/spring, is justified as it would limit the likelihood for soil movement and disease to impact the adjacent *Banksia* woodland and Lake Joondalup.

#### **Attachments:**

**Schedule 1** – Minor or Preliminary Works

**Figure 1** – Proposed Minor or Preliminary works

**Schedule 1**

**Minor or Preliminary Works**

**Table 1: Summary of the authorised minor or preliminary works**

<b>Proposal title</b>	Perth Groundwater Replenishment Scheme Stage 2
<b>Short description</b>	Pursuant to section 41A(3) of the <i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i> the EPA consents to the Water Corporation undertaking the minor or preliminary works, within the assessed development envelope for the purposes of establishing an access track and drill pad.

**Table 2: Location and authorised extent of physical and operational elements**

<b>Element</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Authorised extent</b>
Access track and drill pad	Figure 1	Within the 1.28 ha development envelope delineated in Figure 1.

