**PART A**

**PROPOSED APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTEGRATED PLAN FOR RED HILL NATURE RESERVE AND SURROUNDS**

**Parcels of land which should be the subject of the Integrated Planning study.**

An important first step in development of the Integrated Plan for Red Hill Nature Reserve and surrounds is establishing what parcels of land should be included in this Integrated Planning study. Clearly the study needs to cover those areas of land referred to in the Legislative Assembly resolution and the Petitions dealing with the same issue. Part B of this document sets out the parcels of land we consider need to be subject to the Integrated Plan.

In our view the two privately leased blocks must feature highly in the Integrated Plan considerations. These are:

* Federal Golf Club site (Red Hill, Block 1, Section52) – PRZ2: Restricted Access Recreation, and
* Deakin, Blocks 7 & 8, Section 66 – TSZ2: Services

Section 66 Deakin - Particularly Block 8

Section 66 Deakin is a commercial type Transport and Services Zone (TSZ2). Block 8 Section 66 is a privately-owned parcel that has a sizeable frontage to the RHNR.

In our view EPSDD should proceed with utmost caution in considering any expansion of existing land use activities on Section 66 Deakin (particularly Block 8).

* If existing land use activities are to be retained, assessments should be made of measures needed to ensure the protection of the neighbouring Nature Reserve land including land use type, development conditions including appropriate floor areas, plot ratios and setbacks from the Nature Reserve common boundary. Buffer zones separating development from the Nature Reserve boundary should feature in considerations.
* Recognition of the existing rights bestowed under the Crown Lease is required, but any development conditions need to be strengthened to more comprehensively cover the requirements of the location of a Service Zone immediately abutting such an important Nature Reserve’

Federal Golf Club (FGC) site (Red Hill Block 1, Section52).

No single adjacent parcel has greater potential to impact on the Nature Reserve than the FGC lease. Its North-East, North, and North-West boundaries all border the Nature Reserve. It is a prominent site that, along with the Nature Reserve, dominates the East and North-East sectors of Woden Valley and interacts profoundly with the suburbs of Garran and Hughes as well as the Nature Reserve.

The Crown Lease covers an area more than 85ha. The whole site is clearly visible from the Red Hill Lookout and surrounding area and presents as a complimentary land use to the Nature Reserve and a buffer zone to the Woden Valley residential area.

*Planning and Crown Lease Controls Apply to the FGC Lease.*

In undertaking work on the Integrated Plan, a key step is to look closely at the existing Territory Plan zoning controls and the existing Crown Lease to clarify what planning outcomes were intended for these parcels of land.

* The FGC site is subject to a “PRZ2 Restricted Access Recreation” zone in the Territory Plan

Key objectives of PRZ2 Restricted Access Recreation zone that to be considered in the Integrated Plan exercise are:

***“c) ensure the amenity of adjoining development is not unacceptably affected by the operation of sport and recreation facilities, particularly in terms of noise, traffic, parking, privacy and outside lighting at night; and***

***d) Design and landscaping of development is to be compatible with the surrounding landscape.”***

Residential usage is not a permissible use under this zoning and is in fact identified as a “prohibited use”.

* The Territory Plan includes a range of controls on development which are set out, for this zone, in the “Parks and Recreation Zones Development Code”. These include:

***“The scale of the development is consistent with adjacent developments and the neighbouring uses are protected from overlooking, noise and other intrusions.”***

* The existing FGC Crown Lease covers an area more than 85ha. Far more than is necessary for a large 18-hole course which can adequately be housed in 40-50ha. Large areas within the course remain unused by the club. One large area at the North-West of the site has been demonstrated to be high quality critically endangered yellow box – Blakley’s red gum grassy woodland which should be incorporated into the Nature Reserve. Whilst this area remains in the FGC lease, the Club has indicated a willingness to “conditionally” surrender it for inclusion in the Nature Reserve. Facilitating this area into the Nature Reserve should be covered by the Integrated Plan.

*Public Access to FGC Lease.*

It is specifically provided in the Crown Lease that the public is entitled to largely unrestricted access to most areas of the Course. These rights are well utilised and are an important aspect of community access to the much-appreciated local environment including the Course, its surrounds and the Nature Reserve. Removing or restricting this access by setting aside large tracts of the Lease for private development would limit this entitlement.

**The Intended Strategy Behind the Present Land Use Controls.**

It is apparent that the current zoning is highly appropriate for land surrounding the Nature Reserve. Clearly there was a definite intention behind the limitation of development opportunity within the site. The need for protection of the Nature Reserve is dealt with in Part B of this paper but of much importance is the role that the golf course plays in providing a buffer zone that complements and protects the Nature Reserve.

We consider that there should be no reduction in the onus placed on the FGC by the current controls in relation to any new proposed FGC development. We also consider that the existing controls are obviously designed to protect the important areas covered by this Integrated Plan against large scale and inappropriate development. If any new development strategies are to be considered for the FGC site and other designated parcels, we are of the view that these should be consistent with the existing zoning and development controls and be restricted to small, well located and designed facilities that will not have any adverse impact on the ecological, heritage, cultural and visual values and the amenity of the area to be covered by the Integrated Plan and the surrounding areas.

**Overarching Approach**

1. The nature, background and history of the area to be covered by the Integrated Plan is such as to require special consideration and particular outcomes in order to secure its long-term protection.
2. This unique location should not be subjected to the pressures of unsolicited and inappropriate piecemeal development proposals and activities originating with and progressed by corporations, development interests, government agencies, organisations and individuals.

1. It is essential that the Integrated Plan provides a complete and comprehensive blueprint dealing with the future protection and use of the area.
2. The Integrated Plan must provide certainty for all parts of the community that are involved with the protection and use of the area.
3. The Integrated Plan must be clear, precise and prescriptive in terms of what can and cannot be done.
4. The implementation of the Integrated Plan must be given regulatory force.

It is our hope that EPSDD will work closely with relevant community interest groups throughout the entire process of developing the Integrated Plan. These groups are ready to provide the necessary assistance to progress this critical task in an objective manner, in order to bring to an end, the problems faced in the past in relation to the protection and management of this important area.

**Part B**

**DRAFT OUTLINE**

**INTEGRATED PLAN FOR RED HILL NATURE RESERVE AND SURROUNDS**

**Purpose**

To provide an integrated planning and management framework to secure the long-term protection of the Red Hill Nature Reserve and surrounding lands.

**Parcels of land to be covered by the Integrated Plan**

The parcels of land to be covered by the Integrated Plan are shown in the following maps. This area of land comprises:

The Red Hill Nature Reserve – Designated Land

The FGC Lease Area – Red Hill, Block 1, Section52 – PRZ2: Restricted Access Recreation

PRZ1 Urban Open Space

* Hughes Block 3, Section 57
* Hughes Block 1, Section 58
* Hughes Block 1, Section 50
* Hughes Block 31, Section 16
* Garran Block 74, Section 10
* Garran Block 73, Section 10
* Garran Block 54, Section 8
* Red Hill Block 1, Section52

Garran Block 54, Section24 – NUZ3: Hills, Ridges and Buffer areas; CF: Community Facilities

Deakin Block 6, Section 66 – TSZ2: Services







**Description of the area**

# Significance of the critically endangered Yellow Box – Blakely’s Red Gum Grassy Woodland and its components.

A dominant feature of the area to be covered by the Integrated Plan is the woodland which is found both within and outside of the Red Hill Nature Reserve.

The woodland on Red Hill is a component of the White Box - Yellow Box - Blakely’s Red Gum Grassy Woodlands and Derived Native Grasslands, which was listed nationally as critically endangered on 17 May 2006. Yellow Box - Red Gum Grassy Woodland has been listed as endangered in the ACT since 19 May 1997.

Large size

Red Hill supports one of the largest remaining remnants of the endangered yellow box – Blakley’s red gum grassy woodland in Australia. This woodland type once covered over 25,000 square kilometres, in a belt stretching from Melbourne to South Queensland. Over 95% of this vegetation belt is now cleared. Leaving this woodland highly fragmented and generally existing as isolated patches smaller than 5ha in area.

“In terms of size, connectivity, diversity and condition, the ACT remnants are exceptional, especially the presence of larger patches (over 100 ha) in good condition.” Remnants greater than 200ha are extremely rare. There are only four remnants left in Australia of 1000ha or more and all are in the ACT. There are no Yellow Box - Red Gum remnants greater than 100ha in Victoria or the Murray catchment of NSW and there are no remnants of 200ha or greater in southern NSW.

Red Hill supports a Yellow Box -Red Gum woodland of about 275ha. It is a vital component of the second largest Yellow Box -Red Gum woodland remnant in Australia that covers about 1,200ha from Red Hill to East O'Malley- Symonston-Mugga Lane and Callum Brae. Although Hindmarsh Drive is a barrier to some species, many woodland plant and animal species are able to disperse across this highway.

High plant diversity

Because of its relatively large size and the good condition of the understorey, Red Hill supports one of the highest native plant diversities recorded in a Yellow-Box - Red Gum woodland remnant anywhere in Australia. 210 native woodland species have been recorded on Red Hill. The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service has a database of plant species records from about 1000 grassy ecosystem (grassland + grassy woodland) sites across south-eastern NSW and the ACT. Fewer than 5% of these sites have a recorded plant diversity of over 100 species. It is relevant that remnants of particularly high quality have been targeted in the surveys.

Large number of rare and threatened species

Given the size and diversity of its endangered woodland, it is not surprising that Red Hill supports important populations of many uncommon, rare or threatened species. It contains large populations of the nationally endangered daisy, the button wrinkelwort (*Rutidosis leptorrhynchoides*), and Swainson's silky pea (*Swainsonia sericea*), which is listed as vulnerable in NSW. Fourteen plant species considered rare in the ACT occur on Red Hill. Red Hill is a major habitat for several of these species. The invertebrate fauna of Red Hill has yet to be systematically surveyed, but given its relatively large size, plant diversity and good condition, it is likely to be of importance for woodland invertebrate conservation. It is an important known habitat of the vulnerable grasshopper, *Perunga ochracea*. Several ACT and/or NSW threatened birds as well as several regionally uncommon birds breed on the Hill

In summary: Red Hill:

* contains one of the largest remaining remnants of its woodland type anywhere;
* supports one of the highest diversities of woodland plants recorded in South-eastern Australia; and
* is habitat for over 30 threatened, rare or regionally uncommon plant, bird, bat, lizard or grasshopper species.

Federal Golf Couse Lease Area **-** [Description to be included]

Urban Open Space - [Description to be included]

Deakin Block 6, Section 66 - [Description to be included]

Infrastructure and Services – [Description to be included]

**Management Context**

National Capital Plan – [Text concerning relevance to be included]

Territory Plan - [Text concerning relevance to be included]

Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991 - [Text concerning relevance to be included]

Nature Conservation Act 1980 - [Text concerning relevance to be included]

FGC lease - [Text concerning relevance to be included]

**Objectives**

1. To protect, and where appropriate restore, the historical, visual, cultural and ecological values of the Red Hill area.

1. To ensure that there are no detrimental impacts on the critically endangered Yellow Box – Blakely’s Red Gum Grassy Woodland and its components.

1. To protect mature trees, hollow bearing trees and nesting trees.
2. To facilitate important areas of woodland outside the Red Hill Nature Reserve being incorporated into the Reserve.
3. To establish criteria and management guidelines to govern decision making in relation to all activities and proposed developments to be undertaken in the area.
4. To Identify indigenous heritage in the area.
5. To protect the heritage values of the area including the landscape values and the view field.
6. To protect community use and sense of belonging to the area.
7. To ensure that the amenity of adjacent residents is not eroded.
8. To ensure Bushfire Management requirements do not result in detrimental impact on critically endangered woodland.
9. To identify all sites contaminated by pollutants and take action to guarantee public safety.
10. To ensure that the extraction of ground water is less than the discharge rate.
11. To ensure traffic flows do not result in detrimental impacts on the environment and public safety and result in additional congestion on roads in surrounding suburbs.
12. To ensure that all development proposals and activities which are likely to have an adverse effect on the environment in the area are subject to public consultation.
13. To provide for the transitioning of land in the FGC lease area into the Red Hill Nature Reserve in the event that the FGC is no longer financially viable.

**Management Criteria**

Woodland Protection

1. No activity to be undertaken which results in the clearing or fragmentation of any part of the woodland in the Nature Reserve and the integral parts of the woodland located outside the Nature Reserve.
2. Prohibit activities likely to have an adverse impact on the woodland and its components both within and outside the Nature Reserve including:
3. soil cultivation, excavation, ripping, removal and compaction;
4. inappropriate use of chemicals;
5. run – off from construction and drainage works;
6. the introduction of exotic and non-indigenous plant species or the dense planting of native plant species into the woodland and in areas adjacent to the woodland;
7. the removal or piling of fallen timber, leaf litter and rock;
8. rigorous and inappropriate mowing and slashing particularly if it is undertaken outside of late summer and autumn;
9. the extraction of groundwater at a rate greater than its discharge rate.
10. Prevent the release of feral animals into woodland and in areas adjacent to woodland.
11. Maintain adequate buffer zones around adjacent land uses, such as large scale built development to ensure that there is no adverse impact on woodland and its components.

**[We need to devise a buffer zone definition which does what we require when applied to both the FGC development and the Hindmarsh development. We cannot have separate buffer zone requirements. I am concerned that the 200m buffer being applied to the FGC development will be seen as totally unreasonable and be rejected if we try and have it applied to the Hindmarsh development].**

1. Ensure that any fire management practices do not damage the structural integrity of all parts of the woodland or the floristic and faunal composition of the woodland, and the distribution, reproduction and population numbers of individual species.

Protecting mature, hollow-bearing and nesting trees

1. If an activity that is likely to have an adverse effect on the environment is proposed for an area, all trees in that area which provide resources for wildlife for foraging, shelter, roosting and nesting are to be surveyed.
2. All large/mature trees in that area that are important for hollow-dependent species are to be identified. These trees include hollow -bearing trees and recruitment trees. Of particular importance are trees used for breeding habitat.
3. Every effort is to be taken to protect the trees in the area, and in particular impacts on trees that are important for hollow-dependent species are to be avoided.
4. All trees that are identified as being used for breeding habitat for threatened species are to be retained together with a surrounding buffer zone of 100m radius.

Protecting heritage values

[Text to be added]

Facilitating the incorporation into the Nature Reserve of important areas of woodland

currently outside the Reserve

[Text to be added]

Protecting the amenity of adjacent residents

1. To protect the quality of amenity as currently provided by the restricted controls in force in relation to the Nature Reserve, the Restricted Access Recreation Area and the Open Space areas.
2. To ensure that adjacent woodland components and other areas of vegetation will not be adversely affected with reference to the management criteria for Woodland Protection.
3. To ensure that any potential loss of amenity is minimised by the use of strategies such as the timing and staging of activities, the use of design elements to minimise impacts, controls on light, noise and any other potentially polluting activities and the use of landscaping and screening using plants native to the area.
4. If any major built developments are likely to occur maintain a buffer zone of at least 100m wide from the property boundaries of residents to the development.

Protecting community use of the area

[Text to be added]

Ensuring that there are no detrimental environmental or social impacts from traffic flows

[Text to be added]

Impact of pollutants

[Text to be added]

Public consultation

[Text to be added]

**Implementation.**

Implementation of the Integrated Plan involves the use of a range of ACT Government processes, plans and regulatory instruments. In giving consideration to or undertaking any activity in the area of the Integrated Plan the requirements of the Integrated Plan will take precedence over all other provisions and requirements.

The Integrated Plan will be given legislative force through the use of existing regulatory instruments and new regulatory instruments where required.

**Monitoring**

**Reporting**

**Garran and Hughes Residents’ Action Group**

**4 May 2018**