



The ACT Equestrian Association Incorporated

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Development Application: 201630750 - construction of a storm water treatment system, landscaping, associated works and structures between the Cotter Road and Dixon Drive.

The ACT Equestrian Association makes the following comments on the proposed Basin Water project between Dixon Drive, Holder and the Cotter Road as a representative of local horse riders associated with its 20 affiliated recreational and sporting equestrian clubs.

ACTEA acknowledges that it has had every opportunity to put its position on those water management projects likely to impact on Canberra equestrians and that in the main, we have been listened to and designs emended accordingly. ACTEA endorses the statement in regard to the overall project that *Community support is expected so long as the equestrian community is not negatively impacted (not removing existing routes)*¹.

We note that the route of the Bicentennial National Trail, running the length of Waragamba Avenue/Dixon Drive is clearly marked on the various plans associated with this Development Application. We have, however, two issues with the project as proposed, neither of which have not been previously discussed with us and which we hope could be resolved with some consultation. These issues are spelled out below but in summary:

- **ACTEA asks that equestrian safety be made a serious consideration in the design of the proposed crossings over the BNT and that Alluvium be required to consult with us about an appropriate design and footing which should be consistent with that already agreed with the government in other places.**
- **ACTEA seeks a meeting with Alluvium before any approvals to ensure the Traffic Management Plan does not transfer off site a significant danger to equestrians.**

¹ DESIGN_DEVELOPMENT_REPORT-01

1. A Long Term Problem

ACTEA understood the new works would finish roughly at the existing stock fence and the broad verge up to Eucumbene Drive presently used by riders will remain unaffected. Several drawings in the DA, however, show what appear to be two pedestrian access tracks crossing the Bicentennial National Trail (BNT) from Dixon Drive. One drawing implies these will be 3.5m wide and concrete!² There has been no discussion with us about the design of these crossings or their impact on horse riders travelling through the open space on Dixon Drive.

The foot traffic between Dixon Drive and the wetlands will increase greatly in the future as the government deliberately aims to create a community destination of the storm water treatment ponds.

Additional paths will be created, linking the wetlands and to the existing pathways, and creating more recreational opportunities.

That means more pedestrians, more dogs and more cyclists. Horses can cope with these things if their environment does not include hazards. Concrete paths are a hazard for horses especially when they are moving from one surface (grass) to another. Their metal shoes can slip on the concrete if they shy sharply and can result in falls and injuries to the horses, their riders and bystanders. We would much prefer these paths to be reduced to one crossing point and to be constructed of a safer material. There are standards for footing materials for horses which will be included in the new Municipal Infrastructure Standards.

Capital Works in Transport Canberra and City Services is proposing to construct a vehicle access route across the BNT to the new dog park at the Eucumbene Drive intersection with Waragamba Avenue. Discussions about the same safety issue have resulted in a signage strategy and a decision to use compacted gravel consistent with the standard.

ACTEA asks that equestrian safety be made a serious consideration in the design of the proposed crossings over the BNT and that Alluvium be required to consult with us about an appropriate design and footing which should be consistent with that already agreed with the government in other places.

2. A Short Term Problem

The Traffic Management Plan associated with the project³ includes a label

Manage pedestrian, equestrian and cycle traffic during construction of outlet pipe. Pedestrian movement to be carefully considered during construction. Engage with stakeholders to arrange alternative route

This label seems to imply that equestrians will be rerouted onto a commuter cycle path for the duration of the project. This is an extremely serious issue. There are 2 problems:

- Fast moving cyclists and horses do not work together. Cyclists do not slow down for horses and horses can react badly to cyclists speeding up behind them. Accidents will happen which, we are sure, is not the intention.

² DESIGN-201630750-CIVIL_OVERVIEW-01, LSCAPE-201630750-LANDSCAPE_PLAN_WEST-01, SEDIMENT-201630750-ESC_PLAN-01

³ CONCEPTPLAN-201630750-TEMP_TRAFFIC_MANAGEMENT-01

- The drawing conveniently shows the cycle path disappearing off the right hand side of the page, taking the horses with it. Unfortunately, in the real world, the path continues on to a blind left hand turn into the western side of the Cotter Road underpass. This is a narrow, four lane long cycle chute through which commuting cyclists move at speed wearing headphones. The equestrian underpass for the Cotter Road is well separated on the other, eastern side of Weston Creek. Once exiting from the underpass riders will find themselves on the wrong side of the North Weston Ponds. See the attached map. **There is no way that it is safe for horse riders to be routed to this underpass.**

This plan is not consistent with the statement on page 23 of the Design Development Report

Careful consideration will need to be given to manage traffic during construction works. Access to the Canberra Centenary Trail and Bicentennial trail that runs through the site should be maintained, requiring traffic controllers to manage the interaction of site vehicles and pedestrians.

ACTEA seeks a meeting with Alluvium before any approvals to ensure the Traffic Management Plan does not transfer off site a significant danger to equestrians.

ACTEA looks forward to talking to Alluvium as soon as possible about finding solutions to these two problems.

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