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Jandakot Airport Preliminary Exposure Draft Master Plan 2020

Due 15 June 2021

The Jandakot Airport Draft Masterplan 2020 *'is the guiding document for the development of Jandakot Airport for the next 20 years'* (p vi). This being the case, the Urban Bushland Council WA Inc (UBC) make various suggestions for improvement of the JAH Preliminary Draft Master Plan 2020 (DMP 2020) that are significant under the EPBC Act.

- 1.) Acknowledge the critical importance of the bushland/conservation areas in the foreword.** JAH can, by this inclusion, acknowledge three essential sectors - aviation, non-aviation and conservation.

The UBC suggests that the conservation/bushland areas, of such significance to endangered species, are mentioned in the 2020 JAH foreword. The last sentence of the Foreword is:
Master Plan 2020 provides for an appropriate balance of aviation and non-aviation sectors of the airport'.

The UBC suggests the following:

'Master Plan 2020 provides for an appropriate balance of aviation and non-aviation sectors of the airport. This includes protection in perpetuity of the critically significant bushland/conservation areas.'

The UBC suggests:

Page 1: executive summary: Change: Bushland 119 hectares (19%);

To: Bushland Conservation Area - 119 hectares (19%) – To be protected in perpetuity

Page 4: Map of Airport View

The conservation value of the bushland should be noted on all maps by changing the legend from "Bushland" to "Bushland Conservation Area". This makes it clear to managers (and new personnel) that this area is to be protected.

Likewise, in the body of the DMP 2020, acknowledge the Bushland Conservation Areas, now described as 'bushland'. That JAH can protect the remaining bushland areas that are so significant to the state, the nation and the world, and should be viewed with pride by JAH. The Airport bushland has the greatest extent of *Caladenia huegelii* and the DMP 2020 should reflect this data.

2.) Strengthen connections between bushland areas.

The conservation areas (1A, 2B, 2A, 2B) within the airport sites are now the only remaining ecological linkages between the bushlands to the north and southeast of the airport.

As a guardian of conservation areas, JAH has the opportunity to strengthen the connection between bushland areas inside and outside the airport grounds. Fragmentation has reduced the opportunity for rare plants, listed under Federal government legislation as Matters of National Environmental Significance, to survive into the future. This aspiration was part of the DMP 2010 and it is recommended that this work continues. Organisations such as the UBC are willing to offer their expertise and would look forward to partnerships that would allow the bushland/conservation areas to survive and even flourish into the future.

The paper, *'A threatened ecological community: research advances and priorities for Banksia Woodlands'* – lead author Alison L Ritchie with 28 associated authors, published recently, 10 March 2021, has the following important information:

'The small form of the thynnine wasp (Macrothynnus insignis) has a specialised pollinator relationship with the once more common orchid, Caladenia huegelii Rchb.f. The decline of this thynnine wasp in fragmented BW [Banksia woodlands] is contributing to the increasing rarity of the orchid and the species is now facing an almost complete loss of pollination services (Phillips et al 2015). Many of these relationships remain undocumented or studied.' (page 11)

The UBC strongly suggests that more emphasis is placed on the protection of the conservation/bushland areas, and on possible linkages, akin to what was written in the 2009 Draft Master Plan.

An example from the 2009 Master Plan is taken from the foreword page iii.

'The major difference of this Master Plan from the approved Master Plan 2005 is a change in land use to secure areas of environmental significance.'

'...our funding of research programmes into rare and endangered species will significantly improve the chances of their survival'

The Managing Director, Mr John Fraser, also states in the 2009 forward:

'Jandakot Airport holdings recognises that while its operations are located within the Airport boundary, there are significant benefits that can be achieved by JAH's involvement in the wider community. JAH is seeking to build upon the Airport's conservation outcomes through additional initiatives for proposed rehabilitation of and outside of its boundaries. This work will provide an ecological corridor between existing conservation areas, within and north of the Airport with conservation areas south of the Airport. JAH identifies that this work has the potential to have a very significant positive environmental outcome for the broader community.'

3.) Conserve in perpetuity conservation/bushland areas

Page 85 Section 9.5 ‘Environmentally Significant Areas’

This section is highly inappropriate; the values of the bushland are obfuscated. Instead, the report should clearly acknowledge that there are environmentally significant areas within the site and that the operators have the responsibility to conserve and enhance these areas as good corporate citizens for the benefit of all future generations.

The UBC suggests that the section should be re-written as follows:

The airport site contains environmentally significant areas: 119 hectares of (mostly) Banksia Woodlands which are now listed as ‘endangered’ Threatened Ecological Communities (TEC) under the Environment Protection Biodiversity and Conservation (EPBC) Act. These are (should be) identified in the report as Bushland Conservation Areas 1A, 1B, 2A, and 2B.

These Banksia Woodlands are unique to Perth and the southwest; they are found nowhere else in the world. The associated Conservation Advice recommends that all such remaining woodlands be protected to prevent further loss of extent and condition.

These woodlands are also significant because they provide essential foraging habitat for the endangered Carnaby’s Cockatoos (*Calyptorhynchus latirostris*). Also present are the critically endangered Grand Spider Orchids (*Caladenia huegelii*). The Recovery Plan for these orchids emphasises that all known habitat is critical for the species survival.

The conservation areas (1A, 2B, 2A, 2B) within the airport sites are now the only remaining ecological linkages between the bushlands to the north and southeast of the airport.

In the original airport plans, Banksia Woodlands, areas 6 and 6A, were identified to be retained. However, these areas were cleared for an expansion project.

Hence, any further clearing of the 119 ha of Bushland Conservation Areas 1A, 1B, 2A, and 2B will not be permitted; all must remain protected in perpetuity as required under the Ministerial Approval Condition number 3 (signed and dated 25 March 2010 by the then Minister for Environment the Hon Peter Garrett MP) for EPBC 2009/4796.

What remains of the bushland conservation areas will have the nomination ‘conserved in perpetuity’.

ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY (page 77)

4.) Consult with environmental NGOs

In Chapter 10 (page 104), list of groups/committees consulted is given but the expertise of those such as the Urban Bushland Council WA Inc, the Wildflower Society, the Conservation Council and the Friends of Ken Hurst Park are not there, because consultation with those groups did not happen. The UBC is keen to offer their expertise. It is recommended that environmental NGOs listed above be included as a stakeholder and included in future consultation processes, particularly regarding conservation outcomes.

It is heartening that although areas of bushland have been cleared, (6 and 6A) and fragmented, *'No significant changes were observed between the 2011 and 2016 surveys with the majority of bushland areas in 'excellent' or 'very good' condition.'* (page 95)

5.) **No more clearing of conservation/bushland areas**

Numbers of *Caladenia huegelii* present in bushland areas:

- 390 plus 35 translocated plants in precinct 1A,
- 22 in Precinct 1B
- 1 in 2A

show the great significance of these remaining areas. No more clearing should be considered and where opportunities exist for increasing vegetated areas that would link areas, the UBC encourages JAH to that end.

The UBC is disturbed that further clearing continues. In Table 9.7 (page 98) it is stated *'Monitor clearing and earth disturbance for Aboriginal and European heritage by construction personnel. The time frame for this action is 'Ongoing as required – during all clearing and earth disturbance works.'*

Contain further development on already cleared land. With further loss of bushland areas, the conservation/bushland areas will be unable to persist in the current condition.

Conclusion

The UBC urges JAH to contain all proposed development on already cleared land and to protect the remaining and significant conservation/bushland areas in perpetuity. Strengthen linkages between conservation/bushland areas so that species have a chance of persisting into the future.

Look to consult with groups with bushland expertise.

These targets must be included in the DMP 2020, to become the final Master Plan for the next 20 years.