



# **GREATER BRIXTON STREET WETLANDS NEEDS YOU**

**Introduction to the EPA's Guidance Statement 2022**

# THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AUTHORITY'S GUIDANCE STATEMENT



## Environmental values and pressures for the Greater Brixton Street Wetlands on the Swan Coastal Plain

Advice in accordance with section 16(j) of the  
*Environmental Protection Act 1986*



Environmental Protection Authority

October 2022

## Greater Brixton Street Wetlands section 16(j) advice

The EPA recognised the significance of these wetlands and the potential risks from existing and future pressures to environmental values.

This advice is aimed at proponents, decision makers, regulators and the public and will be considered during the environmental impact assessment of proposals and planning schemes.

<https://www.epa.wa.gov.au/environmental-values-and-pressures-greater-brixton-street-wetlands-swan-coastal-plain>

## WHAT DOES THE ADVICE SAY ABOUT BIODIVERSITY OF GBSW?



- The GBSW are recognised as one of the most important wetlands remaining on the SCP, characterized by outstanding botanical diversity, with over 650 plant species recorded...
- GBSW's unique biodiversity is attributed to the **specialised plant adaptations** to the **complex soils, chemistry and hydrology** of the site.
- The area supports naturally vegetated wetlands that are **rare or no longer exist elsewhere**, and it is one of the largest consolidated wetland areas of high conservation value on the SCP.
- Changes in the water balance of the area could lead to increases in groundwater recharge and raise the natural water table close enough to the land surface for capillary action to draw up salts and kill vegetation.
- The maintenance of the hydrology of the GBSW is important to protect the unique flora and vegetation communities. Small variations in water levels and wetting and drying cycles may adversely impact the groundwater-dependant ecosystems.
- There is strong engagement from researchers, citizen scientists and community groups
- Landforms and biota within the catchment have evolved side by side with the Aboriginal people living here, making this ancient cultural heritage globally significant

## EXISTING AND POTENTIAL PRESSURES



- **Historical** clearing and land modifications have significantly reduced the quality and extent of native vegetation and habitat
- **Existing** development and infrastructure have fragmented the GBSW and changed its ecological and hydrological functions.
- There have been changes to existing watercourses and there is also a **lack of adequate buffers**.
- Future urban development and infrastructure activities may lead to more changes in the **water balances** and hydrological regimes of wetlands and watercourses. Untreated runoff from urban areas may add to the adverse changes in biogeochemistry.
- Places of **Aboriginal cultural significance** may be disturbed.
- **Climate change** is a clear driver for potential cumulative impacts across environmental values. Given wetlands play a significant role in capturing and storing carbon, their protection is vital.

# EXPECTATIONS FOR PROPOSALS AND PLANNING SCHEMES



EPA provides advice on protecting and enhancing the environmental values

- ❑ Through (i) Enhancing the level of protection; (ii) coordinated management and (iii) restoring and enhancing environmental values and connectivity

EPA also provides advice on expectations for proposals and planning schemes around:

- ❑ Traditional owner engagement
- ❑ Protection of ecological and hydrological values (*note offsets statement*)
  - Hydrological and hydrogeological investigations
  - Stormwater management and drainage
  - Buffers
- ❑ Cumulative Impacts

*Continued piecemeal development without enhancing the protection of the GBSW may result in further degradation of the area's unique and significant environmental values.*