APPENDIX 6 – ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (EPBC ACT)

Migratory Species

Protected under several international agreements to which Australia is a signatory, Migratory species are considered Matters of National Environmental Significance under the EPBC Act. One species as listed under the EPBC Act was detected during the field survey adjacent to the study area, this being White-bellied Sea-eagle. The following migratory species were identified as those with the potential to occur within the vicinity of the proposal:

- Fork-tailed Swift
- Osprey

Under the EPBC Act, an action is likely to have a significant impact on a migratory species if it substantially modifies, destroys or isolated an area of 'important habitat' for the species (DotE, 2013). The study area is not considered to comprise 'important habitat' as it does not contain:

- Habitat used by a migratory species occasionally or periodically within a region that supports an ecological significant proportion of the population of the species
- Habitat that is of critical importance to the species at particular life-cycle stages
- Habitat used by a migratory species that is at the limit of the species' range
- Habitat within an area where the species is declining.

Given this, the potential for the proposed activity to impact on EPBC Act listed migratory species is unlikely and not considered further.

Threatened Species

The evaluation table within **Appendix 4** identified that three EPBC Act listed biota had the potential to be impacted by the proposed work: Long-nosed Potoroo, Southern Brown Bandicoot, Spotted-tailed Quoll.

Vulnerable Species (Long-nosed Potoroo)

> *Will the action lead to a long-term decrease in the size of an important population of a species?*

No. For this species, there is no evidence that an important population occurs within the study area. The proposed action would not result in the impact to or removal of native vegetation. Given this, it is unlikely that the proposed action would lead to a long-term decrease in an area of occupancy of an important population of this species.

> *Will the action reduce the area of occupancy of an important population?*

No. While there is no evidence to suggest that an 'important' population of this species even occurs within the study area, the proposed action would not result in the impact to or removal

of native vegetation. Given this, it is unlikely that the proposed action would reduce the area of occupancy of an important population of this species.

Will the action fragment an existing population into two or more populations?

No population would be fragmented into two or more populations by the proposed action.

Will the action adversely affect habitat critical to the survival of a species?

No. The habitat of the study area is not considered critical to the survival of this species.

Will the action disrupt the breeding cycle of an important population?

No. The proposed action would not disrupt the breeding cycle of an 'important population' (should one occur there) as the proposal does not require the removal of any habitat.

Will the action modify, destroy, remove, or isolate or decrease the availability or quality of habitat to the extent that the species is likely to decline?

No. The availability of habitat in the locality indicates that the proposed action is unlikely to impact potential habitat to the extent this species is likely to decline.

Will the action result in invasive species that are harmful to a vulnerable species becoming established in the vulnerable species' habitat?

No. The proposed action has the potential to increase the ability of environmental weeds. Recommendations within Section 9 provide a framework to minimise these risks.

Will the action introduce disease that may cause the species to decline?

No. Recommendations within Section 9 provide a framework for managing potential risks to biodiversity.

Will the action interfere with the recovery of the species?

No. Given the relatively minor nature of the proposed action, the extent of higher quality habitats in the locality, and the adoption of the recommendation's details within Section 9, it is unlikely that the proposed action would have an impact on the recovery of this species.

Endangered Species (Southern Brown Bandicoot, Spotted-tailed Quoll)

Will the action lead to a long-term decrease in the size of a population of a species?

No. The proposed action would not result in the impact to or removal of native vegetation.

Given this, it is unlikely that the proposed action would lead to a long-term decrease in the size of a population of these species (should one even occur there).

Will the action reduce the area of occupancy of the species?

No. There is no evidence to suggest that an 'important' population of Southern Brown Bandicoot or Spotted-tailed Quoll occurs within the region. The proposed action would not result in the impact to or removal of native vegetation. Given this, it is unlikely that the proposed action would lead to a long-term decrease in an area of occupancy of an important population of these species.

Will the action fragment an existing population into two or more populations?

No population would be fragmented into two or more populations by the current design of the proposed action.

Will the action adversely affect habitat critical to the survival of a species?

No. The habitat located adjacent to the proposal is not considered critical for the survival of these species.

Will the action disrupt the breeding cycle of a population?

No. There is no evidence of breeding of a population within the vicinity of the proposal. Therefore, the breeding cycle of a population will not be disrupted.

Will the action modify, destroy, remove, or isolate or decrease the availability or quality of habitat to the extent that the species is likely to decline?

No. The availability of habitat in the locality indicates that the proposed action is unlikely to impact potential habitat to the extent these species are likely to decline.

Will the action result in invasive species that are harmful to an endangered species becoming established in the endangered species' habitat?

No. The proposed action has the potential to increase the ability of environmental weeds to become established through site disturbance. Recommendations within Section 9 provide a framework to minimise the risk of weed species and feral animals invading adjoining habitats.

Will the action introduce disease that may cause the species to decline?

No. Recommendations within Section 9 provide a framework for managing potential risks to biodiversity.

Will the action interfere with the recovery of the species?

No. Given the relatively minor nature of the proposal, the extent of similar or higher quality habitats in the locality, and the adoption of the recommendation's details within Section 9, it is unlikely that the proposed action would have an impact on the recovery of these species.

Conclusion

With consideration of the assessments completed, the proposal is unlikely to have a significant effect on threatened or migratory species as listed by the EPBC Act. Based on this, referral to the Commonwealth Minster is not warranted.