

Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories

Committee Hearing – 17 June 2021

Answers to Questions Taken on Notice

Question 1:

Mr DAVID SMITH: Following on, in relation to the landscape, with the early earthworks approval, was there a heritage cultural landscape impact study done? I'm guessing, because it's so much work, it has been done and it may be in those papers you have there.

Ms Barnes: These are the 600 submissions. There are comments on each of the 600 submissions—601 submissions. There was concern about the trees. Canberra is known as the Bush Capital. People in Canberra, and nationally, want to make sure that the tree-scape prevails. For the National Capital Authority, the landscape is one of our key drivers. The Minister for the Environment, in her heritage assessment under the EPBC Act, looked at the cultural and natural features. She gave approval, with conditions.

Mr DAVID SMITH: So was there an impact study done?

Ms Barnes: I think it's part of the EPBC process, or there's one to come. I'm not sure; I'll have to get back to you about that.

Mr DAVID SMITH: Okay. If there were, it would be great if the committee could possibly see it.

Answer to Question 1:

The impacts on heritage matters were considered under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) referral and determined by the decision made by the Minister for the Environment. The NCA understands that a Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) was prepared for the EPBC Act referral and informed the assessment of the proposal. Further information about the HIS and provision of that document would be best directed to the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.

Question 2:

CHAIR: In relation to the trees, do you have an idea of how many of them were native versus not?

Ms Barnes: The ones that are coming down?

CHAIR: Yes.

Ms Barnes: I don't have that with me, but I can get back to you if you like. But definitely the one's going in are going to be endemic, local to the area, more natives. I think the landscape will be strict. The construction work is the construction work. But we're taking the opportunity

to strengthen the landscape, post the construction work, so that it is a landscape that will survive well with the changing climate into the next hundred years.

Answer to Question 2:

There are 134 native trees to be removed and six exotic trees to be removed as part of the Early Works.

National Capital Authority
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