

From: [Ian Stanley](#)
To: [TPC Enquiry](#)
Cc: [Sue Newitt](#)
Subject: Sorell 2015 - draft amendment 43-2021-1 & permit SA-2021-3
Date: Tuesday, 22 March 2022 10:24:18 AM
Attachments: [43.2021.1 SA.2021.3 EagleActivity ANorth 20220321.pdf](#)

I refer to the Commission's letter of the 8th March 2022 regarding issues that the Commission has identified for particular focus for the hearing. Whilst not mentioned by the Commission's Delegate in the letter the owner and I recognise that of particular importance to the representors is the impact on Wedge Tailed Eagles in the vicinity. As such we have sought further information from Andrew North the author of the Natural Values Assessment report that accompanied the application. It is hoped this will assist the Commission when the matter is discussed.

The information is contained in the attached file

Ian Stanley
BA, MTP, RPIA (Fellow)
0417513073



Section 43A – 2021.1 and subdivision application SA 2021/3-1

Josephs Road, Carlton and McGinness Road, Carlton River

CT119311/1 and 169070/1

Commentary on Importance of land for Tasmanian wedge-tailed eagle (*Accipiter audax fleayi*)

Andrew North

21 March 2022

Several representations have referred to some purportedly regular and sustained use of the land, and macrocarpa trees, by wedge-tailed eagles for foraging, feeding and 'training young'.

The Applicant, Quentin Newitt, has sought further commentary on this matter for discussion at the forthcoming Commission Hearing which I am unable to attend.

I prepared a natural values assessment report dated 23 December 2020¹. The approach in this assessment is consistent with guidelines for natural values assessments². The main source for background information was the Natural Values Atlas, DPIPWE (accessed 30 January 2020). My assessment included information collected during three site visits undertaken in February, April and June 2020.

In that report I observed:

No threatened fauna species records are documented on the NVA within 500 m of the site, although there are anecdotal observation records of wedge-tailed eagle foraging. No significant habitat for threatened fauna is present. Any occurrences of threatened fauna would be incidental.

In a review of all fauna species of conservation significance (Appendix D) I state:

Wedge-tailed eagles' nest in a range of old growth native forests and the species is dependent on forest for nesting. Territories can contain up to five alternate nests usually close to each other but may be up to 1 km apart where habitat is locally restricted. Wedge-tailed eagles' prey and scavenge on a wide variety of fauna including fish, reptiles, birds and mammals. May use site for foraging. No nesting habitat.

Figure 1 identifies eagle nests, wedge-tailed eagle observations and a nesting habitat model. The closest wedge-tailed eagle nest is 1.5km north of the property boundary. Raptor nests located closer to the area used by white-bellied sea-eagles. The observation record of wedge-tailed eagle was uploaded onto the NVA after my database search.

¹ North Barker Ecosystem services (2020)

² DPIPWE (2015)

Section 43A – 2021.1 and subdivision application SA 2021/3-1

Eagles nesting in this area exhibit a high tolerance to human activity. Recent developments in new subdivisions that have taken place off the northern end of Josephs Road and Sugar Loaf Road have encroached into modelled suitable nesting habitat and are much closer to known nest sites than the subject land although it is not known what impact new residences associated with these projects may have had on breeding success since going in.

No suitable nesting habitat for wedge-tailed eagles is identified within 1km radius of the property. The project will not cause any disruption to nesting success by wedge-tailed eagles.

The representators' reports of frequent use by wedge-tailed eagles on the property is certainly of interest. Clearly birds make use of the open space and availability of prey. It also sounds as if the macrocarpa pines are a popular roosting site.

Once the project area is subdivided and developed then the frequency of visits by eagles may decline. The proximity of the new dwelling to the macrocarpa pines can be expected to impact on their use by eagles. Civil works and building development during the construction phase will as likely disturb birds from the property.

However once uses are normalised, routine and familiar then it is likely that birds will return to the site to use some of the habitats within the area. The lot size may provide sufficient buffering from dwellings to allow for birds to forage in pasture. The proximity of the macrocarpa trees to new dwellings will determine whether or not these trees will continue to be utilised.

Local disruption to foraging and other activities described from the property will not adversely impact the breeding success of the birds that visit the site. Wedge-tailed eagles utilise large territories, typically 10km diameter. Active nests in adjacent territories can be 5-20km apart³. With such vast territories the environments such as those found on the subject land are not a limiting factor on breeding success. The pair may relocate certain activities to elsewhere in their territory.

The key consideration for assessing impacts to wedge-tailed eagles is to consider whether a project and associated use will directly harm birds or impact the breeding success of the species with particular focus on nesting. The Species Management Profile for wedge-tailed eagle (Appendix A) is heavily focused on threats to nesting.

The last published Recovery Plan for Tasmanian eagles⁴ identifies threats as:

- Loss of habitat, specifically nesting habitat
- Nest disturbance
- Unnatural mortality – persecution, collision, electrocution, oiling, entanglement and pollution
- Decline in mean age of population
- Decline in recruitment

Development and use arising from the proposed rezoning and subdivision does not correspond to any of the threats listed in the recovery plan. Disturbances to wedge-tailed eagles using the property will not impact on the breeding success.

³ Bryant & Jackson 1999 – Tasmanian Threatened Fauna handbook

⁴ Threatened Species Section (2006).

Section 43A – 2021.1 and subdivision application SA 2021/3-1

References

- Bryant, S. & Jackson, J. (1999). *Tasmania's Threatened Fauna Handbook: what, where and how to protect*. Threatened Species Unit, Parks & Wildlife Service, Hobart.
- DPIPWE (2015). *Guidelines for Natural Values Survey – Terrestrial Development Proposals*. Version 1.0. 16th April 2015. Policy and Conservation Advice Branch. Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment.
- North Barker Ecosystem Services (2015). 2 Lots off Baudin Road, Carlton (Folio ref 119311 and 169070). Natural values Assessment. 23 December 2015.
- Threatened Species Section (2006). *Threatened Tasmanian Eagles Recovery Plan 2006-2010*. Department of Primary Industries and Water, Hobart

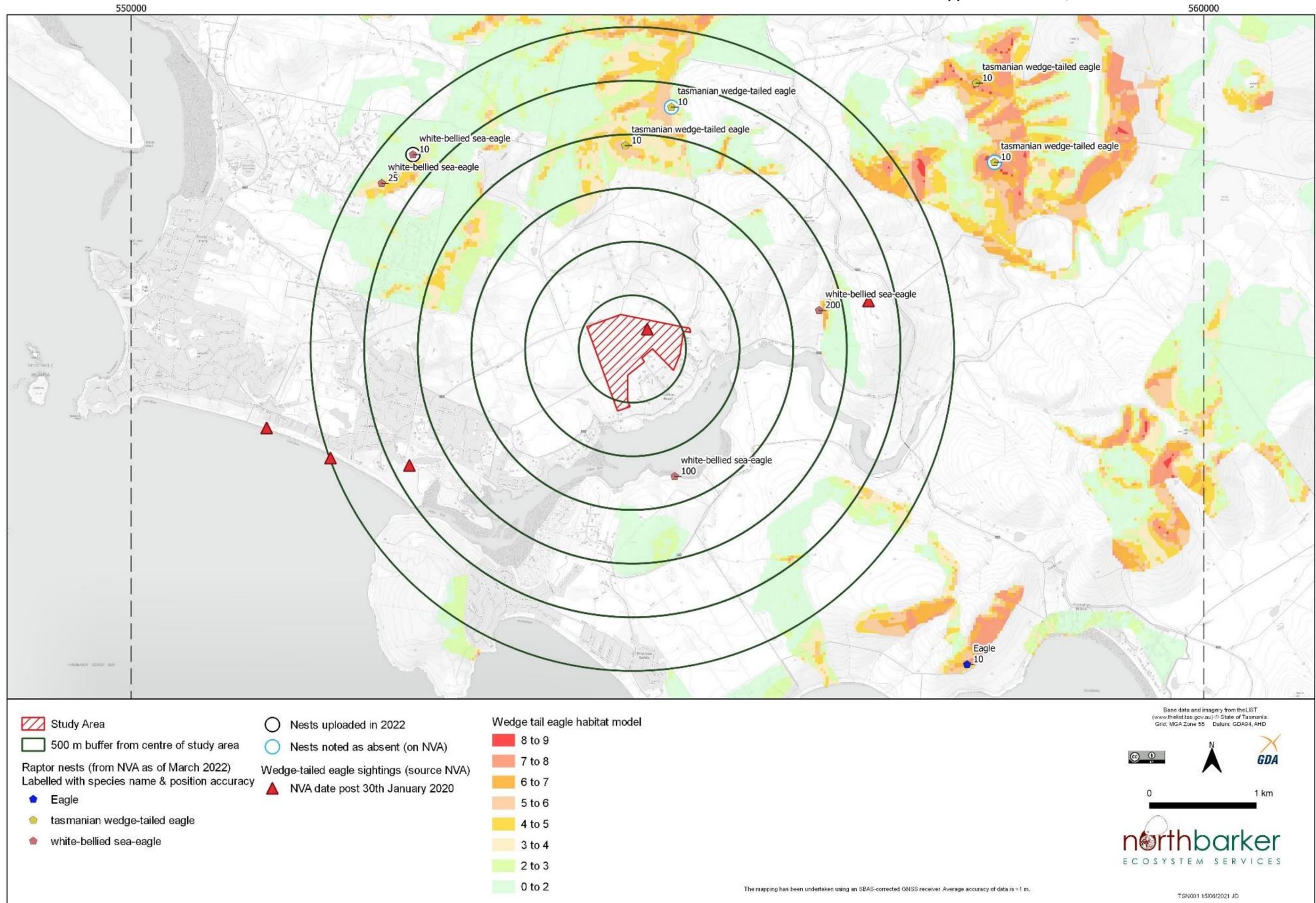


Figure 1: Eagle records, nests and modelled nesting habitat