



PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET OFFICE

NSW Parliament • Parliament House, Macquarie Street Sydney 2000

Referred by: Australian Labor Party **Proposal No:** C968
Date Referred: 13/12/2022 **Date Published:** 20/03/2023
Proposal Title: Protect the Woronora wildlife corridor
Cluster: Planning and Environment

General Government Sector Impacts

	2022-23 \$'000	2023-24 \$'000	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	4-year Total \$'000
Expenses (ex. depreciation)					-
Depreciation					-
Less: Offsets					-
Revenue					-
Net Operating Balance:	-	-	-	-	-

Capital Expenditure					
Capital Offsets					
Net Capital Expenditure:	-	-	-	-	-

Net Lending/(Borrowing):	-	-	-	-	-
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Total State Sector Impacts

Net Lending/(Borrowing):	-	-	-	-	-
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Notes and costing assumptions:

The policy proposes to transfer the ownership of the Woronora wildlife corridor from Sydney Water to National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS). The Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) assumes that this refers to the 32.7-hectare parcel of land indicated in the map overleaf.

The policy also proposes to conduct an assessment of koala corridors in the region linking Heathcote National Park and the Royal National Park for further reservation.

The policy assumes that costs would be met within existing resources. The PBO considers this a reasonable assumption given that the total operating costs (including labour) estimated by the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) are minimal (\$885,000 over the forward estimates).

The Parliamentary Budget Office assumes that the inter-government transfer of land and equivalent cash contribution would be treated as an equity adjustment in both DPE and Sydney Water reflecting the government's decision to reallocate resources within the public sector, thereby resulting in nil budget impact.

Notes and costing assumptions continued:

Background

Sydney Water owns 32.7 hectares of land at 22 Bundanoon Road, Woronora Heights. Of this land, the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) advised that

- 1.3 hectares (blue area) are zoned E4 Environmental Living¹ and is surplus to Sydney Water, thus could be transferred to NPWS
- 31.4 hectares (red area) are zoned E2 Environmental Conservation, and Sydney Water would be required to undertake an assessment of the future requirements of the site before transfer could occur. DPE notes that the property contains a large water pipeline and ongoing access to this would be required.



Assumptions

- NPWS would have to pay compensation to Sydney Water, which is a state owned corporation, that is equivalent to the market value of the land as per the NSW Treasurer's Direction [92/2](#) (469.01).
- No other land has been considered for further reservation, acquisition or transfer apart from the 32.7 hectares noted above.
- The Valuer General valuation as of 1 July 2021 was used as basis to estimate the value of the relevant land. The valuation is at \$2.2 million.
- NPWS would deal directly with Sydney Water to make the transfer.
- Labour costs would be incurred per year for one National Parks Ranger (see table below).
- Other expenses include
 - \$80,000 per year for pest and weed management work (escalated by CPI)
 - \$70,000 in 2023-24 for survey and cultural and environmental assessments
 - \$100,000 in 2023-24 for transaction fees, labour, legal and valuation advice.

An operating cost summary is provided below.

<i>Amounts in \$'000s</i>	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	4-year Total
Employee expenses		152	156	161	469
Other expenses		250	82	84	416
Total expenses		402	238	245	885

¹ Information on environment protection zones can be found on DPE's [website](#).