

Questions relating to Black Mountain that need to be answered, and are not covered in the Feasibility Study

Questions, Jean Egan.

Responses, Libby Gordon, Design and Development, Parks and Conservation Service.

1. What environmental impact assessment study, not just the ground-truthing of the tracks, has been carried out in Black Mountain?

There have been no environmental impact studies completed for the proposed alignment of the Canberra Centenary Trail at this stage of the project. Any new sections of trail within Nature Reserves, such as Black Mountain, would be required to have formal environmental clearances achieved via a Preliminary Risk Assessment process. This process would review the impact of any new works on areas of high conservation value and determine if the works require a formal Environmental Impact Statement. However, no new sections of track are proposed within the Black Mountain Nature Reserve. Construction Management Plans will control activities where sections of trail are proposed to be upgraded to minimise the impact of these activities on surrounding areas.

The proposed trail alignment as shown in the *Centenary Trail Ground-Truthing Report* (August 2011, Anthony Burton and Associates) will be revised in response to community feedback received during the consultation period which closes on 10 February 2012.

2. Was any person with intimate knowledge of the flora and fauna of Black Mountain consulted?
Conservation, Planning and Research, the ACT Government's specialist unit responsible for wildlife research, ecological surveying, biodiversity monitoring, and threatened species conservation has provided information to the project. The project team also relied on local expert knowledge, such as the information you provided on the location of significant *Orchid spp.* The level of information required on existing trail areas is not as detailed as that for new sections of track – no new sections of track have been proposed for Black Mountain.
3. Will environmental impact assessments be carried out annually over the first three years (as well as the planned assessment of the degradation of the trail)?
The impact of the Centenary Trail on surrounding areas will be monitored over time. This review will be part of the role of the Trail's management board (yet to be established) and will rely on feedback from parkcare and other volunteers, trail users and rangers.
4. Will there be environmental impact assessments after the first three years?
The review of the impact of the Centenary Trail on surrounding areas will be an ongoing responsibility of the Trail's management board.
5. If the trails have to be realigned due to degradation will there be provision to comment on the realignment and its impact on the environment?
Yes, should future realignment of sections of the Centenary Trail be required there will be the opportunity to comment on the realignment.
6. What provision will be made for ongoing issues such as weed infestation and litter?

Management guidelines will be prepared for the Centenary Trail and adherence to these guidelines will be overseen by a management board. These guidelines will document ways to manage ongoing issues such as weed infestation and litter as well as trail usage. These guidelines will be developed in accordance with the *Canberra Nature Park Plan of Management 1999*.

Issues that need to be addressed regarding the use of the bicycle trail for “events”

7. Has TAMS a definition for an “event”?

An event is an organised recreational activity by a group or association being conducted in parks and reserves and requiring PCS approval.

8. Will there be a maximum number of events allowed in one year?

The approval of proposed events will be assessed on a case by case basis and depend on the level of impact there will be conditions that have to be adhered to. The number and type of conditions placed on running the event will increase as the event size increases.

9. Will there be a maximum number of riders allowed in any given event?

Proposed events will be assessed on application and depending on the level of impact there will be conditions that have to be adhered to. The number and type of conditions placed on running the event will increase as the event size increases.

10. What will be the park rangers' role at the events?

District staff are involved in the assessment of event applications and ensuring conditions to run the event have been met.

11. Will park rangers be present at all events and if not, who will decide which events will have park rangers present?

District staff will be involved in the assessment of applications and ensuring conditions to run the event have been met. For small events there may not be a requirement for rangers to be in attendance. In the first instance the District Manager will decide which events will have park rangers present.

12. What action is proposed to stop illegal tracks being created?

PCS is taking a number of approaches including ranger patrols, directional signage and raising public awareness through publications, signage and liaising with recreation user groups.

13. How will the entrances to the parks be designed to allow easy access to bicycles but not to other illegal users such as trail bikes, or where applicable horses?

Currently bicycles can access Canberra Nature Park using the pedestrian slip-throughs or the pedestrian holes in the gates. Horse riding will be permitted on sections of the trail that already allow horse use. In these sections cavalettis are provided for access. The design of the trail infrastructure for the Centenary Trail will address access issues at main trail access points.

14. How will bicycles riders be prevented in areas that are designated as paths for walkers only?

Directional and orientation signage is used to inform park visitors/users. The budget for the Centenary Trail has allowed for additional signage to be developed and installed along the trail.

15. As the feasibility study only mentioned events in passing and as TAMS has also been somewhat reticent in clarifying the situation, have all Park Care groups now been made aware that events will be held on the Centenary Trail?

The Centenary Trail is no different to any of the trails in Canberra Nature Park and will be available for use by the general public and user groups. Applications to run events will be considered by PCS and are subject to a rigorous application process that ensures relevant land management requirements are met. As outlined above, the bigger the event the more stringent the conditions that will apply.