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MEDIA RELEASE

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ACT NATIONAL TRUST RECOMMENDS AGAINST PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS ON JERRABOMBERRA WETLANDS

The ACT National Trust has sent a submission to the Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) recommending against a proposed ACT Government power line development across the heritage listed Jerrabomberra Wetlands.

The project has been referred to the Commonwealth Government for approval under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act.

The proposed works in the wetland area involve the construction of underground power transmission lines across the wetlands. The underground laying of cables will involve the excavation of a 1.4 kilometre long trench, 1.25 metres deep and 4 metres wide across the heritage listed area.

The route chosen will cut through an extensive area of paleochannels (former ancient courses of the Molonglo River) and sand bodies which have been identified as important geological evidence of the evolution of the natural landscape of the area.

The Trust is also concerned that such a wide and deep trench could expose ancient Indigenous sites which may be lying underneath the present surface.

The Wetlands are classified by the ACT National Trust (1997) and are on the ACT Heritage Register (1998).

In the submission the Trust made the following recommendations:

1. The ACT National Trust cannot accept any development option where substantial excavations or the installation of overhead powerlines will occur within the heritage listed boundary of Jerrabomberra Wetlands.
2. We recommend that alternative routes be considered which will not involve electrical infrastructure being built within the heritage listed boundary of Jerrabomberra Wetlands.
3. The ACT National Trust therefore recommends that the proposed works should be considered a controlled action and put the Minister for Environment and Heritage for final approval