



Approval

Lord Howe Island Rodent Eradication Project, NSW (EPBC 2016/7703)

This decision is made under sections 130(1) and 133 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Proposed action

person to whom the approval is granted Lord Howe Island Board

proponent's ABN (if applicable) 33 280 968 043

proposed action To eradicate introduced rodents on Lord Howe Island and its associated islands and rocky islets and to capture and house Lord Howe Woodhens (*Hypotaenidia sylvestris*) and Lord Howe Island Currawongs (*Strepera graculina crissali*) (see EPBC Act referral 2016/7703).

Approval decision

Controlling Provision	Decision
World Heritage properties (sections 12 & 15A)	Approved
National Heritage places (sections 15B & 15C)	Approved
Listed threatened species and communities (sections 18 & 18A)	Approved
Listed migratory species (sections 20 & 20A)	Approved

conditions of approval

This approval is subject to the conditions specified below.

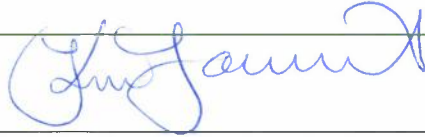
expiry date of approval

This approval has effect until 31 December 2022.

Decision-maker

name and position

Kim Farrant
Assistant Secretary
Assessments (NSW, ACT) and Fuel Branch

Signature

date of decision

18.8.17

Conditions attached to the approval

1. To avoid and minimise impacts on the **Lord Howe Island World Heritage Area and National Heritage place** (as identified at Schedule 1) and listed threatened species and communities and listed migratory species, the action must be undertaken in accordance with the final *Lord Howe Island Rodent Eradication Public Environment Report* dated 10 February 2017.

The person taking the action must capture and manage in captivity Lord Howe Woodhens and Lord Howe Island Currawongs in accordance with Taronga Zoo's revised Lord Howe Island Rodent Eradication Project Captive Management Plan (July 2017).
2. To avoid, minimise and mitigate impacts from the aerial baiting on **non-target species** and the environment of the **Lord Howe Island Group**:
 - (a) aerial baiting can only be undertaken between 1 June and 30 August;
 - (b) during aerial baiting, **observers** must be at a location with clear line of sight to the Providence Petrel (*Pterodroma solandri*) and Masked Booby (*Sula dactylatra*) breeding grounds (as identified at Schedule 2). Trained **observers** must also be located within the boat observation zone (as identified at Schedule 2) and provide commentary to the helicopter pilot via radio regarding the behaviour of Providence Petrels and Masked Boobies, to supplement the pilot's observations and minimise impacts on Providence Petrels and Masked Boobies;
 - (c) where it is safe to do so, aerial baiting in the vicinity of the Providence Petrel and Masked Booby breeding grounds must be undertaken at a bait dispersal altitude and times that minimises impacts on Providence Petrels and Masked Boobies;
 - (d) handling, transport, clean-up and disposal of the pesticide **Brodifacoum** must be undertaken in accordance with the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority minor use permit.
3. Within one month of the date of this approval, the person taking the action must submit to the **Department** draft terms of reference for the **Minister's** approval for the establishment of a **Technical Advisory Group (TAG)**.

Baiting must not commence until the membership of the **TAG** is approved by the **Department**. The members must include, but not be limited to, an environmental toxicologist, a pelagic bird expert and an island ecologist each with relevant tertiary qualifications and suitable experience in their field of expertise.

The TAG will provide technical advice to the **Rodent Eradication Steering Committee** and be responsible for providing advice and recommendations for the development and implementation of the Monitoring and Mitigation Plan required at Condition 4.

4. To minimise impacts from aerial baiting on **non-target species** and the environment of the **Lord Howe Island Group**, the person taking the action must establish a **Monitoring and Mitigation Plan** based on advice from the **TAG**. The **Monitoring and Mitigation Plan** must be approved by the **Minister** prior to **commencement** of aerial baiting on the **Lord Howe Island Group**. The **Monitoring and Mitigation Plan** must:
 - (a) provide for the monitoring of mortality and cause of death of **non-target species**, for a period of at least 4 months after the **commencement** of aerial baiting;
 - (b) establish a **Mitigation Team Manager** responsible for collection of qualitative and quantitative information on **non-target species** mortality, documenting and reporting this information and using this information to coordinate and adapt carcass search and removal operations. The **Mitigation Team Manager** must provide weekly reports to the **Department** and the **TAG** regarding **non-target species** mortality and efficacy of carcass search and removal operations. More regular reports must be provided if requested by the **TAG**. The **Mitigation Team Manager** must continuously undertake these tasks for a period of at least 4 months after the **commencement** of aerial baiting;
 - (c) include protocols and impact thresholds, where the **TAG** determines that unacceptable impacts on **non-target species** are observed between the first and second aerial baiting events;
 - (d) include protocols to ensure systematic, targeted and effective carcass search, collection and disposal in the vicinity of the **Settlement** and other accessible areas (to avoid secondary poisoning of **non-target species**, but recognising that Masked Owl (*Tyto novaehollandiae castanops*) eradication depends on sufficient carcasses remaining uncollected) and specify appropriate resourcing;
 - (e) include clear contingency planning and adaptive management measures where mortality of **non-target species** is recorded, with the aim of reducing further mortalities;
 - (f) provide for a whole-of-island census, and breeding success monitoring of Lord Howe Woodhen and Lord Howe Island Currawong populations, twice a year, for a period of at least 2 years, following the release of captive birds.

A report summarising the monitoring results collected on **non-target species** mortality in accordance with Condition 4(a&b) must be provided to the **Department** within 5 months following the completion of the final aerial baiting event.

The results of the whole-of-island census and breeding success monitoring conducted in accordance with Condition 4(f) must be provided to the **Department** within two months of completing each census.

5. To ensure the success of the rodent eradication program, the person taking the action must establish a rodent detection team. Following the decay or removal of rodent carcasses, the rodent detection team must initiate intensive rodent detection activities across the **Lord Howe Island Group** to identify and kill remaining **target species**, as detailed in section 2.6 *Rodent Detection Monitoring* in the **PER**.

To avoid and mitigate impacts from rodent detection operations on **non-target species** and the environment of **Lord Howe Island Group**:

- (a) all detecting team members must be trained in the location of the colonies of EPBC Act listed bird species and methods for minimising impacts on these colonies, vegetation and soils;
 - (b) all dogs used to aid detection of rodent species on the **Lord Howe Island Group** must have previously undergone project-specific training and be currently accredited by the Canine Detection Certification Council after passing the Council's practical accreditation test, prior to detection operations starting;
 - (c) each handler must have a Statement of Attainment in Dog Training from the Certificate IV, Companion Animal Care and Management Course (ACM40310) from TAFE NSW or equivalent as approved in advance by the **Department**;
 - (d) when rodents are detected appropriate action must be taken to eradicate rodents at that location;
 - (e) rodent detection using dogs must occur across the island until no rodents are detected.
6. The person taking the action must submit an **integrated quarantine/biosecurity management plan (the plan)** for the airport and shipping port to prevent the reintroduction of rodents to the **Lord Howe Island Group** for the **Minister's** approval prior to **commencement** of the action.

The plan must prescribe quarantine/biosecurity management protocols regarding visiting yachts, cruise ships, other vessels and shipwrecks and maintaining rodent free status on islets including the long-term use of rodent detection dogs.

In developing and implementing **the plan** the person taking the action must seek and address advice and recommendations from an independent biosecurity expert.

7. To maximise the likelihood of eradicating rodents on the **Lord Howe Island Group**, the person taking the action must use their best endeavours to ensure that rodent baiting is conducted on all properties and leases on the **Lord Howe Island Group**.
8. Within 30 days after the **commencement** of the action, the person taking the action must advise the **Department** in writing of the actual date of **commencement**.
9. The person taking the action must maintain accurate records substantiating all activities associated with or relevant to the conditions of approval, including measures taken to implement plans required by this approval, and make them available upon request to the **Department**. Such records may be subject to audit by the **Department** or an independent auditor in accordance with section 458 of the EPBC Act, or used to verify compliance with the conditions of approval. Summaries of audits will be posted on the **Department's** website. The results of audits may also be publicised through the general media.
10. Upon the direction of the **Minister**, the person taking the action must ensure that an independent audit of compliance with the conditions of approval is conducted and a report submitted to the **Minister**. The independent auditor must be approved by the **Minister** prior to the commencement of the audit. Audit criteria must be agreed to by the **Minister** and the audit report must address the criteria to the satisfaction of the **Minister**.
11. If, any time after 5 years from the date of this approval, the person taking the action has not substantially commenced the action, then the person taking the action must not substantially commence the action without the written agreement of the **Minister**.

Definitions

Brodifacoum baits means either 5.5 mm or 10 mm cereal-based bait pellets of Pestoff 20R containing 0.02g/kg (20 parts per million) of the toxin Brodifacoum.

Commencement (where bolded in the text) means the commencement of the aerial distribution of Brodifacoum baits across the **Lord Howe Island Group** using helicopters.

Department means the Australian Government Department responsible for administering the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Lord Howe Island World Heritage Area and National Heritage place means the area identified at Schedule 1 of the approval.

Integrated quarantine/biosecurity management plan means a quarantine/biosecurity management plan for the airport and wharf to prevent the reintroduction of rodents should the rodent eradication be successful.

Lord Howe Island Group means Lord Howe Island and its associated islands and **rocky islets** (excluding Balls Pyramid).

Minister means the Australian Government Minister responsible for administering the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Mitigation Team means the team, including the **Mitigation Team** Manager, responsible for implementing relevant mitigation and monitoring activities on Lord Howe Island under the **Monitoring and Mitigation Plan**.

Monitoring and Mitigation Plan means the plan to be prepared by the proponent that will guide mitigation and monitoring activities on the **Lord Howe Island Group** with the aim of minimising **non-target species** mortality from the aerial baiting as well as monitoring **non-target species** mortality, impacts on populations and population responses.

Non-target species means endemic flora and fauna species on the **Lord Howe Island Group**.

Observers means bird experts approved by the Lord Howe Island Board as being suitably qualified and/or experienced to observe and interpret the response of birds to the helicopter baiting flights.

PER means the final Public Environment Report dated 10 February 2017.

Rocky islets means any body of land of the **Lord Howe Island Group** excluding Lord Howe Island and Balls Pyramid that has permanent land above the mean high water mark and that can be safely accessed by a suitably trained person (boat or helicopter) for the purpose of setting and retrieving presence and absence monitoring equipment for **target species**.

Rodent Eradication Steering Committee means the Rodent Eradication Steering Committee established in October 2012, consisting of one representative from each of the following organisations, the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Energy, the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage, the CEO of the Lord Howe Island Board, an elected Lord Howe Island Board member and a rodent eradication expert.

Settlement means the area identified at Schedule 1 as the Settlement.

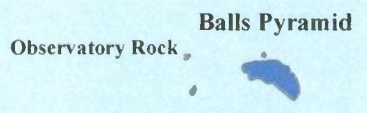
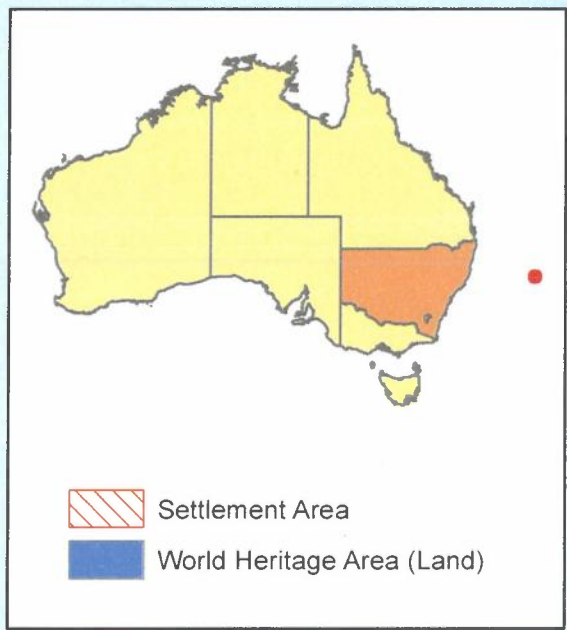
Target species means *Rattus rattus*, *Mus musculus* and *Tyto novaehollandiae castanops* (the Masked Owl Tasmanian population).

Technical Advisory Group means a group of experts with operational and ecological experience, independent of the person taking the action to provide advice and recommendations on the mitigation and monitoring of **non-target species** mortality and recovery.

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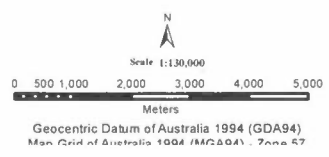


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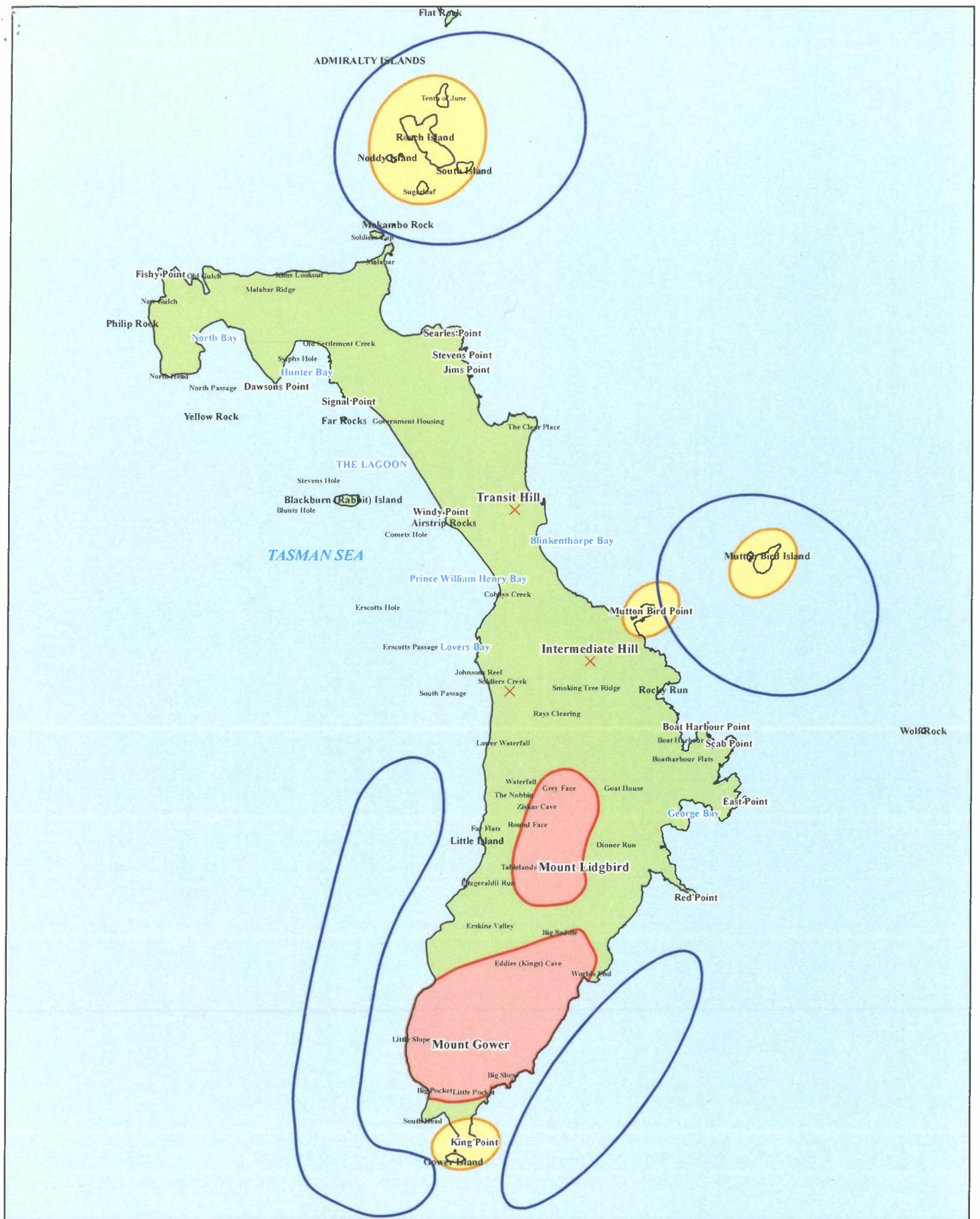


Schedule 1

Lord Howe Island Group World Heritage Area and National Heritage Place



DISCLAIMER
This map is not guaranteed to be free from error or omission. Therefore, the Lord Howe Island Board and its employees disclaim liability of any act done or omission made on the information on the map and any consequences of such acts or omissions.



- X Observation Points
- Boat Observation Zone
- Masked Booby Breeding Site
- Providence Petrel Breeding Grounds

Lord Howe Island

Schedule 2 Location of Providence Petrel and Masked Booby breeding grounds



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Date Created 23/06/2017

