

## 7 APPENDIX B Wiruna Property Management Plan

Revision date: August 2021 – Lesa Moore, Treasurer, ASNSW

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## 7.1 Organisation and Access

The Astronomical Society of NSW (ASNSW) is an incorporated association, run by a management committee. The committee nominally consists of ten society members. The committee member responsible for liaising with the committee on all Wiruna-related matters is the “Vice-President Wiruna”, who attends on virtually all scheduled new-Moon weekends and at the annual Star Party. The committee meets on a monthly basis to discuss and approve expenditure for all maintenance items and any new acquisitions, including anything required for “Wiruna” (48 Old Ilford Rd, Ilford NSW).

The Wiruna property is mainly used by members on scheduled new-Moon weekends and for the annual South Pacific Star Party (refer separate Star Party Event Management Plan). It may be used by members at other times if pre-arranged with the Vice-President Wiruna. The Vice-President Wiruna may also attend at other times to liaise with tradesmen, the RFS or for conducting sundry maintenance activities.

There are currently no permanent residents living at Wiruna. The two gates facing Old Ilford Rd, and all lockable buildings, are kept locked when there is no one on the property. When members are in attendance on scheduled new-Moon weekends, the main gate is usually left open (for convenience and as an emergency exit) and the Meeting Hall, main amenities block and bunkrooms are opened. Other structures may be unlocked as needed.

## 7.2 Accommodation, “Wiruna Sites Policy 2020”, Attendances

**Permanently-Available Accommodation:** The current accommodation arrangements include a two-bedroom house on the western part of the property and four bunkrooms in a bunkhouse offset from the Meeting Hall by a covered breezeway. Bookings for these accommodations on scheduled new-Moon weekends are made with the Vice-President Wiruna by club members on an ad-hoc basis.

**Semi-Permanent Member Installations:** A number of members leave their own tents and caravans on the property on a semi-permanent basis, i.e. the members leave the tents/vans there, year-to-year, provided that these members are still meeting minimum attendance requirements at the property. Minimum attendance requirements are covered in our “Wiruna Sites Policy 2020”. Specifically, the member must “Have attended at least four scheduled Wiruna observing weekends in the previous twelve (12) month period, with a minimum total of six (6) nights across the year.”

The “Wiruna Sites Policy 2020” also covers matters relating to the safety and maintenance of each member’s site (refer “Wiruna Sites Policy 2020”, attached separately).

Currently, there are 16 caravans, 11 tents and three storage sheds at Wiruna under this arrangement (refer Plan 3: Existing Property Detail B and Plan 4: Existing Property Detail C).

**Attendance Numbers:** Attendance patterns vary seasonally, with typical numbers between 20 and 45 individuals for a scheduled new-Moon weekend. Most of this number would be regular or semi-regular attendees who use the house, bunkrooms or their own installations for accommodation. Special events (also on one of the scheduled dates), such as an “equinox dinner”, may attract another handful of members who may camp just for the weekend in one of the designated areas (any of the Mixed weekend camping/observing areas or the Long-term camping, caravans and sheds area shown in **Plan 1: Existing Overall Property Usage Diagram**).

### 7.3 Maintenance

The ASNSW undertakes to maintain the Wiruna property to a standard that ensures the safety and comfort of all members and visitors who use the property. This includes, but is not limited to, maintenance of:

- a. The driveway, all access tracks and paths (grading and gravel);
- b. The society-owned buildings (cladding and interiors);
- c. The grounds that are utilised for astronomical observations (mowing, trimming of bushes and trees);
- d. Amenities (water tanks, showers, flushing toilets & septic systems, the pit toilets on the eastern part of the property);
- e. Emergency equipment (fire extinguishers, siren, first aid, etc.);
- f. Fences (including vehicular access track inside the fence along Old Ilford Rd);
- g. The fire break to the west of the managed woodland area (clearing and bulldozing as needed).
- h. Asset protection zones to buildings

The other essential maintenance to ensure that the property continues to serve the ASNSW members well is to keep the various observing fields clear of overgrowth and maintain tree height at a level that allows adequate views of the night sky from the observing fields. These include the mixed camping/observing areas as well as the Main Observing Field.

No Weeds of National Significance, listed at:

<http://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/WeedListPublics/CategoryResults?showImages=True&categoryId=1&pageTitle=Weeds%20of%20National%20Significance>

have been identified on the property.

### 7.4 Parking

Almost all users of the property arrive by motor vehicle. Public transport is only available as far as the Ilford bus stop, from where visitors may be collected by someone already with a vehicle at Wiruna.

Parking is allowed:

- a. adjacent to individual member-owned tents and caravans (refer **Plan 3: Existing Property Detail B - Long-term camping, caravans and sheds**), as well as on the gravel area to the south of the Meeting Hall (for users of the Bunkhouse). Vehicles may also be left in the Mixed weekend camping/observing areas (refer **Plan 1: Existing Overall Property Usage Diagram**), where members and visitors may set up camp and telescopes together;
- b. temporarily only, adjacent to the Bush Kitchen (refer **Plan 4: Existing Property Detail C - Permanent structures**) for the purpose of dropping off or picking up eskies and provisions;
- c. near the house on the western area of the property (refer **Plan 4: Existing Property Detail C - Permanent structures**);
- d. on the Main Observing Field - for loading and unloading astronomical equipment (refer **Plan 2: Existing Property Detail A - Main Observing Field Installations**). No vehicle movements are allowed on the Main Observing Field after dark.

During the South Pacific Star Party (refer "SPSPInfo2019", attached separately), additional large camper vehicles and caravans are directed to designated areas in the easternmost Mixed weekend camping/observing area. Participants who arrive after dark or intend to leave during the evening are required to park in the small parking bay near the main entry gate, so as not to disturb other participants with stray light.

## 7.5 Utilities

**Electricity:** The property is powered for electricity by solar panels and battery storage, with 240V available through an inverter system. Generators may also be used from time to time and, especially, for the annual South Pacific Star Party (refer “APPENDIX C Star Party Event Management Plan”).

**Gas:** Gas cylinders supply fuel for cooking and hot water. 45kg cylinders are stored upright on concrete pads and chained in the upright position to the adjacent buildings when in use. Smaller, 9kg cylinders are used on a more portable basis, but are always placed on a flat concrete surface for use. Cylinders not in current use are stored separately in two dedicated gas cylinder cages positioned adjacent to the main driveway in the cleared area north of the main hall.

**Fuel:** A bund is used for the storage of essential quantities of flammable fuels required for generators and power tools.

**Water:** Water supply is from rainfall collected in tanks. If rainfall is insufficient to provide for the needs of members, visitors and the larger influx for the South Pacific Star Party, water is bought from a local supplier.

## 7.6 Astronomical Usage

As an astronomical society, the main cleared area of the property (the “Main Observing Field”) is dedicated to use for astronomical observing and members’ observatories. A member must apply to the management committee for permission to install an observatory, a telescope pier or any other form of fixed or temporary installation relating to astronomical use. The society owns and operates two telescopes on the Main Observing Field – these instruments are housed in roll-off sheds.

Currently, in addition to the two roll-off sheds owned by the society, there are another nine observatories in place (roll-off sheds or sheds with roll-off rooves), six smaller roll-off enclosures, six telescope piers and a number of mats and foot-pads that are owned by members on the Main Observing Field. The locations of these are all indicated on **Plan 2: Existing Property Detail A - Main Observing Field Installations**.

## 7.7 Conservation

Much of “Wiruna” is natural bushland. The ASNSW does not intend to do any major clearing works, nor to commence any agricultural activities (crops or stock), so the existing expanses of natural vegetation on the western parts of the property serve as nature reserves for wildlife and vegetation. Refer **Plan 1: Existing Overall Property Usage Diagram**.

## 7.8 Fire Mitigation

The property is managed so as to minimise the risk from bushfire or other accidental fires (refer “6 Appendix A Bushfire Management Plan”).

## 7.9 Members’ Emplacements

Members who have tents, caravans, fixed sheds, roll-off sheds (observatories), telescopes, piers, mats or property of any kind at Wiruna understand that they are solely responsible for the maintenance and care of that property.