

THE BUSHLAND BULLETIN[©]



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Concerns about Road Works on Henry Lawson Drive

by Chris Brogan

The Society has written to the Minister for Roads and Maritime Services re proposed widening of a section of Henry Lawson Drive at Picnic Point. The Society has become aware of a proposal The Society wrote to Minister Duncan Gay in September 2016 expressing its opposition to the destruction of any bushland along Henry Lawson Drive between Picnic Point and Milperra. We received a reply from the Parliamentary Secretary dated 22nd October stating that there were *"no proposals to upgrade Henry Lawson Drive, south of the M5 Motorway, at this time. If the Roads and Maritime does propose changes in the future, it will arrange stakeholder and community consultation and environmental assessment before making any decisions."*

Given that our group expressed particular interest in this, we are disappointed that we were not informed of this proposal despite the assurances of the Parliamentary Secretary. This lack of consultation illustrates that the New South Wales Government has a policy of roads at all cost despite the wishes of the community.

In 1995, to make the road safer, our group proposed reducing the speed limit from 80 to 60 kph. Along with this reduction a speed camera was installed. These measures have done the job of eliminating serious accidents along Henry Lawson Drive where it passes through the Georges River National Park for more than 20 years. We have been informed that the four crashes recorded in this area in the past five years have all been single car accidents. Widening the road will not enhance safety rather it will only encourage people to drive faster leading to more accidents.

Koalas have been recorded in the vicinity of where these works are proposed. It is likely that if these works were to proceed, koala habitat would be destroyed. The Society has urged the department not to proceed with road works along Henry Lawson Drive that are simply not necessary and will result in the destruction of much valued scenic bushland.



Local Area Plan Slammed at High Level

by Col Gibson

The future of important parklands at Padstow, Revesby and Panania, slated for high rise developments in Canterbury-Bankstown's South West Area Plan, continues to cause concern. Recently, Federal Member for Banks, David Coleman, has put his personal concerns on record. Last May, Mr. Coleman received a justification for the planned sell off and/or development of parklands from Interim General Manager, Matthew Stewart, in which Mr. Stewart stated that Council had completed an audit of open space available in the Bankstown Open Space Strategic Plan: *"That Plan, Community Land Generic Plan of Management, and Local Area Plans have revealed the City's south-east, which includes Revesby and Panania, has a high number of accessible open space sites (59, comprising 214 hectares) compared to other areas of the City."* (Matthew Stewart to Coleman, 25-5-2016).

Here we learn that the south has too many parks, more than its fair share when compared to other parts of Bankstown. Why has it taken only recently for this to be revealed when it has not been seen as a problem in the past? In fact, it has only ever been lauded as a good thing. Why, indeed, is the number of parks a problem for Council when it certainly is not for the people who live in these suburbs. Surely, with growing populations in mind, the best thing to do would be to even things up by creating more parks in areas that currently have less. The above statement is simply a convenient way of justifying

culling of parks for cash sale.

Mr. Stewart went on to say: *"councils have a responsibility to ensure open space is accessible and meets the needs of community and, I can assure you, this Council has only proposed the investigation for divestment of open space in very specific circumstances. These particular assets are in areas where there is already a high number of local and neighbourhood open space; where the open space has limited recreational, social or environmental value; and where the asset is 2,000 square metres in size or less."*

You'd think this would exempt green spaces in the centres of Padstow, Revesby and Panania used by thousands of people each day, but no, Council considers these not so much to be amenities but "assets" from which development opportunities can be realised. Where did the figure of 2,000 square metres come from? Parks of all sizes are of value. Is it only size that protects some of our parks? When all the parks under 2,000 square metres are sold, will the bar simply be moved up a notch to 2,500?

All of our then Councillors approved this plan, not one of them stood up for the parks long entrusted to their care. The only voice in sympathy with local environmental concerns of the community is Mr. Coleman's. In response to the GM, Mr. Coleman has put on record: *"This Open Space Strategic Plan was developed alongside Council's South West Local Area*

Plan, which I am strongly opposed to. While some development is necessary to support population growth, Council's plan is excessive and will substantially change our area. The issues with the Plan come on top of the existing problems in the area – namely the lack of infrastructure planning to accommodate for the growth of duplex homes and multi-storey buildings." (David Coleman to Col Gibson, 24-10-2016).

Anyone can see that as the population grows we have more of everything – duplexes, town houses, multi storey, traffic congestion, but, if Council has its way, less open space. Some small parks, like Ray McCormack Reserve (which is the only green space in the Revesby CBD south of the railway line) are simply in the way of Council's own development plans, so keen it is to grab for itself a slice of the pie.

Mr. Coleman added: *"I recently met with the NSW Minister for Planning, the Hon. Rob Stokes, to express my objections. I will continue to work with the Planning Minister throughout this process to ensure our community's concerns are adequately addressed. The Local Area Plan cannot be finalised, unless and until, it has been agreed to by the NSW State Government. It is important that the character of our local area is preserved, especially its open spaces. As your local member of parliament I am determined to fight on behalf of the community on this important matter."*

Barton Park Development Concerns

by *Dave Noble*

There is at present a very alarming development proposal to relocate a private golf course to public land at Barton Park near Arncliffe. If it goes ahead this development will be very detrimental to important remnant wetland areas in the Cooks River Valley.

At present Kogarah Golf Club occupy a site closer to the airport between the M5 and Marsh Street. They propose to vacate that land for a high rise housing development and move south to a large area of public green space. Their proposed new site contains the important Landing Lights Wetland and other wetland areas

between Spring Street and Eve Street. Other sections contain cycle ways, sporting fields, remnant bushland, and the old St George Football Stadium (closed for many years).

The Development Proposal intends to retain the Landing Lights Wetland and provide one access path to a viewing platform. But it will be surrounded by the golf course, and to access the viewing platform you may need to sign in at the clubhouse. At present the wetland has access on all sides – important to view and photograph the migratory birds that come and go at different times of the year. As well the hinterland

to the Landing Lights Wetland provides habitat to many other species of bird – honeyeaters, finches, cisticolas, kingfishers, silvereyes, willie wagtails and wrens. These bird's bush cover will be removed in the proposal.

In the region that contains Barton Park there are plenty of golf courses, but precious little green space. It will be a shame if it is lost!

See the Save Barton Park Website <http://www.savebartonpark.com/> or Facebook Page for more information and to get involved.



Black-winged Stilt



Sharp-tailed Sandpiper



Black-fronted Dotterel



Golden-headed Cisticola

Moorebank Intermodal Myths

by Erik Rakowski

One of the biggest myths about the Moorebank Container Terminals is that it will create thousands of new jobs. It will steal jobs, not create them.

In the marketing of Moorebank Container Terminals, the Federal Government and Private Interests have claimed that it will generate "around 7,000 jobs". However, that is just a statistical fantasy based on the average job density of Liverpool -x- the amount of land used.

The applications for the projects indicate that the whole precinct will only generate 2,400 full time jobs and that is a Net Reduction of Jobs.

Alternatively, if the sites were sustainably designed and master planned to include parks, conservation, campuses, schools, shopping centres, cafes, offices, a business park and residential we could create our own mini Melbourne on the Georges River.

This alternative use is projected to create 36,000+ Jobs next to 15,000 / 20,000 Residences, alongside Higher Education opportunities and could be serviced by up to three Train Stations.

With a young average age of 33, Liverpool needs Universities. With almost 20,000 people unemployed the South West needs Jobs. With a crisis of Housing Affordability and Traffic Congestion, Sydney needs homes near jobs, near public transport.



300ha of riverfront destroyed to sandwich a polluting Container Terminal among Residents

Strategic planning and an alternative master plan could achieve all this and save the Georges River through smart design that focuses on how we live, not how much profit it makes. We deserve better.

For further information re the campaign to stop the Intermodal at Moorebank see <https://www.facebook.com/RAIDMoorebank/>

Nature Conservation Council CEO Kate Smolski said:

Federal Government's role

"It is unacceptable that the Federal Government approves projects before the full

environmental impacts are known. If the Federal Environment Department had concerns about the biodiversity assessment for this project, it should have required more information before granting approval, not afterwards."

Systemic failures of the NSW planning system

"The NSW Government needs to explain why the Planning Assessment Commission was not alerted to the presence of this rare and endangered plant so it could be considered in the PAC's final assessment of the project. If it did alert the PAC, then why

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

was this not mentioned in the PACs final report?

The government should also explain why it took until mid-December to list the species as critically endangered when it was rediscovered on the site more than a month earlier. It is hard to avoid the conclusion the NSW Government delayed listing the species to ensure the project were ahead as scheduled.”

What should happen

“This incident shows that planning system in NSW values development at any cost, regardless of the loss of species. This must change. If an endangered species is found after planning approvals have been granted, there should be a stop-work trigger to ensure its survival.”

Further to Note:

SIMTA have buried THREE new applications over Christmas. Combined, they amount in 2,200,000 metres cubed of dirt, enough to bury the site by 2 metres or build the Pyramid of Giza. We are asking everyone to make submissions to object to the project itself and these significantly different modifications, added after the fact.

It can be quite complex, which is why we will be setting a simple objection website and hosting a Public Meeting next week. The goal is to help anyone and everyone make a submission and share our experience. We wish to invite all of our friends, neighbours, and the 1000's of young families and retirees of our region to come and ask their questions.

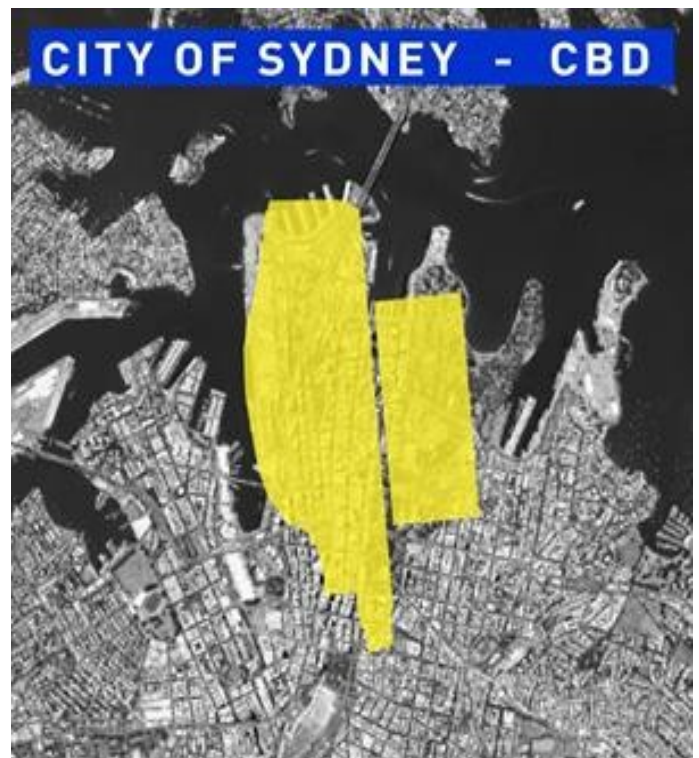
We implore you to attend; to learn why you might want to stop your kids from playing outside. Why it will likely take you an extra hour to get to and from work or what implications there are to the value of your land and character of your home. Most of all we want to share with you all what you can do to stop this disastrous and costly white elephant on 300ha of river-front land. We will share how we can all use voices to speak up and be the difference we want see, in our streets, our suburbs, our city.

Let's make one thing clear: fight is not even close to over, the fight it is alive like never before.

*(For the rediscovery of the rare **Hibbertia fumana** on the Intermodal development site see page 6).*



The proposed Moorebank Intermodal is the size of Port Botany, without the open space or access



As Australia's Largest Inland Port it would be big enough to smother the whole CBD of Sydney

Rediscovery of *Hibbertia fumana* (thought to be Extinct), at Moorebank by "Observer"

Late on Friday 16th December 2016 the NSW Office of Environment & Heritage issued an emergency ('provisional') Critically Endangered listing for the species which is known as *Hibbertia fumana*. You can read the listing here:

www.environment.nsw.gov.au/committee/ProvisionalDeterminations.htm

Earlier in 2016, in submissions to the biodiversity assessment for the Moorebank Intermodal proposal, criticisms were raised to the Federal and State governments on various grounds, among them the failure of the Biodiversity assessments to identify *Hibbertia* flowers on site, which were reported only as '*Hibbertia* sp.' The concerns were that the species may have been the recently described and Endangered *Hibbertia puberula* ssp. *glabrescens*, known only from one population at Bankstown Airport, in which case the proposal may not be suitable for the site.

However, both State and Federal government approved the controversial project without confirming the identity of the *Hibbertia* on site – i.e. without the knowledge needed to determine if the proposal was appropriate. In the Federal approval conditions, they inserted a requirement for an expert to survey the site for *Hibbertia* species. Basically, if they found *Hibbertia puberula* ssp. *glabrescens* they'd just slap on an offset requirement and

proceed with the development as planned.

Mr Andrew Orme who is an expert in *Hibbertia* working with the Royal Botanic Gardens was commissioned to survey *Hibbertia* on the site in fulfilment of the Federal approval conditions. The expectation was that *Hibbertia puberula* ssp. *glabrescens* would be discovered; instead Mr Orme found a species of *Hibbertia* until now thought to be extinct.

The species known as *Hibbertia fumana*, not recorded since 1823, was gazetted as Critically Endangered by the NSW Office of Environment & Heritage under 'emergency' provisions this Friday 16 December 2016. It was held back until further Planning approvals could be issued – these came on 13th December and the endangered listing then proceeded.

The planning behind this is damning. The Moorebank Intermodal was approved with the acknowledgement that inadequate survey had been undertaken to assess its impact on biodiversity. Instead of collecting the information needed to determine the suitability of the proposal, an approval was made and the development outcome locked in before the site's conservation values could be appropriately assessed or protected. The Intermodal requested the announcement be delayed to avoid it 'complicating' the approvals.

As a result of this abuse of process we now have an 'extinct' species rediscovered — but found only on an approved

development site. It is very unlikely that the development would have been approved in its current form with this knowledge, so instead the knowledge has been suppressed until the necessary approvals were in place.

Images: *Hibbertia fumana*





BANKSTOWN BUSHLAND SOCIETY ON FACEBOOK

Checkout Bankstown Bushland Society on Facebook. Anyone who shares an interest in Bankstown's bushland heritage is welcome to join and post items of interest. Facebook provides us opportunities for posting information relevant to the natural environment of our area, remnant flora and fauna as well as updates on our bush regeneration projects, nature walks and so on.

ELECTRONIC BULLETINS

The Bushland Bulletin is available electronically to members who so desire. All you have to do is send your email address to the Bulletin editor at:

greenaisance1@gmail.com.

Members are entitled to both printed and electronic forms, but if you only want the electronic form instead of the printed please let us know.

Flora of the Yeramba Lagoon Environs

**A presentation by
photographer Nick Bloukos.**

Wednesday night, April 19th, 7.30 pm, in the Wal Browning Meeting Room at rear of Padstow Progress Hall, Ryan Road, Padstow. Nick is a Picnic Point resident and class act professional photographer and amateur naturalist who is dedicated to Yeramba Lagoon and knows it inside out. Nick has been assisting the National Parks & Wildlife Service in recent years with their clean up operations around the lagoon with terrific results. Come and see Nick's photos of the area and bring a friend along.

Bushland Society meetings are held at Padstow Progress Hall, Ryan Road, Padstow, on the 3rd Wednesday of the month (except December & January), in the Wal Browning Meeting Room at rear of hall.

Time: 7.00pm.

Tea and biscuits provided.

All welcome.

Further enquiries please ring Col on 97886232.

BANKSTOWN BUSHLAND SOCIETY COMMITTEE 2017

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9788 6232

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Colin Gibson

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WHY NOT JOIN THE SOCIETY ?



The Bankstown Bushland Society is an incorporated association under the Associations Incorporation Act (NSW) 1984.

We are Bankstown's only incorporated association dedicated to protecting our City's environment.

The Society's objects are:

- To protect the environment of Bankstown
- To assist other persons in the protection of the environment in Bankstown
- To foster better community awareness of environmental issues
- To lobby through Government, commercial and other persons for the maintenance of a high quality of life through the progressive improvement of the environment

Bankstown Bushland Society has lobbied effectively for the protection of bushland and the natural environment since 1988. With your support we can continue the work. By joining the Society you can make an important contribution to our local environment.



Yes, I wish to join the
Bankstown Bushland Society Inc:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____ Postcode _____

Telephone Number: _____

Attached please find my payment of:

(\$.00)

_____ (amount in words)

Membership fees

Family/Group - \$20

Ordinary - \$15

Concession - \$10

"student/unwaged/pensioner"

Send payment to:

**The Secretary,
Bankstown Bushland Society Inc.
PO Box 210
Panania NSW 2213**

Or pay by direct transfer to

**BSB 512 170 Account Number 100087319, AND put
your name on the transfer form.**



**Bankstown Bushland Society Inc.
PO Box 210
Panania NSW 2213**

