

THE BUSHLAND BULLETIN[©]



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www.bankstownbushlandsociety.org

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Road Widening and Habitat Considerations along Henry Lawson Drive

In 2016, Roads & Maritime Services proposed widening a section of Henry Lawson Drive through the Georges River National Park at Picnic Point. Upon finding out that these works were planned, the Society successfully lobbied to have clearing of road verges reduced in order to minimise damage to adjacent bushland but still allow for safety improvements. Knowing that koalas inhabit the area (one was sighted at Cattle Duffers Flat in 2012 and another found dead on this same section of road in 2015), and that other native animals, including wallabies and echidnas, also cross the drive at this point, BBS President, Chris Brogan, drew this to the attention of the RMS, which responded with an on site meeting which led to the verge clearing plans being modified and erection of a *Koala Crossing* warning sign. The Society thanks the Roads & Maritime Services for its careful consideration of all the issues here. The Society's concerns extend to other significant stands of bushland in small road

Stop highrise and roadwork to save habitat



□ Independent hopefuls Chris Brogan and Bob Wilson at the Koala road sign at Henry Lawson Drive, Picnic Point.

Photo by RADIM CECVALA.

reserves along other sections of Henry Lawson Drive such as at Lambeth Park, Monash Reserve, East Hills Park, Deepwater Park, Kentucky Reserve and Lansdowne Reserve. For instance, widening of Henry Lawson Drive along the beautiful tree-lined section running beside Kentucky Reserve at Georges Hall has been mooted. Widening of the drive here will destroy many fine mature specimens of *Eucalyptus baueriana* (Blue Box), and will do little to improve traffic flow given that vehicles will still have to deal with the traffic lights at the major intersection with Milperra Road. Only a flyover of Milperra Road will substantially improve traffic flow in this area, but this is a much more expensive consideration than chipping away at the road reserves. The Bushland Society proposes that the rare bushland remnants in these road reserves be protected and their ownership and management be transferred to Canterbury-Bankstown Council.

Environmental Issues of Concern in Canterbury-Bankstown

by Christopher Brogan

The following are a few of the issues currently of concern for which the Society is focussing attention.

1. Riverlands

Riverlands Golf Course in Milperra occupies an area of approximately 80 hectares on the Georges River floodplain and retains significant ecological and heritage values. Despite being recognised by Bankstown Council as Regionally Significant Conservation Land it was rezoned for housing in June 2015. In early 2016 a development application was submitted to Council seeking approval for the destruction of 1,300 remnant bushland trees for preliminary site works. The society believes that many of these trees have Aboriginal or Cultural scars, the origin of which has been confirmed by members of Bankstown's Aboriginal community. The NSW Office of Environment and Heritage has

however determined that these scar trees are not Cultural as they are not old enough – which we think is highly contentious. As such, Riverlands is not protected under NSW legislation or the Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act. The NSW Government has announced plans for large scale development at Riverlands. The Bankstown Bushland Society proposes that the DA before Council be rejected and Council appeal the Minister's rejection of Council's application for Environmental Protection zoning.

2. Airport Reserve

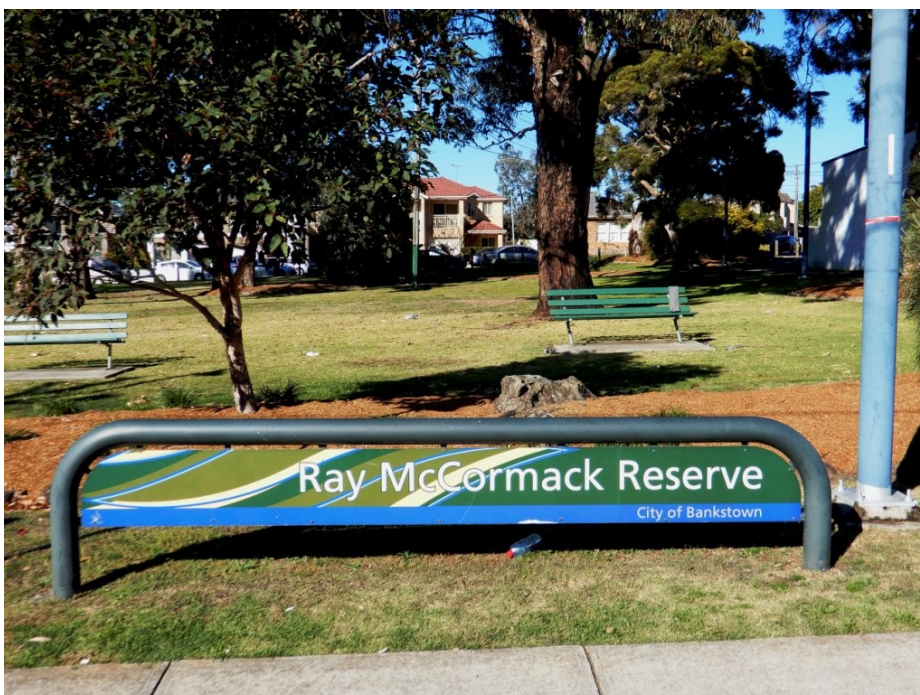
Airport Reserve is Crown Land located adjacent to Bankstown Airport near the Henry Lawson Drive - Milperra Rd intersection. Bushland at the reserve has been classified by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage as Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and Freshwater

Wetlands on Coastal Floodplains both of which are listed as NSW Threatened Species Conservation Act (1995) (TSC Act), Endangered Ecological Communities. Bushland at the reserve is also listed under the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (1999) (EPBC Act). In 2016 Leda Holdings Pty Ltd proposed to access a bulky goods warehouse development on airport lands by constructing a four-lane road through Airport Reserve from Milperra Road. Road construction would have included a 100 metre slip-lane and new traffic lights located close to where a mall creek crosses under Milperra Road. This proposal did not proceed. Airport Reserve is still vulnerable however due to its status as Crown Land. Bankstown Bushland Society proposes that ownership of Airport Reserve be transferred to Canterbury Bankstown Council.

3. Local Area Plans

In May 2016, the night before the amalgamation of Canterbury and Bankstown Councils, a meeting was held at Bankstown Council Chambers to “discuss” the Local Area Plans. I attended as did a large number of property developers and about 2 dozen members of the community. As each plan was tabled those who had registered to talk were called to sit at a desk within the inner sanctum and allowed 5 minutes to make their case. For the developers this involved arguing that they should be allowed to

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build taller blocks of flats than the area plans stipulated. One agitated for a change from 6 storeys to 12. This was agreed to. One who was associated with Woolworths claimed that he could only turn a profit if he was allowed a change from 6 to 8 storeys over 8,000 square meters. The councillors agreed to "consider" his proposal. The woman from the Padstow Public School P&C who pointed out that a development of this scale and height was inappropriate given the close proximity of the school was ignored.

The Local Area Plans propose the sale of numerous community parks and libraries. In Panania the library, seniors centre and associated council car park has been rezoned for high rise as has

the council car park opposite St. Christophers. In Revesby the council car park outside the station is to be sold and transformed into a 12-storey block of flats. Also in Revesby Ray McCormack Reserve is to be developed. This beautiful little park located behind the YMCA is used by residents to walk their dogs, access the station and for quiet reflection. It is home to a number of old remnant bushland trees including Woollybutts, Melaleucas and a beautiful old Grey Box and represents a haven for Bankstown's Biodiversity. Carl Little Reserve opposite Padstow Station in which the Library is nestled is also to make way high rise. Bankstown Bushland Society is opposed to the selloff and development of the parks.

4. The Sydney Metro

This project has been promoted by the NSW Government as an improvement to Sydney's public transport system. There is, however, considerable community suspicion that the Sydney Metro represents the first stage in the privatisation of Sydney's rail network and is designed to facilitate property development. Works will involve the removal of the existing rail infrastructure (track, signals, troughing and overhead power lines) along the Bankstown line and replacement with new rail infrastructure completely incompatible with Sydney's current rail network. High rise developments will follow. The Society is strongly opposed to the destruction of bushland and open space in the Metro corridor.

Bush Regeneration for 2018

Since 1991, the Bushland Society has been the recipient of \$464,407 in government grants for bush regeneration work in the former Bankstown LGA. This funding has enabled us to make solid contributions to the rehabilitation of some of the most diverse bushland in western Sydney. The Society's grant funded sites have been: The Crest of Bankstown and Lake Gillawarna at Georges Hall; Lansdowne Reserve at Lansdowne; Marion Reserve at Yagoona; Deverall Park Bush at Condell Park; Norfolk Reserve at Chullora; Lambeth Park at Picnic Point; Smith Park, East Hills Park and Monash Reserve at East Hills; Irene

Jones Bush at Padstow; Lot 5 Riverlands, Deepwater Park, Airport Reserve and Ashford Reserve at Milperra and the Freshwater Creek Bushlands at the old Chullora Railway Yards. Volunteer efforts during this same time have also been undertaken at these sites, as well as at Salt Pan Creek at Padstow; Beauty Point Bushland and Mickeys Point at Padstow Heights; Yeramba Lagoon at

Picnic Point; Carysfield Park at Bass Hill; Davidson Street Bush at Chullora and Cocks Creek Bush at Greenacre.

Most of these sites had not had any bush regeneration work performed until we initiated it. The results achieved have been first rate and on a scale rarely attempted elsewhere. (Our work at Lansdowne was so successful the site was recently designated a Biobanking Reserve). Although our volunteer effort has been scaled back in recent years, in 2018 we will be returning to the field and will be welcoming participants. Stay tuned on Facebook for details of where and when.

BBS volunteers at Smith Park, East Hills, in 1993.



Riverlands Development Application - a Worst Case Scenario

by Colin Gibson

The Society has been battling the Riverlands issue since 1989. A most disastrous development application has been submitted. The following is our submission to Canterbury-Bankstown Council urging that it be rejected.

Introduction

The Development Application as described in the Statement of Environmental Effects will clearly have drastic impacts on the environmental values of the site. Bankstown Bushland Society appeals to Canterbury-Bankstown Council to reject the Development Application. The SEE and residential lot design plan take no account of the ecological values including indigenous trees and tree hollows. No areas are set aside for preservation of any of these. The SEE claims the proposed subdivision will have no negative effects on tree hollows or biodiversity. We think this is unsupportable given the density of buildings indicated in the

development plan.

The SEE and DA show how improper Residential zoning is in this area. The Society believes that Council should reject the DA and resubmit to the Minister for Planning its proposal for more environmentally sympathetic Environmental Protection Zoning with a proper plan to protect the environmental values of the site. Protection of these important local and regional ecological values has been the paramount concern of local residents and concerned community members for over three decades. It is time that Council and State Government took them serious.

Proposed Open Space

There is scant provision for open space parkland in the DA. The riparian zone along the river will not serve the new residential area as it is too distant from it, is not part of the residential area in question and is separated from it by private property. Part of the riparian zone is

tidal and flood prone and passes through an Endangered Swamp Oak (*Casuarina glauca*) Forest. Construction of boardwalks and bicycle paths is inappropriate in endangered habitat such as this.

Parks containing good representative stands of the indigenous trees on site (as identified by Anne Clements in the Flora Assessment of Riverlands Golf Course in 2012) should be central to the development. There is no such park in the plan. As it is, hardly any of the native trees and tree hollows will survive the construction of so many buildings. Additionally, there is no set back from the proposed residential subdivision site to the Council-owned bushland remnant at Lot 5.

Endangered Plant Communities

The golf course and surrounding lands are crucial parts of the Georges River environmental corridor. This is an area high in natural values. The golf course itself is home to over 1,300 indigenous trees (Clements) as well as endangered river-flat forest, wetlands, Cumberland Plain Woodland and the native wildlife associated with them. A range of locally and regionally rare native plant species occurs on the site. Riverlands exhibits a wide range of ecological attributes, including a succession of habitats from estuarine swamp forest to coastal river-flat forest and wetland, as well as woodland on Tertiary sandy loam and remnant open forest on the Wianamatta shale rise, all of which are Endangered Ecological Communities. No better example of this transition exists in Bankstown. The development will destroy the greater part of the Wianamatta shale component of this transition. The SEE takes no account of this and therefore should be rejected.

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Forest Trees at Riverlands

The fact that the Statement of Environmental Effects takes no account of the fate of the significant stands of native trees is an indication of how inappropriate the development is. Many trees at Riverlands are of sufficient age to possess nesting hollows for birds and other wildlife. It can take well in excess of 100 years for a tree to form hollows that might be suitable for native animals. Riverlands Golf Course possess scores of these which provide habitat for a wide range of native wildlife.

Native trees at Riverlands include Forest Red Gum, Red Mahogany, White Stringybark, Grey Box, Scribbly Gum, Ironbark, Broad-leaved Apple and Thin-leaved Stringybark. The ecologist, Anne Clements noted that 42 of the 49 tree groups lining the golf course fairways are of “*class A – High local conservation significance*”, with several regionally significant species among them (Clements p. 69), recommending that all of the class A tree groups should be retained (Clements p. 86). None of these tree groups are mentioned in the SEE. The development as planned will result in the destruction of the vast majority of these and their habitat hollows. On these grounds the Development Application is inappropriate.

Protection of Tree Hollows

In its advice to Council, dated 6-9-2006, The Department of Environment and Conservation noted that, “*hollows are an important but limited ecological resource. They are essential for breeding and refuge for a large range of birds and mammals including threatened species and take decades to form.*” There are hundreds of mature native trees with habitat hollows at Riverlands. Many other trees will form hollows in time, if allowed.

Destruction of habitat hollows is a listed Key Threatening Process contributing to wildlife decline in this state. In light of this, why has the State Government seen fit to rezone the area Residential? Council should make a principled stand by rejecting the DA so as not to contribute further to this decline.

Council has gone to considerable expense over recent years to establish wildlife nesting boxes in trees in many parks and reserves with overall poor results. The nesting opportunities these boxes provide are short lived and the failure rate is high. There are no better habitat opportunities than are provided by the several hundred hollows in the indigenous trees at Riverlands. All these hollows must be preserved at Riverlands.

Access from Keys Parade

The road access from the north will be particularly destructive, cutting through a forested corridor of remnant Sydney Coastal River-flat Forest, as well as a rare stand of Scribbly Gum Woodland on Tertiary sandy loam. Native vegetation at this location contains a range of locally rare shrub and ground cover flora. This is the only patch of Scribbly Gum Woodland on Tertiary alluvium in the Canterbury-Bankstown Local Government Area with representative shrub layer and ground cover flora. Three species having their only known occurrence in Canterbury-Bankstown occur here, these being *Viola banksia*, *Selaginella uliginosa* and *Luzula flaccida*. These, and other species, are threatened with local extinction by the road and residential plan.

Recommendation of the Office of Environment & Heritage

The Bushland Society reflects the concerns of the then Department of Environment & Climate Change, when it wrote to Council on 28-9-2007: “*The DECC raises concern*

regarding the rezoning approach of adding a major redevelopment of the area as an additional use in the LEP. The proposed LEP amendment makes no reference to the protection and conservation of the natural values within the site in the ‘aims of this plan’ or in the provisions and requirements to be inserted into Schedule 2 and 9 of the LEP. In addition, the proposed approach provides significant flexibility to amend the proposal and therefore uncertainty with regard to the long term protection and enhancement of the conservation areas.” (see Clements, 6(b), p. 8).

The SEE does not address the conservation of the natural values and the development plan is in complete disregard of them and this important advice from the Department. This has always made prioritising of residential development over protection of environmental values at Riverlands a mistake. It is time both local and state governments revisited this crucial advice and took it seriously.

Conclusion

Residential development at Riverlands will destroy hundreds of significant trees and habitat hollows that have been recommended for retention. It will cause the destruction, and fragmentation of Endangered plant Communities. These negative impacts, along with the lack of provision for accessible open space, renders the Development Application unsuitable for an area with such high conservation values. Added to this are concerns over stormwater impacts on adjacent wetlands that are breeding grounds for a wide range of wildlife, exacerbated by the fact that part of the residential zone is located within the 1:100-year flood zone. To sacrifice such an environmentally significant area to intensive urban development as outlined in the SEE is unacceptable. The DA must be rejected.

The Moorebank Intermodal—Where Would You Put It?

by Erik Rakowski

Where should we put Australia's Largest Inland Port and Container Terminal? The Broader Western Sydney Employment Area extends from Eastern Creek to the back of Badgerys Creek. It is centrally located to service both of the two major growth centres: North West and South West.

Eastern Creek = Over 30% Demand for Container Freight. Moorebank = 0.1% Demand for Container Freight is so small it can barely be seen when pictured in scale comparison to Eastern Creek.

Eastern Creek is now home to most major national and international distribution and logistics companies. While Liverpool is increasingly residential, with 30,000 new residents and a Health & Education Precinct on the way.

Hume Hwy Liverpool = #1 Accident Hotspot. M5 from Heathcote Rd to Hume Hwy = Death toll blackspot that is 40 x RMS guidelines and according to the NSW Freight Strategy, the M5 Bridge over the Georges River 'will be at capacity as early as 2016.' Building Moorebank Intermodal will make the Southern Sydney Freight Line redundant by 2020.

where would you build it?

Would you force 10,000 plus trucks into Liverpool traffic nightmare every day, only to drive the freight to Eastern Creek, effectively double handling freight while drastically retarding an already constrained Rail and Road Network?

OR

Would you rather build the one project in the right place and build the dedicated Western Sydney Freight Line to service Eastern Creek? And by so doing avoid the mammoth mistake of Moorebank and remove the need for \$3-6 Billion in Local Upgrades, and also remove the need for the WestConnex and or at least prevent 3,000+ trucks from packing out the WestConnex or ever getting on the road network to begin with. Surely the answer is self-evident?

81 jobs—that's it!!

Deloitte Report for Moorebank Intermodal clearly shows that the Container Terminal will only generate 81 full time jobs. While the "ancillary" cafe, gym, supermarket, childcare services and sport facilities will generate MORE than the Terminal itself at 150 full time jobs. That's plain ridiculous!! All of us would just rather a new sports facility, childcare services, schools, cafes and gym by the River. Especially when the demand is in Eastern

Creek to begin with.

22– Site management
81– Terminal Operations
150–ANCILLARY
584–Truck Drivers
5,985–Warehouse Staff

97% of the projected jobs are based on offsite Truck Drivers and Onsite Warehouse Staff of retail warehousing and Distribution centres. Said jobs would exist wherever the Terminal is located. And if located at Eastern Creek, would tap into existing warehousing and eliminate the need for trucks—WHICH IS THE WHOLE POINT—of building it at Moorebank according to the Govt.

Worse still the numbers in the report are based on 1,050,000 Containers and 850,000sqm of warehousing but conceptual approval is for a 1/4 of that: 250,000 Containers and 3000,000sqm. So total best case is 1,705 jobs and that is a dam sight less than the sales pitch of 6,800 jobs OR the 15,000 to 35,000 jobs possible; if our river is used for better development.

Artist's conceptualisation of the imposition of the Moorebank Intermodal on the Georges River floodplain.





***Check out BANKSTOWN
BUSHLAND SOCIETY on
FACEBOOK***

The BBS Facebook page provides us opportunities for posting information relevant to the natural environment and flora and fauna of our area, as well as updates on our bush regeneration projects, nature walks and so on. Anyone interested in the bushland of Bankstown and the Georges River is welcome to like our page.

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 (see front cover). 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.

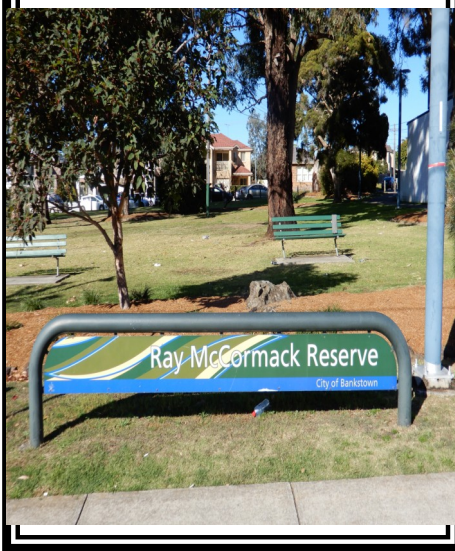
MEMBERSHIP for 2018

Thanks to all members for your much valued support. Memberships are soon to fall due for the calendar year 2018. For payment methods please see the back of the Bulletin. Best wishes for the summer season.

**SAVE
Ray McCormack
Reserve, Revesby**

**Please take a minute to
sign our online petition to
save Ray McCormack
Reserve at Revesby:**

**[https://www.change.org/
p/nsw-minister-for-
planning-the-hon-
anthony-roberts-save-ray](https://www.change.org/p/nsw-minister-for-planning-the-hon-anthony-roberts-save-ray)**



**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**

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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**

