

THE BUSHLAND BULLETIN[©]



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GOOD NEWS FOR WONGA SMITH'S BUSH

We have received very good news regarding the future of Wonga Smith's Bush at Western Sydney University, Milperra. In response to our letter of last December, Mr. Bill Parasiris, Director, Estate and Commercial Division of Finance & Resources of UWS, had this to say:

"We acknowledge the University's previous commitment to retain the area. As part of our due diligence and planning, the University has recently commissioned an up-

dated ecological assessment of the site. Our studies support that this area is ecologically significant and should be retained. The University will preserve this area and we will be seeking to dedicate the land to the Canterbury-Bankstown Council for ongoing management. This request will be considered by Council as part of their overall assessment of any future proposal." (2-2-2018).

The response we received from the Mayor simply points out:

"as you are aware, are strict legislative controls applying to the protection of the Cumberland Plain Woodland, in accordance with the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016. Needless to say, Council would expect any potential future plans submitted by Western Sydney University, for the re-development of its Milperra campus, to be informed by those controls."

Overall, the future is looking good for this beautiful bushland.



QUESTIONS ABOUT RIVERLANDS

by Col Gibson

“The development of Riverlands Golf Course has been a perennial threat to the peaceful lives of the residents of Milperra west of Henry Lawson Drive for over 30 years. Repeated submissions for development application have all failed to meet environmental requirements due to insufficient, inadequate and/or inaccurate environmental studies. Ample documentation has been provided to council regarding the short fallings of the environmental assessment undertaken and their disregard for real potential environmental impacts. The residents of Milperra are sick and tired of Council pandering to a greedy developer from outside the area.” David James, ecologist.

In **June 2015** Council voted to submit a rezoning plan for the site to the Department of Planning that would have seen part of the site rezoned from Zone R2 Low Density Residential to Zone E3 Environmental Management. Two elected councillors were forced to leave the meeting due to vexatious actions by the Proponent, but the Proponent’s legal representative and ecological consultant were present to support the vote for E3 with speeches to the meeting.

In **December 2015** the Dept. Planning & Environment wrote to the Society informing it that it in its opinion Council’s application “reflects the

sensitivity of the site and the importance of using a strategic planning approach whereby some appropriate residential development can enable environmental outcomes to be achieved.” (Brett Whitworth, Acting Executive Director, Regions Planning Services NSW Planning & Environment to BBS 3-12-2015).

Then, in **February 2016**, before the Department made any ruling on the proposed rezoning the Proponent lodged a DA to clear all trees and do a year of earthworks on the site in preparation for a future housing project. This was totally inconsistent with his earlier support for the rezoning strictions attached to E3. Subsequently, in the amendments to the Bankstown Local Environment Plan 2015 notified in **October 2016**, the Department rezoned the land R2 on the grounds that it was “*consistent with the zone that was publicly exhibited.*” (Ashley Albury, Acting Executive Director, Regions Planning Services NSW Planning & Environment to BBS 7-11-2016).

The Department had not received any new information, so why did it change its mind about E3? Why does the Developer’s DA submitted in February seem to preempt the Department’s decision? And how is Residential zoning consistent with the proposal for E3 that was publicly displayed? In the Department’s letter of 2015 it was stated that Council’s decision had been based on “*advice from the Office of Environment and Heritage about the maximum retention and long term protection of habitat*

trees.” (see Whitworth letter), and yet less than a year later this was out the door. The Department’s rejection of Council’s E3 application was made when there was no elected Council to react to it. How convenient.

A new Council was elected in **September 2017** and a new DA notified the following February, this one including something that had never been raised in the Planning Proposals presented for public comment—a new road (the extension of Keys Parade) passing along the adjoining riverflat before turning east to enter the development site. This road will have a devastating impact on the floodplain and Endangered wetlands and may explain why the Biodiversity Area Protection Measures applied to the riverflat wetlands identified in the August 2013 Planning Proposal were deleted in the PP of June 2015 and reapplied to a 20 metre strip of river foreshore. Could this be because the protection measures for the internal wetlands were in the way of a potential access road? It is impossible to think that Council did not know this proposed access along the riverflat was being considered before 2018.

On reason that Council has said nothing about this might be because it was admonished in 2006 by the Dept Environment and Heritage for proposing an access road to the development through Deepwater Park. That’s how much Council cared about
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the integrity of Deepwater Park. Keeping the extension of Keys Pde along the riverflat out of the Planning Proposals kept it away from scrutiny until after rezoning, leaving it to the Developer to toss it up in his latest DA before the public got wind of it.

Noting that there is a road easement extending Keys Pde to the east of the riverflat wetlands, BBS drew attention to it in its submission out of concern for potential impacts on bushland and wetlands if it was to become an access road: *"The extension of the road through this easement will have unavoidable and devastating impacts on this important vegetation. Nowhere in the Planning Proposal is there any mention of this, nor is there any consideration given to the revocation of the road easement, which is absolutely essential to protecting this rare bushland remnant. Other areas of biodiversity value identified on the western side of the golf course and at the back of Martin Crescent [the riverflat wetlands] will also be directly impacted by construction of the proposed connecting road network."*

Council's response in its Submissions Report of June 2015 was as follows: *"No change to the planning proposal is proposed. Reason: The design stage of Keys Parade would consider this issue."* In this manner the critical issue of the riverflat and its wetlands was brushed aside as of no consequence to the development and rezoning.

**Moorebank Intermodal:
A battle won but the War
still rages**
*by Jenny French (RAID,
Moorebank).*

RAID [Residents Against Intermodal Development] has secured major conditions to be placed on a project already approved by NSW Planners; conditions won in the Land and Environment Court through an action against the Minister for Planning and Intermodal developers Qube Holdings. Without this action the community would not have achieved any concessions at all. Two primary issues of biodiversity and noise were the subject of conditions sought. While the judgement was handed down in March, with the initial project approval standing, the final conditions are to be confirmed by the Department of Planning and Environment and will be provided in seven days. RAID launched the Merits Appeal in the Land and Environment court represented by EDO NSW in an attempt to deal with some of the most destructive aspects of the Moorebank Intermodal Terminal, a vast industrial complex which is to be placed in the heart of South West Sydney. RAID's action set out to protect a critically endangered ancient plant species thought to be extinct for almost 200 years; to raise the issue of excessive industrial noise; and to ask the Land and Environment Court to undertake a full reconsideration of the approval of the large industrial shipping container facility on the Georges River at Moorebank, within Liverpool City. The critically endangered

Hibbertia fumana, thought to be extinct but recently rediscovered in the area of the development, wasn't considered by the Planning and Assessment Commission when Stage 1 of the development was approved in December 2016.

Final conditions have been released for the RAID v Qube court case in the NSW Land and Environment Court, and it is clear that this was a fight worth having. EDO NSW delivered a strong result for the Liverpool community, working with RAID through a gruelling court process involving two appeals on technical grounds by Qube. Land and Environment Court Senior Commissioner Susan Dixon said in the Court judgment: *"I am satisfied that RAID through this litigation has achieved a more stringent set of conditions which respond to many of the concerns raised by the lay witnesses and the expert evidence as it presently stands."*

The conditions set by the court fall into several areas:

Biodiversity gains:

Qube have to prepare and implement a survey plan for *Hibbertia* species to identify how any endangered plants there are within the rail corridor and ensure an appropriate offset for any impacted plants. Qube have to remove the disused rail spur on the offset "boot" land on the site and have to rehabilitate that land. Within two months of completing that rehabilitation process, they have to amend the biobanking agreement to include the rehabilitated area (the disused rail line). Qube have to consider translocating any threatened flora species they find in development

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Noise gains:

Qube must prepare and implement a container noise barrier management plan, which has to achieve a specified noise reduction level so that it complies with the EPA's industrial noise policy. Actual noise levels for compliance are contained within the conditions. If those noise levels aren't being complied with, then an acoustic expert has to amend the management actions required by the plan so there is compliance. The plan has to be submitted to the secretary of the Planning Department a month before the facility starts.

Qube has to have continuous "angle of attack" noise monitoring on the curved spur line into the facility to check for noise, including "wheel squeal." The results have to be accessible on a website maintained by Qube within 24 hours. There also has to be a night time noise survey at Glenfield Farm, which is considered to be a representative location for the area, to check if there are exceedances of approved noise levels of more than 2 decibels for more than 30 of the nights surveyed are occurring. The effect of this is that if the trigger level is exceeded, Qube must construct a noise barrier within 12 months to prevent future exceedances.

Air quality gains:

Air quality monitoring requirements have been strengthened and Qube must outline how it will respond to air quality complaints. A plan

including emissions measurements must be submitted to the Secretary of the Planning Department and must be published on Qube's website.

Despite our best efforts as a community group, with excellent legal support from EDO NSW and financial support from Liverpool City Council, the project remains a looming disaster for Liverpool and the wider area. It was our goal to stop the project going ahead, and that is still our goal. Massive problems remain. The prospect of tens of thousands of heavy trucks disabling our road network, which is already at capacity; the problems of diesel particulate pollution in our residential area; and further impacts on the environment, wildlife, and the Georges River, weigh heavily on local residents.

The Sydney Greener Places Draft Review

The State Government's draft Greener Places Policy in its present form is of concern to all who want to see urban parkland and bushland preserved and enhanced. The following comments on the draft have been received from *Save Our Parks, Trees and Wildlife*:

1. No targets, actions or how this will be measured or monitored included. Evidence based targets should be set and released as part of the public exhibition process, so that informed public input can be made.
2. The policy does not address the critical shortage of green space and inequity that already exists in cities such as

Sydney. This needs to be addressed.

3. Greater Sydney is projected to grow by one million people over the coming decade, with nearly a 60% increase in population by 2050. The draft plans by the Greater Sydney Commission show much of the growth will be facilitated through high growth precincts. Many of these areas already experience disadvantage in terms of open space and urban canopy cover; e.g. Bankstown to Sydenham (B2S) urban renewal corridor. As a minimum, evidence-based targets should be defined, with green space targets set alongside population and job growth targets, in order to ensure minimum standards are set and met, with additional public reserve/open space acquired to compensate for the increased density and loss of backyards and the like. In particular, linear corridors along the railway corridor as proposed for the B2S urban renewal corridor does not provide adequate and quality green space.

4. The recently introduced Biodiversity reforms is a major barrier to successfully implementing the policy as it fails to adequately recognise the loss of mature canopies and green space. Further, the rollout of many major infrastructure projects, and like for like offsetting does not address the loss of green space and urban canopy covers. This must be addressed.

5. Green rooftops and walls can reduce air pollution, have cooling properties and make for attractive vistas. They can also provide additional facilities for strata bodies. However, they provide limited habitats for

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insects and birds, do not mitigate flood risk, and have limited capacity in terms of being an adequate replacement for ground-level green space.

6. The expansion of the Codes SEPP is a major barrier to successfully implementing the policy. Likewise, SEPP 65 as it fails to ensure a minimal four hours of sunshine for green space survival, and/or sufficient setbacks to maintain deep soils. In doing so, it compromises the aim of achieving better green infrastructure outcomes. This must be addressed.

7. Crown land reform is seeing the commercialisation and potential sale of public assets. This requires urgent review to protect green infrastructure.

8. The Federal Government's Strategy for Nature is currently on public exhibition. Likewise, the Strategy fails to provide minimum standards and specific targets. Given the obvious interrelationship between the Policy and Strategy, both documents should be reviewed to ensure minimal provisions are set.

9. The concept of 'multi-functionality' does not recognise the need for passive recreation and environmental conservation benefits and relies on accessibility to green space vs setting minimum standards that provide equity and liveability, and are key considerations when considering high density growth projections for many parts of Sydney; e.g. the concept of shared green space is currently being considered for Rhodes East, whereby a new school is proposed to be funded effectively by the developer and built within a high rise complex, whereby the

developer would fund an access bridge to a local park used as a shared facility. This raises a number of issues, including equity and parity. Notwithstanding key challenges with the concept, the policy document should provide sufficient detail rather than relying upon subsequent documentation.

10. The delivery of the Green Grid 'incrementally over decades' fails to prioritise green infrastructure necessary to respond to rapid population growth. It also fails to adequately provide sufficient green space to address the 'urban heat' effect.

11. The proposed funding models are inadequate and rely on developer contributions; e.g. the recently exhibited Town Plan for Camellia relies on the developer contributions to deliver public space and green infrastructure via the Special Infrastructure Contributions Levy. This will see housing prices inflated and needs further evidence-based research prior to finalisation of any policy.

12. Large scale development projects are typically modified over time. Typically, however the approvals are not adjusted for green space; e.g. Central Park, Chippendale. In this case the project has undergone multiple modifications whereby the residential and visitor population doubled after the Concept Plan (no 2) was approved. Yet no additional green space was provided to offset the modifications that effectively more than doubled the residential population from 2,500 to over 5,000 people, with a significant increase in retail space and visitor attractions. As a consequence, the local area suffers from an acute shortage of

green space evidenced by the overuse of facilities and growing social issues. Likewise, the redevelopment of urban renewal corridors and growth corridors is likely to see the amount of open space per head of population substantially reduced, with a reliance on regional facilities rather ensuring sufficient green space is provided locally. In particular, the issue of equity and minimal green space provisions in high growth areas vs accessibility needs further review to address the growing equity divide. This should also include considerations in terms of access barriers, e.g. major roads and transport corridors. In addition, further consideration should be given to ensuring access within 200 metres of high density projects.

13. The concept of greenways is supported. However, this should not be trade-off for sufficient local green space.

14. Recent years has seen a decline in trust in government and frustration in terms of community consultation (vs participation). This needs to be considered as part and parcel of the policy, with minimum standards for green space identified up front before the population and job targets are set, otherwise green space objectives are compromised; e.g. the redevelopment of the Waterloo Estate is likely green space substantially reduced when compared with the historic local provision, and historic minimum standards used by the City of Sydney, i.e. 6.6 sqm per resident, with 6.0 sqm for Green Square.

In conclusion, the Policy requires considerable further work and should be re-exhibited for public input prior to being finalised.

Update on Yeramba

The Yeramba Lagoon environs at Picnic Point in Georges River National Park are home to a range of rare plant communities and over 500 species of native plants. Towards the end of last year work began on a habitat restoration project at Yeramba Lagoon where over \$500,000 of Federal funding secured by Member for Banks, David Coleman, is to be spent on Green Army tasks. Major objectives that are now well underway include removal of privet infestations in rare Swamp Woodland (*Eucalyptus robusta*) habitat at the head of the lagoon and treatment of infestation of *Ludwigia peruviana* in the bed of the lagoon itself.

Beginning in about 2010, *Ludwigia* spread rapidly across most of the lagoon, ruining it as habitat for many species including the range of native waterbirds which nested there. Given the extent of the infestation, physical removal by hand is not feasible and NPWS has informed us that *"Treatment of Ludwigia will include the use of bi-active herbicide (water safe) to increase the success of control... requirements include minimal application of herbicide over the water itself and application must be as direct to the plant as possible."* Very little in the way of native wetland species compete with *Ludwigia*, but there are still to be found viable thickets of native sedge scrub in pockets at the edges of the lagoon. Fortunately, *Ludwigia* does not invade these dense thickets from which it is hoped frogs and freshwater invertebrates will eventually recolonise the area.

Another issue being looked at is the potential for opening the weir under Henry Lawson Drive to restore saltwater tidal influx to the lower end of the lagoon which was cut off from the river in the 1960s. In regard to this, Deon Van Rensberg, Director, Greater Sydney NPWS informs us that *"NPWS is currently working with relevant stakeholders to secure significant funding to lead the Yeramba Lagoon restoration project that will run over the next few years. The project will involve modifications to the existing weir*

to restore tidal flows and significantly alter the ecology of the site back to a natural wetland/estuary... The project will include weed control and native plantings following the weir modifications to facilitate the native wetland/estuary restoration."

The Society is happy that the lagoon is now receiving the remediation it has for so long been in need of and acknowledges the parts played by David Coleman, the Green Army, NPWS and others in the process to setting things right.

www.localnewsplus.com.au

C-B Torch 21-2-2018



□ A weed removal team navigates the choking weeds of Yeramba Lagoon at Picnic Point.

Get \$500,000 to restore lagoon

By MICK ROBERTS

THE Herculean task of reversing years of neglect at Picnic Point's weed-infested Yeramba Lagoon, is underway after a massive \$500,000 Federal Government funding injection.

Environmental groups, the former Bankstown council and the Georges River Combined Councils' Committee have long campaigned for solutions to restore the lagoon.

Once a pristine estuarine habitat, the introduction of a weir in 1964 has turned the former tidal area, once flushed by saltwater, into a stagnant, weed infested freshwater wetland, where sediment from the surrounding catchment is trapped.

As a result, residents have endured a persistent odour problem, while fish have been cut off from a vital nursery habitat.

The lagoon's health came into the spotlight during the 2016 federal election campaign, when candidates in the Banks electorate promised solutions.

Almost two years on from the election, Federal MP for Banks, David Coleman, has



□ Federal MP David Coleman with the Green Army team.

secured over \$500,000 in funding to spend on improving the wetland.

In addition to a Federal Government Green Army Team, who have been removing invasive species surrounding the lagoon, a team of specialists have begun work on the surface of the estuary, to spray and remove invasive species.

The specialist team will work at the lagoon over the coming months.

In addition to weed removal, the funding will also restore the weir, which will allow salt water to once again flow and flush the wetland.

"It's great to see teams out on the water, removing the carpet of weeds which have grown in the lagoon after years of neglect," he said.

"For too long, Yeramba Lagoon has been in poor condition," Mr Coleman said.



**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 bushland regeneration projects, nature walks and such. Anyone interested in the Georges River and bushland generally is welcome to join our page.

**THE CREST of
BANKSTOWN
volunteer
BUSH REGEN MORNING
Saturday 19th May.
Join us in the shade of the
rare and beautiful
Turpentine Brushforest at
The Crest at Georges Hall.
Meet at 9.00am in the car
park in from the McClean
Street entrance. For
details contact Skye:
0411584295**



COMMON AND RARE PLANTS OF ROYAL NATIONAL PARK

**A presentation by
Sydney botanist
Alan Fairley,
Wednesday 7.30 pm,
June 20th**



**in the
Wal Browning Meeting
Room at Padstow
Progress Hall,
11 Ryan Road Padstow.**

**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
For enquiries please ring
Col on 97886232.**

BANKSTOWN BUSHLAND SOCIETY COMMITTEE for 2018

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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**

