

THE BUSHLAND BULLETIN[©]

No. 90, WINTER (July) 2019.



A publication of the Bankstown Bushland Society Incorporated
Reg. No. Y1557612

www.bankstownbushlandsociety.org

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A New Banksia for Bankstown *by Colin Gibson*

In May this year, Georges Hall resident, Karlo Taliana, at Picnic Point found a species of Banksia, Heath-leaved Banksia (*Banksia ericifolia*) not previously known to occur in the Canterbury-Bankstown Local Government Area. The species is very common south of the Georges River, so it has always seemed surprising that it could not be found on the north side of the river despite Robert Miller and I having our eyes out for it for many years.

Karlo found a single mature plant under power lines on the plateau above Yeramba Lagoon and reported it on a native plant identification page on Facebook. Seeing it there, I went to look for it and found it, along with a smaller plant close by. Both had new flower cones and old cones with seed in them.

This Banksia is in an area that was slashed under powerlines in about the mid-1990s, which was when Robert and I last looked closely at the particular site,

which might explain why it was not then seen by us. Since then the bushes have grown back. *Banksia ericifolia* is very common in the Blue Mountains and on coastal heaths, so its presence at Picnic Point is probably at the limit of its range. This is now the sixth species of

Banksia known to occur in the area, the others being: *integrifolia*, *marginata*, *oblongifolia*, *serrata* and *spinulosa*. For the record, *Banksia ericifolia* was originally collected at Botany Bay in 1770 by Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander. #



Banksia ericifolia found recently in bushland at Picnic Point



Bushland Zoned Industrial at Chullora

Environmental Zoning Needed for Bushland in Canterbury-Bankstown

by Colin Gibson

In February the Society receive a letter from Canterbury-Bankstown Council informing us of the current status of the Local Area Plans that in July 2018 Council decided not to proceed with. The Society's chief concerns about the discontinued LAPs were largely based around the proposed selling of parks and the lack of undertakings given for the security of particular parks (notably Ray MacCormack Reserve) which were subject to proposed rezonings. As Council will continue to develop new planning controls over the coming years, we have written in anticipation of this to put on the table a couple of key issues.

Currently there are no areas zoned Environmental in the area, and the only place Council has ever applied for Environmental zoning, Riverlands, was refused in favour of Residential by the Minister for Planning. Some

councils (see extract of letter by Local Government NSW following this article) are actively pursuing Environmental zoning for deserving sites in their Local Environment Plans; however, presently, CBC is not one of them. In our submissions we referred to the suitability of Environmental zoning for government-owned bushland in the former Chullora Railway Yards and also at the University Western Sydney campus, Milperra. In putting this forward we note that Council did not respond or give the matter any apparent consideration.

In the case of Chullora, I refer to the Chullora (Freshwater Creek) Wetlands which the Society played a critical role in negotiating for back in 1998, and the Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark remnant usually referred to as Muston Site 3, for which, in 1999, a meeting of Bankstown Council unanimously agreed to acquire from the then owner, State Rail. The Society was thereafter engaged in negotiations with Council, State Rail and various politicians including Craig Knowles, for

several years up until Council walked away from the deal in 2006 without providing an explanation.

The Chullora bushland has been the subject of numerous botanical studies. The Society, in the period 1993 – 1998, did a lot of bush regeneration work at Muston Sites 2 and 3 funded to the tune of \$51,000 contributed by various government agencies. To this we added a considerable volunteer contribution. The adjoining Muston Site 2 also received a separate \$40,000 worth of funding as an outcome of the National Rail Corp expansion of its Chullora facility.

In the case of the Chullora Wetlands (recently renamed Yana Badu Wetlands), this site was designed by a specialist wetlands ecologist with input from the Society and managed for more than a decade by another Community Group, South West Enviro Centre in conjunction with Sydney Water. This important wetland sits almost at the head of the Cooks River and regularly tests for the cleanest water in the catchment. How appropriate is it that that these areas, including the wetland, remain zoned Industrial? How does Industrial zoning offer these places any long term security for the their recognised ecological and hydrological values?

The case with Wonga Smith's Bush at UWS is similar in that we received no response from Council to our suggestion that Environmental zoning would be more appropriate than Educational Facilities. The owner of this site (UWS) has written to

(continued next page)

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us informing of its intention to have the land protected and handed over to Canterbury-Bankstown Council. UWS hopes for this to be an outcome of the forthcoming approval process for the redevelopment of the Milperra campus. We have also found that in 1974 the Education Department set the bushland aside as a flora and fauna park. Council can help here by zoning it Environmental.

There are other natural areas in Canterbury-Bankstown worthy of Environmental zoning, such as Lansdowne, The Crest, Carysfield Park, Deepwater Park and Norfolk Reserve, Marion Reserve, Airport Reserve and Ashford Reserve, all of which are classified as open space. In its Fairfield Local Environment Plan 2013, Fairfield City Council designated its major riparian zones Environmental. As worthy of this zoning as Fairfield's watercourses are, much of the remnant bushland in Canterbury-Bankstown listed above contains more Endangered Ecological Communities, more Threatened Species and is much less compromised by invasive weeds.

#

**Extract from a letter by
Local Government New
South Wales (Cr. Linda
Scott) to the Nature
Conservation Council
(Prof. Don White) 4-3-2019**

Local Government New South Wales (LGNSW) supports increasing urban tree canopy and preventing any further urban vegetation loss. Many councils have developed plans to identify

their urban tree canopy to inform strategic planning decisions and priority areas for re-establishment of urban tree canopy. The NSW Government currently has the Five Million Trees Program which is focussed on assisting councils with grants to undertake tree planting in the Sydney region. More information on this program is available at www.5milliontrees.nsw.gov.au

Councils are also in the process of developing Local Strategic Planning Statements required since recent amendments to the Environmental Planning Assessment Act 1979. This will require councils to prepare a 20 year strategic vision for local land use in their area. The plans will include a description of current urban tree canopy cover in each LGA which will be prepared using data provided to councils by the Office of Environment and Heritage. These plans will assist in a more strategic approach to the management, protection and replacement of urban tree canopy.

With regards to the use of E5 zones for environment protection of public land, some councils have shown an interest in applying this zone in their Local Environment Plans. We should be interested in further discussions on the use of this zone.

The LGNSW Conference in October 2018 agreed to a number of resolutions which may be of interest to the NCC. We seek the support from your organisation on these positions where they align with your organisations views. These include:

- Vegetation protection: That Local Government NSW calls on the NSW Government to review current legislative arrangements and support available to local government for regulating vegetation in urban and environmental areas, and to consider preparing a Vegetation Act in consultation with local government to support this policy priority.

- That Local Government NSW requests the NSW Government to review the provisions for cat management and control under the Local Government Act 1993, the Companion Animals Act 1998 and associated Regulations including enabling councils to effectively manage the nuisance effects of cats on residents and wildlife.

- Review of the 10/50 Vegetation Clearing Scheme: That Local Government NSW calls on the NSW Government to undertake a formal review of the 10/50 Clearing Scheme including an assessment of the effectiveness of the entitlement areas in reducing bushfire hazard to people and property; an assessment of the impacts of the introduction of the 10/50 Vegetation Clearing Code on tree canopy cover in entitlement areas; an appraisal of reducing the entitlement area noting the implications of reduced canopy cover; and any unintended/unforeseen consequences on vegetation resulting from the introduction of the scheme.

#

Comment on the Georges River Draft Open Space Recreation and Community Facilities Strategy

by Kathryn Kelsey, 7-4-2019.

My main points are all based on respect for the natural environment and green space, and the very important role they play in our health and well-being. They require that council also see and place this as a priority. The main points are that:

- * we need more of BOTH green space AND sporting fields, not either or less.

- * this could be achieved by purchasing land in high density, low green-space locations, as the property becomes available for purchase, for the purpose of conversion to small community green space parks, gardens and playgrounds scattered equitably throughout the area. Compulsory acquisition is not recommended.

- * a report called "St George Football Association Sporting Fields State Of Play" (noted from here as the "State of Play Report"), which makes recommendations about improving grass resilience on recommendations about improving grass resilience on Georges River area sports fields through better green-keeping practices, should be considered in the Draft Strategy, made available to councillors, and included in decision making about current and future proposals for sports fields.

- * the State of Play Report and other qualified recommendations to improve the quality of green

natural grass fields should be trialled first for at least a full year, and fully reviewed at the end of this term, before considering artificial turf on any sports fields in the Georges River area.

- * in the light of this new information, fields currently earmarked for artificial turf (Penshurst, Poulton and Peakhurst Parks) should be reconsidered for natural grass.

- * small green parks should be included in the considerations of the Draft OSRCF Strategy, and where applicable be rezoned as recreational space, so that as much existing green space as possible can be retained.

- * the surface and content of these small parks should be rehabilitated and improved according to best practice for green spaces, with appropriate

grass stock, soil preparation, and planting of shrubs, flowering plants and trees (preferably of Australian natives that are endemic to the area).

- * the community can be invited to assist with tending to urban green spaces and gardens, in a similar way to how council-led volunteer bush-care teams have been set up.

- * councils or sporting groups should contribute to providing new natural grass spaces when they take away natural community parks by covering them with artificial turf playing fields.

Georges River Council should actively resist State government demands to increase population and density in the Georges River area, at least until adequate green space is found and ready to accommodate these changes. #



BBS stall at Panania Harvest Festival, Panania Public School, in May

Mass Felling of Trees at Milperra in 2016

by Concerned Citizens

It is estimated that somewhere in excess of 1,000 trees were illegally felled on the floodplain at Riverlands, Milperra, between February 22 and June 28, 2016. The majority of these felled trees were located on the flood plain on the eastern bank of the Georges River. These trees formed part of an important riparian vegetation community described as Sydney Coastal River Flat Forest.

The tree species felled are mainly Swamp Oak (*Casuarina glauca*), Blue Box (*Eucalyptus baueriana*) and Cabbage Gum (*Eucalyptus amplifolia*). Many of these trees had stump diameters in excess of 300 mm and have adorned the river corridor for many years.

Entire creek lines of trees and extensive areas of riparian vegetation have been clear felled. The total amount of trees felled would appear to be substantially more than the number of trees on the former golf course site, those which the community has fought so hard to preserve.

There can be no justification for what has taken place here, especially when it is taken into account that the owner of the land has entered into a Voluntary Planning Agreement with council to protect the creek and river frontage on his property. Regrettably, it appears that the trees cut down are located outside the zones covered by the VPA.

The VPA was recently renegotiated and signed by the parties in June, but still provides

no protection for most of the remaining trees on the floodplain including the extensive Swamp Oak Floodplain Forest listed as Endangered under the Federal Government's Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Act.

This issue was originally reported to Council and to the Office of Environment and Heritage in August 2016. We have recently asked for what action was taken. OEH has informed us that an "appropriate

regulatory response" was made, but due to a privacy clause it cannot disclose exactly what that was.

Fines apply for cutting even a single tree down without authorisation, but we have no way of knowing whether any fines were applied in this case. This issue naturally arouses concerns about the remaining trees and wetlands at Riverlands.

#



Blue Box felled in 2016 on the riverflat at Milperra

**Call for a Georges River
Nature Reserve
(Appeal to the Independent
Planning Commission re
Moorebank Intermodal)**
by Ian Bailey, 25-6-2019.

For over 12 years now we have written, inspected and talked about this proposal in the suburb of Moorebank. On each occasion we make the same initial statement: *It is the wrong type of development in the wrong place.*

The area bounded by Moorebank Ave and the Georges River then looking east toward Bankstown is a Virtual Island. The suburb is already almost inaccessible and all traffic, north, south and from the west must find a way through the maze. Add a huge container terminal and the district will become impassable.

A dozen or more issues have been thoroughly researched and advanced to the Commission. Issues such as air pollution and the health of residents, impossible traffic movements, a huge gift of land and proposed

infrastructure such as bridges and rail lines given away to private enterprise, the start of Badgerys Creek Airport making Moorebank a distant logistics problem and now we read that bulk container shippers are likely to move goods from Brisbane to Melbourne on the west side of the Great Divide.

The Moorebank Intermodal is looking more like a white elephant every day. The most serious question however is how much damage will there be to wildlife if this proposal is completed? Already we know that the Liverpool LGA has now only 6% of the original bush at the time of white settlement. The native bushland here contains not only rare plants (eg. *Hibbertia fumana*) but old-growth trees with hollows. Many native mammals and birds rely on hollows which take a minimum of 150 years to develop.

Most critically, we believe there is a remnant population, up to 1000 individuals, of the Koala. This colony reaches to the

woodlands of Wollondilly and is thought to be healthy. If we were to lose any part of this colony it would represent a tragedy of major proportions. A unique and widely loved animal that can never be replaced. Thousands of tourists come to Australia each year to see Koalas and other unique fauna.

Badgerys Creek Airport with a planned passenger traffic of 80 million in 40 years, almost complete loss of bushland in the region, nothing to show our visitors? Many alternate land-use ideas for the Moorebank land have been offered. However, a substantial Nature Reserve protecting what we have left of Australian wildlife which will be quiet, provide cleaner air and carbon sequestration and a filter to a fresh-water stretch of the Georges River, can be ours forever. Sustainable and nurturing.

Will the Commission please consider very carefully what it is we will lose if this proposal is completed? #



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

ELECTRONIC BULLETINS

The Bushland Bulletin is available to subscribers in hard copy or digital form or both. To obtain a digital copy all you have to do is send your email address to the Editor (see front cover).

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 ring Col on 97886232.**

**RALLY
FOR RIVERLANDS**
Saturday 27th July, 12 noon
at
Prescot Parade, Milperra.
For information contact Skye
on 0411584295.



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**BUSHWALK at
YERAMBA LAGOON,
PICNIC POINT**
to be led by local ecologist,
Colin Gibson.
Meet at end of
Amberdale Avenue at
Picnic Point. 9.30am to 12
noon, Sunday 11th August.



**BANKSTOWN
BUSHLAND
SOCIETY
COMMITTEE for 2019**

President:

Skye Virgin
0411584295

Vice President:

Brian Shaw

Secretary:

Colin Gibson:
9788 6232

Assistant Secretary:

Skye Virgin:
0411584295

Treasurer:

John Gibson:
9772 3549

Committee Members:

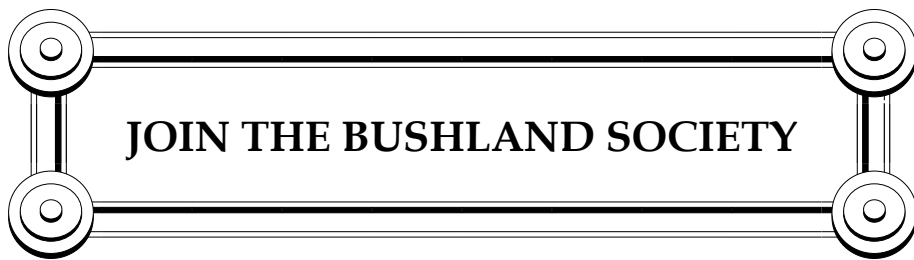
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Bushland Bulletin

Editor:

Colin Gibson

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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.



I wish to join

Bankstown Bushland Society Inc:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____ Postcode _____

Telephone No. _____

Email: _____

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**

