

THE BUSHLAND BULLETIN[©]

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Riverlands and the Bankstown Local Environmental Plan

Mirvac's plan for Riverlands is in breach the following clauses of the Bankstown Local Environment Plan 2015, 1.2 Aims of the Plan (2).

Clause b): to protect and enhance the landform and vegetation, especially foreshores and bushland, in a way that maintains the biodiversity values and landscape amenities of Bankstown.

The Voluntary Planning

Agreement and procedural subdivision breach this clause as they facilitate the destruction of hundreds of native trees, modifications to remnant natural wetlands and wildlife habitat, introduce fill to parts of the floodplain and pave the way for intrusions into foreshore mangrove and Swamp Oak Forest. All this in an area recognised by Canterbury-Bankstown Council as a core wildlife corridor in its Biodiversity Management Plan.

Clause c): to protect the natural, cultural and built heritage of Bankstown.

This clause is an undertaking to the people of Bankstown to protect the natural heritage, not destroy it as Mirvac's plan will do. Recently the Society was reassured by the Mayor "as I have previously said to the BBA, [BBS] the City of Canterbury-Bankstown is committed to protecting our native trees." (Mayor Khal Asfour to BBS 2-2-2018). (Cont. page 2)



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Council approves the procedural subdivision this undertaking will mean very little.

Clause e): to minimise the risk to the community in areas subject to environmental hazards by restricting development in sensitive areas.

As the floods of February 2020 reminded everyone, Riverlands is in a floodplain hazard zone. The development includes a new road on the floodplain below the 1:100-year flood level that presents unacceptable risks to the community. The road will require massive amounts of fill which will cause irreparable damage to the floodplain's natural drainage system and associated wetlands.

Filling the floodplain for roads and other developments should not be permitted. This essentially was the advice given by the Moorebank-Milperra Floodway Study for the City of Bankstown by the NSW Public Works Department in September 1983: *"The Moorebank-Milperra Floodway is a major flood risk area and is arguably one of the worst floodways in the State. In view of the extent of current development in the area a major flood could be expected to cause extensive property damage and to endanger lives."* In light of this advice it would be irresponsible for Council to continue to approve road and associated infrastructure on the floodplain and adjacent areas.

Clause j): to concentrate intensive trip-generating activities in locations most accessible to rail transport to reduce car dependence and to limit the potential for additional

traffic in the road network.

Riverlands is three kilometres from the nearest rail hub at East Hills Station; Bankstown Station is three times as far. This is a development that will have the opposite effect to the one espoused in this clause.

Clause k): to consider the cumulative impact of the development on the natural environment and waterways and on the capacity of infrastructure and the road network.

This clause was designed as a protection against the wholesale destruction of hundreds of native trees and the fragmentation of wildlife corridors as caused by development proposals of this very type. This clause was intended to guide Council in safeguarding sensitive wetlands and natural floodwater drainage processes and to prevent inappropriate planning that throws large numbers of extra vehicles onto local road networks not designed for them. If Council abides by this clause and considers the cumulative impacts on the environment it will reject the DA.

Clause l): to enhance the quality of life and the social well-being and amenity of the community.

The best qualified to decide this are the people of the community, particularly the people of Milperra who have been opposing inappropriate development and environmental destruction for decades. The majority of people in Milperra have let it long be known they do not want to be hemmed in by a new residential zone between

their settlement and the river. They are well aware they live close to a floodwater hazard zone, and that creating a new residential zone within it only increases the hazard for them.

#

Environmental Protection Zones for Endangered Ecological Communities *by Col Gibson*

The Consolidated Canterbury-Bankstown Local Environmental Plan March 2020 bears many similarities to the preceding Local Area Plans, particularly with regard to proposed building heights and zonings, that Council decided after considerable public pressure not to proceed with in July 2018. The State Government has since compelled Council to resume the process.

The Society has throughout the LAP and Consolidated LEP formulation process requested Council to consider Environmental Protection zoning for its significant bushland areas, but a look at the online map identifying zoning in the LGA shows not a single EP zone on land Council either owns or is responsible for, and this despite substantial bushland areas containing Endangered Ecological Communities as at Lansdowne Reserve, Carysfield Park, The Crest of Bankstown and Deepwater Park. A significant part of Lansdowne is now a designated Biobanking Reserve but not even that is being considered for EP zoning.

Environmental Protection zones offer the strongest protection for ecologically significant areas,

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and yet, despite past recommendations, there are no EP zones in Bankstown. In 2007 Council received the following advice from the Department of Environment and Climate Change about Deepwater Park: *“DECC notes that Council’s Biodiversity Strategy has identified Deepwater Reserve as environmentally significant and that it should be zoned to Environmental Protection (Conservation) to reflect the value of the land and to ensure that it is managed primarily for environmental purposes.”* Council took no action.

The intended outcomes of the Consolidated LEP include protecting areas of high biodiversity significance [1.1 (2h)] and restricting development in sensitive areas [1.1(2k)], which is in keeping with the

State Government’s Greater Sydney Region Plan (Objective 27) and South District Plan (Planning Priority S14) regarding protecting and enhancing bushland *“to protect areas of high biodiversity significance and the ecological processes necessary for their continued existence.”*

But Council’s means of achieving this does not involve Environmental zoning; instead, it relies on Biodiversity Clause 6.5 in the Consolidated LEP relevant to terrestrial and riparian biodiversity assessment. This clause is not a bad thing in itself, but the difference between EP zoning and Clause 6.5 is that the former discourages potentially destructive Development Applications from being submitted, whereas Clause 6.5 does not, and it requires only that the consent authority

consider measures to “avoid, minimise or mitigate” adverse impacts of development proposals. This keeps open the door for developments on open space bushland zoned RE1, such as roads, bicycle ways, restaurants, day care centres, adventure playgrounds, sports fields and associated facilities, which is fine for most parks but not for Endangered Ecological Communities.

Clause 6.5 is useful, but Environmental Protection zoning is tailored to give a higher level of protection for areas of exceptional ecological biodiversity. No one denies we have such areas; it is a pity then that Council seems to want to keep potentially destructive development options open for them.

#



**Extract from
“Green Bans and Urban
Environmentalism”**

**by Jack Munday (in “Protest!
environmental activism in
NSW 1968 – 1998”, Historic
Houses Trust of New South
Wales, 1999).**

In 1971, thirteen women in the established and historic suburb of Hunters Hill were leading a valiant fight to save an area of bushland, the last of its kind on the Parramatta River. The bush area in question was to have been developed for housing. The NSW State Government, led by the developer-friendly Sir Robert Askin, ignored the protests of these women who called

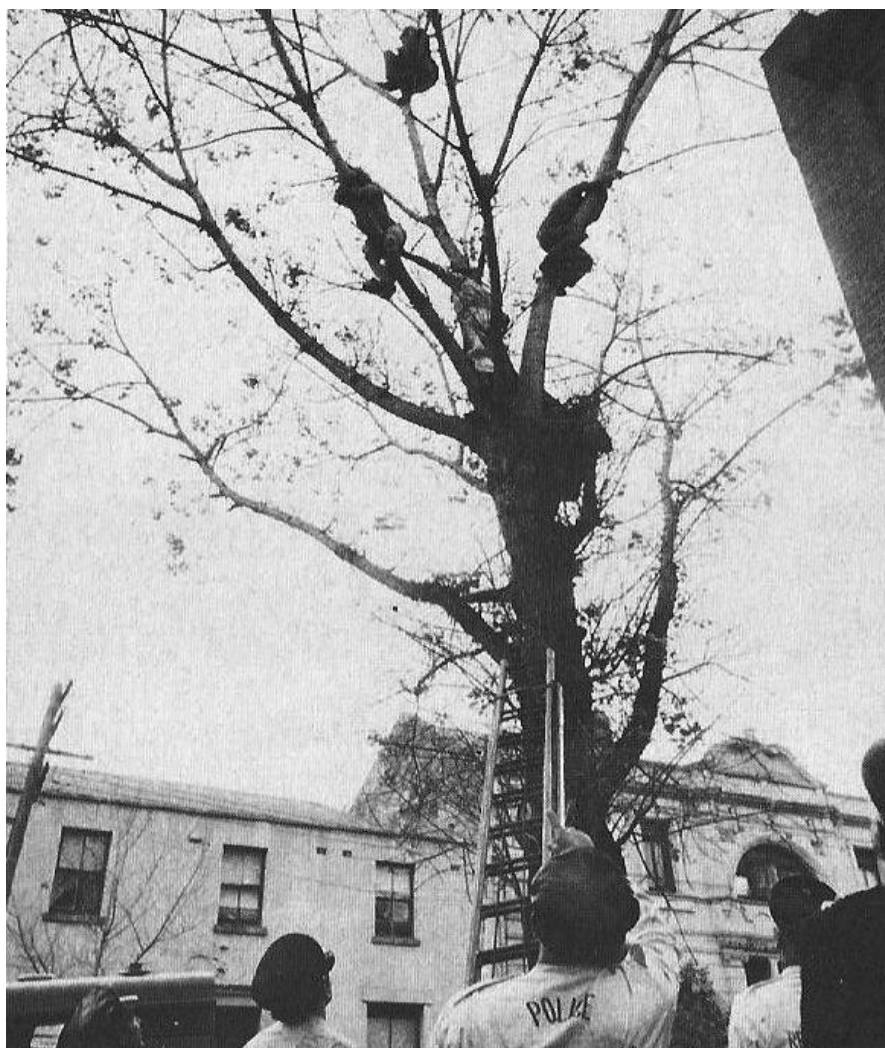
themselves ‘The Battlers for Kelly’s Bush’. The Battlers

approached the Builders Labourers’ Federation forming an ‘unholy’ alliance which cut right across socio-economic interests, linking the upper and middle classes with the very working class members of the Builders Labourers’ union. The alliance highlighted the fact that environmental concerns went way beyond the narrow, sectional interests of any one class alone.

Previous trade union bans on work at particular sites were known as ‘Black Bans’ and were usually used to win improvements in wages or to oppose specific policies regarded as non-progressive, such as apartheid and the Springbok tour of 1968. The term ‘Green Ban’ was deemed a more apt way of describing an exciting new phenomenon where union bans

were imposed in support of the environmental considerations. The Green Bans movement that ensued led to the birth of a new and pro-active style of urban environmentalism and came to capture the imagination of forward thinking people in Australia and beyond.

Between 1971 and 1975 at the request of citizens, the Union ‘Green Banned’ 43 large and small projects. Over \$3,000 million worth of development was stopped. The National Trust estimated that dozens of historical and architecturally significant buildings in New South Wales were saved by the bans. At the same time, the Union pressured the Askin Government for legislation to prevent the destruction of heritage buildings.



The enlightened leadership of the NSW Builders Labourers’ Federation imposed bans only after being approached by community groups and carefully weighing up public support for the issue. The Union followed the practise of requiring a public meeting before it would seek endorsement from the membership for a ban. In this way, the Union countered the claim that the leadership manipulated the rank and file members. In imposing such bans, the Union filled a vacuum because at that time there were no avenues for public participation in the planning process, nor were their laws to prevent the demolition of historic buildings or to prevent classified buildings from being demolished regardless of their historic or heritage value. Unprecedented development pressures meant

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that many people became uneasy about the loss of their heritage.

The extra parliamentary actions of the NSW Builders Labourers' Federation, together with the Resident Action Groups (RAGS) and growing public support for their goals, led the Wran Government to introduce a series of conservation and planning Acts throughout the 1970s and to establish the Land and Environment Court in 1979. The controversial Green Ban actions were the catalyst which brought these changes and public participation in the decision making process took a vital step forward.

At the heart of the Green Ban movement was a desire to empower people to have a greater say in society. The Union pushed for ecologically sustainable development (ESD). It argued that economics should not dominate ecology and that labour, as far as possible, should be used to achieve a socially beneficial purpose. This philosophy is more than ever justified and relevant in the present climate where despite the enormous technological changes and gigantic productivity gains of recent decades, workers in work are working longer hours while over a million Australians are unemployed and the gap between rich and poor is widening. The problems and negative aspects associated with Globalisation call for Government intervention and for environmental, labour and consumer rights to be protected and enshrined in strong laws.

#

Independent Review of the Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

The second independent review of the EPBC Act commenced on 29 October 2019 and is led by Professor Graeme Samuel AC, supported by a panel of experts. The Society has made a submission pointing out that huge amounts of habitat are still being destroyed – 7.7 million hectares of threatened species habitat has been destroyed since the Act came into law. Australia is a global deforestation hotspot – a disgrace for a developed nation.

Our emissions are rising and not enough action on climate change is being undertaken. There have been constant budget cuts to Federal Environment Departments – lip service is paid to environmental protection. Plastic is having devastating effect in our oceans but there are no Federal laws to regulate plastic use. Even RAMSAR wetlands (internationally listed sites for bird conservation) are

not actually being protected Federally.

The Society has asked that the EPBC Act be improved; that national protections for water resources, soil conservation and National Parks be strengthened; that land clearing be reduced by strict controls enforced by the EPBC Act; that incentives for land managers be made available to restore natural ecosystems on their land and that funding of Federal Environment Departments to implement the Act be improved. The Society also believes that more on-the-ground jobs based around environmental protection and enhancement should be created.

Protection of the environment should be taken out of the political arena. The EPBC Act also needs to address climate change as there is currently no mention of climate change in the Act. The work of volunteer organisations should be backed up by providing funding for the above and making the EPBC Act work on a nationwide level.

#



Moorebank Intermodal Update

The Society is supporting RAID, Liverpool Action Group and others in opposing the Moorebank Intermodal Precinct West- Stage 3 Development Application. **Ian Bailey** outlines the following objections submitted to the Minister for Planning:

Establishment of a works compound: The entire site has long been known as a complex habitat for native flora and fauna including Threatened and Endangered species such as the koala. Any and all clearing will put extreme pressure on this remnant woodland and riverine floodplain.

Proposed earthworks, such as roads, utilities installation, stormwater and drainage, signage and landscaping mean that more of the native ecosystems will be lost permanently.

Progressive subdivision of the MPW site is obviously going to cause additional destruction to the woodlands as trees are removed as being close to a site boundary and buildings constructed.

Import of approximately 820,000m³ of Fill is the worst aspect of this abhorrent proposal. The entire area of Moorebank, Wattle Grove, Holsworthy and Milperra, as well as floodplains in the Canterbury-Bankstown LGA, will suffer flood-water displacement during the times of major flooding. We already know that catchment runoffs of flood water are exceeding speed-of-collection and volumes like have never been seen before. Already sites along the sweeping bend of the Georges River, which almost completely surrounds the MPW site as an 'island', are overloaded with imported fill which should never have happened. People who have invested in homes in this region would never have thought such threats to their safety and property values would occur. It is a planning travesty.

The above is prompted only by conditions advertised in the Development Application. During the past 10 years, we have protested about other great disadvantages to Liverpool such as air pollution, traffic chaos, noise and total unsuitability of the site for this purpose. All the above issues have worsened as time passes and we believe it is now likely that the Container Intermodal will be a commercial 'White Elephant'.

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

BBS Facebook provides the opportunity 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 its bushland is welcome.

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.

**NOTE: HALL MEETINGS
SUSPENDED UNTIL
FUTHER NOTICE DUE TO
CORONAVIRUS.**

**Further enquiries ring Col or
Skye.**

Bush Regeneration

**at Yeramba Lagoon,
Saturday 18th July.
Meet 10am at end of
Amberdale Avenue,
Picnic Point. Contact
Skye on 0411584295.**



Preliminary Notice

**An NPWS Yeramba
Lagoon Restoration
Project Information
Day is presently
scheduled for Saturday
1st August.**

**A walk around the
lagoon is to follow the
presentation. For
details contact Col on
97886232.**

BANKSTOWN BUSHLAND SOCIETY COMMITTEE for 2020

President:

Ashlie Stevenson

Vice President:

Skye Virgin: 0411584295

Secretary:

Chris Dewhurst

Assistant Secretary:

Colin Gibson: 9788 6232

Treasurer:

John Gibson: 9772 3549

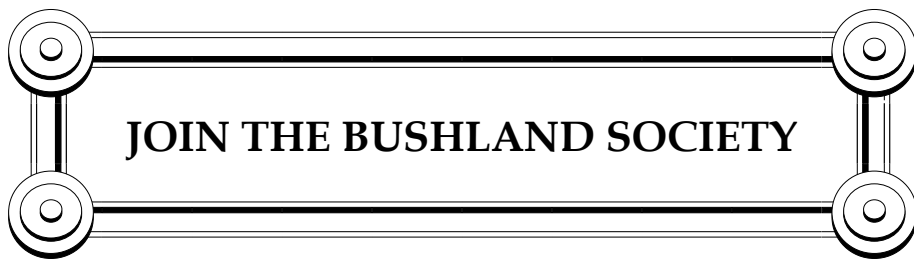
Committee Members:

Wal Browning
Darryl McKay
Karlo Taliana
Ian Bailey

Bushland Bulletin

Editor:

Colin Gibson



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.**

Enquiries: greenaissance1@gmail.com



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

