

Community Submission

RE: Proposal to Expand the Western Sydney Employment Area

As a resident of Western Sydney and a neighbour to the planned WSEA, I **OBJECT** to the Proposal to expand the BWSEA. Due to insufficient assessment of current vegetation and planned removal of endangered Cumberland Plain Woodland. Also the following will occur if development continues – the loss of habitat for native fauna, and increased traffic and poor health of Western Sydney residents caused by pollution created from the planned infrastructure.

Summary Points Discussed

- Destruction of roadside verges including shrub and canopy vegetation
- Destruction of threatened flora populations
- Destruction of native fauna habitat
- Ecological study done is not credible
- Road widening
- Flooding and pollution caused by development
- Increased traffic caused by development
- Loss of rural landscape , market gardens and fertile land
- BWSEA will not improve Australian Economy and will not produce the significant amount of jobs promised for Western Sydney
- Our Future

The open grassland, roadside verges of shrubs, roadsides of mature trees, small tree populations and riparian areas, are habitat to unique western Sydney wildlife which call this area HOME. Development of this area will cause habitat loss for these animals which include owls, echidnas, possums, gliders, wallabies, kangaroos and large lizards to name a few. Micro fishing bats need open areas near dams plus large tree hollows to survive. The BWSEA is their home and they are found in the middle of the Badgery's Creek site. Even vegetation with no canopy cover is important. The importance of shrubs is for the small birds. In a morning observation, 70 species of birds can be spotting amongst the roadside verges of shrubs and trees. 10 of these are very uncommon in Western Sydney. This area is the last stronghold for these birds and other wildlife. Having uncommon birds shows that what may not seem like much vegetation is good habitat and is not just vacant land to develop. By removing what may seem as a few insignificant trees here and there, you are removing the link between larger vegetation patches. These dotted trees are important in a network of stepping stones for tree dwelling species to move through the landscape. If you remove any of these stepping stones, species migration, habitat location, food resources and overall survival may be impacted.

Important populations of *Pultenaea parviflora*, a vulnerable shrub, can be found on roadside verges within the BWSEA. These will be lost if the area is heavily developed and roads widened. Threatened *Marsdenia viridiflora*, a climber, is found in numerous sites within the BWSEA at Badgerys's Creek.

The flora study done is not creditable. The report (Exhibition draft – BWSEA Biodiversity and Riparian Assessment) has been prepared by Ecological, who did not actually survey the site. They did a desktop survey – they looked at what others have published on the area in the past. They did not identify threatened species, they did not identify areas of vegetation, as they did not visit the survey area. The picture on the front cover of the document is not even from the BWSEA. It is from Marsden Park outside the area. Therefore a thorough survey needs to be done which actually looks at what there is. We need to be informed of the facts of what is on ground before decisions can be made. The DPI must engage a genuine on-ground ecological assessment and put this back on public exhibition.

Important major trees alongside Elizabeth Drive need to be retained. These trees cannot be offset or replaced elsewhere as you cannot replace old trees which are home to wildlife with vegetation of a different type outside the BWSEA or young seedlings. If anything more seedlings should be added to existing vegetation to connect corridors. Vegetation must be retained within the BWSEA. Vegetation needs to be retained to keep a biodiversity corridor (a corridor of vegetation linking creek lines, national parks, reserves and any native vegetation north and south, east and west. It allows movement of animals & insects on land and in the air (migration and breeding) and movement of plant material (pollination important for plant survival). Without linking corridors of vegetation the genetic diversity of flora and fauna become limited and populations will die. (See Western Sydney Conservation Alliance for more on vegetation corridors.)

No widening of Elizabeth Drive is important. Old trees line the road and need to be maintained along the whole length. If more lanes need to be added then the main road should be relocated to adjacent paddock to the north and keep Elizabeth Drive as a minor road as it is, or add an extra 2 lanes in the paddock alongside for other direction traffic, and maintain both sides of tree line in between the two directions. Figure 5 from the Exhibition Draft BWSEA Biodiversity and Riparian Assessment Report Shows that there is vegetation of conservation significance with multiple areas along Elizabeth Drive described as core(green) vegetation and also Vegetation to support the core (orange). These areas of mature and immature trees on and near the road edge and patches of trees which link to other vegetation patches and creek lines are important in maintaining and representing the fragile and threatened Cumberland Plain Woodland.

The Proposed expansion of The BWSEA will destroy important fertile land for vegetation, wildlife and agriculture. It should not be used for urbanisation and industrial. It is an important open public space.

Development means increased runoff from hard surfaces. Pollution by rubbish and heavy metals from nearby industrial areas and airport will reduce quality of these creek lines. There will be significant loss of vegetation, habitat and fauna due to the change in water flow. More hard surfaces mean, an increase in water and flooding due to the reduction in the amount of land acting as a sponge. Now agricultural land is acting as a sponge as it absorbs the rainfall and slowly releases it into the catchment, a natural gradual addition of water to the creek, unlike hard surfaces which create a flood like event. More runoff to creek lines will cause erosion to the already fragile creek line and creek ponds due to increased water flow from development. These creek lines within the BWSEA are important in the catchment. Development should be away from these areas to reduce flooding and to maintain vegetation (sponges to soak up water and habitat).

BWSEA is not needed as it does not create significant new jobs. The only jobs that are certain are the jobs to build the infrastructure which are limited professions and for a limited time. Once the area is developed the jobs will be gone. Industrial areas employ limited people as they are highly mechanised. Most likely the warehouses created will be for businesses that deal in imports rather than factories making products. Therefore imports shipped into Sydney need to be transported to the west creating traffic. Then these products will be shipped back to the stores and customers in suburban areas, thus more traffic 2x more traffic. Invest in infrastructure in inner Sydney areas to take these imports and reduce the traffic going back and forth to the west. Therefore there will be less congestion and less maintenance and upgrade of roads and infrastructure required.

Businesses will build themselves in the west if needed. Do not force what people do not need or want.

Western Sydney is a rural area. Don't add noise pollution, air pollution, and traffic. Retain vegetation and arable land!

Think of our children. The BWSEA is a quick fix political idea that does not help the future of Western Sydney. Putting money into building Australian Business and skills training is what will help the economy and produce jobs, not building warehouses for imports.

Regards

Western Sydney