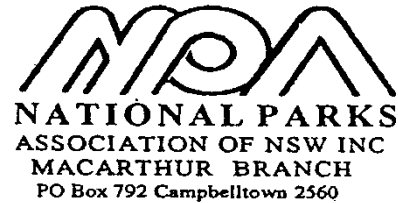


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SUBMISSION: Greater Macarthur Land Release Investigation (GILEAD)

The Macarthur Branch of the National Parks Association was formed as a Sub-Branch of the State wide organisation in October 1975, and our first proposal to have the Dharawal Nature Reserve was submitted to the State Government in 1988.

Our original proposal was for the present Dharawal area, plus the Georges River Corridor which would have protected the River plus the Campbelltown Koala Population, but at that time although we had found Koalas at Wedderburn in 1986, we did not realise that we were living further along the Corridor.

As you would be aware the Dharawal National Park has now been created, much to the pride of residents of the greater Macarthur Region, but we had to accept that the Georges River Corridor would hopefully be added at a later date.

We have a proposal to create a Bargo/Nepean National Park. We hope to have this area protected by National Parks and Wildlife Service in the not too distant future, and the proposed threat of the sub-division near that region is being dealt with in another submission.

These proposals and many other campaigns have been on our agenda since our Branch was formed.

GILEAD

The proposed development is on surprisingly significant land having environmental values, heritage aesthetic qualities, Aboriginal significance, and of a high agricultural grade. In the long term it could be of more use to Macarthur residents left as open space rather than developing the area for homes. Perhaps, State/Federal Government could consider buying the property as a bio banking area or off set for Cumberland Plain Woodland being destroyed during the construction of Badgerys Creek Airport.

A small environmental/heritage building where Campbelltown to Wilton children could learn about our local bushland and natural resources would replace the large gap left when Wedderburn Resource Centre was closed. We have noted that a large number of children had not visited the Wooglemai Environmental Education Centre at Oakdale, because of the cost of transport.

ENVIRONMENT

CRITICALLY ENDANGERED EPBC ACT

Three types of woodland occur on the site Cumberland Plain Woodland, Shale Sandstone Transition Forest, and River-flat Eucalypt Forest all of which are fast disappearing within the Sydney Basin, despite their endangered listings.

WILDLIFE CORRIDOR

The land is the last chance of a wildlife corridor between the Georges and Nepean Rivers. The adjacent Noorumba Reserve and Beulah Woodland have Core Koala Habitat, as has woodland to the east of Appin Road. The corridor has already been severed north of Appin now that new homes have been built and are continuing to be built without having wildlife corridors in place.

KOALA

The Campbelltown Koala population is now considered to be the last large, healthy and expanding population left in New South Wales, and as such should be protected and allowed to expand into the Nepean system. The population is listed as Vulnerable in New South Wales; the EPBC (listed as Vulnerable) also comes into effect, as the Koala population is considered to be "a key source population either for breeding or dispersal, and a population necessary for maintaining genetic diversity"

There is no doubt that the population is expanding as they are now being seen in areas where they have not been seen by the present human population, and unless strong legislation is put into place in the immediate future their habitat will be lost or fragmented.

SEPP 44 has been in place since 1995, and yet Koala numbers are still dropping drastically in all other parts of New South Wales. It is only luck that has kept the Campbelltown population healthy and expanding as present legislation does not protect them; subdivision, clearing the land, proposed Georges River Parkway, and the High Speed Train corridors would decimate the Campbelltown Koala population.

BEULAH WOODLAND/NOORUMBA RESERVE

The subdivision is situated between Beulah woodland and Noorumba Reserve. If homes are built between these two areas of native bushland they will obviously both be isolated and native animals and birds will no longer be able to move between them.

MENANGLE/WOODHOUSE/NEPEAN & MALATY CREEKS

Although Malaty is situated on the southern border of the present proposed development it must be included as an important creek, which links bushland to the Georges River and through to the Dharawal State Conservation Area and onto the Dharawal National Park.

The proposal does suggest that some creeks if not all do not need to be protected. We cannot agree with this as they act as a refuge and wildlife corridor between the two rivers.

BUFFER ZONES & ASSET PROTECTION AREAS

If development were to go ahead large buffer zones and Asset Protection areas would need to be included along the borders of Noorumba Reserve, Beulah Woodland and Homestead, Mt Gilead House and Windmill, along with the aforementioned creeks.

Trees planted between the two woodland areas would not only act as a visual buffer zone between the road and homes, it would enable native animals, and birds to move freely between the two.

PROPOSED SUBDIVISION EAST OF APPIN ROAD

We are opposed to any subdivision on the eastern side of Appin Road as it would undoubtedly endanger native animals and cause run off and dumping of rubbish into or very near to the Georges River.

HERITAGE PROPERTIES

Mount Gilead Even as far back as the 1800's farming was being carried out at Gilead. When governor Macquarie visited the property he stated that he had seen "promising crops" (Campbelltown City Council – History of Gilead)

Hamilton Hume started his long trek south from this area.

Beulah House and Woodland contains approximately 60 hectares of Critically Endangered Cumberland Plain Woodland, along with the house which is currently being restored by the Historic Houses Trust.

Sydney Water Supply Canal the age and importance of the canal for water supply requires that existing buffer zones, and fencing must be protected, or even strengthened.

Views from these properties are of open woodland and paddocks. It does seem a shame if these were spoilt by small building blocks

AESTHETIC QUALITY

The land is situated at Campbelltown's southern border, and when entering or leaving Campbelltown ones eye is irresistibly drawn to the green and open area on the western side of Appin Road and Woodland to the east. North of Campbelltown we have the Scenic Hills, and residents would be very disappointed to have either of these areas spoilt by building a high number of homes.

It would be a shame to lose the rural quality of this area.

Developers have been allowed to build near to Appin Road without the benefit of buffer zones, and if a screen of trees and bushes had been planted at the time of subdivision the broken wooden fences and lack of greenery would not have been so apparent. We have the utmost respect for residents and definitely do not expect them to plant trees in small back yards, but a 20 or 30 metre buffer zone would soften the entrance to the City of Campbelltown.

PROPOSED NEW TOWN CENTRE

There is no doubt that a new town centre will need to be built as there will be a large number of residents moving into the area, however the suggested position of the town centre is very near to Noorumba Reserve, and Rosemeadow shopping centre. Macarthur Square, Market Fair and Campbelltown Mall are all within reach of existing residents. We therefore suggest that the new Town Centre be moved further south. A shopping centre nearer to Appin would also be of more use to new residents already moving into subdivisions within Appin.

SPRING FARM LINK ROAD, APPIN ROAD MODIFICATION

We suggest that underpasses and fencing be installed to allow native animals to move safely through the area. Measures in place on the north coast as part of the upgrade to the Pacific Highway should be used, especially for Koala safety.

The link road must be in place before any subdivision goes ahead. Traffic congestion is already a significant problem especially when leaving the Hume Highway at both exits into Campbelltown and the Narellan Road as residents of Menangle and Mount Annan have to pass through Campbelltown on their journey to and from work.

Road rage is increasing and although we have not heard of any physical incidents there is definitely verbal abuse and the sounding of horns for no apparent reason other than the sheer frustration of drivers travelling on the M5 and Hume Highway, only to be stuck in traffic jams once they have reached the aforementioned exits.

WALKING/CYCLE TRACKS

There is a sad lack of walking/cycle tracks in the Campbelltown area, and very little for young people to do, if their parents cannot afford to pay for sporting activities. Unfortunately, bored teenagers are a problem, and future large subdivisions should include such activities as walking/cycle tracks, skate board parks etc.

The large number of proposed residents moving into the region would also require more passive recreation areas, sporting facilities and a swimming pool.

AIR QUALITY

One of the reasons given for the original Macarthur South proposal not going ahead was concern that air quality would diminish and cause hardship to residents.

If thousands of new homes, plus the Badgerys Creek Airport are created State Government must be fully convinced that air pollution will not cause an increase in childhood asthma attack, and lung cancer among residents. Monitoring once these proposals are built will be too late.

CITY OF CAMPBELLTOWN

As we have suggested our region requires an Environmental Education Centre for children, and we see no reason why a Koala science/medical centre could not be included with this.

Furthermore, if a city is to be sustainable into the future there must be areas set aside for the growing of vegetables to be sold locally at a reasonable cost, without the need for transporting them long distances or even bringing them in from overseas.

Campbelltown is fast becoming an area full of homes without the opportunity for residents to exercise, or meet for conversation without having to join a gym or pay for a meal at a restaurant. Developers are business people, and will not include passive areas unless instructed to do so by State Government legislation.

Yours faithfully

Pat Durman

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