

13 July 2018

Comment on Proposed Amendment to: Sydney Regional Environmental Plan no.33 –Cooks Cove

The Cooks River Alliance welcomes the opportunity to comment on the proposed amendment to the Sydney Regional Environmental Plan no.33 –Cooks Cove.

The Cooks River Alliance (the Alliance) is a voluntary regional organisation of four Councils (Bayside, Inner West, Strathfield and Canterbury-Bankstown). These Councils are working towards a common mission to improve the health of the Cooks River. The Alliance is currently hosted by Canterbury-Bankstown Council.

The Alliance is not in favour of the proposed additional 'recreational facility' use in this Special Uses zone. The consequence of the additional use will have detrimental impacts on Landing Lights wetland and endangered ecological communities. The result will be to exclude the community's access to the wetlands and public open space.

The Sydney Regional Environmental Plan no.33 – Cooks Cove defines Recreation Facility as meaning 'a building or place used exclusively for sporting or leisure activities, whether operating for the purpose of gain or not.'

It is suggested that this use is not compatible with the aims of the plan that includes:

(a) to establish planning principles for the development of land that promote the ecologically sustainable use of the Cooks Cove site,

(d) to facilitate master planning strategies that will promote the orderly development of public open space and trade and technology land uses, and

(f) to protect environmentally significant wetlands and the habitat of the endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog.

Clearly the intention of the SREP is to ensure that development of trade and technology land uses, *public* open space and ecological values are compatible. It is not to allow 'exclusive use' for sporting or leisure activities that operate for gain, such as a private golf course.

The importance of Landing Lights Wetlands

This area of land in the southern portion of the precinct zoned Special Uses affects Landing Lights wetlands. It contains Endangered Ecological Communities of Sydney Freshwater, Wetlands Swamp Oak Floodplain Forest, and Freshwater wetlands on coastal floodplains. It also provides foraging for nationally protected migratory birds and potential habitat for the green and golden bell frog. It is a locally recognised landmark in the community and one of the few wetlands along the Cooks River.

In 2014-17 the Alliance received Australian Government funding of \$115,500 that enabled the removal of woody and wetland weeds, native species removal from saltmarsh and ongoing maintenance. Additionally the grant has funded open days, bird watching and wetland awareness activities and this continues. Along the Cooks River this site is one of the very few opportunities for the community to have this experience.

The Alliance has previously expressed concerns about the Cooks Cove Southern Precinct Master plan. These are that the Master Plan:

- Does not recognise the ecological works already completed by the Alliance with Australian Government funding.

- Reduces the value of the wetland to foraging migratory birds by removing portions of the wetland and as mapping indicates, planting trees along the remaining edges.
- Denies public access by enclosing the golf course (and wetlands) with 1.8 metre high fencing.
- Introduces a pesticides and fertilisers management regime that may impact the Cooks River and the water quality of Botany Bay.

I am available if you wish to discuss any of the above points.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sue Burton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sue Burton
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