

Danella Robinson
PO Box 351
Richmond
NSW 2753

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Deputy Secretary
Greater Sydney Place and Infrastructure
NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Locked Bag 5022
Parramatta 2124

Delivered via email submission

Dear Deputy Secretary – Greater Sydney Place and Infrastructure

RE: Proposed Amendment to the State Environmental Planning Policy (Penrith Lakes Scheme) 1989 (Penrith Lakes SEPP) Consultation Process.

I would like firstly to thank the Department for the opportunity to comment on the aforementioned SEPP amendment. My submission is an **objection** to the current proposed changes.

I am aware of the many previous amendments and modifications to the Penrith Lakes Scheme's planning instruments being a member of the local Aboriginal community, the former Chairperson of Muru Mittigar Aboriginal Education Centre for over 10 years and an employee of the Penrith Lakes Development Corporation in the areas of Aboriginal cultural heritage, contact history heritage and Environment.

The consultation paper issued by the Department advises that the proposed amendments seek to amend land use zones without completing the long foreshadowed Plan of Management (POM) for the Penrith Lakes Scheme. This POM should guide the land use and zoning of the Scheme. The proposed amendment also seeks to extensively increase the extent of the Employment land use zone, which is reported to be currently 47 hectares. This is of a scale that could not be considered small in comparison to other developments in the area. The Department also advises that it seeks to make these amendments without a POM to inform the appropriateness of the proposed amendments or their potential impacts on conservation values within the Penrith Lakes Scheme.

My objection is based on the following:

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Conservation Values

As the Department would be aware, in the early 1980's Dr Jim Kohen of the University of Macquarie and the local Aboriginal community completed numerous studies of the Nepean riverbank environs within the Scheme boundary and noted that the high bank and levees behind the high bank had the greatest potential for containing evidence of prehistory Aboriginal occupation.

So important was the Riverbank and its setback, to the Aboriginal community and cultural conservation values within the Hawkesbury Nepean River environs that the then NSW Office of Environment and Heritage sought to protect these sites from development through the issuing of numerous Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permits (AHIP's), that also included extensive "No Harm" zones, and detailed

management plans for ongoing living conservation of Aboriginal cultural heritage values.

The current proposed Employment and Environment Zone amendments are within the previously described "No Harm" or Conservation zones of the Riverbank environs.

Environment Conservation Values

Publicly available studies that were completed over the years of the Penrith Lakes Scheme's implementation by eminent scientists and the Aboriginal community speak to the importance of the southern precinct of the Scheme and its ongoing conservation. These include the Penrith Lakes Scheme Biodiversity Master plan and the Penrith Lakes Scheme - Conservation Master Plan. The Master Plans outline the conservation values of rare remnant vegetation communities, development of habitat corridors through the Penrith Lakes Scheme to assist with conservation, and management recommendations for cultural heritage assets.

These reports contain significant Environment and Cultural conservation recommendations for the zones currently proposed Employment and Environment in the draft SEPP amendment.

Living Conservation Values

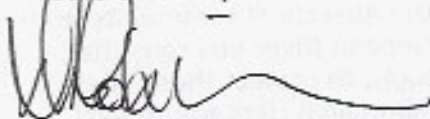
The Office of Penrith Lakes (OPL) also reported that the Riverbank and its high bank were of significant importance to the Aboriginal community and included living conservation recommendations. This is documented in the Penrith Lakes Parklands draft Vision Plan. The report records their consultation process with the local Aboriginal community and recommends a possible Cultural Indigenous Centre and Conservation zone.

OPL's recommended Aboriginal conservation zone appears to be within the area now proposed to be an extension to Employment land zoning within the proposed draft SEPP.

In conclusion I strongly suggest that the Department does not proceed with the proposed amendments to the SEPP until it:

- a) Recognises the previous work carried out in relation to the conservation of cultural values and the proposed protection of Aboriginal cultural sites across the Penrith Lakes Scheme and these sites connection to the lands currently under consideration in the proposed SEPP amendment.
- b) Undertake full consultation on the proposed amendments to the SEPP with the local Aboriginal community in accordance with the established protocols and in order to ensure that this amendment does not diminish the conservation undertaking of previous AHIPS.
- c) Appropriately addresses the environmental protection requirements for rare remnant vegetation communities and wetland communities and their connectivity across habitat corridors through the Penrith Lakes Scheme and the wider conservation of the Hawkesbury Nepean River Environs.

Yours sincerely



Danelia Robinson