

NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Green and Resilient Places Division
Locked Bag 5022
Parramatta NSW 2124

9. October 2020

Submitted online via the NSW Planning Portal

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing to express my objections to several elements of the draft Cumberland Plain Conservation Plan (the Plan). I agree to publication on the Department's website of my submission, name and postcode.

I object to the Plan basically because it is inconsistent with the objectives of ecologically sustainable development that underlie planning law in New South Wales.

It also goes against the recommendations of the Chief Scientist for the survival of Koala populations in NSW by proposing

- Construction of 120 km of Koala exclusion fencing which will isolate and fragment an expanding and thriving koala population
- Protection of only one of the six east-west movement corridors recommended in the Chief Scientist Koala Report
- Prevention of the current recolonisation of koalas from their historic refuge in Wedderburn across the vast Cumberland Plain to the west

The adoption of a long-term strategic plan for the future development of west and south western Sydney is an excellent idea as it should overcome the perennial problem of planning in NSW whereby projects are evaluated in isolation so that cumulative impacts on biodiversity are disregarded. However, this Plan has many faults that will be detrimental to the survival of wildlife and their habitats. The basic needs for the maintenance of biodiversity; resilience, connectivity and adequate representation of habitat will not be met. The Plan should be rewritten.

As the Plan covers such a large area it is a great opportunity, once and for all, to ensure that the right balance is achieved between preserving natural habitat and providing land for future population growth. Ecologically sustainable development requires that human needs do not take priority over the natural world. Once an ecological community such as Cumberland Plain Woodland is lost it cannot be replaced or replicated elsewhere.

An improved Plan should ensure the following essential outcomes for the future of this growth area of Greater Sydney:

1. Enact enduring protection for the areas that are not earmarked for development. Large areas of this region were previously designated as a prime biodiversity offset area and now much of is going to be cleared for development. Significant areas of woodland vegetation should be preserved for the benefit of the resident population as well as wildlife.
2. Adjust the Plan to avoid clearing of any more areas of the critically endangered Cumberland Plain Woodland ecosystem. No type of vegetation offset can compensate for clearing this irreplaceable landscape, of which only 6% of the original area remains.
3. Ensure sufficient rural land is maintained to cover the needs for growing food for Sydney's population. Climate change impacts on land productivity needs to be part of the assessment.
4. Alleviate fragmentation of existing habitat and reserves. The current Plan will permanently isolate three of the four National Parks which currently protect significant areas of

Cumberland Plain Woodland; the Wianamatta Regional Park, Shanes Park, and Colebee Nature Reserve. Wildlife presently move freely (across two local roads) between these three reserves.

The following changes are needed to avoid the losses described above:

1. Protect a 500m-wide koala corridor at Mount Gilead.
2. Remove the need for large lengths of exclusion fencing that will block koala movement
- 3.. Save Wianamatta Regional Park by building a road tunnel
4. Extend the Camden Tunnel 4km south and 6km north to save the wildlife corridor between the Elizabeth Macarthur Agricultural Institute and Razorback, Cobbitty Hills as well as existing homes.
5. Lock in a sufficient budget upfront to ensure offsets are actually delivered and do not permit taxpayer subsidies for developer offsets. Do not create offsets on existing public reserves of any kind.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Yours sincerely

Jill Green

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