

**Hon. Sussan Ley MP**  
**Minister for the Environment**  
**PO Box 6022**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Parliament House**  
**CANBERRA ACT 2600**

**Hon. Matt Kean MP**  
**Minister for Energy and Environment**  
**GPO Box 5341**  
**SYDNEY NSW2001**

**Dear Ministers,**

**RE: DRAFT CUMBERLAND PLAIN CONSERVATION PLAN**

As a resident and landowner of Orchard Hills, I have serious concerns about aspects of the proposed biodiversity conservation zoning as detailed in the Draft Cumberland Plain Conservation Plan. My concerns are based on the following points:

- Residents understand that even though some gave permission to access their property, the Department decided to map vegetation to determine the vegetation biodiversity conservation area, by mostly using the assessment process of conducting a desk top review and aerial photo interpretation and was peer reviewed by an independent process. We question this process as it has not resulted in an accurate portrayal of the environment.
- In 2017, a map was produced showing the biodiversity conservation zone for NSW following the legislation of the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016. For the Orchard Hills area the biodiversity conservation zone is a lot different to the currently advertised Cumberland Plain Conservation Plan (Conservation Zone).
- The difference between the 2017 biodiversity conservation zone and the currently exhibited biodiversity conservation zone is of concern as there are significant anomalies. The Draft Cumberland Plain Conservation Plan does not address the anomalies. I request that details of the rationale justifying the differences between the two conservation zoning plans be provided.
- I believe that in order to provide an accurate base plan that can be defended for the proposed biodiversity conservation zoned in Orchard Hills, an on-site assessment

should be carried out on all affected properties to determine the value and integrity of any biodiversity conservation present.

- The credibility of the proposed biodiversity conservation zones is questionable if there has been no on site assessments of all affected properties. I believe this is required now before any finalisation of the conservation areas is sought. Under the Biodiversity Conservation Act the on site field assessment methodology is a requirement.
- I wish it noted that landowners were not contacted directly to discuss the proposal and how it affects their site specifically. This fact has been verified by the Department of Planning, which calls into question the fairness and diligence of the process.

In light of the above I request that the following be conducted:

1. An onsite inspection of all affected properties be undertaken, before the draft plan is finalised.
2. Provide all evidence gathered to date specific to the Orchard Hills area, be made available to the affected residents.
3. Dates, times and location of any inspection conducted in the Orchard Hills area be made available.
4. That an audit of policy and procedure be conducted to ensure that the residents of Orchard Hills have been afforded due process and diligence.

Until such time that a detailed on-site assessment is carried out on all affected properties in Orchard Hills with the proposed biodiversity conservation zoning I request that the draft plan be withdrawn.

