

Latham Report – Central region

S2.3.7 – PROPOSED SHANES PARK NATURE RESERVE

Location and Description

The proposed Shanes Park Nature Reserve is situated immediately to the east of the International Radio Transmitting Station at Shanes Park (Riverstone 1:25 000 Topographic Map). This proposal has also been known as the proposed Marsden Park Nature Reserve.

Area

Approximately 250 ha

Land Tenure

Commonwealth Land vested in the former Civil Aviation Authority, now Australian Air Services.

State Electorate

State: Mount Druitt

(Federal: Chifley)

Local Government Area

Blacktown

Geology

Wianamatta Shale and Tertiary Alluvium

Flora

The plant communities have been comprehensively documented by Antcliff (1989), Benson (1991) and Coveny et al (1991). Over 230 species have been recorded by the NPWS and National Herbarium (Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney). They include large tree specimens and a diverse understorey of native shrubs and herbs. There are two dominant communities:

Grey Box Woodland

The dominant canopy species are Grey Box (*Eucalyptus moluccana*) and Forest Red Gum (*E. tereticornis*.) This is an endangered community, the second largest intact remnant, and currently unconserved.

Shale / Gravel Transition Forest

The dominant canopy species are Broad-leaved Ironbark (*Eucalyptus fibrosa*) and Grey Box (*E. moluccana*). This community is vulnerable and poorly conserved.

Other smaller and intergrading plant communities include Ironbark Forest of *Eucalyptus fibrosa* (vulnerable and poorly conserved), Woodland of Hard-leaved

Scribbly Gum (*E. sclerophylla*) and Paperbark Forest / Woodland of *Melaleuca decora* and *Casuarina glauca*.

Conservation Significance

A high proportion of the 230 recorded native plant species are of conservation significance.

Good populations of ROTAP / TSC Act species include *Dillwynia tenuifolia* (2RCa), *Micromyrtus minutiflora* (2V), *Persoonia nutans* (2ECi) and *Pultenaea parviflora* (2E).

13 of regional significance include *Acacia leiocalyx*, *Cardamine pauciflora*, *Cyperus haspan*, *Dodonaea falcata*, *Drosera glanduligera*, *Gompholobium* sp B, *Murdannia graminea*, *Paspalum orbiculare*, *Polygala japonica*, *Prostanthera scutellarioides* and *Pultenaea microphylla*.

Over 40 other plant species which are vulnerable and inadequately conserved in western Sydney are listed in NPWS UBBS 1997 (2) Appendix 3.1.

Fauna

Fifty three bird species (including Emus) have been recorded.

Swamp Wallabies occur here.

Cultural Heritage

Unknown

Reasons for Reservation

- To preserve what may be the most pristine stand of shale vegetation left on the Cumberland Plain, including an undisturbed understorey and very tall tree specimens important for the conservation of several bird species, particularly the Speckled Warbler (Antcliff 1989a p.10).
- To protect one of the largest areas of contiguous native vegetation in the Blacktown LGA, where it has a central position in relation to other significant and smaller bushland remnants in the region and provides many options for establishing corridors to link them. The most important potential link is to the ADI St Marys property (proposed South Creek Regional Park. See [Section 2.7.2](#)). (NPWS UBBS 1997 (2) p.71).
- To protect a high degree of plant community and species diversity.
- To protect the second largest remnant of Grey Box Woodland in western Sydney.
- To protect Castlereagh Woodland communities.

- To protect 4 ROTAP / TSC Act plant species, 13 of regional significance, and over 40 which are vulnerable in western Sydney.

Threats to Conservation Values

- Future residential subdivision.
- Unscheduled wildfire and inappropriate hazard reduction burning regime may be reducing plant biodiversity and vegetation structure.
- Illegal rubbish dumping in one area is potentially threatening populations of ROTAP species (NPWS UBBS 1997 (2) p.71).

Proposal History

1987: NPA proposal for Marsden Park Nature Reserve.

1991: Recommendation by Benson and McDougall for reservation as part of a series of Cumberland Plain Nature Reserves.

1995: October. NPA proposal for Shanes Park Nature Reserve in first edition of this report.

The NPA emphasised the opportunity to conserve fragments of Castlereagh Woodland on land between the proposed Nature Reserve and Stony Creek Road through conservation agreements between the NPWS and OTC (see map). This Woodland contains an outlying occurrence of a north coast Wattle species (*Acacia leiocalyx*). Only one other occurrence remains in the Sydney Basin, at Scheyville.

1997: The NPWS Urban Bushland Biodiversity Survey strongly urged protection of its 'outstanding conservation values', and further recommended appropriate zoning and tenure to achieve protection and management of environmental values, and that a plan of management be prepared to include fire management strategies designed to protect biodiversity and allow hazard reduction (1997 (2) pp.72).

1999: January. Renewed NPA proposal for Shanes Park Nature Reserve.

(Adapted from Doherty 1987 p.16; and NPWS UBBS 1997 (2) pp. 70-72 and Appendix 3.1).