

SHANE'S PARK

...for nature reserve

COMMUNITY ACTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE SHANE'S PARK WOODLAND



Shanes Park Woodland Alliance
10 Gladstone St
Wentworth Falls
NSW 2782

Friday, 27 June 2014

Hon. Greg Hunt MP
Federal Minister for the Environment
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Re: Transfer of 550 ha Air Services Australia land, Shanes Park

Dear Minister Hunt,

I write on behalf of the Shanes Park Woodland Alliance. The Alliance comprises seven state and local community associations with an interest in the conservation of 'Shanes Park', a 550 ha woodland property in western Sydney. Shanes Park has been committed to a conservation future through Federal, State and local planning instruments since 2006, however the community of Western Sydney still await protection of this site.

The Alliance originally negotiated for this site to be handed to the NSW Parks & Wildlife service. However the Service have demonstrated an increasing lack of capacity to maintain or recover biodiversity on their land holdings. We are now recommending the land be held until a more suitable owner-manager can be found. There is interest from the Australian Wildlife Conservancy in this regard.

We congratulate you on your role, and would like to confirm your position in relation to the site and its future management. In this regard we offer the following questions:

- Will you office honour the conditions of the Western Sydney Growth Centres Strategic Assessment and the associated Program Report?
- In particular will you honour the Program Report section '*Urban development and protected areas*' and associated Figure 5 which delineate the *entire* site to be protected as an '*Environmental conservation area*' in contrast to '*Public recreation*' conservation areas which have a dual management purpose? We note in this regard that the eastern portions within the Marsden Park Industrial Precinct are currently proposed for development for recreational purposes, and the proposed Western Sydney Orbital route includes areas in the

south of the mapped area. Both developments are direct infringements of the Strategic Assessment conditions within the Program Report.

- Will you support a 50 m offset from the site within the Marsden Park North Precinct? This is necessary to permit essential management actions including feral animal control and hazard reduction burning.
- Will you commit to dedication of Shanes Park as a Nature Reserve or similar conservation managed property, in contrast to a Regional or National Park? Will this dedication include the heritage buildings present on site? We note that numerous Nature Reserves in NSW incorporate heritage buildings under active use as detailed on our website. Contrary to former claims there are no limitations to such within the NP&W Act or other policy.
- Will you commit to the management of feral wildlife, and against any culling of native fauna on it?

'Shanes Park' provides the last opportunity to restore a large intact remnant of the Cumberland Plain landscape. Every flora and fauna species restricted to the Cumberland Plain is represented on site, in addition to over 15 nationally threatened species. We encourage you to visit our website at www.shanespark.com which includes further information on Shanes Park and its wildlife.

Please note that a copy of this letter has been posted on our website, and we will post a copy of your response on receipt.

Thank you for your attention and your ongoing efforts for the natural heritage of our Nation. We look forward to your response.

Kind regards,

Peter Ridgeway
info@shanespark.com
Mob. 0401 481 037