

FOKE Talk

Time for World Heritage Ku-ring-gai Chase NP!



In October 2018 Friends of Ku-ring-gai Environment (FOKE) resolved to commence a campaign to call for the World Heritage listing of Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park (KCNP).

A committee has commenced to investigate the UNESCO listing process, research and prepare the necessary documentation to meet the selection criteria. This committee aims to encourage participation from all relevant community and environmental groups.

To be included on the World Heritage List, sites must be of outstanding universal value and meet at least one out of ten selection criteria. FOKE believes KCNP can meet a number of the key UNESCO selection criteria for listing.

UNESCO selection criteria	FOKE's view
(iii) To bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared.	KCNP has exceptional Indigenous history, and is home to around 1,500 pieces of Aboriginal rock art. It has the largest concentration of Indigenous sites in Australia.
(v) To be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change.	KCNP is an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement. Historical Indigenous sites include burial sites, caves or shelters, marriage areas, men's areas, women's areas, birthing areas, midden sites, stone arrangement and tool sites.
(vii) To contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance.	KCNP has superb natural beauty, from the bush through to the waterways. Fortunately preserved until the 1950/60s.
(x) To contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.	KCNP contains significant natural habitat for in-situ conservation of biological diversity. It has similarities to the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. Importantly, it is home to a number of very rare, or threatened, plants and animals.
(iv) to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. (Preferably used with other criteria)	KCNP is part of the history of the global national park movement. It is the second oldest National Park in Australia, gazetted in 1894. It also was one of the first national parks that celebrated the intrinsic value of nature for itself.

Our first stage will be to establish the viability of listing by investigating the detail required to support each criterion. We have established a Facebook page as a means to create a venue for discussion and recommendations as we progress through this process. We look forward to your comments and suggestions. [Facebook.com/kuringgaiworldheritage](https://www.facebook.com/kuringgaiworldheritage)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

In closing another year and our final newsletter for 2018 I would like to thank our loyal members for your feedback, support and encouragement throughout the year.

This month I was appointed to the Greater Sydney Commission Citizen's Panel, which includes two compulsory weekend workshop sessions at the Novotel Parramatta. The workshops are primarily to listen to citizens discussions and opinions on the directions for measuring performance of the Greater Sydney Region Plan and the context for developing an indicators based framework for Greater Sydney. Workshop outcomes will be put up on the Greater Sydney Commission website.

Our great concern is that Sydney is being overpopulated along with inadequate provision of services and infrastructure with minimal discussion by the State Government of decentralisation.

Over the month I also attended a Ku-ring-gai Council workshop for developing Recreation in Natural Areas. Council is currently developing a strategy through consultation workshops to manage the way people use our natural areas for recreation. The community attendees at our workshop were primarily concerned with the impacts on the environment and whether the activities Council is proposing would be sustainable. Residents expressed the overriding requirement that any activities in natural areas must be ecologically sustainable to prevent further environmental degradation to Ku-ring-gai's bushland.

Ursula Bonzol and I also attended two meetings last month with local politicians. Our first meeting was with Member for Davidson Jonathan O'Dea MP and the second with Roseville Ward Councillor Sam Ngai. Both meetings were to discuss a range of Ku-ring-gai local planning issues. These included her-



itage conservation areas which have been highly politicised in the press, the outrageous proposals for the Lindfield Hub and the Greater Sydney Commission housing targets for the next five years.

The topics discussed with Jonathan included latest approval and dwelling figures from the Department of Planning, the lack of any need to rezone for more high density in Ku-ring-gai due to the remaining yield in the local centres yet to be taken up, the Greater Sydney Commission proposed dwelling targets for Ku-ring-gai over the next five years, and the excessive heights and overdevelopment being suggested for the Lindfield Hub. The meeting with Clr Ngai focussed on the Lindfield Hub proposal and the new dwelling figures for Ku-ring-gai.

If the proposed heights for the Lindfield Hub increase from the agreed 7 storeys to the proposed 10 or 14 storeys, this will set a precedent for higher density across Ku-ring-gai.

It is pleasing and satisfying for FOKE to see that State Rail have saved and replanted some of the old Waterhouse camelia sasanqua plants which were rescued, removed and cared for while the new works on Gordon Station were being carried out. It is good to think that our FOKE knowledge and lobbying has saved some of these plants from being destroyed.

With my best wishes to you all for a very Happy Christmas and a fulfilling New Year.

Kind regards,

Kathy Cowley

PRESIDENT

*Our very best wishes
to you and
your family
for a
Merry Christmas
And a
Happy New Year!*



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Check your facts, Mr Daley!

The Leader of the Opposition Michael Daley said on the ABC on taking up the Leader position that his first edict will be lifting the standards of behaviour. If Mr Daley is to be believed or trusted as a potential Premier of NSW then he needs to heed his words and not only lift his game but get his facts right when making public statements which are clearly not true.

Having been the Shadow Minister for Planning prior to being elected as Leader of the Opposition, you would think he would have close and reliable access to the housing data which has been requested and provided to FOKE by the Department of Planning and the Greater Sydney Commission!

Mr Daley stated to Wendy Harmer on ABC Breakfast in November that the North Shore had got off "scott free" in providing new homes, which is patently untrue!

Ku-ring-gai has approved nearly 12,000 new dwellings since the Labor Government imposed the 10,000 new dwelling target to be achieved from 2004-2031. Ku-ring-gai was one of the first council areas in Sydney to be targeted with a Residential Development Strategy in 2002 by the then Labor Government. Ku-ring-gai Council achieved this 10,000 new dwelling target in less than 14 years and have now been tasked by the Liberal appointed Greater Sydney Commission to provide a further 4000 new dwellings in the next five years!

In the last 10 years Ku-ring-gai has experienced a 25% population increase. Over that time Ku-ring-gai citizens have experienced no increase in services or new infrastructure and approximately 20% loss in train services to the North Shore line! The Pacific Highway has become gridlocked and our schools are overcrowded.

The current Ku-ring-gai Local Centres and Principal Local Environmental Plans (LEPs) are pre-

dicted to yield approximately a further 4000- 6000 new dwellings in the commercial areas in 6 Local Centres in Ku-ring-gai. The 6 targeted centres are Roseville, Lindfield, Gordon, Pymble, St Ives and Turramurra. Considerable areas of land in these 6 local centres have already been zoned and gazetted for higher density commercial/residential development and not yet taken up.

Has Mr Daley not noticed the angry Rallies occurring in Crows Nest and St Leonards objecting to the 50, 27 and 18 storey apartment blocks proposed along the Pacific Highway? North Shore densities under these plans will exceed those of some of the world's largest cities. With infrastructure lagging behind as usual.

It would appear the Leader for the Oppositions' statement on ABC radio recently, was entirely misleading and political, designed to appeal to his safe Labor constituency and not the citizens on the North Shore.

So the question is, will Mr Daley become a fairer Labor Premier to all NSW citizens if elected, or will it be back to the old, biased days of Labor?



Congratulations State Rail for saving and replanting Professor Waterhouse's heritage camellia hedge at Gordon Railway Station.

Recreation in Bushland—a Trojan Horse?

Ku-ring-gai Council is currently promoting more 'recreational use' of our bushland reserves. FOKE has real concerns that these high impact sports will seriously threaten Ku-ring-gai's natural environment by clearing, fragmenting and degrading sensitive bushland that will seriously threaten Ku-ring-gai's birds and wildlife whose habitat is being coveted by recreational users.

Ku-ring-gai Council signalled its support for high impact sports by first inviting sports users to workshops promoting these sports followed by invitations to those with environmental concerns. Some of the high impact sports include trail running, rock climbing, abseiling and mountain biking.

The National Parks Association has raised an alarm regarding Orange, where the Orange City Council has supported the construction of 60 kilometres of mountain bike trails in the Mount Canobolas State Conservation Areas – supposedly a protected site. The mountain bike industry is also pushing for 82 kilometres of constructed bike tracks in the Illawarra Escarpment Conservation Areas that will clear up to 16 hectares of rare and sensitive rainforest.

High impact sports are no more appropriate in bushland reserves than clearing them for netball courts or new ovals. Illegal bike tracks do exist in bushland reserves and there are concerns that some of these tracks may be used as an excuse for bike track industries to justify further and more intrusive bike track construction in bushland areas.

It is important that this recreational policy is not allowed to appropriate and destroy Ku-ring-gai's precious bushland, a vital habitat for many threatened birds and wildlife.

Take Action!

Council needs to hear from residents. Please email or call to let them know your concerns.

Population Policy or Pre-Election Mirage?

Since our 2017 AGM when Dick Smith spoke of the need for a Population Policy and limits to what our cities can absorb each year, the concerns have only increased and are peaking in the pre-election promises of both our State and Federal leaders.

In October, Premier Berejiklian has called for a halving of NSW's migrant intake, with the debate on population policy now resting on congestion, liveability, housing affordability and infrastructure.

Premier Berejiklian has now appointed an expert panel to develop a population policy for NSW. "It is becoming increasingly clear that the current high rates of population growth are putting even more pressure on our infrastructure. It is now time for us to take stock and get ahead."

The Premier renewed her call for net overseas migration levels to return to more sustainable Howard-era rates when NSW net overseas migration was steady at around 45,000 a year, rather than the current 100,000.

With both Victoria and NSW lobbying for a review of immigration levels, Premier Morrison is expected to cut the number of migrants coming to Australia by up to 30,000.

However, this debate cannot ignore more than 1 million temporary working visas and 350,000 international student visa holders currently requiring a home while in Australia. A population policy without a reduction in the number of future visa holders will not assist in addressing the congestion, liveability and housing needs of residents.

It is time for a constructive debate over immigration policy in the lead-up to the State and Federal elections. What is required is not just promises, but a coherent set of proposals and timetable of how this will occur. Promises, without concrete plans, will be futile. We have been there before on this issue.

Fighting to retain Heritage Conservation Areas (HCAs)

The process of putting in place adequate HCAs in Ku-ring-gai remains, unfortunately, a slow one.

In 2002 Council was about to adopt a significant number of HCAs (then called Urban Conservation Areas) when, in May of that year, the State Labor government suddenly withdrew its delegation to Council to proceed with any HCAs. This was to allow unrestricted rezoning for increased residential densities, i.e. the demolition of Ku-ring-gai's traditional homes for the construction of apartment blocks.

It was not until 2010, and once rezoning planning instruments for apartment blocks were in place, that the State government returned to Council its HCA delegation. In 2011 Council staff decided to "update" its HCA studies.

However, Council staff retained two separate HCA consultants – one for the South areas, of Roseville to Gordon, and a different one for North areas, of Pymble to Wahroonga. The northern areas criteria were applied in such a way as to minimise the extent of HCAs, and favour potential future development. The inevitable results were minimal HCAs in the North.

As a result of concerns raised by the National Trust in March 2011 regarding deficiencies in this approach,

Council initiated two separate studies by external heritage planners.

These identified appropriate HCA outcomes in the north areas, and these were placed on public exhibition in 2015 and 2017. Notwithstanding this, Council proceeded, this year, to adopt only some of the exhibited HCA areas.

In part, Council bowed to some objectors claiming that HCAs involve heritage listing, prevent alterations or additions, and affect property values.

In fact, HCAs do not involve heritage listing, or prevent alterations or additions; and published studies have shown a positive effect on property values.

HCAs protect the valued streetscapes and character which attract residents to Ku-ring-gai. These are attributes and amenity which can easily disappear, as is now so evident - hence the vital role of HCAs.

Council should continue the examination of potential future HCAs and actively promote a proper community understanding of the benefits of a HCA to both the area and the individual residents.



Killara Urban Conservation Area