

FOKE Talk

Time NSW Planned for Sustainability

In 2005 The New South Wales Government issued a planning policy known as the Metropolitan Strategy that planned to locate some 70% of new dwellings within existing communities (infill) by setting housing targets for councils.

Developers seized on this to impose more and more high-rise onto communities. The government periodically increases the targets. Over time the ability of councils to conform to the wishes of their communities through their local environment plans has been eroded. Decisions on planning applications have been taken out of council hands and given to government appointed planning panels. Developers try to avoid public consultation on proposals by demanding “certainty”. Time limits on assessment proposals limit the accuracy of panel assessments.

The March 2023 state elections provide an excellent opportunity for our communities to clearly express their view on overdevelopment to political candidates.

The strenuous efforts of developer organisations to promote replacement of low density dwellings with high-rise need to be countered. The exorbitant profits these developers reap from selling high-rise units provide them with huge resources for their campaigns. This becomes a never-ending cycle - profits funding advocacy for high-rise leading to more high-rise leading to more profits.

The Property Council has issued a manifesto directed at the major parties aimed at pushing more density into communities. They urge that



councils not be allowed to fall behind on targets for higher densities and a “red card” system be used to identify such councils. The Urban Taskforce spares no effort in belittling to politicians those who oppose their campaigns, terming them “NIMBYs”. Never mind what people want.

For most of us, our homes represent the biggest single financial investment we are ever likely to own. We are legitimately concerned with what happens in our street and neighbourhood such as road congestion, parking problems and destruction of neighbourhood character. We did not vote for the changes being advocated by developers.

Developer arguments favouring high-density are easily countered. No one can point to any high-density city in the world that does not suffer from the ills the developer lobby claims high-density will alleviate. Research shows high-density

increases housing cost, reduces housing choice, increases traffic congestion, increases average journey times and there is more energy consumed per person.

The claim that infrastructure cost is saved by retrofitting high-density onto suburbs originally designed for low density is not valid as the infrastructure designed for the original density becomes hopelessly overloaded. Our congested infrastructure makes this plain for all to see.

Planning based on top-down developer-influenced bureaucracy is completely unacceptable— eg., the attempt to force unwilling councils to amalgamate.

We need a planning system based on a community-up strategy. Planning should be initiated at a local level. People should be allowed and encouraged to consider the future of their area. Such local level

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

We hope you spent a very relaxing and enjoyable time with your families over Christmas and New Year.

We are looking forward to continuing on behalf of our members to help protect Ku-ring-gai by taking on issues likely to adversely affect our community during the coming year.

FOKE held a webinar on its Ku-ring-gai GeoRegion project on 7 February 2023. Guest speakers included Ursula Bonzol (FOKE), Dr John Martin (STEP) and Angus Robertson (geologist and a long standing member of FOKE). The proposal has received in principle support from the Geological Survey of NSW, Hornsby, Ku-ring-gai, & Northern Beaches Councils, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, and local MPs. A video of the FOKE Ku-ring-gai GeoRegion webinar is available on the FOKE website.

Ursula Bonzol FOKE committee member has requested a leave of absence from the FOKE committee to fulfil some family projects. We wish Ursula Bonzol well and thank her for driving not only the Ku-ring-gai GeoRegion project but in her dedication to writing many of FOKE's submissions. We thank Ursula Bonzol for her enormous work and dedicated efforts since joining the committee in 2009 and wish her well as she takes leave from the Committee.

Janine Kitson will take Ursula's place on the Ku-ring-gai GeoRegion committee and FOKE member Angus Robinson will lead the committee.

With the State Government election being held this month - overdevelopment, corruption, climate change and planning

issues will be some of the key state election issues again.

As with the Federal elections there will be a number of Independent candidates standing in several parts of the North Shore. Committee member Janine Kitson will be standing as an Independent in Davidson and we wish her well for her election.

Should Labor win the State Election there is concern that Ku-ring-gai will again be targeted for thousands of additional dwellings within our heritage and significant endangered ecological environment. The last Labor Government's plans allowed 16,000 new dwellings and a 25% population increase in Ku-ring-gai without any additional services or infrastructure.

Tony Rescei, President of Save Our Suburbs, has summarised some of the state planning issues leading up to the elections in the article he has written for the Newsletter. We have also summarised some of the issues that the Nature Conservation Council has asked member groups such as FOKE to support.

We recently submitted a written objection to the lease proposals for Gardens of Stone State Conservation Area to the NSW Minister for the Environment James Griffin, which we have posted on the FOKE website.

We look forward to welcoming you to our AGM on 24 May at 7.30pm and the National Trust Heritage Festival Events that we are organising. See page 3 of this newsletter for dates and events.

Wishing you all a very happy and healthy 2023.

Kind regards

Kathy

ADVANCE NOTICE

FOKE AGM

The FOKE AGM will be on
Wednesday 24 May 2022

Killara Uniting Church Hall,
Killara 7.30 pm
Details to follow

KU-RING-GAI GEOREGION WEBINAR

If you missed attending this webinar on 7 Feb 23 a recording of it is now available on the [FOKE website](#). Listen to the Ku-ring-gai GeoRegion Steering Committee explain this amazing FOKE project.

Join FOKE Now!

www.foke.org.au

FRIENDS OF KU-RING-GAI ENVIRONMENT INC.

Established 1994

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Christiane Berlioz

Ursula Bonzol (on leave)

Carolyn Darby

Janet Harwood

Denise Hendy

Dinah Warner



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Jan Langley Sustainability Award



Congratulations to Kianne Wu who was the student recipient of Jan Langley Award 2022 from East Lindfield Public School.

Jan Langley, a former parent at Lindfield East Public School made a significant contribution to the school and also was a member of FOKE.

Jean Posen Environment Award

Congratulations to Freya Bartlett who was Lindfield Public School's student recipient of Jean Posen Environment Award 2022.

Freya was a particularly active member of the school's 'Clean Earth' Committee who monitored energy usage and encouraged the responsible use of power in classrooms by turning off lights and devices when not in use. She was part of a team who were awarded the Clean Earth Trophy for sustainable practices in the school.

The Award remembers Jean Posen a long standing member of the FOKE Committee and who was passionate about protecting Ku-ring-gai's environment.



FOKE
Heritage Festival Events
2023

Join FOKE's walks that celebrate the [Australian Heritage Festival](#)

Ku-ring-gai GeoRegion Walks



West Pymble Bicentennial Park Walk

This short walk will be led by geologist Dr John Martyn highlighting its basalt dyke.

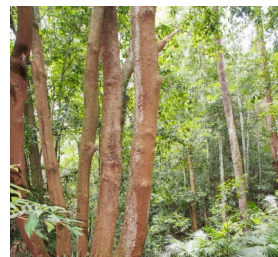
Date: **Sunday 16 April, 2023**

Time: 10am-12noon Cost: Free

Meet at: Entrance to West Pymble Bicentennial Park next to carpark via Prince of Wales Drive off Lofberg Rd (near Ryde Rd)

Bring: Water, snack and wear good walking shoes

Ticket Bookings: [Humanitix](#)



Browns Field Walk, Wahroonga

Learn about this remarkable diatrema led by geologist Dr John Martyn.

Date: **Sunday 23 April, 2023**

Time: 10am-12noon Cost: Free

Meet at: Entrance to Browns Field from Campbell Drive, Wahroonga (off Fox Valley Rd)

Bring: Water, snack and wear good walking shoes

Ticket Bookings: [Humanitix](#)



Sheldon Forest Walk, Turramurra

Angus M. Robinson, one of Australia's leading geotourism proponents, will share his geological insights into one of Ku-ring-gai's rarest urban forests.

Date: **Sunday 30 April, 2023**

Time: 10 am-12 noon Cost: Free

Meet at: Sheldon Forest, enter via Warragal Road and meet near FOKE signs

Bring: Water, snack and wear good walking shoes

Ticket Bookings: [Humanitix](#)



Biodiversity + geodiversity + cultural heritage = Ku-ring-gai GeoRegion Talk & Luncheon

Dr Peter Mitchell OAM will outline the natural & cultural history of Ku-ring-gai and why a Ku-ring-gai GeoRegion is a 'no threat' good idea!

Date: **Sunday 7 May 2023**

Time: 11.45am for 12noon start. Finish at 1pm.

Followed by lunch at Roseville Club Bistrot - at own expense (1-2.30pm)

Meet at: The Roseville Club, 64 Pacific Hwy, Roseville

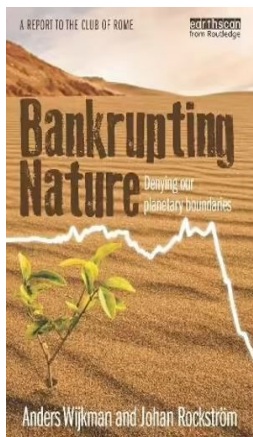
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considerations could then be integrated upwards to form an overall State strategic plan.

Our wonderful unique Australian way of life is being irrevocably destroyed on the altar of developer greed. Politicians and bureaucrats are smothered by developer cloud-cuckoo land fantasies.

The state election provides us with the opportunity to counter the self-serving developer falsehoods. Let us make the most of it!

Book Reviews:



Bankrupting Nature Denying Planetary Boundaries

In 1972 the Club of Rome caused a stir in conservation and political circles alike.

Its report 'The Limits to Growth' concluded that without substantial changes in resource consumption: *the most probable result will be a rather sudden and uncontrollable decline in both population and industrial capacity.*

'Limits to Growth' remains on track with its sobering predictions that human society and planet Earth remain on an unsustainable and destructive course.

The book's premise is that humans are rapidly approaching the limits to the Earth's finite capacity to support the projected population.

This problem has become more serious with the impacts of climate change, diminishing natural resources, capacity to feed the growing population, increasing levels of wealth and consumption from developing nations, and our inability to save what is left of our natural biodiversity.

Significant and urgent changes are needed to the way humans interact not only with Nature but the wider reserve base of the planet.

The assumptions that underlie measures of success and growth are no longer fit for purpose. GDP economic growth is no longer relevant when much of the growth comes from utilisation of the "commons" which is not costed into the measurement of growth and is increasingly constrained.

Since 1972 many other books have been published by the Club of Rome about the limits to growth.

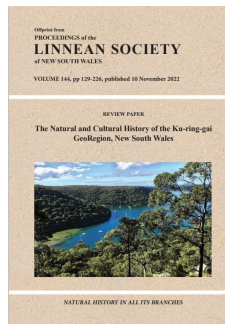
A number of possible solutions are offered.

However these are only possible with global change and agreement and hence come at a cost – both monetary and social.

'Bankrupting Nature' is strongly recommended.

Its words echo powerfully:

The lack of global governance to deal with a whole range of international problems is profoundly serious. 'Actions' alone will not be sufficient. We need to adopt strategies for planetary stewardship.



This Linnean Society's publication '[The Natural and Cultural History of the Ku-ring-gai GeoRegion, NSW](#)' outlines the geological, biological and cultural forces that have shaped the northern Sydney's sandstone landscape with its unique and rare flora and fauna; and Aboriginal heritage.

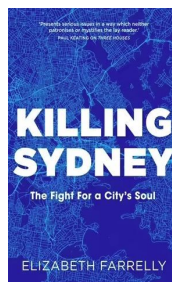
This report is an essential first step to call on the NSW Government and Federal Government to nominate the Ku-ring-gai GeoRegion to UNESCO as an Aspiring Global Geopark. If successful it will be one of the first UNESCO Geoparks in Australia.

FOKE initiated the Ku-ring-gai GeoRegion project in 2018 as a way of promoting the national and indeed international significance of Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park—Australia's second oldest national park (gazetted in 1894) and one of the world's oldest national parks.



The Nature Conservation Council of NSW's policy platform for the 2023 election '[Our Environment Our Future](#)' outlines priority policies for safeguarding and restoring NSW's environment.

The NSW environment is facing unprecedented environmental challenges: carbon pollution and the dangerous impacts of climate change; loss and fragmentation of native vegetation and wildlife habitat; declining biodiversity and record numbers of threatened species; degradation of rivers, wetlands and water catchments; contamination from pollution and toxic chemicals; unsustainable consumption; and production of vast amounts of waste.



Architect Elizabeth Farrelly reminds us about how overdevelopment is killing Sydney with its never ending motorway construction, loss of trees, sell off of public land and buildings, heritage demolition, ill-considered developments blighting the Sydney Harbour such as at Barangaroo and Darling Harbour.

Perhaps we need a new book called 'Killing Ku-ring-gai'?