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BUSHRANGER

Newsletter of the
Lane Cove Bushland & Conservation Society Inc

July 2021

Next meeting 7 – 9 pm

Tuesday 10 August 2021

Lane Cove Library Meeting Room / Zoom?

Meeting venue to be confirmed closer to the date

Look! Hygrocybae of Lane Cove Bushland Park

Fungi appear above ground from mid-May to mid-July and sometimes into August. **Conservation status NSW: Critically Endangered Ecological Community**

NAIDOC week 2021 online forum: 'Healing Country! Challenging concepts of European land ownership via First Nations farming partnerships in NSW. [Watch](#)

Tuesday 20 July, 7- 8.30pm -Free Online Event – Sydney's Last Koalas

Join WEPA, Save Sydney's Koalas and the Wilderness Society Sydney North online for a special evening with koala experts and documentary film makers trying to save the last healthy and expanding colony of Koalas in Sydney. Click to book your place: <https://sydneylastkoalas.eventbrite.com>



Guided Bushwalk: Sunday August 15, 9:30 – 12:30 pm

Field of Mars Reserve, Lane Cove Mangrove Walkway and Lane Cove Valley Walk to Sugar Loaf Point on the western bank of Lane Cove River

Bookings open in August

Patrick Spiers, a teacher from the 'Field of Mars' will guide the walk. Watch our website and Bushranger newsletter.

COMMUNITY PANEL VISION for LANE COVE GOLF COURSE

The Report by the Community Panel organised by Lane Cove Council to determine: **'the best use of the outdoor area on Lane Cove Golf Course to meet our community needs now and in the future'** is on Council's website. A panel of thirty-two people, run by Mosaic Lab, met on four occasions to discuss information and deliberate in groups. Stakeholders were invited to contribute. The Panel has issued its report with a Vision statement and ten criteria - which, hopefully, will be used as a guide for future actions:

"Lane Cove Golf Course provides an accessible, sustainable golf and greenspace for the current and evolving community to enjoy for generations to come."

After gaining insights into the level of subsidy Council was prepared to contribute, the LC Golf Club Board decided not to proceed with taking over the running of the course, but instead offered an increased level of payment per member and share of competition fees, due to the numerous unknowns around the precinct development. The Lane Cove Golf Club Newsletter- Vol.16/No6 JULY is [found here](#).

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Sports & Recreation Facility on the Golf Course Clubhouse site



Construction is a two/part three storey/mezzanine multi-purpose sport facility comprising 6,800m² of GFA and ground level carpark for over 200 cars.

Submissions are closed for this DA64/2021. 84 trees will be removed from the Clubhouse site - the majority being mature and indigenous to Lane Cove. Not mentioned in this DA is that 40+ more trees, threatened species habitat could be taken to widen the access road, essential to enter the new carpark but NOT subject to a DA. The entire Golf Course precinct has been divided into 3 parts and two separate DA's that are inextricably interconnected and should be considered together:

- **The Sports and Recreation / club house / restaurant and entertainment building,**
- **The existing golf course, its uses and its relationship to the S & R facility and**
- **Transport access into the Golf Club affecting Stevenson Street (DA for the roundabout at corner of Northwood/River Rd)**

Council's 'Community Panel' made recommendations to Council about the best use of the golf course 'greens' site but this specifically excludes the Sports and Recreation facility or the new roundabout to feed increased traffic and buses from River Rd Northwood into the Sport Centre via quiet Stevenson Street by enlarging it, so predicted to remove mature trees in Stevenson Street.

Where will wildlife go with the lost a lot so many mature trees, such as the Angophoras and a Blackbutt along the River Road bush strip? While the DA landscape plan proposes 158 new trees, they take up to 20 years to be useful and up to 50yrs to form hollows. And Council committed to Climate Emergency action.

The as yet undecided fate of 266 Longueville Rd (former Music & Cultural centre/ Women's

Bowling site) connected by a wildlife corridor of mature native trees to Stevenson St and the Golf course, could also see many more mature native trees destroyed.

The Society would like members to follow the agendas (listed Thursday before Council's Monday monthly meeting- little time to digest!) and Minutes of Council meeting's decisions, found easily accessed on their website, so as to input. Council elections are 4th September – Covid allowing!

Due to the impacts of the Covid outbreak, Council granted the Society an extension to the Submission date to this DA which can be read on our website.



http://lcc-web1.lanecove.nsw.gov.au/InfoCouncil/Open/2021/04/CNL_19042021_AGN_WEB.htm

COUNCIL MEETINGS & THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

DRAFT DOG STRATEGY - bushland habitat for wildlife?

The Society is happy that all 8 Councillors voted for the Motion (below) of Cllrs. Vissel and Brent at Council's Meeting - 21 June 2021. The Minutes [are found here](#).

The Motion was that:

1. Council adopt for the purpose of public exhibition, the Draft Dog Friendly Strategy;
2. Council undertake community consultation for a period of six (6) weeks ... as per the report; and
3. Following the exhibition period, the Draft Dog Strategy, together with a report on any submissions received and any proposed amendments, be considered by Council.

As the LC population has grown from 33,233 in 2011 to 40,534 (2021), demand for open space by a variety of users has followed, especially with the pandemic. A consultant was engaged to develop the Strategy in early 2021.

The Society has always had concerns with the lack of protection in bushland areas for native species due to pets freely roaming off-lead or hunting, despite current signage. It is perhaps not understood that the mere smell of a dog in bushland causes native animals to abandon their habitat, perhaps even a nest. Funding local Rangers to enforce the requirements (dogs on leads in LC bushland) and expected standards of behaviour of dogs and their owners in public places is expensive, so we applaud the Council's new efforts.

Stakeholder meetings were held with the **Bushland Management Advisory Committee**, **Lane Cove Bushland & Conservation Society**, sporting groups and the Lane Cove Dog Lovers Association. We strongly promoted the idea of education, classification and signage with the aim of increasing education and the environmental significance of **bushland for wildlife**. National Parks 'Wildlife Refuge' or 'Sanctuary' signage at entrances (such as for Bushland Park) effectively states the underlying message.



National Park sign at an entrance to Lane Cove Bushland Park

Over 6,000 dogs are now registered as residing in the LGA, creating a need for Council to plan for the provision for dog exercise areas in the future. We await the formulation of Council's first 'Light Spillage' policy so must be vigilant that the 'Recommendation' below to "extend" night-time light for dog parks located next to bushland doesn't degrade habitat for nocturnal species.

Key recommendations of interest to the Society:

- Consideration will be given to classifying bushland reserves as wildlife protection areas by establishing two categories – dogs prohibited and dogs on-lead to increase the environmental significance of bushland for wildlife
- **Public lighting** has the potential to extend the use of dog parks. A public lighting trial will be investigated for the dog park at Blackman Park
- The location and content of all dog related signage will be audited and reviewed
- A comprehensive Information, Education and Communications Plan will be prepared that identifies the role and best use of each means of communicating with the community
- Interpretive signage that explains the environmental significance of bushland areas and their sensitivity to a range of risks including dogs should be considered at the entries to the bushland reserves.

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DRAFT CLIMATE RESILIENCE PLAN - Sydney's weather is changing...

The more frequent and intense extreme weather events projected in the State of the Climate report produced by the CSIRO and Bureau of Meteorology will directly or indirectly impact the Lane Cove community, for example the 2020 heatwaves and bushfires and the 2021 flooding resulted in climate shocks.

The Draft CRP (AT-1) sets goals, targets and will guide the implementation of actions over the next five years to respond to the challenges posed by a changing climate. A total of 6 Councillors voted for (with Clrs Bennison and Brooks-Horn against) the Motion of Clrs Zbik and Vissel:

- 1. The Draft CRP to be placed on public exhibition for six (6) weeks ... etc. and**
- 2. A further report be submitted to Council following the public exhibition period.**

[http://ecouncil.lanecove.nsw.gov.au/TRIM/documents_TE/790093778/TRIM_Draft%20Climate%20Resilience%20Plan%202021-2026%20%20designed%20version\)_1536902.PDF](http://ecouncil.lanecove.nsw.gov.au/TRIM/documents_TE/790093778/TRIM_Draft%20Climate%20Resilience%20Plan%202021-2026%20%20designed%20version)_1536902.PDF)

A sample of the 48 priority actions include building resilience neighbourhoods, developing a resilience toolkit and investigating the use of an app to increase social cohesion so as to increase the number of resilient-ready residents in the Lane Cove LGA.

Submissions close 5:00pm, Wed. 4 August 2021

DRAFT LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY

We are most grateful to member Margaret Bergomi, an expert in Planning, who wrote our Submission to the Housing Strategy. [It can be found here](#) on our website. **We agreed with Council that no up-zoning of land for housing was required but found that Council overlooked bushland's contribution to liveability.**

Council is preparing this Strategy to respond to NSW State Government requirements to plan for increased housing over the next 20 years in

accordance with targets. Community consultation was for six (6) weeks. ***"We strongly recommend that the document be reviewed to make sure that it reinforces the need to protect, maintain and enhance the characteristics that make Lane Cove special, including its bushland, foreshore areas, and leafy quality, etc. These values should be more clearly spelled out through the Strategy."***

The draft Strategy and related documents are found here: [Council Meeting 17 May 2021](#)

Preserve Royal North Shore Hospital land for clinical use only

Petition re Herbert Street Precinct development –[click here](#)

This Petition to the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly (NSW) brings community concerns about the Herbert Street Precinct development to their attention. The NSW Government is proposing to redevelop 2.27 hectares of land within the southern campus of the RNSH, along Herbert Street adjacent to the St Leonards Train and Bus Interchange.

About 95% of this development precludes future use of this land for patient related health care by

the hospital as it primarily proposes building residential accommodation, a primary school, commercial offices and retail shops.

The RNSH campus is one of the smallest Teaching Hospital Campuses in NSW and has only a small amount of remaining land still available to expand the hospital as the population increases.

In respect for the needs of future generations the petition, in part asks the Legislative Assembly to:

- 1. Cease the proposed Precinct development and**
- 2. Preserve RNSH land for future hospital growth.**

Blue Mountains first in Australia to adopt 'Rights of Nature'

At the national local government conference in Canberra a few weeks ago, Blue Mountains Councillors spoke enthusiastically about how their GM and council are incorporating 'rights of nature' into council operations, DAs, planning policies etc. re-orienting its relationship with nature from an essentially exploitative one and boosting its commitment to becoming a Sustainable City.

Mayor Mark Greenhill said by acknowledging RON as a guiding principle in its overarching high level strategic planning documents, Council is making a powerful statement about its intent to be a best practice, environmentally responsible organisation in all aspects of its operations and decision making." [Read the entire article here](#)

Threatened Species Strategy Fails to Meet Targets

The Coalition Government's strategy to save Australia's endangered wildlife has failed to meet targets to stem the decline of many endangered mammals, plants and birds, including the red-tailed black cockatoo and the eastern barred bandicoot. [Read the Guardian article here.](#)

The final-year report of the five-year threatened species strategy, [found here](#), introduced under the former environment minister Greg Hunt, has found five out of the strategy's 13 targets were met, three partially met and five unmet.

Unmet Targets include three that aimed to improve the trajectory of 20 birds, 20 mammals and 30 plants.



A target to cull 2 million feral cats across Australia was considered partially met at more than 1.5 million, but was not met on islands.

Bob Campbell Oval – turf update

A press release issued by Natural Grass at Bob Campbell Inc (NG Inc) forwarded by the GCA.

"In response to a letter of demand threatening legal proceedings issued on 12 June by solicitors for NG Inc, Lane Cove Council (Council) has revoked its own environmental approval for its plans for Bob Campbell Oval, including the synthetic turf sports ground, and has undertaken not to rely further on this approval.

Since 2020, Council has been warned in very clear terms, in hundreds of detailed written submissions from its community, of the need to address the significant environmental impacts of the use of synthetic turf in an environmentally sensitive location.

Council's mandatory environmental approval of its plan for Bob Campbell Oval was released on 24 May. It was immediately apparent that the approval had failed to consider a number of significant environmental impacts, chief of which is the risk of pollution of the harbour and tidal mud flats.

On its website, Lane Cove Council states that its decision to revoke its approval was prompted by the fact that the approval contained a technical error as to management of contaminated land. Whilst this issue is important, it is just one of many serious environmental questions that were not addressed in the original approval and were clearly outlined to Council in the 5 page letter from the solicitors for NG Inc.

*The complex issues that remain to be addressed by Council require detailed and careful consideration – something that should not be rushed. **The General Manager's letter states that in the coming weeks "the Council will be making a fresh decision on whether or not to approve the carrying out of the redevelopment of Bob Campbell Oval".** NG Inc expects Council to acknowledge the environmental risks of synthetic turf and cancel its plans for a synthetic ground."*

All enquiries about the activities of Natural Grass at Bob Campbell Inc. should be directed to Martin Cunningham, President, on naturalgrassatbco@gmail.com

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