

Media Release Lane Cove Council

22 March 2011

COUNCIL DEMANDS STATE GOVERNMENT ACTION

Lane Cove Council worked closely with its community over a number of years on the development of a Comprehensive Local Environmental Plan (LEP) to guide land use decisions in the area.

Council was awarded an RH Dougherty Award for communication for the effort put into consulting with our community on the LEP.

Whilst satisfied generally with the NSW Department of Planning's response to its draft LEP there was disagreement over the Department of Planning's desire to rezone one section of the Mowbray Road precinct adjoining Batten Reserve to high density residential resulting in another 2500 dwellings.

Batten Reserve runs the full length of the southern portion of the area concerned and is a highly valued ecological community containing two endangered forest communities, a variety of threatened species and a wildlife corridor.

The NSW Minister for Planning however went ahead on Department of Planning advice and gazetted the Lane Cove LEP with this disputed area included.

Council, concerned that a range of traffic and bushfire risk issues had not been properly considered, had requested the Department of Planning to carry out an appropriate study. The resulting study, known as the Urbanhorizons report suggests that evacuation of residents in the high density zone in the event of a bush fire could be made less disastrous if:

- The lower limbs of trees up to a height of 2m are **REMOVED**
- The tree canopy cover along Stringybark Creek in Batten Reserve is **REDUCED by up to 85%** and
- The understorey along the southern side of Gordon Crescent and Kullah Parade are **REGULARLY MOWN**

The Urbanhorizons Report also highlighted that the increase in traffic movements may create delays in the event of evacuation as a result of the proposed high density development. Such delays not only affect bushfires but also affect all other emergency evacuations.

Peter Brown, General Manager Lane Cove Council said, "In short, if you don't mind the bushfire roaring up the gully while you are evacuating, or constantly removing the vegetation along significant portions of the endangered forests (which includes



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threatened species) then it should all be ok as long as the State Government's concerned to approve high density developments in this area."

Council is in strong disagreement and calls on the incoming state government to downzone the area as a matter of extreme urgency. For more information go to www.lanecove.nsw.gov.au



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