

Geoff Brown
President
Western Sydney Conservation Alliance Inc
PO Box 4134
WERRINGTON NSW 2747

The Hon Carmel Tebbutt
Deputy Premier
Minister for Climate Change and the Environment

RE: DECC acquisition of the former Air Services Australia site at Cranebrook

Dear Minister,

You would be aware of the community campaign seeking that the entire Cranebrook site be saved from development in order to protect its unique natural and Aboriginal heritage values. You would be aware that the entire site has been identified by DECC as a Western Sydney Priority Conservation Area which means its conservation is necessary for the NSW Government to meet the conditions of Biodiversity Certification of the Sydney Growth Centres. The protection of the entire site is also needed for DECC to successfully implement its upcoming Recovery Plan for the Cumberland Plain.

Penrith Council has confirmed its intent to rezone the entire site for conservation in Stage 2 of its draft Penrith LEP. Council has written to you about this. It is known that Penrith Council has told you that its preferred zoning is an E1 (National Park). Such a zoning can only proceed if the NSW Government acquires the entire site. Attached is a copy of the May 4 resolution of Penrith Council which clearly indicates Councils position.

The Western Sydney Conservation Alliance successfully lobbied the ALP leading up to the 2007 Federal Election to commit \$15 million towards the protection of this site. WSCA also called for Commonwealth land at Shanes Park and Orchard Hills to be gifted to the NSW Government - we now know that the 558 ha Shanes Park land is being gifted to the NSW Government - which means DECC will take ownership of a major reserve for next to no cost. Peter Garrett's Department (DEWHA) is committed to using the \$15 million to assist protect Cranebrook and DECC can access this funding through the National Reserve System Program. The NRS program assists the acquisition of land by providing 66% of the acquisition price and the applicant (in this case DECC) providing the remainder.

Minister there is an expectation that DECC will acquire the entire site for nature conservation. This needs to be done ASAP as the site currently sits unmanaged and its heritage values are being eroded due to a lack of active management, which DECC are best placed to provide. I urge you to assist Penrith Council to achieve an E1 zoning for the entire site by entering into negotiations with IFC Capital Ltd, the land owner, for a sale to DECC.

It will be a terrible look for the NSW Government and for local members if Councils E1 zoning is scuttled by DECC due to inaction and squabbling over funding (such as with the Federal Government). It is now up to the NSW Government to do the right thing.

I seek a written response to this correspondence ASAP.

Regards,

Geoff Brown
President
WSCA