



28th June 2013

New Planning System
Department of Planning and Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
Sydney 2001

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Mosman Parks and Bushland Association Inc, originally The Ashton Park Association, was formed in 1964.

One of the aims of the Association is:

- To advocate good principles of town planning especially insofar as they impact on bushland, parks and public open space.

It is therefore of concern to the Association that the radical changes to the planning system of NSW should continue to protect the environment and the public amenity of parks and bushland in Mosman. We recognise the need to expedite the planning process in an age of increasing population and housing need. However along with those needs comes an increased need to preserve public amenity and the environment for that increased population.

We have some doubts about how the White Paper and draft Planning Bill proposals will continue to give the same levels of protection to the environment and to public open space and bushland.

Our concerns are:

1. The White Paper talks of sustainable development but appears to have lost sight of the Ecology. Ecologically sustainable development is defined in the EPA Act and should be a basic principle of the planning process.
2. Existing environmental protections such as the SEPPS should be carried over into the new system. The SEPPS and other planning instruments and policies have worked well and are working well. They should be maintained in their present form.
3. The strategic planning principles in the draft Planning Bill are too vague. There should be specific environmental and social outcomes for example recognition and protection of bushland, biodiversity and open space.

4. The White paper talks of community involvement at the strategic planning stage but is vague about how it will be achieved. Transparent assessment and analyses should occur in the development of the strategic plans.

5. Environmental zones: We note that the zones that are of particular relevance to the Mosman Parks & Bushland Association (E2 and RE1) will remain. However we are concerned that reducing other environment protection zones will have a negative impact on the natural environment and biodiversity in NSW.

6. Particularly dangerous to democratic public interest are the arbitrary powers to be given to the Minister to overthrow the provisions of a local plan without community consultation. (s3.12 Planning Bill)

7. Changes to appeal rights and judicial review reduce transparency and public accountability. These changes are not in the public interest and will reduce public confidence in the planning system.

8. Code Assessment: With a target of 80% of development to be determined as complying or code development there is a danger that the environment, heritage and public amenity will receive scant consideration. Where development is in an environmentally sensitive area (for instance where bushland or waterways could be affected) code assessment is inappropriate

In summary Mosman Parks and Bushland is disappointed in the White Paper and draft Planning Bill.

- The Association would like to see legislation that will protect the environment and public amenity.
- Plans and planning instruments should not be subject to ministerial discretion.
- Judicial review should not be weakened and appeal rights should be maintained.
- Existing environmental planning instruments such as the SEPPS should be maintained.

Yours sincerely,



Kate Eccles
President