

PAC – Proposed Sydney Zoo
14 December 2016
Comment by Wayne Olling

When Premier Bob Carr announced the establishment of Western Sydney Parklands in 2004 he said the land secured by the government would never be developed.

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/National/Park-to-be-lungs-of-Sydneys-west-Carr/2004/12/04/1101923375970.html>

However, the government was already looking for land in Blacktown LGA to be sold off for development to derive income for the Parklands. The residential development that is Bungarribee and the industrial development that is Huntington West resulted in the loss of more than 100ha of land that was supposed to be never developed.

Later, a Bill passed through Parliament permitting Western Sydney Parklands Trust to hive off up to 2% of its land under management to develop it and keep the Trust financially secure. Part of that 2% of land comprises land proposed for the Sydney Zoo.

This land, alongside Eastern Creek, was the site of NSW Government approved activity by Greening Australia and community volunteers more than 10 years ago. Community volunteers responded to the call to help our natural environment by engaging in revegetation works on this site.

Now, as if to slap the community in the face and demean volunteer engagement in conservation works the NSW Government via Western Sydney Parklands Trust is about to bulldoze those community works.

The Planning Assessment Commission can go and visit the site and see areas of revegetated and consequent regeneration of the shrub *Bursaria spinosa* and other plant species which all came at the hand of and through the tireless effort of volunteer community members.

What is the Planning Assessment Commission to say to the community when it approves bulldozing of the communities efforts? What is the Planning Assessment Commission saying to the community about the worth of engaging in future conservation works if it is all susceptible to a drive for development dollars later on?

Aside from that affront to decency there is a serious risk of run-off from the proposed zoo site into Eastern Creek and further along the Hawkesbury River Catchment. All industrial, commercial, residential and other land uses involving built structures are subject to hosing down for cleaning purposes. That water will make its way into drains and then into creeks. In this proposed development of Sydney Zoo there will be hosing down of enclosures and hosing down of surrounds. This will result in weed species from introduced grasses, herbs, shrubs, trees and animal waste entering Eastern Creek.

The proposed site for the Sydney Zoo is far too close to Eastern Creek. It will pollute and redefine.

The zoo is an alien imposition on the natural environment of Doonside. It will result in reduced foraging for Eastern Grey Kangaroos and other fauna inhabiting Western Sydney Parklands in Doonside. It pushes out indigenous species to accommodate species from other parts of the world.

This proposition is another blight on the already appalling record of Western Sydney Parklands Trust to adequately sustain viable populations of the natural heritage of Western Sydney.