

From: [REDACTED]
To: [IPCN Enquiries Mailbox](#)
Subject: Tanya Davies' speech - Crown Cemetery Development Wallacia
Date: Wednesday, 27 March 2019 10:12:33 AM

- > Thank you
- >
- > From the outset I want to state that I am opposed to the Crown Cemetery Development Wallacia.
- >
- > This proposal is environmentally and socially flawed and in breach of numerous government standards and guidelines which I will now articulate.
- >
- > Firstly, Australian cemetery standards recommend prohibiting cemetery developments within flood-labile lands due to the direct health hazards that would emanate during a flood event. The Wallacia Golf Club is divided into two by Jerrys Creek which is a tributary of the Nepean River. Photographs and resident's data keeping illustrate that the Wallacia Golf Club is prone to not just flood events but catastrophic flood events.
- >
- > Newspaper clippings illustrate the Goddard House, Joann Copeman's house and the village of Wallacia including the Wallacia Golf Course itself all under flood waters. These flood records date between 1873 and 1992. Some may argue that these records are over 30 years old and older still so what relevance would the topic of flooding hold today? I answer this question by saying these flood records hold even greater significance now than ever before.
- >
- > With the continuing expansion of the built environment within the Nepean Valley, when flood waters arrive there is now far less open green space to absorb these waters. Only as recently as June 2016 heavy and persistent rain fell across western Sydney which led to the closing of Wallacia Bridge (Blaxland Crossing) and Greendale Rd due to rising flood waters. Mulgoa Road at Jerrys Creek was blocked by flood water. Wallacia Public School had to be closed too. The Caravan Park at Wallacia and low-lying properties near Jerrys Creek were also impacted by the flood.
- >
- > These examples are presented to you today to illustrate a major failing of the Crown to select an appropriate site for a cemetery development that adheres to Australian Standards. The Wallacia Golf Club site is inherently and environmentally inappropriate for a cemetery. To protect the health of my community this Crown development application must be rejected.
- >
- > Secondly, a number of State and Local Government Guidelines and Strategies have been contravened by this Crown proposal:
- >
- > 1. Penrith City Council's Sport, Recreation, Play and Open Space Strategy highlights the lack of sufficient sporting and recreational sites within the Mulgoa and Wallacia Valley. Approval of this Crown development will decimate the main recreational and sporting facility in the Wallacia Village - the golf course. The CMCT are proposing a reduced golf course to accommodate some remaining recreational opportunities but we all know once approval has been given for a cemetery eventually it will creep further and further to the boundary lines and eradicate any remaining recreational golfing opportunities. To protect the main recreational facility for Wallacia the Crown development application must be refused.
- >
- > 2. Penrith City Council's Mulgoa and Wallacia Rural Villages Strategy states that the purpose of the village of Wallacia, like Mulgoa village, in the future will be to provide for an alternative to urban living that delivers harmony with the surrounding rural character. To survive the pressures for redevelopment the rural zones around the village need to limit subdivision, promote rural uses and create a firm edge to contain the village and to separate it from surrounding areas. In determining this village edge environmental constraints have been carefully considered alongside the need to retain a viable village structure.... the golf course provides a barrier to development to the east". If the Crown development application before us today were to be approved, the existing golf course barrier holding at bay unfettered development within the valley would disappear. The Mulgoa and Wallacia Valley rural character must be protected to provide balance between green, open space and the urbanisation occurring at great speed across western Sydney. To achieve this outcome the Crown development application must be rejected.
- >
- > 3. The NSW Government's Local Character and Place Guideline has been breached by this Crown

development application. This guideline has been released by the Minister for Planning and it has been developed to align with Government Architect NSW policies including 'Better Placed'. The Crown development application before you contravenes this NSW Government direction. I quote from this document Alison Frame Deputy Secretary Department of Planning and Environment, "social isolation is a symptom of low social capital and an outcome of lifestyle change. Places that do not evolve to provide enhanced communal spaces, public domain, or the opportunity for social interaction can create stress and social isolation. They are not simply bland, stagnant or characterless but can lead to public health issues by increasing isolation, the risk of cardiovascular disease and mental health issues. By investing in social capital and creating socially connected places - we can contribute to addressing these problems within our community.... Creating places that enhance the social fabrics of our cities, towns and streets is vital." I put to you that the approval of this Crown cemetery development would destroy the Wallacia Golf Club and thereby destroy this community's access to facilities and places essential to maintaining socially connected and healthy lifestyles. I also reiterate that the current proposal presenting a smaller golf course as a 'fair and reasonable' compromise for the community's relief is comical. If the cemetery received approval, at sometime in the future there will not be a sporting and recreational space. This Crown development would annihilate this critical Government imperative and therefore the Crown development is untenable to our Government's vision of establishing community and protecting local character. To retain our community and character the Crown development application must be rejected.

>

> 4. Greater Sydney Commission's Strategic Review of Sydney's Cemetery requirements. As you know the Premier wrote to the GSC last month directing the GSC to conduct a strategic review of the needs of cemeteries and crematoria for Sydney. This review is now underway and will be conducted in consultation with local councils and communities. It is anticipated that this review will take between 3-6 months. Whilst this strategic review is underway I believe it is preemptive of the IPC to continue in the assessment of the Crown Cemetery Development Wallacia proposal. I respectfully request that the IPC pause the assessment of this proposal until the GSC review has been completed.

>

> There is no urgency to finalise this application before you. Whilst I understand the need for the Government created trusts to secure land for the burial needs of Sydney residents, the Wallacia Golf Club is no such site. I have met with the Catholic Metropolitan Cemetery Trust on a number of occasions to present to them other sites that already have DA approvals for cemeteries (3 sites within a couple of kilometres from where we are standing today). I have also presented a significant opportunity for the CMCT to talk with the largest land owner in western Sydney, the Deerubbin Land Council, who are in possession of hundreds of acres of unencumbered lands to the north of Penrith. Disappointingly, the CMCT were dismissive of my efforts to save Wallacia Golf Club and uninterested in investigating other viable options that would meet their obligation to find burial space. In particular the Deerubbin lands have the willingness of the land owner, the support of the local council and community for such cemetery developments to be based in this location. The use of the Deerubbin lands for cemeteries would meet the Trust's obligations as well as preserve the Wallacia Golf Club and course. In addition to preserving and protecting the Wallacia Golf Club, I have written confirmation from two significant sporting organisations of expressions of interest to locate Centres of Excellence within the Wallacia Golf Club site. Not only do we have an imperative to protect the social, sporting and recreational opportunities that currently are provided to the community by the existing Wallacia Golf Club but these opportunities can be expanded.

>

> In conclusion, while the land that is subject to the Crown Cemetery Development application may have a permissible zoning for a cemetery, the Crown proposal fails in its obligation to adhere to higher expectations of the broader community and Government directives. The Crown's application fails by putting at risk the health and safety of a community in the event of floods, it fails by effectively removing social, recreational and sporting needs of a community and it fails to recognise and pursue other supremely better situated lands for cemetery needs

>

> I implore the IPC to reject this proposal immediately or at least place the assessment of this proposal on hold until the Greater Sydney Commission's strategic review of burial needs has been completed

>

> Thank you

> Sent from my iPhone