

Independent Planning Commission NSW
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30 July 2018

To Commission members

Objection to West Culburra Concept Proposal (SSD 3846)

The following points should be considered which stem from the meeting on 24 July 2018.

1. Claim that the majority of people in Culburra Beach support the development as is.

This claim was made by the politicians and councillors without any basis in fact. Certainly the outrageous show of hands 'for' and 'against' at the meeting has no merit whatsoever. Such claims should be disregarded. In every sense the level of local support has to be weighed against the 'big picture' issues and the whole of State and National opinion for environmental protection and conservation.

2. The development will provide cheap housing in Culburra

This claim is nonsense because the development is staged with a small number of houses being added year by year. Houses in Culburra will always have higher value due to the bidding by holiday home buyers who are attracted to the wonderful environmental and recreational assets of the area. Houses closer to Nowra, and in Worrigea and Bombaderry will always be much cheaper. The idea of a sudden supply of 600 houses onto the market forcing prices down is a furphy. The claim does not stack up!!!

3. Who will pay for the upgrade of the sewerage treatment works, water and other utilities for the new development?

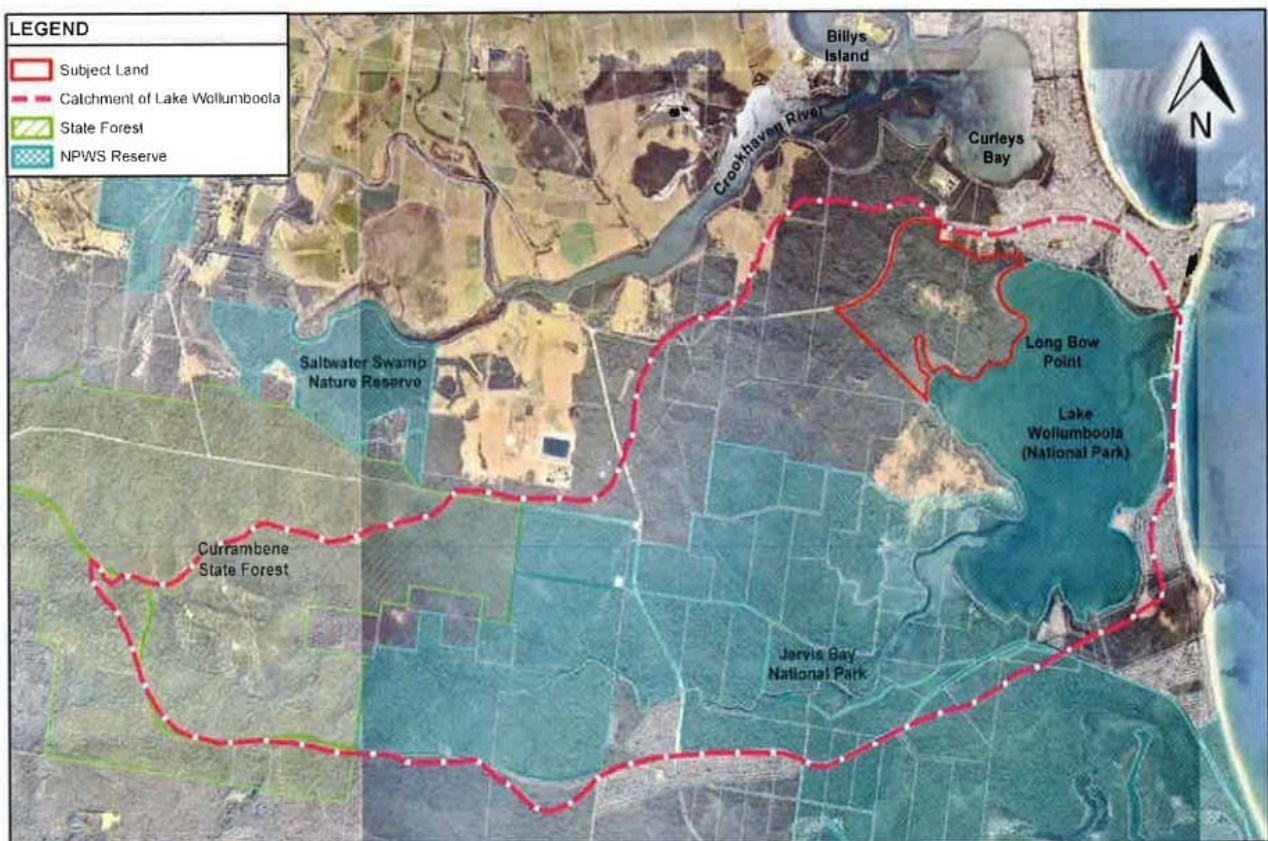
The concept of a stage development over perhaps 20 years with each stage having to be formally approved with a DA makes the provision of upgraded facilities difficult to deal with. The developers should pay for the upgrades up front at the start, if the concept plan is developed. It is up to them to levee the house buyers if they see fit. This will increase prices considerably. These extra costs should **NOT** be leveed against **all** rate payers.

4. The claim was made that Lake Wollumbulla already receives storm-water from Culburra streets and that this has caused not impact whatsoever. So adding more will not matter a hoot.

Nutrient levels in the Lake are **already moderate** due to **pollution from the urban stormwater runoff**. The impact of nutrients, pesticides and other pollutants depends on thresholds. No further development should be allowed in the catchment because the pollution levels from urban stormwater are **already too high** and are approaching the **thresholds** when major damage will occur. The other point is that the Lake is a closed receiving waterbody. What goes in there, stays in there. The infrequent openings (once a year or less) do not flush the lake due to ineffective circulation. Nutrients, heavy metals, pesticides and other pollutants are bound up in the plants and animals and in the sediments. The build up of pollutants will eventually affect the lake ecology. Adding extra sources of nutrients will hasten this process and degrade the high and unique values of the lake and its catchment. Lake Wollumbulla and its catchment should be zoned for

conservation and protection. Once this has been done, studies and works need to be undertaken in intercept and treat the existing urban stormwater runoff which is polluting the lake and threatens its ecology.

Far from justifying the claims of zero impact, highlighting the streets from which urban stormwater drains into the lake emphasises that the lake is already polluted by this runoff which needs to be treated. Urgent action is required to address this major threat to the ecosystem in the lake. The existing urban runoff **IS ALREADY** polluting the lake. It is the major source of pollution for the Lake. This major threat should be addressed by further studies and redial works to intercept and treat the existing discharges. Various funding sources should be investigated so that these urgent works can be undertaken as soon as possible.



5. There are many alternative areas for urban development which would have far less impact.

Most of the people opposed to the development are not opposed to development as such, but to this development, at this high value and sensitive site. Other sites should be considered well away from the near shore areas of the Crookhaven and Lake Wollumbulla catchments. Other sites will have far less impact.

6. The development is needed to sustain local businesses

While I support local businesses, such as the local hardware and other shops, the harsh reality is that the days of the 'corner store' are well and truly over. Local businesses cannot stock the range of items people want. About half the time I have sought to buy goods locally the items were not stocked here, and I had to go to Nowra. Many people choose to go to Nowra to shop at ALDI and other shops to get a wider range and cheaper prices. Price is a major consideration for where people shop. Many, many people shop online

because of the cheaper prices (this affects businesses like the tackle and surf shop). Woolies and Coles both offer home 'shop and deliver services'. The development is staged over 20 years and so the concept that approving the concept plan will save businesses **NOW** is a furphy. It is clear that only a limited range of businesses can prosper in a small town like Culburra, primarily for the seasonal holiday visitors. This is the stark reality. Culburra will always have a high proportion of house own by people who do not live here permanently.

7. If the concept plan is not approved Culburra will become another Currawong devoid of facilities

This is simplistic, especially given the staged development. Many people chose to live in both communities because of the lifestyle and wonderful natural environment. In a sense, people chose to live here, knowing the facilities are now, and will in the future, be rudimentary. Turning Culburra into a housing estate and shopping centre will destroy the very thing that attracts people to the area. In many ways you can't have both at the same time and the development will destroy the natural environment which many people love and cherish so much. To the contrary many people who live here permanently or own holiday houses here do not want Culburra to turn into another Shellharbour, Kiama or Vincentia which have been ruined by excess developments. Noosa in Queensland provides a good model for the way things should proceed. Noosa banned development in the immediate vicinity of the town itself, but the shire allowed developments in the hinterlands inland. Culburra should be fostered as a holiday and tourist destination rather than as a housing estate. This is where future jobs will be and business opportunities.

Yours sincerely,

Dr John Anderson (Environmental Scientist with 35 years experience)

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Home owner and Permanent Resident for over 15 years

PS I help develop the most recent versions of the **The Australian and New Zealand Guidelines for Fresh and Marine Water Quality** before retiring 4 years ago.

