

Submission Against the Berrima Hotel Development- *Lambies Well and the river*

In this submission I plan to address the Historically and threatened Lambies Well, And the immediate threat to local flora and fauna of the Berrima stretch of the Wingecarribee River.

Historically the unique village of Berrima NSW (Established in 1831) has proven to be of such importance in its character, landscape and natural beauty. From its inception as a result of the failed Bong Bong village upstream on the Wingecarribee River, near to where the town of Moss Vale stands, Berrima began with great purpose.

Within the next 5-6 years using convict labour a new Gaol and court house were constructed. These buildings became of immense focus for a quickly developing area of New South Wales.

Nearly 200 years on Berrima has so fortunately been able to retain its old Colonial Heritage Charm. A beautiful setting of old time tranquility it has been a draw card for young and old alike.

As a result of the railway never coming to town this resulted in a time capture of the town and a slow in the previously planned development. Even articles and mentions in the newspapers before 1900 talk of Berrima being a tourist site to be visited.

Now 125 years into the future from 1900, visitors to Berrima remark on its unique charm. If heavily built upon in a modern fashion we will lose the charm and uniqueness that this historic village brings. A Gem such as Berrima can not be replicated. Why destroy it?

New settlers, and in particular early explorers, Surveyors and Government officials visiting the Berrima site had noted down the beauty of the location from its earliest moments. In particular the Wingecarribee river at the site was valued for its proximity and water supply as an uppermost reason for settling there. Unfortunately the European settlers had to cope with typical fluctuations in the local climate and the abundance and at other times limited access to fresh water.

Water supply being crucial became apparent to Surveyor John Lambie, who looked for a supply of fresh water. In about the mid 1830's, I've yet to pin point the date, John Lambie discovered fresh water seeping out of the rocks. Below what is the overhanging rock formation and riparian zone of the curtilage of the now Historic Berrima Gaol he dug and constructed what is now known as Lambie's Well. It is one of our countries early, and still functioning, public wells.

Lambies Well, now close to 200 years old, was of such a benefit and purity it was remarked on by Major-General Sir Richard Bourke, the 8th NSW state Governor on his first visit to the region in April 1838.

Speaking of Berrima he wrote

'...on the east side of the township is a beautiful picturesque walk, which runs along the base of a precipice nearby twenty feet in height, covered with a variety of delicious lichens to

a well of delicious water supplied by filtering from a rock, made by Surveyor Lambie who lately resided at Berrima'.

Extract from The Sydney Gazette & NSW Advertiser- 12th April 1838. Written by Major-General Sir Richard Bourke, Governor NSW 1831-1837.

NB: His statue stands outside the State Library of NSW, the first public statue erected in Australia.

Lambies well and the surrounds of the Wingecarribee river that is within the Berrima Village are of so much Historic and natural value, they must be protected.

Placing a large multi story hotel on the sloping curtilage of the Historic Berrima Gaol and on the delicate riparian zone above Lambies Well and the Wingecarribee cannot be considered. What the BlueSox company's 'Architectural computer images' of a perfectly sitting modern development is very disceptive and does not illustrate:

1. The true location, if included at all of Lambies Well.
2. The disruptive enormous footings that will be required to support a construction of this size.
3. The displacement and disruption to the existing natural springs that have fed Lambie's well continuously since the 1830's.
4. The extent of the harm such a development will have on existing flora (endangered) and fauna (platypus) Please see the latest platypus research in the video link below.

I ,with other locals, visited the information weekend put on by BlueSox inside the usually locked Gaol walls. The Heritage representative for the development when asked by me 'why the existing Lambies Well was not on the drawings', she said 'The well is not within the development scoped site, it is further along the river'. When I pressed her again and informed her that her information was wrong, she said 'I do not know where it is'. She was meant to be making sure all historical details are noted and shown. I for one was Not impressed.

The destruction of the natural existing rock and springs will be irreversible. This development will harm the local environment and natural structure for the local flora and fauna. The impact from what will be excessive light and noise pollution from the site will impact the local platypus that live in this part of the Wingecarribee River system. Already under threat from modern pollutants of chemicals and microplastics, our local platypus families could not tolerate a large hotel development such as this.

I've included a link to a recent talk given in Bowral by PhD Candidate Katherine (Kat) Warwick, school of science, Western Sydney University, 'PFAS detections in local Platypus' on 13/11/2025.

Please view via the link here.

https://youtu.be/log_iuYojE4?si=7tLrrNNa8tmr2yuP

Along this stretch of the Wingecarribee River and adjacent to the development site, are, as well as other native flora, 2 species of native flora already listed as endangered and under threat, by both State and Federal government bodies.

1.- (Ref: The Berrima Reserve Plan of Management WSC)

2.4 Flora

A diverse range of flora can be found within Berrima River Reserve and the riparian zone.

2.4.1

The Silky Pomaderris

Scientific name: *Pomaderris sericca*.

Conservation Status in NSW: *Endangered*

National Conservation Status: *Vulnerable*

Silky Pomaderris



Illustration, Silky Pomaderris [Botanic Gardens Trust](#)
Image: Lesley Elkan
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Distribution

In NSW, Silky Pomaderris is known from Morton National Park near Bundanoon and from Wollemi National Park. It has also been recorded in north-eastern Victoria.

Habitat Rehabilitation/
Restoration and/or Regeneration.

Habitat loss or modification for 'urban development and agricultural practices' has been a major factor

In the decline of many native plants and animals.....

A listing from 'National Parks & Wildlife Services of known recorded points of flora species from the 'Atlas of NSW Wildlife Database', a reported identification of a threatened species within a 10 km radius.'

This species is found in habitat, as exists on the reserve.

2- (Ref. nsw.gov.au <https://threatenedspecies.bionet.gov.au>)

'Paddy's River Box

Scientific Name: *Eucalyptus macarthurii*

Conservation Status in NSW: *Endangered*

Commonwealth Status: *Endangered*

Gazetted date: 29/Aug/2014

Updated: 02/Oct/2025

Description

Paddy's River Box is a tall tree reaching up to 40 meters high....

Distribution

It is currently recorded from Moss Vale district to Kanangra-Boyd National Park. In the Southern Highlands it occurs mainly on private land, often as isolated individuals....It is not well reserved but does occur within Cecil Hoskins Nature Reserve in the Southern Highlands...'

The *Eucalyptus macarthurii* is also recorded within the Berrima River Reserve which is adjacent to the proposed Berrima hotel site. Its natural habitat including the Wingecarribee river in Berrima will be greatly undermined by the construction of the 3 story hotel on the very riparian zone which, as an endangered species, struggles to occur naturally.