

25th February 2021

To: Director Industry Assessment
Dept of Planning, Industry & Environment

Reference: **West Culburra Concept Proposal SSD 3846**

As Conservation Officer of the Australian Plants Society NSW (Nowra group) I am writing to state member's objections to this proposal.

1) DESTRUCTION OF 47 HECTARES IMPACTS

While our members are concerned with all issues arising from this development we would like to comment on the impacts of the proposed loss of 47 hectares of Currumbene Lowland Coastal Forest.

The proposal to clear these 47ha of Currumbene Lowland Coastal Forest for construction of the housing estate is of greatest concern, as the forest is part of a habitat corridor that extends west to the Shoalhaven escarpment and north to the Crookhaven River Wetlands.

Habitat Corridors are important for the ongoing support and protection of our natural species.

Threatened Species inhabit these forests and must be protected as well as the native flora and fauna species; some of the known species includes the Glossy Black cockatoo and the Powerful owl.

2019/2021 Bushfires. Especially at this time when the Shoalhaven, across NSW as well as other states have been so devastated by the recent 2019/20 bushfires that saw millions of hectares of bushland destroyed and all of the biodiversity with plants, insects, birds and wildlife it supported – Gone!

All remnant bushland that survived those fires in coastal villages are refuges for displaced species as well as supplying habitat and support for local species. Great care must be taken to ensure no further bushland losses at least until forests have regenerated as many areas are struggling and may never come back due to the extreme heat of the fires.

Also projections of future Climate Change impacts report bushfire events will be as extreme as those of 2019 and more frequent, so making remnant intact bushland even more precious and important.

In some areas the soil itself was burned with the plant seeds destroyed; this all must be taken into consideration to ensure survival of our natural environment.

2) Crookhaven River

Whilst it has been stated the bushland is our main concern, our members understand the important role the forests play in ensuring waterways are unpolluted with clear waters.

The Crookhaven River is environmentally and economically significant and its waters must stay unpolluted. Mangroves play a major role in keeping our waterways clean and with habitat for marine species.

Construction of 293 dwellings will cause a great threat to this wonderful waterway and APS members suggest using the Precautionary Principle when decisions are made to approve/reject this proposal.

There can be no going back from major pollution events caused by heavy rain during clearing and building construction of developments as well as running off suburbia.

3) Lake Wollumboola

Our members have visited Lake Wollumboola on a number of occasions and appreciated the significance and ecological importance of the wonderful birdlife it supports.

Again our members understand how important the catchments are to our waterways, and those adjacent and nearby that help supply habitat and corridors.

4) THE AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY (NSW) Nowra group

The Australian Plants Society (NSW) Nowra group is part of an Australia wide organisation dedicated to the growing, propagating, and preservation of Australian native plants and their habitats.

Indeed the one of the Objects of our parent group Australian Native Plants Society Australia (APNSA) is:

**** To promote the conservation of Australian plants and their habitats***

Therefore the Nowra group of the Australian Plants Society (APS) works within these **Objects** and comment on issues when appropriate.

Thank You

Maureen Webb (Conservation Officer)