SOUTHLAND SUBMISSION

NSW Department of Planning May 2020

The Australian Environmental Network and School was established in 2000 to embrace a future where internet technology would connect with communities and schools to increase awareness of environmental challenges and help people protect their communities from the impact of climate change.

The Australian Environmental Network and School became involved in the contamination clean up process at Botany in 2003 and has continued as a member of Orica's community participation committees today.

In all this time there has been an expectation that Orica would provide the Botany community with some form of environmental compensation. Suggested environmental projects have ranged from tree planting projects to a large environmental project proposed for Southland in 2006 that would link frog ponds to areas of the Detention Basin and Springvale Drain.

Orica's current proposal for Southland is to concrete over the Detention Basin to construct warehouse buildings. Orica's intention is to maximise revenue from Orica's last remaining parcel of Botany land.

There are environmental problems at Southland as this is a highly contaminated area of former swamp land. Certain hot spots of contamination have been removed for the previous development at Southland while areas of contamination and other hot spots remain.

Southland is at the centre of the Botany Aquifer clean up process. Ground water which flows close to the surface is drawn into Primary Containment wells and pumped to Orica's Ground Water Treatment Plant and destroyed.

The Ground Water extraction has removed a large amount of contamination from within the primary source ground water contamination plumes. This extraction rate has diminished over time as a large percentage of the contamination embedded in the Aquifer soil and clay base is difficult to remove.

Orica is committed to adhere to "Worlds Best Practice" in the clean up of the contamination at Botany. 2020 OBLC Review consultants have offered their opinion that breakthrough technology will be necessary to destroy the contamination that remains.

This breakthrough technology, if and when it becomes available may require access to the contamination to be applied. In the meantime Orica's Ground Water Treatment Plant will need to operate indefinitely and microbes present in the natural clean up processes will need support with microbiological research.

Recognition of the permanent nature of the contamination presents Orica at Southland with an opportunity. Orica could establish a significant environmental project on this valuable parcel of Orica land. A "Worlds Best Practice" environment research project, a vision for the future where the potential of the natural environmental clean up processes can be explored.

Orica's Southland Research Centre can become a focus and a location communities and schools can turn to for information on how to protect, clean up and support our environment and the natural world.

Susan Hall
The Australian Environmental Network and School