

>>> barrie griffiths <bgriffiths@harboursat.com.au> 18/04/2011 16:03 >>>

**Mr Sam Haddad, Director
NSW Department of Planning.**

**Response to proposed Stage One of the development to establish a new town, "Huntlee", near
Branxton.**

Dear Mr Haddad,

I write very briefly and directly to yourself, to express again my objection to this outrageous proposal.

I have responded, personally and on behalf of North East Forest Alliance, from the beginning and at each stage, in detailed submissions and representations to the Department in Newcastle and in Sydney, and to the Commonwealth, with particular reference to biodiversity and abuse-of-process/appalling planning aspects.

I note the proposal is re-submitted subsequent to the finding by the Land and Environment Court, and subsequent to consequent minor amendment to the (also disgraceful) Lower Hunter Regional Strategy - specifically, to the Regional Environment Plan. I note the proposal has not been substantially altered; and I refer you to my previous submissions and representations for detailed grounds of objection.

I also made detailed objection to the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy and Conservation Plan, met with Craig Abbs and others in Newcastle, and with Crozier, Westacott and Knowles in Sydney - and indeed, working with colleagues in the Hunter Community Environment Centre, we submitted a detailed and mapped alternative Conservation Plan for the Lower Hunter, identifying release and conservation areas, and etc.

I refer you also to this material; and to earlier material by the coalition of Lower Hunter Environment Groups, to the 2008 submission by Sweetwater Action Group, to which I contributed... And of course, numerous reports and memos including internal material speak out against this development.

I note also this bizarre development proposal is to be subject of court proceedings. Appropriate advice to the Minister by yourself, based on responsible planning principles, and refusing to be dictated to by the sort of corrupt alliance of politicians and developer interests prevailing hitherto, is essential. Perhaps the new government may be receptive to accepting your advice and scrapping this project along with Part 3A and the least defensible aspects of the Strategy and RCP, that there may be some hope of eventual recovery in the future from such extreme abuse, for the Region's natural and human communities.

Of all the appalling decisions made by the previous Government in your time - from HEZ Tomalpin to Anvil Hill etc etc - this is surely the worst, and the most offensive to professional planners - and indeed, as you know, senior people in the department, in Sydney and in Newcastle, have been strongly opposed from the start; and of course, NPWS/DECC have been ignored and over-ridden in the most appalling manner.

I consider it important that the Department and yourself not be sullied by association with the approval - should that be the Minister's decision - of such an indefensible project.

Let us see whether this gross and embarrassing project may yet be rejected without requiring another court judgement.

**Barrie Griffiths
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April 18th 2011.