

4 April 2022

The Hon. Anthony Roberts, MP
Minister for Planning and Minister for Homes
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001



Dear Minister

Council's Vegetation Mapping Planning Proposal

The purpose of this letter is to seek your assistance to progress a Council-initiated planning proposal to protect land of biodiversity value within Hornsby Shire.

As you may be aware, Council has received a letter from the Department of Planning and Environment dated 3 March 2022 (copy attached) in response to Council's request for a Gateway Determination to enable exhibition of the Planning Proposal. It is disappointing that after 16 months, the Department has requested Council withdraw the Proposal which seeks to update our mapping to protect all vegetation communities within Hornsby Shire. The letter from the Department notes that our Proposal is not supportable and that several significant amendments must be addressed before progression.

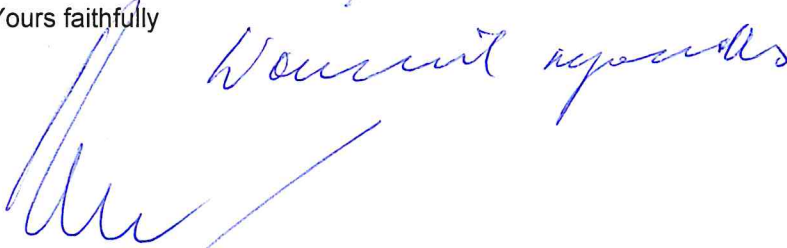
By way of background, Council's Vegetation Mapping Planning Proposal was lodged with the Department on 28 October 2020 and seeks (in part) to amend the Hornsby Local Environmental Plan 2013 by mapping all vegetation communities (National, State, Regional and locally significant or common communities) plus a 10m buffer to better protect vegetation communities. The Proposal was prepared after careful consideration by Council and significant financial and resource expense with the intention of updating mapping and further protecting vegetation communities within the Shire. Council is of the opinion that the Planning Proposal holds significant local and State strategic merit, including alignment with priorities and actions of the Hornsby LSPS, Hornsby Community Strategic Plan, North District Plan, Greater Sydney Region Plan and the Greening our City Premier's Priority.

The Department's letter was considered by Councillors at an informal workshop on 16 March 2022 and discussion included acknowledgement of the need for accuracy of mapping and the importance of additional protection for all types of vegetation communities to be elevated into Council's Local Environmental Plan. Accordingly, there was general agreement that the Department be advised that Council does not wish to withdraw the Planning Proposal and the Department be requested to reconsider its position and issue a Gateway Determination to enable exhibition of the Plan. I wish to point out clearly that Councils views the careful balancing of retaining the unique character of our vegetated rural areas with appropriate development is aided by having the right information available to support quality outcomes.

I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss opportunities for Council to progress our Planning Proposal which is very important to ensure we retain tree canopy cover and remain the "Bushland Shire". Should you be agreeable to a meeting, it would be appreciated if you would contact my office by phoning Tracy Wakeford on 9847 6604 or email twakeford@hornsby.nsw.gov.au to arrange a meeting.

I look forward to your response.

Yours faithfully

 *Warmest regards*

Philip Ruddock AO

Mayor

Attachment: DPE Letter dated 3 March 2022

TRIM Reference: F2020/00021

cc: The Hon. Dominic Perrottet, MP
The Hon. Matt Kean, MP
The Hon. Alister Henskens, MP
Ms Robyn Preston, MP