



SUSAN TEMPLEMAN MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR MACQUARIE

21 November 2017

The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP
Minister for Urban Infrastructure
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Josh

Dear Minister,

I note that Australia was recently elected to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee. I congratulate you and the Government on this achievement. UNESCO is an incredibly important organisation and one which is deserving of our support. It is my hope that our membership of the Committee is one which leads to greater protection and celebration of Australia's world heritage.

As I am sure you are aware, Australia is home to nineteen sites on the World Heritage List, one of which is the Greater Blue Mountains Area, within my electorate of Macquarie.

The Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area (GBMWhA) constitutes one of the largest and most intact tracts of protected bushland in Australia, and is home to rare and endemic flora, particularly eucalypts and one of the world's rarest species, the critically endangered Wollemi pine, located within the Wollemi National Park. The GBMWhA is also home to 12 different species of critically endangered species, and has been described as one of Australia's "natural laboratories".

I have previously corresponded with both you and Minister Fletcher regarding the proposed Western Sydney Airport. I am concerned that the preliminary flight plans for the airport will, over time, threaten the World Heritage Status of the GBMWhA.

Though I understand that the flight plans are not yet official, the preliminary flight plans have 100% of departures flying over the GBMWhA. The noise of aircraft departures over the GBMWhA may reach 70dBA+. This level of noise adversely affects fauna by changing foraging behaviour and lowering breeding success, threatening the endemic and endangered animal life within the GBMWhA. In 2000, UNESCO noted that any plans for an airport with flights going over the GBMWhA would "adversely affect the natural quiet" of the Blue Mountains. Your colleague, the former Minister for Tourism and former Member for Lindsay, Jackie Kelly, has stated that the threat to the Blue Mountains of take-offs and landings is "significant", particularly the threat presented by aviation gas pollution. UNESCO has most recently raised concern that the lights could "compromise the integrity" of the area.

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In your recent joint media release with Foreign Minister Bishop, you note that the role on the UNESCO World Heritage Committee will enhance Australia's ability to "*contribute to the conservation of places recognised for their Outstanding Universal Value*".

The current plans for the Western Sydney airport directly threaten the integrity of the GBMWhA and therefore its World Heritage Status. Not only would the flight plans have a detrimental impact to our natural environment, but also to the large and growing nature tourism industry in the Blue Mountains.

If the airport is to go ahead, I ask that you consider closely the impacts and ramifications that the preliminary flight paths would have on the GBMWhA, and uphold your stated commitment to the protection and conservation of Australia's world heritage.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan Templeman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Susan Templeman MP
Federal Member for Macquarie

CC: The Hon Paul Fletcher MP, Minister for Urban Infrastructure
The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Shadow Minister for Transport and Infrastructure
The Hon Tony Burke MP, Shadow Minister for Environment
Mr Mark Greenhill OAM, Mayor of City of Blue Mountains
Ms Trish Doyle MP, State Member for Blue Mountains
Ms Madi Maclean, President – Blue Mountains Conservation Society
Mr Peter Dollin, President – Residents Against Western Sydney Airport