



Our mission is to help conserve the natural environment of the Greater Blue Mountains and to increase awareness of the natural environment in general.

Home

Resources

About Us

Activities

Campaigns

Publications

Galleries

SHARE

## COUNCILS AND LABOR

©**Ross Coster**

[Convenor of Blue Mountains Conservation Society No Badgerys Creek Airport Subcommittee]

### **PENRITH COUNCIL**

Penrith Council has a policy that supports Western Sydney airport, provided there is a curfew and road and rail links are built before the airport opens.

I wrote letters to all 15 Penrith Councillors on 25-Jul-2016 on behalf of No Badgerys Creek Airport (NoBCA) asking them to review their support for Western Sydney airport, which is contingent on a curfew that is not proposed!

On Monday 8th August Penrith Council held a 'Policy Review' session, with the public in attendance. Councillor Maurice Giroto, a member of NoBCA, put forward a motion that Penrith Council should:

- conduct a series of community forums (similar to Blacktown Council);
- inform attendees of the impacts of the airport;
- get feedback from attendees;
- revise their policy based on the feedback

Penrith Council voted 8-6 not to hold forums. Councillor Ross Fowler said at the meeting that the Federal Government had a mandate to build the airport (I guess he missed the fact that every seat around the airport is now with Labor).

### **HILLS SHIRE COUNCIL**

Blacktown Council had planned a community forum on the Western Sydney airport and the "World's Biggest Incinerator", at Kellyville, and booked a school hall for that purpose. Shortly before the forum, the headmaster of the high school cancelled the booking. Blacktown Council made an alternative booking at the Wrights Road Community Centre, then letterboxed 10,000 homes in Kellyville advertising the forum. One of the houses letterboxed was that of the (Liberal) Mayor of Hills Shire Michelle Byrne. Ms Byrne promptly cancelled the booking at the Community Centre, quoting safety of other users of the facility during the 'Political Rally' as her reason. Blacktown Council attempted to organise a meeting in the car park of the Community Centre, but were refused a permit by Police, again quoting safety.

At the Hills Shire Council meeting of 9-Aug-2016, six 'silent protestors' attended, taped their mouths to signify loss of free speech, and turned their backs whenever the Mayor addressed the meeting. An interesting and effective protest that generated some media: <http://www.hillsnews.com.au/story/4087888/silent-protesters-appear-at-the-hills-council/>

### **SPRINGWOOD MEETING**

On Saturday 13-Aug-2016 Susan Templeman held a *Community Forum* at the Springwood Hub, with Bill Shorten, Emma Husar (Member for Lindsay) and Senator Doug Cameron in attendance. The forum was so well attended that it was moved from the smaller hall to the theatre. The photo shows half the crowd!



I am told the Airport was a major discussion point. Bill Shorten made it plain that Labor support for the airport is about the promised jobs, and that if they don't 'stack up' their position may be reviewed. He also gave considerable attention to the High Speed Rail option, so I guess our activity has had an impact. Blue Mountains Mayor Mark Greenhill presented Bill Shorten with a copy of the Council submission on the draft EIS, which he believes is an eloquent dismissal of the proposal.

**The campaign is not over! The airport has not been built! We keep working!**

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