

“Hands off our LEPs” campaign

Information Sheet - Blue Mountains environment at risk



Did you know?

- Our current 2005 Local Environmental Plan's commitment to Ecologically Sustainable Development cannot be included in our new Standard Instrument Local Environmental Plan (SI LEP). This is a step backwards from our 'best practice' place-based, award-winning LEP 2005.
- A SI LEP offers less environmental protection than our current LEPs and will see many of our current provisions watered down. Any current environmental provisions that are inconsistent with the 'one size fits all' SI LEP will not be permitted. This is not good enough for a city in a national park and World Heritage Area.
- Some current local provisions such as Protected Area - Land Between Towns (LBT), are unlikely to be transferred to the SI LEP. LBT limits development in the bushland between townships and helps maintain the 'village' and bushland character of the Blue Mountains. Its loss could lead to strip development along the highway.
- Many legally-enforceable development controls that are currently in our LEPs (e.g. requirement for a site analysis plan, building setback and site coverage standards) will be relegated to non-statutory Development Control Plans (DCP). This means that development controls removed from our current LEPs and instead included in the DCP will not be legally enforceable.
- Protection of significant vegetation and other environmental features on a site will no longer be possible unless they have been previously identified and mapped.
- Five Far North Coast Councils submitted draft SI LEPs to the Department of Planning for finalisation which included areas zoned 'Environmental Protection' (EP). Zoning land this way ensures limited development while protecting environmental values. However, the Minister for Planning, Brad Hazzard, did not agree with the decision of the local Councils and communities and demanded a review into the land zoned EP. The Blue Mountains has currently many areas zoned EP because of their environmental values which need to be zoned EP under the new SI LEP. We need assurances that the Minister will not step in when our new SI LEP is drafted and take away hard fought and well justified land zoned EP.

What you can do:

- **Write** to Blue Mountains City Council demanding that the new SI LEP has equal or better environmental protection provisions than our current LEPs 1991 and 2005, and that all areas currently zoned EP continued to be zoned in this way. Address your letter to the General Manager, Blue Mountains City Council, Locked Bag 1005, Katoomba, NSW 2780.
- Carefully scrutinise the draft Standard Instrument LEP for the Blue Mountains when it goes on public exhibition later this year and lodge a submission.
- If you need guidance on how to do this, **sign up** for the Blue Mountains Conservation Society's email list. Sign up at the public meeting or on bmcs@bluemountains.org.au. The Society will also have guidelines for submission-writing on its website when the time comes.