



2016 FEDERAL ELECTION

VOTE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT



BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

2016 Federal Election: Questionnaire to candidates for Macquarie

Question 1: *Many people in this electorate believe the proposed Western Sydney Airport will damage the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area and negatively impact on both the natural environment and the quality of life.*

- a) *Do you openly oppose this project?*
- b) *Do your party's policies openly oppose this project?*
- c) *How do/will you reconcile any difference between your personal views and the policies of your party?*

MS SUSAN TEMPLEMAN, AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY

- a. I have openly opposed the current Western Sydney Airport project. I organised the first public meeting following the release of the draft EIS and have supported the community in highlighting its failure to address crucial environmental and health issues.
 - b. Labor has opposed elements of the current project such as the merge point flight paths. Labor will not use the merge point system, which concentrates flights over a particular area, and will impose an 11pm-6am No Fly Zone over existing residential areas.
 - c. I have openly committed to fighting for the community in ALP Caucus to protect the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, the environment and quality of life. Along with a number of other western Sydney Labor parliamentarians, I will continue to fight for a better outcome for the region. Already, I have ensured that representatives of BM ConSoc and Residents Against Western Sydney (RAWSA) have had opportunities to put their case to ALP shadow cabinet including Leader Bill Shorten and shadow Environment Minister Mark Butler.
- Labor recognises that the current EIS process for the project appears to have been rushed. It is vital that that there be a proper process and proper consultation.

MR TERRY MORGAN, AUSTRALIAN GREENS

- a. I openly and emphatically oppose the Western Sydney Airport project
- b. Opposition to any new airport in the Sydney basin is the stated policy of NSW Greens
- c. There is no difference to reconcile

DR HAL GINGES, ANIMAL JUSTICE PARTY

- a) Yes, I openly oppose the Western Sydney Airport as I believe land transport – especially rail – has not been fully investigated for its further potential
- b) The Party has not announced a policy, but I can speak for the Party on this local issue and on its concern for the effects upon local fauna and flora
- c) There is no conflict between my views and those of the Party

MR CARL HALLEY, AUSTRALIAN LIBERTY ALLIANCE

No airport for western Sydney full stop.

Question 2: Many people in this electorate believe the proposed Western Sydney Airport will generate unacceptable levels of pollution that will affect millions of people in Western Sydney and in the Blue Mountains.

a) Do you think the airport is justified in view of this potential/probable pollution?

b) Can you explain how you justify this?

MS SUSAN TEMPLEMAN, AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY

a&b. I have great concern about the potential pollution that will be generated by an airport at Badgery's Creek and the impacts on the environment and health. The geography of the Sydney basin is well known as a pollution trap, and therefore any increase in pollution levels in this region have consequences.

MR TERRY MORGAN, AUSTRALIAN GREENS

(a) The pollution that would be generated by the proposed airport is completely unacceptable. To generate this amount of Greenhouse and other toxic air pollution in this or any other place in the face of the global catastrophe that is happening now would be criminally negligent and unfathomably stupid.

(b) I believe this is obvious and requires no justification.

DR HAL GINGES, ANIMAL JUSTICE PARTY

a) I do not think the Airport is justified and am also concerned about the increase in pollution

b) I am not seeking to justify the development of the Airport

Question 3: Many people in this electorate provided feedback as part of the EIS process for the proposed airport.

a) Do you believe this feedback has been adequately addressed and responded to?

b) If the airport proceeds, do you and your party support the application of strict environmental controls over its operation and what would these entail?

c) How do/will you reconcile any difference between your personal views on these controls and the policies of your party?

MS SUSAN TEMPLEMAN, AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY

a. I believe that the submissions in the response to the EIS should be publicly released and I have called on the Federal Government to ensure that happens. Everyone who submitted one should receive acknowledge of their submission.

b. Labor believes any airport should be built to the highest environmental standards. I believe that if the airport is to proceed, the standards should be set as a result of a more rigorous EIS process that ensures the UNESCO World Heritage Listing is not compromised. The new airport will be also required to seek approval for its masterplan every five years, like other federally regulated airports. These plans will also require community consultation.

c. I wouldn't anticipate a difference between the environmental standards that Labor would expect and those I would expect.

MR TERRY MORGAN, AUSTRALIAN GREENS

(a) I do not believe the EIS feedback has been adequately addressed and responded to.

(b) If the airport proceeds, I and my party would insist on the strictest possible controls.

(c) There are no differences.

DR HAL GINGES, ANIMAL JUSTICE PARTY

a) No, I have attended meetings and spoken with officials employed to sell the airport to the community – I think the feedback has been sectioned off and explained away

b) Absolutely. We would want both the now-proposed curfew along with modifications to the flight paths to share the burden more evenly and thinly and a continuing monitoring of the environmental effects and the damage being caused.

c) There are no conflicts between my views and those of the Party.

Question 4: Will you urge your party to halt the development of Western Sydney Airport while surface transport options are pursued?

MS SUSAN TEMPLEMAN, AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY

Labor wants a Sydney rail network connection through the airport from the day it opens.

MR TERRY MORGAN, AUSTRALIAN GREENS

Yes, I will work with my party to halt the airport while surface transport options are pursued.

DR HAL GINGES, ANIMAL JUSTICE PARTY

Yes, indeed, and if elected this is exactly what I would do. I strongly believe that there is a great deal of untapped potential in rail for both passenger and freight transport.

Question 5: Do you personally support the Federal Government retaining all of its existing environmental powers over the Greater Blue Mountains accorded through World Heritage status or otherwise?

MS SUSAN TEMPLEMAN, AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY

Q5 & Q6 Yes. I am passionate about the environmental, cultural and historic value of our region.

Labor is strongly committed to maintaining a rigorous science based process for assessing any actions that will have a significant impact on areas of national environmental significance.

Labor believes matters of national environmental significance should be the responsibility of the national government and not delegated to state or local governments.

In addition, Labor believes reform is needed to strengthen the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. We will have more to say on this during the campaign.

MR TERRY MORGAN, AUSTRALIAN GREENS

I do support retention of Federal Government environmental powers over the GBM.

DR HAL GINGES, ANIMAL JUSTICE PARTY

Yes, I do. I am concerned that a devolution of those powers to the States could be disastrous for world heritage and other environmentally significant area throughout Australia.

Question 6: What arguments would you offer against anyone in your party who favoured transferring any existing Federal power over the Blue Mountains environment to another level of government?

MS SUSAN TEMPLEMAN, AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY

See response to question 5.

MR TERRY MORGAN, AUSTRALIAN GREENS

I would argue that the NSW Government has shown itself to be environmentally negligent and irresponsible and is not fit for stewardship of the Blue Mountains environment. Local government stewardship would be inappropriate also.

DR HAL GINGES, ANIMAL JUSTICE PARTY

I would emphasise the national and international importance of the Blue Mountains environment. I am confident this would not arise as an issue within our Party.

Question 7: What steps would you take to strengthen the Australian Government's role in protecting World Heritage Areas from adverse effects of mining?

MS SUSAN TEMPLEMAN, AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY

Labor is committed to maintaining World Heritage status for the Greater Blue Mountains and would seek to ensure that conditions required by mines within the region are being met.

MR TERRY MORGAN, AUSTRALIAN GREENS

I would oppose any new mining leases or extensions of existing leases and strengthen environmental controls. I would also hold the Federal Government to account for its responsibilities in protecting World Heritage.

DR HAL GINGES, ANIMAL JUSTICE PARTY

I would advocate for a great deal more to be done in the areas of renewable energy – solar, thermal – and for the retraining of coal miners and other workers into renewable industries.

Question 8: Will you seek a specific time table for the phase out of coal mining in the Blue Mountains?

MS SUSAN TEMPLEMAN, AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY

Q8 & 9.

Climate change is driving the most profound restructuring of the world economy this century – the transition from fossil fuel based energy to renewable energy. The transition is happening now and it is accelerating.

Labor is committed to working with businesses and communities to transition to more sustainable, long term industries, Labor will establish a Strategic Industries Reserve Fund with an initial funding profile of \$300 million over three years.

This type of fund would be one of the mechanisms for delivering on the recommendations of the Strategic Industries Taskforce, for example supporting affected workers in emissions intensive regions, targeting assistance to modernisation and investment in low emissions technologies, additional research and development, new market identification and measures to improve efficiency and productivity

MR TERRY MORGAN, AUSTRALIAN GREENS

Yes, I will seek a specific timetable to phase out coal mining all over Australia.

DR HAL GINGES, ANIMAL JUSTICE PARTY

Yes, I would want coal mining phased out over the next 10 years, which is the time I estimate it would take to develop renewable industries and retrain workers into them.

Question 9: What actions can be initiated immediately to make Western Blue Mountains communities less focused on coal mining for employment?

MS SUSAN TEMPLEMAN, AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY

See response to question 8.

MR TERRY MORGAN, AUSTRALIAN GREENS

Specific retraining programs for coal workers need to be introduced to enable them to take advantage of the coming boom in renewable energy industries and other sustainable alternatives. Research and development

assistance and other support mechanisms, including tax breaks and subsidies, need to be provided for these industries, just as they have been for fossil industries for decades.

DR HAL GINGES, ANIMAL JUSTICE PARTY

The area around Lithgow can be redeveloped as an educational and environmental precinct. A perfect example of this is Secret Creek sanctuary, which protects endangered species, employs and retrains in environmental protection, and has moved to operating its restaurant as vegan. Lithgow has 2 university colleges, and they could be better integrated into a restructuring of the local community as an intellectual and artistic centre.

Question 10: What would you do to persuade your party to phase out fossil fuel subsidies?

MS SUSAN TEMPLEMAN, AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY

I work as a member of the grassroots Labor Environment Action Network (LEAN). The group aims to influence the policies of the ALP and Labor parliamentary caucuses to support strong action on climate change and sustainability based on the science.

LEAN advocates moving to a low carbon economy in a way which reflects Labor's values of social justice, decent work and strong communities.

Throughout 2014 and 2015, LEAN ran a campaign across the Labor Party to deliver strong climate change policy. We simplified this ask to 50/50 - that is 50% renewables and 50% pollution reduction, as a rough average of the recommended pollution reduction target to be achieved by 2030. The success of this campaign is evidenced in the Climate Change policy announced in 2016.

MR TERRY MORGAN, AUSTRALIAN GREENS

I do not have to persuade my party to phase out fossil fuel subsidies. It is already party policy.

DR HAL GINGES, ANIMAL JUSTICE PARTY

Our party is new and is in the process of developing policies. The Party will not be opposed to phasing out fossil fuel subsidies, but I will embark upon developing a strategy for re-engaging workers whose jobs will go in fossil fuel industries.

Question 11: The Greater Blue Mountains was granted World Heritage for its biodiversity, in particular diversity of Eucalypt species. What steps would you take to progress the listing of additional criteria for the World Heritage status of the Greater Blue Mountains, including cultural and historic values, geodiversity and scenic splendour?

(The criteria are set out in an online book, published by the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area Advisory Committee: "Values for a new generation – Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area" - <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/protectedareas/values-new-generation.htm>)

MS SUSAN TEMPLEMAN, AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY

For a start, I would advocate to re-establish the Advisory Committee of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. The Advisory Committee's role is to advise on matters relating to the protection, conservation, and the presentation and management of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, including strategic policies in relation to Australia's obligations under the World Heritage Convention. The Advisory Committee plays a crucial role in the provision of scientific advice and achieving conservation outcomes but is not currently formed.

This Committee is best placed to identify additional outstanding universal values from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty.

MR TERRY MORGAN, AUSTRALIAN GREENS

The Greens would support a process to develop evidence for presentation to the World Heritage Committee to establish cultural and historical values, geodiversity and scenic splendour as additional components of the World Heritage Status of the GBMWA.

DR HAL GINGES, ANIMAL JUSTICE PARTY

I would consult with the Conservation Society and advocate for its recommendations.

Question 12: Many people in this electorate, as elsewhere in Australia, are aware of the growing evidence of increasingly rapid climate change throughout the World and the need for all countries, individually and collectively to respond to this.

a) Do you support increased (rather than decreased) funding to institutions like the CSIRO and for empirical research in Australia's universities?

b) What are the policies of your party on this issue?

c) How do/will you reconcile any difference between your personal views on this matter and the policies of your party?

MS SUSAN TEMPLEMAN, AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY

I support increased, rather than decreased, funding for empirical research in Australian universities and the CSIRO.

In its short-sighted 2014 Budget, the Abbott-Turnbull Liberal Government slashed the CSIRO's budget by \$115 million, resulting in the loss of one in five jobs, the biggest staff cut in the agency's history. Now the CSIRO plans to cut another 275 jobs from the Oceans and Atmosphere, Land and Water, Manufacturing, and Data61 (IT) divisions.

This includes the loss of as many as 75 climate scientists, as CSIRO management seeks to redirect resources from monitoring and modelling climate change to focus on mitigating and adapting to its effects. These cuts respond, in part, to the Turnbull Government's \$22 million cut to critical climate research programs managed by the Department of the Environment.

It is clear that CSIRO management has aligned its priorities with those of the Turnbull Government, which is anti-climate science and anti-public good research. By contrast, Labor believes it is crucial that Australia understands the impact of climate change on our environment, economy and society. That's why Labor has publicly committed to using the legal ministerial authority to direct the Board to prevent this round of job cuts, should we win Government. It is why Labor has called on the Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Christopher Pyne, to use that authority to direct the CSIRO Board to delay the job cuts, pending the outcome of the election.

This is not something we do lightly. The CSIRO is an independent statutory agency and should not be subject to political interference. But in this case, the stakes are just too high. It is clear that these latest job cuts have been poorly thought through and have put the CSIRO's international reputation as a leading public research agency at risk.

Labor has also said that we would commission an independent review of the CSIRO's structure, management and functions. It has been almost 30 years since the CSIRO has had such a review, and Labor believes that it would help to modernise the CSIRO's management and improve its consultation processes.

In addition, Labor has announced that under a Shorten Labor Government CSIRO will play a central role in the preservation of the Great Barrier Reef. We will commit to directing the CSIRO to conduct Reef-specific science, including climate research, supported by a \$50 million targeted funding boost.

Under the Liberals, the CSIRO is in danger of becoming little more than a glorified consultancy, only interested in research that turns a quick dollar. That is a comprehensive misunderstanding of how science works, and what effective research requires.

Labor believes Australia must maintain its unique contribution to climate science, and that the CSIRO's public good research is as important as its assistance to industry. The proposed job cuts should be put on hold until

after the election. Mr Pyne must act to prevent further damage to the CSIRO's reputation and to the morale of its hardworking scientists.

Labor will have more to say about the CSIRO during the campaign.

MR TERRY MORGAN, AUSTRALIAN GREENS

(a) Yes, I support increase funding for research into climate change including mitigation and adaptation.

(b) The Greens would establish a national ecological sustainability commission to focus on issues of ecological integrity. This commission would advise and advocate for research funding in identified areas of need. The Greens would restore full funding to the CSIRO and other climate research bodies that have been defunded or cut by the Liberal / National Coalition government.

(c) There are no differences.

DR HAL GINGES, ANIMAL JUSTICE PARTY

(a) Yes, absolutely.

b) Our Party is in the process of developing policies in this and other related areas.

c) There are no differences.

Question 13: How would you ensure that all environmental organisations would have ongoing tax deductibility status for receiving private donations?

MS SUSAN TEMPLEMAN, AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY

On tax deductibility status, Labor does not support the Liberals' proposed changes to the definition of a charity with respect to environmental groups.

Since being elected in 2013, the Liberals have cut funding to community groups and legal services, attempted to gag civil society advocates and cut off their access to the courts. Without appropriate resourcing, these groups are left unable to fight the Turnbull Government's cuts and ideological attacks which are impacting the people and places they represent.

Registered environmental organisations contribute to the preservation of our natural environment and to the health of our democracy. That is why the Labor members of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on the Environment did not support the report of its Inquiry into Register of Environmental Organisations and submitted a dissenting report.

The Turnbull Government members of the Committee provided a series of recommendations that were not based on the weight of evidence provided to the Committee.

One such recommendation was a minimum of 25 per cent of the work done by environmental organisations must be for "environmental remediation work" in order to continue to be eligible for deductible gift recipient status.

Other recommendations in the Committee's report impose potentially unworkable administrative burdens that would only apply to environmental organisations.

Presently, registered environmental organisations are entitled to the benefit of tax deductibility based on the purpose for which the organisation has been established, not a detailed analysis of the work they do. This is the right approach. It should not be for government to tell not-for-profits how to do their work.

Labor stands with the environmental organisations, their donors and supporters – and for a robust democracy. Malcolm Turnbull is continuing Tony Abbott's ideological attack on environmental advocacy groups and Labor will not support that.

MR TERRY MORGAN, AUSTRALIAN GREENS

The Greens would introduce legislation to guarantee the tax deductibility status of all environmental organisations.

DR HAL GINGES, ANIMAL JUSTICE PARTY

I would advocate for the need for continuing tax deductibility in Parliament and with the major parties.
