



Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc

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Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow

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19 May 2019

ATTENTION GLENN SHERLOCK

Dear Dr Dillon

PARKING IN THE CONSERVATION HUT PRECINCT

Thank you for the invitation by email from Mr Sherlock to make a submission by 24th May 2019 regarding this matter.

Council needs to very seriously consider whether the inconvenience created by current demand for parking warrants the disruption of existing vegetation, either on Council controlled land or on State Government controlled land.

If Council persists with any of the measures to reduce naturally vegetated areas in Fletcher Street and Valley Road to create parallel parking and/or to introduce timed parking in residential streets in the precinct, Council will attract advocacy from some residents to approach the State Government about land under its control. The land concerned would include NPWS controlled land immediately north of the Conservation Hut and State Government controlled land at the far western end of Backhouse Street.

Depending on the details of this resident advocacy and Council's precise response to it, a further series of matters affecting the public interest are likely to arise, which Blue Mountains Conservation Society would want the opportunity to comment on at the time.

At this juncture, we will briefly summarise problems with options that have been subject to public discussion:

- Most or all of the asset protection zone designed to protect the Conservation Hut building and surrounds from bushfire could be sealed for car parking. Our Society opposes the use of the asset protection zone for this purpose.
- The existing drainage which sustains the ecosystems within the National Park could be affected by construction near the Conservation Hut, at the western end of Backhouse Street and in the southern-most part of the Fitzgerald Street road reservation.
- Much of the healthy native vegetation in the Council controlled triangle bounded by Fletcher Street and the two arms of Valley Road could be lost, which would be unsatisfactory to us.
- Any increase in parking capacity around the Valley Road / Fletcher Street triangle and the Conservation Hut itself is likely to cause days when there is traffic congestion around all of the existing intersections in the area, leading Council to have to contemplate expensive traffic management solutions.
- In what Council has so far foreshadowed, there is not enough emphasis on encouraging more walking, cycling and public transport use by visitors to the Conservation Hut precinct.

To maintain the status quo appears to us preferable to any of the changes so far advocated.

Yours sincerely,
Don Morison
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