



Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc

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Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow

Dr Rosemary Dillon,
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Wentworth Falls Lake Preliminary Masterplan

Dear Dr Dillon,

The Blue Mountains Conservation Society is a community-based volunteer organisation with over 800 members. Our mission is to help protect, conserve, and advocate for, the natural environment of the Greater Blue Mountains.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Wentworth Falls Lake Masterplan. The Society supports the overall strategy detailed in the Preliminary document and have some detailed comments on areas of environmental significance.

Focus Areas

Area 1 Below the Dam wall

1. The Society strongly supports the retention of the existing wetland area below the dam wall and the planting of additional native planting as a buffer to its current edge. Removal of existing native vegetation for the proposed new sporting areas would be opposed.
2. Legend Item (7) proposes a new path and boardwalk across the wetland. This could be supported by the Society, depending on the final design and material used. The use of concrete in or adjacent to the wetland area or creek must be limited, or preferably excluded.
3. Legend Item (9) proposes the planting of additional trees and vegetation adjacent to the proposed basketball court and near Sinclair Crescent, "filling in" an obvious gap. The species should be sympathetic to the existing vegetation, particularly anything proximate to the wetland area.

Area 2 Eastern Picnic Area

4. The Society supports the Active Foreshore concept in this area as it will reduce degradation of the lakeshore and lessen siltation.
5. Support for Legend Items (7) Proposed tree plantings and (8) Planting to Sinclair Crescent would depend on species to be used.

Area 3 – Central Picnic Area

6. Again the Society supports the concepts of reducing random access to the lake edge by dense plantings in this area, while hardening appropriate desire lines and increasing visitor experience.
7. Legend Item (11) street trees. What species would they be?
8. Legend Items (12) Trees and (13) low plantings. What species?
9. Note there is no marker on the diagram corresponding to (13).
10. Strong support for suitably designed Legend Item (19) Raingarden near water's edge

Area 4. Western Edge – Parkland in Nature

11. The Society strongly supports maintaining the current dominant character with flexible space and open areas.
12. We understand the location and design of the “Outdoor Classroom” is flexible. The Society would be pleased to be involved in further discussions on this element.
13. We query the need for a new tree to be planted adjacent to the semicircular path (ref Legend Item (9)). The “matching” proposed new tree near the coir log/star pickets (likely to be removed) on the western side of the existing large tree seems appropriate, depending on the species used.
14. We have some concerns relating to details of the proposed additional activity and recreation structures listed, mostly to do with significant fragmentation of the bushland structure:
 - Legend Item (2) location and tracks to the proposed new picnic shelter. This is an existing rough track through some significant low vegetation due to overhead power lines. It is a haven for the many smaller bird species. Concern is that the inclusion of a picnic shelter here will create long-stay groups of people, intruding into surrounding dense bushland and disturbing the birds.
 - Legend Item (5) location and style of bird hides/lakeside shelters – please seek input from Blue Mountains Bird Observers Inc. In addition the inclusion of these structures would seem to necessitate additional tracks. So, following on see next dot point.
 - New tracks to the shelters (5) above are of concern. This is fairly sensitive, or edging on sensitive bushland/wetland; open to discussion.
 - Legend Item (8) – concerns at fragmentation and opportunity for unofficial tracks in the “children’s bike track”. What age is targeted and/or expected to use this track?

Area 5 – Waratah Road Wetland

15. The Society supports concept - conditional on design details.
16. The Society notes the stormwater concerns expressed and is aware of the overall mitigation strategy for the catchment.

Other Areas

Loop Walk

17. The Society supports the creation of a safe and well-signposted loop walk, dependent on sensitive treatment of environmental elements.
18. We strongly support Legend Item (3), the Protected Natural Area. This area includes breeding habitat for bird species, particularly on the lake edge.
19. We can NOT support Legend Item (5) Boardwalk link through swamp at this time. The swamp is in good condition, sustains diverse vegetation and fauna and is fragile, already affected by random wanderers.
20. We strongly support the closure of Legend Item (1) Informal tracks.
21. We support new Bush Tracks at the Western end & Banksia Rd as described (not marked by legend).

General

22. The Society would like to emphasise the need to allow for Crayfish habitat in the design and construction along the lake shores. This includes creating ways to discourage illegal trapping (deliberate or by-catch).
23. Wherever possible, new works should take into account and introduce design elements to mitigate the possible increased spread of the various pathogens currently damaging Blue Mountains bushland.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this project.



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