



Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc

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Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow

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Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure,
Locked Bag 5022,
Parramatta NSW 2124

To whom it may concern

Submission: Explanation of Intended Effect: Standard and Model Conditions of Consent

The Blue Mountains Conservation Society (Society) is a community volunteer organisation with over 900 members which has protected and conserved the natural environment of the Greater Blue Mountains since 1961. The Society wishes to make a submission on the *Explanation of Intended Effect: Standard and Model Conditions of Consent* (July 26).

Key points

The Society supports consent authorities being given the power to include additional and site-specific conditions of consent as proposed in the *Explanation of Intended Effect: Standard and Model Conditions of Consent* at section 3 – A new framework for standard and model conditions.

The Society recommends that the Blue Mountains City Council be given the power to include additional and site-specific conditions which are valid despite being inconsistent with Standard and Model Conditions. The Society believes that such powers are essential to protect and conserve the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area.

Detail

The Blue Mountains World Heritage Area is one of only 235 UNESCO World Natural Heritage Areas. The City of Blue Mountains is one of only two cities in the world surrounded by a World Heritage Area. The Blue Mountains is unusually rich in biodiversity (including healthy resident populations of koalas and other species threatened with extinction), has many Art Deco and Victorian-era buildings, is at grave risk of bushfires, is a major Australian tourist destination, and protects Sydney's largest drinking water catchment.

Urban development is not contiguous but takes the form of 27 distinct towns and villages located along the Great Western Highway and western railway line. The urban development, highway and railway bifurcate the World Heritage Area in an east-west direction. The discontinuous strip of development and the large natural areas between towns and villages are important elements of the character of the Blue Mountains (and are a key tourist offering).

The Blue Mountains is characterised by steep topography and most urban development has been and continues to be on the ridgetops with the World Heritage Area occupying the valleys below. As a result, environmental incidents (such as significant water pollution incidents) and chronic environmental harm (such as urban runoff contaminated by household activities), generally flows into the World Heritage Area, and development in the area needs to carefully consider these issues.

In short, protecting and conserving the natural and urban environments while fostering social and economic well-being are key challenges for the Blue Mountains community and the City Council.

The unique character and status of the Blue Mountains as a 'City within a World Heritage Area' (cf. cl. 6.1(2)(a)) is reflected in the *Blue Mountains Local Environmental Plan 2015* which makes unusually detailed provision for development affecting the World Heritage Area and other environmentally sensitive land (cl. 6.1 and 6.2) including conservation of terrestrial biodiversity (cl. 6.3, 6.6 and 6.7), conservation of land at risk of landslides (cl. 6.4 and 6.5), protection of watercourses and riparian land (cl. 6.8), protection of the escarpments which make a significant contribution to the scenic amenity of the Blue Mountains (cl. 6.12), and conservation of character of the major towns and villages of the Blue Mountains (Part 7). The Society played a prominent role in the development of the *Blue Mountains Local Environmental Plan 2015* and believes that it strikes the right balance between fostering social and economic well-being and environmental conservation.

In conclusion, the Society believes that the Blue Mountains has unique challenges which have been well responded to in the *Blue Mountains Local Environmental Plan 2015*, and therefore that, at least in the case of the Blue Mountains, it is desirable that the Blue Mountains City Council be given the power to impose additional and site-specific conditions, including conditions which are valid despite inconsistency with Standard and Model Conditions.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries in regard to this submission

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Annette Sartor". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Annette" and the last name "Sartor" clearly distinguishable.

Ms Annette Sartor
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