

**Submission
No 117**

**INQUIRY INTO PLANNING SYSTEM AND THE IMPACTS
OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND
COMMUNITIES**

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Parliament inquiry Climate change.

I would like the panel to be aware of what is happening in the Macarthur Wilton Growth areas.

Having lived in Appin for over 40 years before we were evicted from our home of 34 years by DPIE because of varying factors but will not go into the unjustified reasons them now.

I have observed a lot in those years, the whole area is very frail because of 3 reasons fire & flood & air pollution, as it forms part of the western Sydney air shed.

I will address the fires first in the 2000/2001 Christmas day fires that started around midday just 1 km from our home, within a very short time it was at Helensburgh the wind changed many times making the prediction of the fires very hard. It burnt for 10 days around the property where we lived in Appin 2 of my children were members of the RFS they were on our property when the wheels of the fire truck started to burn, they were locked in the vehicle & sprinklers started, which saved their lives. That same fire crossed Appin Road on 3 occasions, heading towards Campbelltown thus isolation the town of Appin as the Appin Bulli Road was also closed & Broughton pass was way too dangerous to go near. We had bush fire staging at our home for 3 days then the sheer magnitude of the fire, staging was moved to the local fire shed at Appin. The tankers were filling up in our front yard as the hydrant was there because of the terrible water supply & pressure it was taking 20 minutes to fill one fire tanker, there was a line of 4-5 tankers waiting for water, this has not improved in the last 20 years, despite just having extension built to the huge Water filtration plan in Appin, am told the biggest in the southern Hampshire but not sure that applies now. Yet parts of Appin still have to buy water.

Whilst the Green Wattle Creek fire did not impact this area, waters tankers were positioned along the Hume motorway M5 to stop the fire from jumping across the freeway & getting into the huge water catchment area & the southern coalfields, with Catastrophic outcomes.

If you were to look at Wilton Green aka Wilton Southeast Walkers & Country Garden, you would see that this estate if a disaster in the making is a bushfire was to start in the Cordeaux catchment with the southerly wind pushing it creating a fire storm a lot of the newly built homes would have little chance of been saved.

The cookie cutter development is not allowing room for emergency service vehicles (such a fire trucks) to gain access as the Roads are so narrow.

I would like to bring to your attention that in March this year I requested a GIPA from Wollondilly council re evacuation times for the Wollondilly shire isolated villages, the reason I did this was one page of that report (see attached) had the evacuation times for Appin at 6 hours Wilton at 5, that is despite these areas been rapid growth areas. This report has still been withheld from the public eyes despite the effects of rapid growth & climate change.

Adjoining the historical property of Mt. Gilead is the over 50 Mt. Gilead retirement village & nursing home. There would be at least 1000 residents. They units are built of the side of a hill & at a glance they look like shipping containers stacked one on top of each other, most of the residents have golf carts to get around because of the steep slopes, & the sheer size of the village, in the front & at both side of this facility is bush land if a fire was to come through this area the results would be a lot of dead elderly people as the entry into the facility is very narrow. It is actually connected to Naroomba reserve. Koala territory.

I would like to make mention of the floods. However, Menangle & Menangle Park ever got approved is beyond all reasoning, both areas are known flood areas, yet the homes are proceeding to be built at an excessive speed, Menangle Parks Is Duhua Group, they received a \$300 million donation from state government because of the prohibitive cost of infrastructure. Menangle is Mirvac & private developers Benedict's sand & soil. Both areas come under 2 different Local Government areas been Campbelltown & Wollondilly they both sit on the edge of the very frail Nepean River. The roads surrounding these towns flood easily thus cutting off access for emergency services. The prospective buyers are being told that some of the people objecting to these development have no idea of what they are talking about. That statement is so far from the truth.

The Nepean River also floods at Douglas Park thus cutting off access to the residents on either side & to Wilton. The Nepean River crossing at Douglas Park gorge & the Broughton Pass gorge crossing at Appin are both convict built whilst beautiful & scenic both will never hold the amount of traffic & especially in case of emergencies, they are both closed to trucks which gives you an idea of the twists bends & steep ravines. The last 2 rain events have created land slides on Broughton pass, as there is long wall mining in the area. Trucks are known to sneak through Broughton pass & just today one got stuck thus blocking any movement.

Mt. Gilead whilst only a small section of it floods, that will not be the case when it fills with urban development, a large portion of this property is flanked by the Menangle creek, this runs directly into the Nepean River & in its current state is a sea of brown muddy water because of the Development of Fig Tree Hill it is set to get a lot worse. On the banks of the Creek a little downstream is the Roslyn Park coal seam gas compression plant. (Moomba gas Pipeline) It has fracked the creek bed & have hydrology reports that states same, this water runs into the Nepean River. Also, Mt. Gilead has a large section of the Historic upper canal, which is gravity fed from Appin all the way to prospect Reservoir. This fresh drinking water will be under threat because of this attitude of Developers & urban sprawl. Also on Mt. Gilead is the dam that is first attempt at water conservation in Australia, visually since Fig tree hill has started construction the water has changed color. Its easy to see the degeneration of this at the hands of Developers.

The heat island effect will be horrendous have seen evidence of this in Walker Developments Appin Valley every single tree that was on this land was bulldozed. The cost of running an air conditioner puts a huge strain on family budgets. At the height of the last drought & heat wave, I personally witnessed Koalas dying from the heat. They were literally falling out of the trees. Having a daughter a Koala rehabilitator & carer we saw it firsthand.

I would like you to be aware of the revolving door that seems to have been adopted & used, a perfect example of this is. The investigation into the Greater Macarthur Growth area, was headed by Mr. Brendan O'Brien who worked for DPIE the reports were flawed, however since then Mr. O'Brien has changed jobs & now works for Lend Lease at Mt. Gilead. I have seen Mr. O'Brien in action many meetings in Appin & since then with his developer hat on for Lend Lease.

Have attached a map that I would like you to look closely at the upper reaches of the Georges & Nepean rivers need protecting at all cost. Academics seem to think they have the answers, however common sense is far more reliable than any paid for report.

Thank you for taking the time to read this submission.

Kind regards

Sue Gay