



The Hon. Rob Stokes MP
Minister for Planning and Public Spaces

Ref: MDPE20/439

Mr David Blunt
Clerk of the Parliaments
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Blunt

I write in response to your correspondence referring to the petition presented to the Legislative Council by Mr David Shoebridge MLC seeking a moratorium on land clearing in all areas affected by bushfires.

I acknowledge the petitioners' concerns about the recent bushfires, which have had a devastating impact on our state. The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (the Department) is working with bushfire-affected councils and communities across NSW, and will continue to provide support throughout the recovery and rebuilding process.

At all national parks and reserves in NSW, there are specific fire management strategies, prepared in consultation with the Rural Fire Service (RFS), in order to protect life, property, and community and environmental assets in the event of a bushfire.

I can assure the petitioners that the NSW Government is committed to bushfire recovery and is working hard to put measures in place to maintain and protect NSW native species and biodiversity. Emergency responses to rescue, protect and restore wildlife populations are already underway. These actions include wildlife rescue operations, emergency funding to support wildlife carers and the provision of supplementary food and water to sustain wildlife until habitat regenerates. Intensive feral animal control is being planned and implemented to protect surviving wildlife from feral cats and foxes and to reduce the impact of feral animals on recovering native vegetation. The Department's Environment, Energy and Science Group is using aerial imagery, remote sensing and other mapping techniques to assess impacts and help set priorities for recovery action.

The NSW Government has already committed more than \$6.5 million to support wildlife rescue and rehabilitation. This includes:

- \$1 million in emergency funding for licensed wildlife rehabilitators, to support veterinary care and build capacity in the wildlife rehabilitation sector to respond to bushfire emergencies
- \$1.47 million under the Wildlife Heroes Initiative to help the State's dedicated army of volunteer wildlife rehabilitators meet the growing demands of rescuing more than 100,000 animals every year
- \$4.05 million committed under the NSW Koala Strategy to support wildlife rehabilitation and veterinary care.

The government is also working on a medium-term NSW wildlife and bushfire recovery plan and will focus on extensive control programs to protect native animals and plants from feral animals and weeds in our national parks over the next 12 months.

The Wildlife and Conservation Recovery Immediate Response document sets out the immediate actions the government is taking to protect wildlife and support natural recovery. Further information about the government's response is available at www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/parks-reserves-and-protected-areas/fire/park-recovery-and-rehabilitation/recovering-from-2019-20-fires.

If the petitioners have questions about support for wildlife, they may contact Ms Sarah Balmanno, Acting Director Parks and Conservation at the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment on 9995 6910.

Further to the concerns of the petitioners, I am advised that the two residential subdivisions at Manyana were originally approved in 2008 and 2010. These are both subject to strict conditions to preserve the sites' environmental values and protect against potential bushfire by providing asset protection zones. Broad clearing of vegetation is prohibited and the removal of selected trees is only permitted where approved to accommodate the development of each stage.

I am also advised that the Inyadda Drive site, in North Manyana, is the subject of a planning proposal (with Shoalhaven City Council) to revise the current residential and environmental zonings. The Department issued a Gateway determination to Council in June 2015, requiring among other things a biodiversity offset strategy prior to public exhibition. Council is currently considering this information before the planning proposal is exhibited. I encourage the petitioners to contact Shoalhaven City Council should they have any questions of the planning proposal.

Following receipt of this petition, I have asked the Department to investigate further and provide me with advice about your concerns about the aforementioned residential subdivisions at Manyana. Upon receipt of this brief, I would be happy to provide you and your office with further information.

The Department takes its responsibilities to protect the environment and consider potential bushfire impacts on development seriously, carefully considering the merit of each proposal. The Department seeks advice from RFS on all development applications where bushfire impacts might be a potential issue, and requires compliance with the relevant standards in the Planning for Bushfire Protection document that was recently updated.

Should the petitioners have any further questions, they may contact Mr Brendon Roberts, Acting Director of Regional Assessments at the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment on 9274 6422.

Yours sincerely



The Hon. Rob Stokes MP
Minister for Planning and Public Spaces

*Received a copy of the
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