



Department of  
Environment and Conservation (NSW)

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In reply please quote: MOF14364

19 AUG 2004

Mr Geoff Brown  
ADI Residents Action Group  
PO Box 4134  
WERRINGTON NSW 2747

Dear Mr Brown

I refer to your letter of 3 August 2004 to Scott Cardamatis, in the office of the Hon Bob Debus MP, Minister for the Environment, regarding your recent inspection of the former ADI site at St Marys. I also refer to your letter to the Director General of the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) on 6 August 2004. I am replying on behalf of Mr Cardamatis and the Director General respectively.

I understand that Ms Lou Ewins of the DEC has previously written to you summarising the outcomes of the site visit, so I will not repeat detail on the site visit here, but will address other issues you raised in your letters.

The DEC considers that the previous survey and mapping of the ADI site is sufficient to enable sound decisions regarding planning for the development of the site to be made. The area is in fact one of the most surveyed development sites in NSW.

Of the threatened species locations visited during your site inspection, only two *Pimelea spicata* sites, the second *Persoonia nutans* site visited and the *Micromyrtus minutiflora* site near the main gate had not been previously surveyed and assessed by the developer's consultants. Of these, only the *Pimelea spicata* site in the western precinct warrants further consideration. The others are either already in the proposed regional park (one *Pimelea spicata* site and the second *Persoonia nutans* site), or are of a species (*M. minutiflora*) which will be more than adequately conserved within the proposed regional park.

The *Pimelea spicata* site in the western precinct will be considered during the planning for that area, with provision for local open space to be used in its conservation.

I am advised that no DEC officer at the site inspection can recall saying that they thought the site contained "great habitat for koalas". However, it was said that the area certainly qualifies as potential koala habitat. That is, it is habitat that koalas could use, if they were present.

In addition, your assertion that DEC officer "Tanya Leary reports hearing koalas in the South Creek area" is not confirmed by Ms Leary. I am advised that Ms Leary was conducting a night fauna survey in Windsor Downs Nature reserve when she heard a single, distant noise that may or may not have been a koala. She was not able to investigate further at the time, but has since conducted nocturnal koala playback surveys in the same area, with no koalas being detected, and she now doubts that the noise she heard could have been a koala.

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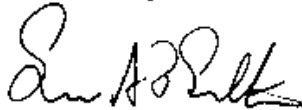
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As Ms Ewins states in her letter to you, the available data (including the information provided by Dr Close) does not indicate there is a resident koala population and the DEC will not be commissioning a full scale koala survey on the ADI site. Nevertheless, some koala surveying will be required as detailed precinct and/or development applications are submitted in the future.

You have said that it appears that funding provided by Lend Lease for conservation has "influenced" DEC decision makers, and suggested that no further efforts will be made to protect threatened species outside the new 850 hectare park. This is not correct. On behalf of the DEC, I wish to confirm that vigorous attention will be given to threatened species conservation as the precinct planning proceeds, and that the monies to be provided will be used to establish the new regional park. This new park will be a great asset for conservation and the people of Western Sydney.

Your concern for the conservation of NSW threatened species is appreciated. Please note, however, that strategic land-use decisions for the ADI site have been finalised by the Commonwealth and State Governments. The DEC considers that the establishment of the new park, and the future work to be done in the precinct planning, together represent a best practice example of balancing development and conservation needs.

Yours sincerely



**SIMON A Y SMITH**  
**Deputy Director General**  
**Environment Protection and Regulation Division**