

ADI Residents Action Group
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Wednesday, 30 March 2005

Letter by Fax
The Hon Ian Campbell
Environment Minister

RE: ADI Site St Marys – St Marys Development Agreement – Transfer of 828 ha of National Estate listed lands to the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service

Dear Senator Campbell

The ADI Residents Action Group writes to express concern that the Federal Government has reneged on its commitment to the people of Western Sydney that it would ensure that the entire 828 hectares of the ADI Site listed in the Register of the National Estate would be protected and retained in public ownership by the transferring of the ownership of the RNE lands to the NSW Government for it to be incorporated into their National Parks Reserve System as part of a 900 hectare Regional Park.

The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service has now revealed plans not to accept 35 hectares of RNE lands into the Regional Park reducing the size of the Regional Park from 900 ha to 865 ha. It cites clauses in the St Marys Development Agreement between Lend Lease, the NSW Government and the Federal Government (Comland) as allowing them that option. The SMDA states that the management of RNE lands not accepted as Regional Park will remain with the landowner, who is now Lend Lease a property developer.

This is outrageous that the Federal Government could have allowed this to occur!

Since October 2001 there has been a commitment given by a series of Federal Environment Ministers and Federal Members that a 900-hectare Regional Park would be created at the ADI site that protected all 828 ha of RNE listed lands. As recently as 8/12/03 the Chief of Staff for the Federal Environment Minister, Dr Peter Poggioli, wrote to the ADI RAG stating “The NSW Development Agreement with Comland provides for the transfer of the RNE listed land to the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. The land will be declared a Regional Park...” (See www.adisite.com)

It is absolutely disgraceful that a public commitment can be given by the Federal Government to ensure these lands were protected in a public reserve system, yet, when it came to the actual negotiations with the NSW Government the Federal Government appears to have been fixated on matters relating to the sale and disposal of the ADI Site, thus the inclusion of absurd clauses in the SMDA that allow a property developer to own and manage RNE listed land.

ADI RAG holds other concerns with the protection of RNE lands besides the size and ownership of the Regional Park. The NSW Government allows Lend Lease to have zonings for drainage basins within the Regional Park. Lend Lease argues that the land is zoned drainage basins and is separate to the Regional Park yet at the same time the drainage basins will be built on part of the 828 ha of RNE listed lands. **These basins are nearly 15 ha in total. This is not acceptable that 15 ha of RNE lands be squandered to accommodate Lend Leases drainage basins. How could this be allowed to happen and what are you going to do about it?**

We remind you that there has been an eleven-year campaign, one of the biggest urban environmental campaigns, to try to have as much of the ADI site protected and retained in public ownership? Were you cognisant that protection of only 900-hectares of the ADI site was seen by most as a sad outcome and that this was the bare minimum we would accept?

We ask that you respond to the above matters at your earliest convenience. ADI RAG does intend to bring this issue to the public's attention and will be highlighting the role of your department and the Federal Government in this cruel joke on the people of Sydney.

We do not for one minute accept that Lend Lease is an appropriate manager of land listed in the Register of the National Estate for its environmental and cultural significance.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. D. Brown'.

Geoff Brown
Convenor
ADI Residents Action Group