

Media Release – 12th August 2001

The Federal Government have come under fire from the ADI Residents Action Group (ADI RAG) for breaching their own environmental laws following the recent slashing of parts of the ADI site. The areas slashed were the proposed Catholic school site and a large section along the Northern Rd.

It appears that sections of the EPBC Act (Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act) have been breached by the Federal Government's property development company Comland, which carried out the slashing. Comland are the joint developers of the ADI site along with Lend Lease Corporation.

“What has occurred is the indiscriminate slashing by a Federal government Department of the Cumberland Plain Woodland (CPW) an Endangered Ecological Community protected by Commonwealth legislation.” Said spokesperson for ADI RAG.

“We have contacted Environment Australia to bring Comland's slashing of the CPW to their urgent attention. We have learnt from Environment Australia that a licence was issued to Comland that limits them to only slash an area 1.5 kilometres long by 12 metres wide on the Eastern or St Marys end of the ADI site.”

“Comland claim this slashing to be for ‘fire mitigation purposes’, we argue that this is nothing but the vandalising of a rare ecological community.”

“Environment Australia have stated that they are now seeking explanations from Comland as to their slashing practices and will take appropriate action if sections of the EPBC Act have been breached.”

The most disturbing aspect of the ADI Site slashing occurred prior to Jackie Kelly and Bishop Manning making an announcement that 6.4 ha of the ADI site would be sold to the Catholic Education Office for a new school. Comland in preparation for Ms Kelly's and Bishop Manning's announcement first slashed any vegetation on the proposed school site to the ground. Some of that vegetation included rare shrubs and regenerating Grey Box saplings.

“It appears that Comland consider themselves to be above the law when it comes to any activities on the ADI Site. We will be making sure that the Federal Government fully investigates this matter and we will call on Jackie Kelly as our local representative to make sure it happens.”