

MEDIA RELEASE

Luke Foley MP

Leader of the Opposition
Shadow Minister for Western Sydney



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LABOR STEPS IN TO SAVE WOLLI CREEK BUSHLAND FROM BAIRD'S BULLDOZERS

Labor will move to force the Baird Government to hand over precious parcels of bushland to expand the 60-hectare Wollie Creek Regional Park.

Labor will introduce legislation to the NSW Parliament next week to expand the park. This will save an important area of bushland in Sydney's Canterbury district from being lost forever.

The Roads and Maritime Services owns the parcels of land.

Despite community support and support from the Office of Environment and Heritage, RMS has failed to give a firm commitment to protect the land, prompting the Labor Opposition to act to save this land before it is too late.

These parcels of land have not been identified as being needed for the Westconnex project, so there is no impediment to having them incorporated into the park.

The Baird Government's record on land clearing is woeful: it has cut down century-old fig trees along Anzac Parade and Parramatta Road and most recently bulldozed one of the few remaining urban patches of critically endangered ironbark forest, beside the M5 motorway and Canterbury Golf Club. The ironbark forest was home to a wide array of species including the powerful owl and blue wren.

Labor Leader Luke Foley was joined by Labor's Candidate for Canterbury, Sophie Cotsis, and Shadow Environment Minister Penny Sharpe at the site next to the Park for the announcement. They were joined by members of the local community including members of the Wollie Creek Preservation Society.

In 2004 the previous Labor Government established the 60 ha Wollie Creek Regional Park.

Quotes attributable to Opposition Leader Luke Foley

"Labor understands this parcel of bushland is precious – it provides habitat for wildlife and picturesque walking tracks, and it represents years of bush regeneration work by the local community to make it a cherished oasis within the surrounding urban landscape."

"I'm proud to add to Labor's enduring legacy in the protection of environmentally important areas in NSW by setting aside this land for inclusion in the Wollie Creek Regional Park."

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Quotes attributable to Labor Candidate for Canterbury Sophie Cotsis

"This land is too important to lose to Mike Baird's bulldozers, and that's why it must be saved now.

"The local community has long campaigned for this bushland to be reserved as part of the Wollie Creek Regional Park, and today we want to honour that commitment and vision for an expanded park.

"I want to congratulate the Wollie Creek Preservation Society for their years of commitment, both for their bush regeneration work in this very location and for never giving up on their goal to see this beautiful area included in the park."

Quotes attributable to Shadow Environment Minister Penny Sharpe

"This land has been identified as important for urban bushland and habitat for native animals, but without protecting it from this government's zeal for clearing it could be lost forever.

"This additional reservation will improve the ability of the parks service to manage and protect the Park's conservation values.

"With growing populations and the loss of green space, every piece of urban bushland that can be protected is important."