

Wolli Creek Preservation Society

Update

September 2015

www.wollicreek.org.au

The NSW Government recently announced:

The 'New M5' will **NOT** impact the Wolli Creek bushland at Bexley Rd
So, that's good news... if we can trust them

To mark the occasion, we think a 'reclaim the bush' session is in order!

WEED & WINE

Given the threat from Westconnex, we halted bushcare efforts at Bexley North for four years. But now we are getting back to reclaiming this bush to underline our campaign to get RMS to finally hand this land over for the WOLLI CREEK REGIONAL PARK

**Come and help look after this prize area on
27 SEPTEMBER**

9 - 1230 BUSHCARE SESSION

Meet at the small mown grassy area at the start of the Two Valley Trail (TVT) near Bexley Road. If you are a regular or occasional bushcare participant, add this special day to your usual session in September. Dust off your gloves if they have been hung up for a while.

If you have thought about coming along to bushcare, but never quite found the time or opportunity, come along and try your hand. There will be experienced bush regenerators there to guide you. Tools will be provided, but your own pair of gloves will help spread our supply around.

Morning tea will be provided for bushcarers.

Please let us know you are coming, so we know how many pairs of gloves to bring.

RSVP to bushcare@wollicreek.org.au



**BEXLEY NORTH
BUSHLAND**

1230 LUNCH

ALL WELCOME, BRING A PLATE

Even if you can't make it to the regen session, come for lunch at Illoura Reserve. BYO lunch and beverage and bring a little extra to share if you wish. Kids welcome!

Illoura Reserve is a short walk down from the turning circle at the end of Johnston St, Earlwood.

Deb Little

WESTCONNEX
WHAT'S NEXT FOR WCPS?
SEE PAGE 4

ANNUAL DINNER

FRIDAY 16th OCTOBER



April 1967
LOCAL RESIDENTS UP IN ARMS
Sound familiar??

During the long campaign in the 1980s and 90s to prevent the construction of an eight-lane motorway through the Wolli Creek Valley, long-time residents told members of WCPS about an earlier fight by locals to save Nannygoat Hill. Canterbury Council had been asked to allow Brambles to completely remove this sandstone outcrop to provide stone for the extension to the new airport runway at Mascot.

In the ABC TV program 'This Day Tonight', popular reporter Frank Bennett told a story about this protest by residents to save Nanny Goat Hill. 'The Battle for Nannygoat Hill' is an integral part of the Valley's history. It documents early environmental action that actually predates the well-known and well-publicized 'Kelly's Bush' action at the start of the Green Bans of the 1970s.

To celebrate how much people continue to care for the Wolli Creek Valley bushland, we will also be showing our current **Tree-mendous Wolli** video.

Tickets are \$50pp and payment can be made via direct deposit to BSB: 032 067; a/c no: 288295.

Please include your surname in the account line identification and send an email with payment date/details to info@wollicreek.org.au so we know you're coming. Or make out a cheque to WCPS and send to PO Box 270, Earlwood 2206.

Don't forget, NSW Greens upper house member Dr Mehreen Faruqi will be our guest speaker



Dr Mehreen Faruqi

FILM SCREENING:
**THE BATTLE FOR
NANNYGOAT HILL**
and
TREE-MENDOUS WOLLI

If you haven't seen this story,
you must come to the
Annual Dinner!

Birdos Brunch

10 - 11.30am SUNDAY 18 OCTOBER
Judy's cottage, 12 Jackson Place

Calling our regular Birdos - and potential Birdos!

Come celebrate the beginning of National Bird week and swap stories about recent bird sightings. We'd also love to know what our bird survey teams have been up to. Come and meet other bird lovers and find out more about what is happening and get involved.

The Wolli Birdos participate in monthly surveys through the Valley. We have ten groups, each surveying their own regular patch, so we know what birds are in the valley month by month. Neil Rankin started collecting bird data in the valley in the 1960s and we have continuous records since then, which is pretty amazing. The information we collect is entered into the CSIRO's online database, the Atlas of Living Australia.

The Wolli Creek Valley has over 50 hectares of diverse bushland habitats and around 100 species of birds are recorded each year. This relatively isolated bushland ribbon in a well-developed urban area is an attractive haven for birds. It provides food, shelter, a passage-way and resting place for migratory species and a home for resident birds.

The Valley also provides a major west-east corridor for migrants moving between the high country west of Sydney and the coast and a significant stepping-stone in Sydney's urban south for migrants moving north-south.

If you would like help in recognizing local birds, try "Morecombe's Australian Birds" App, which not only has descriptions, pictures and a smart search, but includes audio of bird calls.

The Bird Surveys are a wonderful way to get involved in a bit of **CITIZEN SCIENCE** and learn to recognize some local birds

In the Valley...



CITIZEN SCIENCE

“Scientific research conducted by amateur or non-professional scientists and a very important source of data about biodiversity”

Data and insights gained through the efforts of citizen scientists can be as valuable as those obtained by scientists. Harnessing the enthusiasm, interest and efforts of the thousands of people participating in citizen science will continue to enhance the range and depth of data available for analysis and research.



Chinese Yo Yo in Girrahween Park
Weekend mornings, these guys say it's a great way to limber up and start the day

Judy Finlason has spotted an Olive-backed Oriole at her birdbath and now has a pair of nesting White-browed Scrubwrens as well



Fan-tailed Cuckoo



Grey Goshawk, by John Duffy



Pandorea in full bloom



Leucopogon lanceolatus
photos by Laura Zusters

A Society member recently asked us what our position is on Westconnex now. You might also have questions. So here is the committee's full statement.

WCPS POSITION ON WESTCONNEX

A recent Government media release by the Westconnex Delivery Authority (WDA) says that the new M5 tunnel "will not impact Wolli Creek bushland and no local homes will be acquired".

So, the Western Gateway bushland at Bexley Rd appears to be safe, for now.

Thanks to all those who campaigned to help make that happen

WCPS has always recognized that campaigning to protect the Wolli Valley from an increased M5 footprint would be more successful if we simultaneously participate in campaigns against the broader WestConnex project as well.

Two years ago we laid out our position [on our website](#) and our position hasn't changed.

We recently published the following in our e-news to members about what WCPS is doing in the campaign against WestConnex.



Actions include:

Support calls for the business case to be made public. This was supposed to be made public in July'.

Support a Parliamentary Inquiry into the project as sought by Greens member for Newtown Jenny Leong. We have shared the petition and encouraged members to download and sign it in our last newsletter.

Financially support a part-time campaign coordinator who will help manage the many volunteer groups and help organise anti-Westconnex efforts - we have donated \$500 and encouraged members to donate as well if they agree with this.

Our next step will be to call for the Western Gateway bushland at Bexley Rd to be finally included in the Wolli Creek Regional Park, as was promised fourteen years ago, to make sure that it remains safe. Linda Burney MP for Canterbury has asked a pertinent question in the NSW Parliament.

Given the Society's experience of Government promises in the past, our optimism comes with caution. In Sept. 1988, in line with a pre-election promise, the Liberal Government announced that the road reservation over the Valley was lifted and the Environment Minister Tim Moore said, "No matter what future planning options for traffic dispersal will be undertaken, the bushland areas of the Wolli Creek Valley are now guaranteed permanent preservation for community enjoyment".

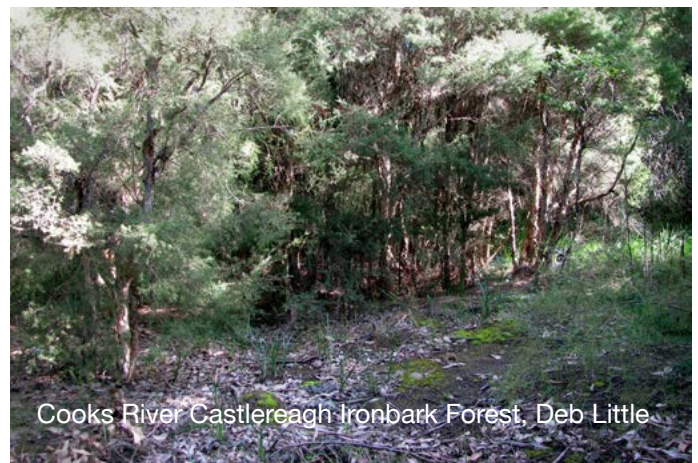
However, in early 1989, the DMR announced two options for the road, one being a tunnel and the other, the DMR's preferred option, was a barely concealed revival of the old Wolli Valley Freeway option. And so WCPS returned once more into the trenches and a lesson was learnt about government duplicity.

It may appear that the immediate threat to the bushland at Bexley North has been lifted. But, nothing is certain until a specific design and route has been locked in, the requirements of the NSW Dept. of Planning have been met and an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has been produced and exhibited. The Society will submit a response when the Environmental Impact Statement is released, possibly in October 2015.

The Westconnex Delivery Authority has announced that the tunnel portal entry and first stack for the new M5 will be located in Kingsgrove, within the current M5E motorway corridor and associated "government land".

The small remnant of RMS-owned Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest (an Endangered Ecological Community under NSW legislation) adjacent to Canterbury Golf Course will be impacted. This is the only remnant of this vegetation left in the Wolli Creek catchment.

It is estimated that only 8% of its original distribution across Sydney remains.



Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest, Deb Little

WCPS POSITION, WESTCONNEX

The Flying-fox population that uses Turrella Reserve and the Green and Golden Bell-frog colony on Kogarah Golf Course (actually in Arncliffe), both of which are Threatened Species under the Cwlth Act, will also be affected.

Since the NSW Government, backed by the Prime Minister, decided to “fast track” Westconnex, the approval and assessment process has already started with the lodging of documents under the Federal Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act on 17/7. Under the Federal Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act, the “New M5” will impact on the Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest, listed as Critically Endangered and of national significance.

The public was only given ten days to submit comments on the RMS’s submission. Assembling a response and detailing our grave concerns in that time was a huge challenge.

Ulrike and Deb, with the help of Pat and Jenny, worked very hard on organizing and writing the very detailed EPBC submission on the M5 part of Westconnex. The resulting document was shared amongst other No Westconnex campaign groups, and facilitated other submissions from such groups and individuals.

This WCPS submission is well worth a read. It can be found in short form and at length on our [website](#).

Peter Stevens has been the treasurer on the NoWestConnex committee for the last 2 years and most recently has also spent a huge amount of time organizing the recruitment of a paid employee.

Until recently Anna was also the communications coordinator for the group. Given time constraints, Anna resigned from the NoW committee in April and Peter is also stepping down in October.

We recognize there will now be a reduced contribution at the NoW executive level going forward. However, we can still make a contribution to the NoWestConnex campaign by continuing to attend campaign meetings, through ongoing donations if we believe milestones are being met and by sharing updates to WCPS members as appropriate.

WCPS encourages its members to join NoW and a few WCPS people have taken up that suggestion.



Esme Hargreaves hugs a tree

M5 Biodiversity Submission

The RMS recently lodged a referral with the Australian Department of the Environment to assess the biodiversity impacts of the M5 on ‘matters of national environmental significance’. Public submissions received in response, like ours, were not made public.

We consider that the RMS referral’s content is inadequate and insufficient to justify the proposed destruction of the environment or the waste of \$15.4 billion of taxpayers’ money. The quality of the information in the RMS document about the threatened native animal species and bushland under consideration was both lacking and misleading.

We, and people with expert knowledge, have strong concerns in particular about the vulnerable Green and Golden Bell Frog species at Kogarah Golf Course Arncliffe and the Critically Endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest remnant at ‘Beverly Grove’ near Canterbury Golf Course.

Wolli Creek Preservation Society, in its detailed submission in response, asked the Federal Minister for the Environment to reject the M5 proposal and to call a public inquiry.

The NSW Government has also still not released the business case for the Westconnex project. The continuing lack of information and the inadequate nature of consultation available to the public on this massive infrastructure project are truly alarming.

Deb Little and Anna Le Masurier



Thanks to Ulrike and Deb for their hard work in preparing this submission

PROPOSED ARCHERY RANGE WATERWORTH PARK

Wolli Creek Preservation Society strongly opposes Canterbury Council's proposal to establish an archery range at Waterworth Park.

The proposed archery range would significantly impact public access to the Two Valley Trail, which crosses Waterworth Park to connect the bushland of Wolli Creek with walking paths along the Cooks River. Developed as a joint initiative between council and local community groups, The Two Valley Trail is popular and widely promoted. It is a local asset that draws recreational walkers from all over Sydney.

This park also borders the environmentally sensitive riparian zone of Wolli Creek, which includes critically endangered saltmarsh, a vital element of the local ecology and a precious natural asset that needs to be protected.

There is limited community demand for archery in this area compared to other existing and proposed uses, which have much higher demand. Even Archery NSW, which you expect to support the proposal, has expressed concerns about it.

At the August Council meeting, a number of people addressed council including Nick Kambounias from the Titans Football Club and myself, from Wolli Creek.

WCPS has been pressing for a Plan of Management for Waterworth for years.

It turns out that council is obliged to develop a plan of management and get it approved by the minister before it can do anything on crown land. So how were they able to put in the new playground? This will force council to do some sort of community consultation.

Tim Pullen
WCPS Secretary



BIKE TRAINING & PLAY AREA GOUGH WHITLAM PARK

Across the road in Gough Whitlam Park, Canterbury Council is building a playground for older children, also without any public consultation, which has had residents up in arms. Council is also proposing a bike safety facility there. So far, there has been little or no community consultation and both WCPS and CRVA have sent protest letters to Council.

Peter Stevens says, "Personally, I am appalled by Council's high-handed actions over the playground at Gough Whitlam Park and over the proposal for an archery range in Waterworth Park. It should still be possible "to work with all stakeholders to meet the needs of the local community" but only on the basis of the development of a full-scale Plan of Management with proper consultation with all groups, including local residents."

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Local resident Chris Maguire has got over 288 signatures on a hard copy petition opposing the proposals.

He has also started an online petition at [sum of us](http://sumofus.org), but it's off to a slow start, so he needs your signature!



'Leave our parks alone'

By CINDY LYNCH
THANKS to nearly 300 residents signing a petition in just an hour, Canterbury Council has done a backflip on its determination to push through an unwanted archery range and bike training facility in Waterworth Park and Gough Whitlam Reserves respectively.
Organiser and Earwood resident Chris Maguire says locals are infuriated.
"The bike training facility is costing \$848,000, that's a whole lot of concrete and natural environment gone when they've got the same type of facility just 4.5km away at St Peter's tertiary school. It's a doubling in size by the end of the year. That money is better spent on widening cycle ways."
"And the archery plan, what a joke! How many archers are going to be using it? It is for cricket or football I could understand. We need to keep those parks for everyone to enjoy. Sure, the circus comes once a year, the German car show but then they're gone and residents get to enjoy the park again."
"We don't need attractions, we don't want Disneyland here and we don't want an archery range. That would be a very bad fall through ultimate lack of use and then it would become a sitting duck for development like at Wall Creek."
The council has agreed to hold off on plans until "all interested stakeholders are consulted", with a further report due to be tabled at its next meeting.
Residents can read more and sign the petition at: <http://community.sumofus.org/petitions/ensure-the-protection-of-remaining-recreational-spaces-in-gough-whitlam-park-in-sydney>
But a push by Liberal councillor Con Vastilades to relocate the proposed facility to Earwood has put the option of Gough Whitlam Park back on the table, much to the anger of residents.
Canterbury Council is yet to decide on the location of the facility that was originally planned for Peace Park in Ashbury.
"The concern here is peace park."

EARWOOD

Anger over park development

COMMUNITY APPEALS FOR MORE INPUT

Cindy Ngo

A PUSH to build a bike safety recreation facility at Gough Whitlam Park in Earwood has been met with community outrage, with residents saying it would remove open spaces.
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Gina Driers, Judi Rossi, Rudita Leverington, Gavin Gatenby (with dog Jesse), Laura Zusters, Deb Little, Ann Leahy, John Butcher, Lee Hoffman and Judy Finlason in front of the new playground construction at Gough Whitlam Park. Photo: JOHN APPLEBY

THE STORY SO FAR

■ A 2013 study by Suter Planners, commissioned by Canterbury Council, identified Peace Park as the most suitable location for the bike facility.
■ The study considered a range of sites and found Gough Whitlam Park was unsuitable due to its proximity to nearby Sydney Park, where there is already a biking facility.
■ In April this year, the council resolved to prepare a further report investigating the relocation of the biking facility from Peace Park to Gough Whitlam Park.
■ The report, now complete, found the touch football field and community events space in Gough Whitlam Park would be the only appropriate site for the facility.
■ Relocating the facility to the park "would lead to significant disruption to existing programs at Gough Whitlam Park", the report said.
■ Conversely, it found the

Both proposals are very problematic, unjustified, contrary to advice and opposed by the community

COOKS RIVER DAY OUT



The Cooks River Alliance invited families, friends and lovers of nature to join them in celebrating the hard work being done to improve the Cooks River. Bands played, activities for kids, reptiles and insects on display.

Our WCPS stall at the Cooks River Day Out on Saturday was a big success. Our wonderful volunteers who staffed the stall reported that many people came up to chat and find out more about Wolli Creek.

Thanks everyone. Let's hope we get some new members out of it!

1-3 HENDERSON ST, TURRELLA



19th August, by Deb Little

This photo taken by Deb Little on the 19th August 2015 of the site at 1-3 Henderson Street Turrella, shows trucks, a digger, a large skip and stockpiled building materials outside the site fence, on the riparian zone on the banks of Wolli Creek.

The Society sent photos to Rockdale Council and some of the equipment has now been moved. However the second photo on 30 August shows plenty of materials still on the wrong side of the fence.

We will continue to monitor the area and will be urging Council to reclaim the riparian zone that has been incorporated into the building site.

Rockdale Council has a policy to protect and maintain riparian land, watercourses and artificial water bodies. Yet the building site continues to be located in the riparian zone. You can see this on Google maps in "Earth" mode, typing in the site address 'Lot 31 Henderson Street Turrella'.



30th August, by Laura Zusters

The riparian zone should be 40 metres wide measured from the top of the creek bank and on Google maps you can clearly see it isn't.

Joanna Robinski





Management Plan for Grey Headed Flying Fox Camp finalized

Rockdale City Council now has a Management Plan for the Flying Fox camp near Turrella Reserve. The GHFF is listed as vulnerable to extinction under NSW and Commonwealth legislation. The site is significantly weed affected, which is threatening GHFF habitat. This management plan has been prepared to guide rehabilitation of vegetation at the camp to sustain habitat for the GHFF population for years to come.

Hammered out over three drafts, the Plan was prepared by Eco Logical Australia, with support from Deb Little (Wolli Creek Preservation Society), Luke Durrington (Sydney Trains), Nell Graham (Canterbury City Council) and David Dekel, Alexandra Vandine and Kate Medcalf from Rockdale City Council.

Congratulations to Deb Little for all the hard work she put into making this Plan as good as it is.

KEEP IN TOUCH

If you want to know what's going on in the valley or share news and opinions, follow us on Facebook, Twitter or have a look at some great videos on our YouTube site.

facebook

www.facebook.com/protectwollicreekvalley

twitter

twitter.com/wollipossum

You Tube

www.youtube.com/wollicreekvalley

MEMBERSHIP

Included with this Update is a membership notice letting you know if you are due to rejoin at the end of 2015 and a nomination form for membership of the WCPS committee. New blood is welcome!

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

26 October 7pm

Only financial members can attend and vote and nominations need to be in a fortnight before the meeting, ie. by 12th October. At inner south-west CDO, suite 1, Ground Floor, 11-13 Hartill-Law Avenue Bardwell Park.

The meeting will hear the annual report and the financial statements for the year to June 30 2015 and consider any motions of which due notice has been given.

CALENDAR

Bush regeneration: Sep 5, 9, 13, 18, 19, 26. Oct 3, 11, 14, 16, 17, 24. Nov 7, 8, 11, 20, 21, 28. Dec 5, 9, 13, 18, 19. Get details of locations via email bushcare@wollicreek.org.au or from WCPS or website calendar, or phone 9554 3176. Always check in case of changes at short notice.

Weed & Wine: 27 September. Special event to reclaim the Bexley Road end of the Western Gateway of Wolli Creek Regional Park from WestConnex. Bushcare from 9am, picnic lunch at Illoura Reserve from 12:30pm. bushcare@wollicreek.org.au

Birdos Brunch: 10am, Sun 18th October at Jackson Place. See page 2 for details.

Bat counting: Generally, third Friday of each month, just after sunset. For up-to-date details, join the bat group email list by contacting bats@wollicreek.org.au and come along to see the fly-out or join in the counting

Bird surveys: Ten teams are doing regular monthly surveys of bird species and numbers present. They work to their own timetable, but we can get you involved on a team if you contact birds@wollicreek.org.au

Committee Meetings: Sep 28, Oct 26, Nov 23. Inner south-west CDO, suite 1, Ground Floor, 11-13 Hartill-Law Avenue Bardwell park. All members are welcome to attend the meetings, notification to WCPS essential due to security at the building.

To register, email us at info@wollicreek.org.au

EDITOR, LAYOUT LAURA ZUSTERS

Wolli Creek Preservation Society
PO Box 270 Earlwood NSW 2206.

T 0431 914 553 E info@wollicreek.org.au

www.wollicreek.org.au

