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RE: DA2021/1164 - 521 Barrenjoey Road BILGOLA BEACH NSW 2107

I am in complete dismay about the relevance of classifying an area as an endangered ecological community if developers and home owners can then spend valuable time money to propose developments like the one proposed here. If the classification of this EEC (Pittwater and Wagstaffe spotted gum forest) had any weight at all- this should be evident to the buyer before purchasing the property. So as fellow residents do we assume the classification is meaningless ? That the council is not upholding its responsibility to retain these EECs and is unable to play the role of high value eco system stewardship. The arborist report said 43/53 trees have high retention value. The DA proposes to remove 28 - more than half of the trees on the property. The EEC is a forest community, it is not a few single trees. Contemporary tree science stresses the importance of the mycorrhizal fungal networks- the critical network below the surface akin to the critical canopy network above the surface. The canopy supporting wildlife corridors, shade and wind protection the below ground network stabilises the trees and links all the trees of the forest in an intricate web that provides a great deal more than carbon sharing. Approving this DA would set a dangerous precedent and would herald the eventual slow or hastened destruction of this endangered forest. It is also beyond belief that an Environmental 4 zoning permits the building of two houses, removal of more than half the trees and excavation as proposed here. The only way I can understand such a massively destruction DA is to imagine that the owners are overreaching- knowing they will be needing to amend the DA, that the public will lose steam in its opposition, and they will get in the end a big house with all the bells and whistles they believe they need. It is a huge test for the council on their commitment to preserve the natural environment of the northern beaches. This unique beauty is the reason I moved here and the increasing destruction over the last decade and especially the last 5 years is the reason I will move away. This DA attacks everything the majority of residents value. The old adage of houses amongst the trees has been smashed with DA such as this. Will the council be able to broker a solution that honours a fragile endangered ecological community ? We hold our breath and I wish I felt more confident. Deb Collins