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RE: DA2019/0200 - 130 Old Pittwater Road BROOKVALE NSW 2100

As a former resident of Corkery Crescent I have a keen interest in the ecological health of this reserve and, as a professional and volunteer bush regenerator I have spent many long and rewarding hours regenerating bushland in this area. I was shocked to discover the recent bulldozing of pristine bushland at 138-140 Old Pittwater Rd (which took place without adequate notification of nearby residents) and I wish to object strongly to this proposed new development which will destroy more bushland adjacent to the already cleared site.

I believe there was a Warringah Shire Council proposal in the 1970s for the entire Brookvale Escarpment to be fully incorporated into Allenby Park so as to create a much-needed buffer zone and protection for the high-quality bushland separating residential Allambie Heights and industrial Brookvale, but this never happened, apart from a relatively narrow band along 30 -36 Corkery Cres and along adjoining Allenby Park Parade.

As a consequence, instead of the bushland being protected in perpetuity, the area is inappropriately zoned and the Brookvale escarpment is being destroyed bit by bit by industrial expansion upwards from Old Pittwater Road.

This latest proposal at 130 Old Pittwater Road would destroy bushland even further up the escarpment than any previous development, including the nearby massive seven-storey construction which took place in 2005, despite community opposition.

I object to this proposal for many reasons:

*The bushland on the Brookvale escarpment is ancient and relatively undisturbed, most weed species are found along residential boundaries and creeklines and it forms part one of the largest continuous tracts of high-quality bushland on the Northern Beaches. It should be left intact.

*Allenby Park and the Brookvale Escarpment is rich in fauna - wallabies, bandicoots and echidnas have returned in recent years after an absence of decades and the bushland is habitat for King Parrots, Laughing Kookaburras, Eastern Rosellas, Black Cockatoos, Sulphur-crested Cockatoos, Australian Magpies, Australian Ravens, Pied Currawongs, Grey Butcherbirds, Rainbow Lorikeets, Brush Turkeys, Noisy Miners, Ring-tail Possums, Brush-tailed possums, Grey-headed Flying Foxes, Boobook Owls, Green Tree Snakes, Red-Crowned Toadlets, Eastern Blue-tongue Lizards, Whip Snakes, Skink and Gecko species, innumerable invertebrate species (although there has been a noticeable decline of this important part of the biosphere over the last few decades, due in part to the intensification of development in surrounding areas). Yet Allenby Park and Brookvale Escarpment is comparatively pristine and - though smaller in area - the bushland condition is comparable to the high-quality of Manly-Warringah War Memorial Park. With Northern Beaches being one of the last strongholds for the wildlife which once inhabited all of Sydney, the time is long overdue to stop decimating what remains of our bushland habitat.

*The site is a Category 2 Wildlife Corridor facilitating wildlife movement from the north to reserves such as Gumbooya, Orara, Goondari and Manly Dam, Garigal National Park and beyond. According to the Flora and Fauna Assessment a total of 43 indigenous plant species occur in the site of the proposed area and 16 species of conservation significance have been recorded within a radius of 5km of the site within the last 20 years, so the site area needs a far more comprehensive vegetation survey of all trees and shrubs on the site.

*There have been 26 species of threatened fauna and one threatened population recorded within a 5km radius of the subject site within the previous 20 years. However the Assessment notes that the corridor is "disjunct and not suitable for migration of terrestrial mammals" and its survey did not find any evidence of wallabies. Yet I know from personal observation that it is only in the last decade that wallabies have returned to the Brookvale Escarpment, (after years of extensive fox control took place across Northern Sydney), along with bandicoots and brush turkeys, all of which have gradually migrated from the Hawkesbury and beyond, and on through Ku-ring-gai National Park, Garigal National Park and through leafy suburban areas at night to find their current sanctuary in the vicinity of the proposed development site. So there have been wallabies living in the bushland below Corkery Crescent now for around ten years, but the presence of wallabies is not even recorded in the Flora and Fauna Assessment. With Northern Beaches Hospital now built on a Category 1 Wildlife Corridor, if the fauna which has returned to this area is reduced by habitat loss on the Escarpment then it is less for the population to be replaced from the Oxford Falls bushland catchment. This is a good example of how ecological decline occurs at a local level.

*The natural hydrology of this steep escarpment will be further impacted as natural seepages and water flows will flow in greater volumes out of the bushland and into Brookvale drains, which will inevitably dry out the deeper layers of moisture upon which large trees depend. The site is also a recognised slip slope.

*The Statement of Environmental Effects states that

"The proposed development will not have a detrimental impact on the adjoining properties or the locality" and that "the proposed development will not have any significant impact on the environment, scenic quality of the area or the amenity of the adjoining allotments...or nearby properties." Yet the bulldozing behind 138-140 Old Pittwater Rd, has already significantly narrowed the bushland corridor and the cleared area can now be seen through the bushland looking east from Allenby Park Parade, Allambie Heights where previously the view was of unbroken bushland leading toward Brookvale. The noise from Brookvale Industrial Area is now more clearly heard by residents and is detrimentally impacting their quality of life. The sound of reversing trucks, fire alarm drills, warehouse roller doors being opened and banged shut - all shatter the quiet of the pre-dawn hours in the Brookvale Valley on a regular basis. Destruction of more bushland behind 130 Old Pittwater Rd will bring the industrial zone and associated noise even further into Allambie Hts and a stark warehouse view will replace the vista of valued bushland for many residents of Corkery Cres. Residents love Allambie Heights for its peace and quiet and this development would further reduce the buffer zone between Brookvale and Allambie Hts for affected Corkery Cres and Allenby Park Pde residents. The view of yet another development cutting even further into the Brookvale Escarpment will also be visible across much of the Brookvale Valley and as far away as Curl Curl and Freshwater.

*Residents have not been properly notified of this development - most notifications went to other industrial premises, not the local community which highly values the Brookvale Escarpment.

*The proposed building also exceeds planning height restrictions.

*This development will destroy bushland further up the escarpment than any previous development. Enough is enough. Piecemeal development is destroying the bushland buffer zone of the Brookvale Escarpment which is worth protecting due to its size, excellent condition and wildlife habitat.

If as noted in the Statement of Environmental Effects 'the proposed new development is considered to be in keeping with the desired future character of the locality," then there are serious flaws in the Local Environment Plan which have never been addressed.

I call on the Northern Beaches Council to reject this proposal. There needs to be a buyback by Council of this bushland site (and the remainder of the Brookvale Escarpment) for rezoning and incorporation into the protected reserve of Allenby Park, as should have happened decades ago.