

From: Susan and Kelvin Wynn
Sent: Monday, 2 June 2008 14:14
To: Committee, CCWEA (Reps)
Subject: Submission to the Standing Committee on Climate Change, Water, Environment and the Arts

The Secretary
 Standing Committee on Climate Change, Water, Environment and the Arts
 PO Box 6021
 House of Representatives
 Parliament House
 Canberra ACT 2600
 Australia

Submission No:	67
Date Received:	2-6-08
Secretary:	<i>[Signature]</i>

Dear Sir/Madam,

INQUIRY INTO CLIMATE CHANGE and ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS ON COASTAL COMMUNITIES.

We are writing this submission to the inquiry to point out the value of the entire Wallarah Peninsula and its precarious vulnerability that would be destroyed by development and put sections of the developments at risk from climate change and associated sea level rises, storm surges and tidal fluctuations. A predicted minimum sea level rise of 1 metre or more and possible increase in storms and tidal surges is going to affect quite a lot of properties in the development areas.

Currently the area is under threat from developers using part 3A of the Environment and Assessment Act, '79 which cuts out community consultation and overrides all other pertinent legislation that could be invoked to protect these areas and save them into posterity for all Australians and allows the Minister for Planning sole discretion as to whether the developments proceed or not.

The land is currently uninhabited and was first proposed as an inter-regional buffer zone in 1969 and it became governmental policy in 1975. This continues until today. The NSW Department of Environment and Conservation agreed that the land should be conserved and disturbed areas restored; however, the government ignored their own department's advice. This region is now the 'lungs' of Sydney being the only remnant coast to lake bushland left along the entire eastern seaboard of NSW. It is also as important an area to retain in an historic sense to trace the mining history of NSW as is the iconic 'Rocks' area in Sydney. The area should become a dedicated National Park for present and future generations of Australians.

Two developers want to develop 887 home sites on the Lake Macquarie peninsula, 700 on Crangan Bay, the last undeveloped bay on Lake Macquarie and part of the last undeveloped area between Newcastle and the Central Coast. They similarly want to develop 900 home sites nearby on the coast at the historic mining village at Catherine Hill Bay over approximately 200 ha of coastal land. Much of the land proposed for development is extremely environmentally significant with critically endangered flora and fauna and ecological communities present across the sites. Wyong Shire Council representatives have categorically stated that these developments will lead to species extinction. The developments will also damage two significant wetlands, one into Crangan Bay the other into the ocean abutting the development with stormwater run-off and weed edge effects. This is coupled with the removal of approximately 60 000 trees on the Crangan Bay waterfront site alone.

These developments contravene the NSW Coastal Design Guidelines; the State Environmental Planning Policy No 71 – Coastal Protection; the State Environmental Planning Policy No 65 all of Section 79C(1)

03/06/2008

(c) of the Environmental Protection and Assessment Act '79. They are also contrary to the NSW Coastal Policy '97; the Hunter's Coast – Hunter Coastal Urban Settlement Strategy '94 and the Lake Macquarie Coastal Management Plan.

The current population of Gwandalan/Summerland Point is approximately 5 000. The large population increase due to these developments would introduce many more car dependant residents in areas that are physically remote from regular public transport nodes, have inadequate infrastructure and few work opportunities. An average round trip to daily employment would be over 50kms, minimum, by car. This is contrary to the Draft State Environmental Planning Policy No 66 – Integration of Land Use and Transport of Section 79C(1)(c) of the Environmental Protection and Assessment Act '79.

In turn this would add to greenhouse gas emissions and further impact on climate change. Such developments would also be a watershed case as there is much more privately owned land in the area which would lead to further fragmentation of the inter-regional buffer zone. In the Lower Hunter Strategic Plan the NSW Government granted these developers a dispensation to ignore sustainability criteria. Can we continue down this slippery slope?

We believe that there are many other coastal areas in NSW which will be put under pressure and be exploited by developers if these developments are approved as they set precedents especially when they are allowed to by-pass councils, communities and so much of the legislation promulgated to protect areas from further destruction, habitat loss and now global warming.

We implore you to consider all of these facts and save this vital area, it would indeed be for you, 'One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind', and the planet and all of its inhabitants, would thank you for it.

Yours faithfully,
Susan and Kelvin Wynn
02.06.'08