

The Secretary
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

**SUBMISSION RE: SITE REMEDIATION AND CONSTRUCTION OF
INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE DEFENCE SITE AT RANDWICK BARRACKS,
SYDNEY NSW**

Dear Ms Courto

I have been involved in this matter since 1996 as firstly the Secretary of the Moverly Precinct Committee and subsequently as a participant in the Reference Group (1996). I've also been a member of other associated committees such as the Bundock Street Project Group and the Randwick Community Park Committee. I am therefore well versed on the issues associated with the disposal of this piece of public land.

As a resident I have seen with great distress the decimation of the natural bushland and the appalling site remediation methods employed by Defence. I feel my health is at risk from the activities being conducted on the site and am completely mystified as to why normal risk management strategies are not applied to the remediation. I am neither informed or in any way protected by the activities on the site. I have lost complete confidence that Defence is able to carry out remediation or any other construction activities without causing some harm to the residents.

As verified by the Senate Inquiry, consultation with the community has been most unsatisfactory. I was involved in meetings in 1996 where residents and stakeholders were invited to develop their vision for the site. After being placed into groups and told to develop our plans for the site, the Defence consultants completely ignored proposals even though the community had a common vision. In an act of complete contempt, the consultants returned the next day with plans that did not even remotely resemble the residents' views and in fact added land that was not in the original proposal. The land available for disposal has changed regularly.

Since 1996, there has been no consultation. We have had presentations at our committee meetings from consultants whose behaviour would be better suited to a run-down used car sales yard. Indeed to show how sincere they were about their interest in our views, they caused the expenditure of \$3M in court costs taking our Council to the Land and Environment Court, following hundreds of submissions against their proposals. The Court condemned their plans and the whole matter went back to the drawing board.

I would think that if they would consider the residents views, conducted proper consultation, the proposals would have been accepted more widely and the government would have saved considerable money. Why would this Committee entrust further funds into the hands of these consultants?

In addition, Defence use their 'Commonwealth powers' when it suits them to do work that they know will be detrimental in some way. They destroyed much bushland

stating that it was in the name of remediation. They have churned up the contaminated dust and let it blow into residences and the nearby child care centre. I have witnessed this first hand and I have photos.

When I have complained I have been told that Council and the relevant state government authorities do not have authority on the site.

I would therefore advocate for the land to be disposed of as soon as practicable. This would allow for the Council and the state authorities to properly oversee all activities including remediation.

Thank you for considering submissions regarding this important matter.

Yours faithfully

Felicia Harris
25 March 2003