

C/- PO Box 1180
Newport NSW 2106
3rd February 2019

The Hon. Rob Stokes, MP
Minister for Education,
1725 Pittwater Road
MONA VALE NSW 2103

Dear Rob,

Re Save the rainforest habitat on Hillside Road Newport

On behalf of all the members of our combined organisations we invite you to give consideration for State Government funding towards the acquisition of the above land known as 62 & 85 Hillside Road Newport. With knowledge of the upcoming State elections we believe this would be a very appropriate time to obtain the current State Government's assistance in this matter.

The community wishes to save the rainforest habitat on Hillside Road Newport from development.

The lush rainforest area above Porter Reserve Newport, just south of Bilgola Bends, adjacent to Attunga and Kanimbla Reserves, is under threat from development.

Despite years of hard-fought opposition from concerned locals and Pittwater Natural Heritage Association, including previous rejections from council and the Land and Environment courts, 1.06 hectares or 10,633sqm of native habitat, is currently for sale. The sale comes with a pre-approved D.A for a 6 lot sub-division as a "gated estate" and is listed as having "outstanding development and building potential".

This would ruin the area.

The land contains Littoral Rainforest and Coastal Vine Thickets of Eastern Australia, listed as a Critically Endangered Ecological Community (CEEC) under the EPBC Act and an Endangered Ecological Community (EEC) under the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BC Act).

A natural creek which runs through this property plays a vital role in supporting native vegetation and animals including palms, ferns, birds, frogs, water dragons, lizards and much more flora and fauna. Its dense vegetation makes it particularly valuable for small birds such as the Spotted Pardalote, Superb Blue Wren, Grey Fantail and Blackfaced Monarch and larger birds such as Australia's largest owl, the Powerful Owl, which is regularly sighted by locals and is listed as vulnerable.

Supporting the local fauna are 73 species of native rainforest flora including the protected Cabbage Tree Palm, Lilly Pilly and various native ferns and grasses that make it the unique coastal habitat it is.

Development of this site would break the bushland link between Attunga and Kanimbla and the Crown of Newport reserves, thus destroying an essential wildlife corridor. This precious pocket of bushland, a tranquil and vital reminder of what Newport was like when once inhabited by the Guringai people, needs our protection.

We call on the NSW Government and Northern Beaches Council to provide funding to purchase, protect and preserve this endangered site so that it may be nurtured and enjoyed by the people of the northern beaches and beyond. In doing so we can complete the 'green loop' of surrounding reserves, "From the Crown to the Sea", adding the final piece to the already amazing walking trails, and giving access to those dedicated locals who lovingly regenerate the native bush thus ensuring that this pocket of paradise endures for future generations. Because once it's gone, it's gone forever.

We understand the Northern Beaches Council is giving consideration to how an acquisition may take place and we would be very pleased if you could liaise with council (either Mayor Michael Regan or CEO Ray Brownlee) and advise us accordingly.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light yellow background. The signature reads "M. Macrae" in a cursive style.

Marita Macrae
President
Pittwater Natural Heritage Association

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light green background. The signature is stylized and appears to read "Gavin Butler".

Gavin Butler
President
Newport Residents Association