

Wolli Creek Preservation Society Inc.

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7 March 2021

Mr Rob Stokes
Minister for Planning and Public Spaces
Parliament House, Sydney

Dear Mr Stokes

I wrote to you on February 17, seeking your engagement with the Minister for Water in relation to a Sydney Water proposal to install an Odour Control Unit (OCU) in the Wolli Creek Valley.

I am writing to you now to point out that the OCU, in the location proposed for it, would breach all five of the high-level guidelines/principles in the Explanation of Intended Effects (EIE) for the draft State Environmental Planning Policy 'Design and Place'.

The attached document explains where we see the failure of the Sydney Water proposal to measure up to the principles. We would like to see Government instrumentalities held to the principles that you have proposed in the EIE and again urge you to take the matter up with Minister Pavey, with a view to having the location of the OCU changed and consistency established between your principles and Government practice.

Our petition to the Minister for Water has now reached 3,590 signatures. Its text is below for your information. It can be accessed via <https://www.nature.org.au/get-involved/take-action/save-wolli-creek-regional-park/>. The scale of the response in six weeks is an indication of the community's alarm at the Sydney Water proposal.

I would appreciate your response to the situation as a matter of some urgency, because Sydney Water has currently scheduled OCU construction for 'mid-2021'.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Svolos'. The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

Gina Svolos
President

Text of public petition

To Water Minister Melinda Pavey

We, the undersigned, call on you to intervene on Sydney Water's planned location for a sewage Odour Control Unit (OCU), a large, intrusive piece of industrial infrastructure, at the eastern gateway to the Wolli Creek valley and across the popular Two Valley Trail.

We value highly the Wolli valley, its bushland and its heritage. Our objection is not to the OCU itself but to the insensitive and unnecessary location of the unit when there are better alternatives.

Our urban bushland areas are where we walk, rest and play. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the popularity of the 4.5km walking track through the Wolli Creek valley has soared to 250 per cent of its pre-COVID level.

Residents of the surrounding suburbs and Greater Sydney have flocked to quality local recreation and environmental experiences.

Sydney Water's proposal locates the OCU at the entry to the Two Valley Trail, cutting into a natural sandstone cliff-face and destroying bushland.

It will also be an ugly intrusion too close to a state heritage-listed aqueduct.

This plan will ruin forever the striking entry point to the visitor's experience of this unique place and seriously damage Sydney Water's reputation for environmentally sensitive works.

Minister, it does not have to be this way. There is a suitable alternative site nearby. Sydney Water and the NSW Government can adopt the alternative, abandon a plan that would severely mar the start of the Two Valley Trail and the nearby heritage aqueduct, keep the bush that the local community has advocated to protect for 30 years, and complete the Wolli Creek Regional Park, promised 20 years ago.
