

Timeline re Sydney Water land for Odour Control Unit

- **1980** Kirby Commission of Inquiry into Kyeemagh-Chullora road recommends protection of Wollie Creek Valley (WCV) bushland
- **1984** Wollie Creek Preservation Society (WCPS) formed by ongoing opponents to building M5E through WCV (incorporated 1987)
- **1993** WCPS proposed Regional Park status for bushland in WCV; Clover Moore introduced a bill into Parliament, which was prorogued before bill was considered
- **1998** Wollie Creek Regional Park (WCRP) announced by Tim Moore
- **1999** NPWS draft Plan of Management For WCRP included disputed Sydney Water lots
- **1999** M5E is built but goes under WCV
- **2004** Final Plan of management approved after campaign by WCPS
- **2004** New draft boundary proposed by National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) excluded Sydney Water (SW) lots at the South-West Ocean Outfall Sewer crossing of Wollie Creek
- **1/2005** WCPS protested exclusion of the SW lots at SWOOS
- **2009** (maybe earlier, certainly ever since) NPWS proposed boundaries for WCRP included the lots
 - *(2009-16 other campaigns, particularly against proposed WestConnex/new M5 impact on Western end of WCV; new M5 tunnel entrance relocated)*
- **6/2017** WCPS wrote to Harwin seeking transfer of SW land in WCV to WCRP
- **8/2017** SW writes to Unwin St residents alerting them to site surveying and geotech investigations for OCU and promising updates (not provided).
- **9/2017** Harwin replied advising SW assessing land not needed for operational purposes – aimed to have land transferred within 12 months
- **7/2018** SW officer gives first indication (in phone call) that SW may seek to retain lot K for operational purposes
- **10/2018** 1st meeting with project team; Minns visits site; WCPS to Harwin noting consultation underway and 1st alternative location put on table
- **11/2018** Harwin to Cotsis “properties feature a state heritage listed wastewater aqueduct and cannot be transferred as it is required for operational purposes”
- **12/2018** WCPS to Harwin setting out second alternative site on eastern side of SWOOS with land swap with DoP (no. 22 Unwin St)
- **1/2019** Harwin to Cotsis: 1st alternative site rejected on engineering grounds (accepted by WCPS)
- **1/2019** WCPS to SW project team with maps and cadastral showing the swap intended
- **2/2019** Cotsis visits site
- **3/2019** Harwin to Cotsis: SW discussing land swap option with DoP
- **7/2019** SW to WCPS (email) final decision on location not yet reached
- **8/2019** WCPS to Pavey explicitly seeking political intervention
- **9/2019**
 - SW to WCPS member: OCU needed for corrosion prevention (first ever mention of this – previously just about Odour) and final decision made after “high-level, multi-criteria assessment” to go with SW original proposal for location
 - A WCPS member seeks involvement of Washington, who makes reps to Kean (nothing further heard)
 - A WCPS member writes to Pavey asking for intervention with SW
- **10/2019**

- SW presented preliminary design to WCPS, WCPS rejected location, put proposal for additional acquisition of adjacent residence (20 Unwin St) to overcome problems with alternative site 2
- SW provided copy of presentation, promised to share internal REF with WCPS (not sent); when acquired through other channels it makes no cost comparisons for using no.22 versus its preferred location; omits all mention of acquiring no.20; does not adequately address how WCPS input was dealt with in the decision-making process.
- REF process makes Sydney Water the proponent **and** the determining authority – no provision for comment/objection;
- WCPS e-wrote to Pavey urging overruling of SW engineers and noting inadequate consideration given to acquisition of no. 20
 - **8/2020** SW to WCPS: timetable now said to be detailed design mid 2021, construction late 2021
 - **11/2020**
- SW advises that test drilling at their preferred location is to take place **the next day**; construction now set for “mid to late 2021”
- WCPS replies, again expressing implacable opposition to location and asking for a reasoned explanation for the rejection of the proposal to acquire no. 20
- SW response indicates that they assumed no.20 was an **alternative** to no. 22, rather than an addition, but gives reasons for rejection summarised in briefing note prepared by Wollie Creek Preservation Society (see above)
- WCPS replies providing in short form the rebuttals set out in the briefing note
 - **1/2021**
- 20th - Public petition launched with Nature Conservation Council; it reaches 3,000 signatures in three weeks. Leaflet promoting petition produced and distributed.
- 20th - MP Cotsis and WCPS rep Stevens have teleconference with (acting) Chief of Staff to Pavey in response to local MPs request for meeting with Minister. Meeting sees simply a restatement of the already established Sydney Water and WCPS positions and a declaration by WCPS that it was time for ministerial intervention. Chief of Staff expressed confidence in Sydney Water.
- 22nd – Application by WCPS to the Heritage Office for an Interim Heritage Order to prevent the construction of the OCU in Wollie Creek Regional Park. Determination expected to take four weeks.
- **2/2021** letters sent to Ministers Pavey (22nd), Kean, and Stokes (both 17th) urging engagement to stop an environmental and heritage mis-step and pointing out the kudos to the Government of finally ensuring the completion of the Wollie Creek Regional Park.
- **3/2021**
- 5th - Letters sent to Pavey and Stokes pointing out the inconsistency between the Sydney Water proposal and the principles espoused for a new draft SEPP ‘Design and Place’.
- 19th – Letter to Minister Harwin (responsible for heritage matters) asking him to expedite a positive decision on the IHO application
- 25th – Op-ed piece on OCU issue in the City Hub and Inner West Independent papers
- **4/2021** Follow-up messages sent to Pavey, Kean, and Stokes seeking timeline for responses to February letters – their stated policy is response within 20 days.

Lobbying efforts

Over the course of the effort to prevent the environmental destruction proposed, WCPS has been in contact with many politicians, but remains convinced that the matter has never been given proper **political** consideration by the Government, as opposed to a narrower **engineering** one by SW (WCPS has never been given the 'multi-criteria' used or how they were weighted to assess viability).

Given Sydney Water's determination to proceed with its proposed site, WCPS switched to making representations to Melinda Pavey, as the Minister responsible for Sydney Water. These have been made directly through letters, indirectly through MPs, via local Councils, by peak environmental organisations, and via a public petition launched in January 2021. Four local MPs and three local Councils have made representations to the Minister. Over 3,800 people have signed the petition (as at 31 March 2021).

All to no avail it seems, as there has been no proper response from the Minister. Nor from the Ministers for Environment (Kean) or Planning (Stokes), who have been asked to engage with Minister Pavey to achieve the right outcome for the Wollie Creek Regional Park. Kean did write back to the National Parks Association noting that "Wollie Creek Regional Park provides rare and valuable open space in the urban environment between Bexley North and Earlwood. It is a recreational and educational resource for local and regional users that contains important habitat and features of cultural and historical significance."

Ministers have been advised of the number of petitioners and made aware of the resolutions of support from Canterbury-Bankstown, Bayside, and Inner West Councils.