



# STEP Inc. Newsletter

Community Based Environmental Conservation Since 1978. No. 97 Sep 1999

## SPECIAL COUNCIL ELECTION EDITION

STEP has sent a questionnaire to candidates in all Wards for the forthcoming council elections, to be held on September 11th 1999. We asked their views on a range of environmental questions that we believe are the key environmental issues facing Ku-ring-gai. Obviously there may be other factors that our members should take into account when deciding their vote. Nevertheless, we hope that this summary of the responses received will help members to make as informed a decision as possible.



The following candidates replied to the questionnaire:

**John Barnes**  
(Wahroonga)  
**Ian de Vulder**  
(Comenarra)  
**Helen Ferns** (Gordon)  
**Deborah Halligan**  
(Roseville)  
**Elise Keays** (Roseville)  
**Terry Insley**  
(Comenarra)  
**Andrew Little**  
(Roseville)

**Simon Lennon** (Gordon)  
**Elaine Malicki**  
(Comenarra)  
**Tony Recsci**  
(Wahroonga)  
**Max Vignes** (Roseville)  
**Robert Webeck**  
(Wahroonga)

Three candidates replied but did not directly answer the questionnaire.

**Giselle Perry** (St Ives) stated that bushland conservation and management issues are of priority, warrant creative solutions and Council commitment to community input.

**Graeme Anderson** (Gordon) did not wish to give detailed answers to the questions without extensive consultation to gain sufficient background knowledge, but listed his practical involvement in regeneration projects and stated his support for the preservation of the Mona Vale Road bushland Corridor.

**Clive Gard** (St Ives) also did not wish to give detailed answers, but enclosed an outline of his background, philosophy and primary concerns (including local traffic problems).



The following candidates did not respond at all:

Patricia Barnett (Gordon)  
Laura Bennett (St Ives)  
Jan Butland (Comenarra)  
Bruce Coleman (Gordon)  
Ian Cross (Wahroonga)  
Mary-Lynne de Jong

(Roseville)  
Tony Hall (St Ives)  
Stephen Jarman (Wahroonga)  
Ron Kalman (Comenarra)  
Barry Lazarus (St Ives)  
Jim Mawer (Wahroonga)  
Caron Morrison (Comenarra)  
John Napier (Wahroonga)  
Ted Roach (Wahroonga)  
Katherine Tippins (Roseville)  
Michael Watson  
(Wahroonga)  
Alyssa Weirman (Gordon)  
Barry Wong (St Ives).

Of course, candidates, whether or not they have responded to STEP, may have already made their views on some or all of these environmental issues known through the media or by other means.



### 1. Bushland Management

*Would you agree that bushland is an important public asset, which lends Ku-ring-gai its special character?*

*Would you agree that bushland management needs to be adequately funded by Council?*

*Would you agree that there is an urgent need to control stormwater run-off, due to its consequences for weed invasion and water quality, into the bushland areas?*

All 12 respondents answered

yes to the three sections of the question. Several candidates stated that increased medium density housing would result in more run-off problems for bushland (**de Vulder, Recsei**).

**Malicki** pointed out that as a Councillor she has tried to increase funding levels for bushland management.



## 2. Incorporation of bushland into Lane Cove National Park

*Would you favour incorporating the bushland currently controlled by Council into the Lane Cove National Park?*

Two candidates answered No (**de Vulder, Insley**), four said yes (**Halligan, Keays, Little, Vignes**), while the remainder were unsure and favoured whatever outcome ensured the bushland's best management.

*If so, would you favour Council retaining the day to day management function under the National Park and Wildlife Service's overall management responsibility?*

One candidate said yes (**Ferns**) while two stated management should pass to NPWS (**Keays, Little**). Several candidates expressed concern that the local community should have input to the management and that

funding to the NPWS may be inadequate (**Ferns, Insley, Malicki**).

**De Vulder** suggested that Ku-ring-gai Council may be better managers of the bushland.

**Malicki** preferred the Regional Park option, allowing local community input to management.

**Recsei** suggested that Council should keep its bushland, allowing it to sell its carbon credits and gain revenue for the community and further bushland management.



## 3. Residential Strategy

*Would you favour increasing Ku-ring-gai's population, or would you favour stabilising it near current levels within the next decade?*

Almost all of the respondents favoured stabilizing Ku-ring-gai's current population.

**Halligan and Vignes** suggested that Ku-ring-gai has a capacity for limited population increase.

**Malicki** advocates a pragmatic approach by Council to produce a Housing Strategy acceptable to the State Government.

**De Vulder** also believes that no increase in Ku-ring-gai's population is probably unrealistic and favours

comprehensive studies to determine acceptable increases.

*If you favour increase, what is your long-term view of how Ku-ring-gai should look in 2020?*

*And do you agree with the strategy of increasing density near transport nodes?*

Ku-ring-gai Preservation Trust candidates (**Insley, de Vulder, Little, Keays**, although not stated in de Vulder's letter) favour a mix of housing styles (low, medium and high density) throughout the municipality. Other candidates believe that any higher density housing should be concentrated near transport nodes (**Ferns, Halligan, Malicki**) and retail centres (**Halligan**). **Malicki** is not in favour of medium density around neighbourhood shopping centres and favours limiting height to two storeys along the railway/highway corridor. **Ferns** offered a vision for Ku-ring-gai in 2020 – no stormwater problems, weeds or feral animals, and a greater tree canopy.



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#### 4. Transport

*What is your view of the future transport system to carry commuters from outside the municipality through the municipality?*

*What is your vision for transport of Ku-ring-gai residents?*

Almost all respondents favoured better public transport, particularly rail (**Barnes, de Vulder, Ferns, Halligan, Insley, Keays, Little, Lennon, Recsei, Vignes, Webeck, Malicki**, although only implied in Malicki's letter).

**Barnes** favours upgrading the Pacific Highway, while **Insley** suggests that road improvement leads to further road congestion.

**Lennon** supports bicycle ways.

**Malicki** believes through traffic is **no** more important than local traffic and rejects additions to the freeway network.

**Recsei** suggests that a new broad approach to public transport is needed, including that people using cars should be charged the full environmental cost of car use.



#### 5. Parramatta Rail Link

*Do you support the*

*proposed link?*

Two candidates did not support the rail link (**Barnes, Webeck**), three did (**Insley, Lennon, Malicki**), while the rest were supportive of a rail link but not as proposed.

*If so, do you favour a station near the UTS Ku-ring-gai campus?*

No (**de Vulder, Ferns, Halligan, Insley, Keays, Little, Malicki, Recsei, Vignes**), yes (**Lennon**), no comment (**Barnes**).

*Are you concerned about the potential destruction of bushland or loss of amenity of Lane Cove National Park if a rail bridge crossing of the Lane Cove River proceeds?*

Yes (all respondents).

*Would you support a tunnel solution from North Ryde to Artarmon Industrial area?*

Yes (**de Vulder, Ferns, Halligan, Keays, Little, Lennon, Recsei, Webeck**), unsure (**Barnes, Malicki**), no comment (**Vignes**). **Insley** favoured a Delhi Rd. to Lane Cove Industrial area link



#### 6. B2/B3 Corridor

*Do you support expeditious rezoning of this land in a manner*

*sympathetic to Ku-ring-gai's natural environment?*

Yes (all candidates except **Lennon** who was unsure but concerned about environmental impact).

*If so, do you support community consultation to achieve this?*

Yes (all respondents).



#### 7. Mona Vale Road Corridor

*Would you agree that the Mona Vale Road Corridor is an important east-west bushland corridor, linking Ku-ring-gai Chase and Garigal National Parks, and should not undergo any further development?*

Yes (all respondents).

**Halligan** stated that for any development proposal of the area, consideration of impact on the National Parks and catchments would be a priority.

*If so, would you favour some mechanism to preserve the remaining bushland in perpetuity (e.g. a conservation agreement)?*

Yes (all candidates except **de Vulder, Recsei and Vignes** who had no specific comment).

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## 8. Netball Courts

*How would you propose to deal with the need for netball courts in light of the disastrous situation created 20 years ago at Canoon Road?*

*Where would you look for alternative sites?*

This is a controversial and difficult issue, and several candidates expressed the need for more community consultation and discussion to find a solution (**de Vulder, Ferns, Halligan, Keays, Little, Vignes**). Other candidates made specific suggestions for alternative sites, such as Indoor Courts (**de Vulder, Recsei**), Montview Oval, Hornsby (**Malicki**), school grounds (**Webeck**), near commercial centres (**Barnes, Ferns**) and St Ives Driving Centre (**Barnes, Lennon**). Several candidates suggested that the courts should be spread over different locations (**Insley, Keays, Little, Lennon, Malicki**).



## 9. Environmental Initiatives

*What new initiatives or enhanced programs in environmental protection and management would you propose for Ku-ring-gai?*

There was a wide range of answers. Several candidates emphasized the importance of limiting impervious surfaces and resultant runoff and considering catchment constraints in planning (**Ferns, Keays, Little, Malicki, Recsei**). Some candidates also favoured better environmental education programmes (**Ferns, Halligan, Insley, Keays, Little**). **Insley** suggested that better Council finances were required to adequately fund bushland management and **Ferns** suggested an environmental levy targeted to stormwater control and impact on adjacent National Parks. **Malicki and Insley** emphasized the importance of street plantings with appropriate native species. **Malicki** also suggested development constraints in fire prone areas, encouraging water storage tanks on private properties and having water storage tanks mandatory at Council playing fields and facilities. **Insley** supported undergrounding of cables. **De Vulder, Little, Keays & Recsei** proposed implementation of a new Local Environment Plan for Ku-ring-gai, including better development controls and retention of trees. **Barnes** suggested clearing the bushland of dead trees and branches.

**Ferns** proposed working with other Councils to achieve changes in the Land & Environment Court. **Lennon** suggested input from local environment groups.

**Recsei** proposed establishing a carbon credit scheme which would both preserve bushland and improve finances.

**Webeck** objected to house blocks with swimming pools and tennis courts.



We would like to thank all the candidates who participated.

We hope that this information will enable STEP members to make an informed decision as possible in the Council elections on Saturday 11th September.

*(We have deliberately refrained from making any comment on any of the respondents' views or suggestions and leave it to the good sense of our members to interpret the information. Ed.)*

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If any members would like more details of the candidates' responses, please contact Michelle Leishman 9489 8972 (tel & fax).

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