



Dr Clare Allen  
Chief Executive Officer  
Port Macquarie Hastings Council  
17 Burrawan St  
PORT MACQUARIE ACT 2444

Dear Dr Allen

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on the [Endorsed Draft Camden Head Masterplan](#). The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) manage Kattang Nature, which is adjacent to the Camden Head Lookout Reserve and seek to ensure future management of adjacent habitat connectivity corridors do not impact the biodiversity values of Kattang Nature Reserve.

### Kattang Nature Reserve

Kattang Nature Reserve is a 58-hectare reserve located on Camden Head, directly adjacent to the Camden Head Lookout Reserve. The reserve was gazetted in 1983 with the primary purpose to preserve an area of significant conservation, geomorphological and scenic values and make it available for scientific research, public education and appreciation.

Despite its small size, Kattang Nature Reserve contains considerable diversity of habitats, flora and fauna. Twenty-nine vegetation communities have been identified in the reserve and over 150 vertebrate fauna species, including many species listed under the federal [Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act \(1999\)](#) and [NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act \(2016\)](#).

The biodiversity values within Kattang Nature Reserve rely on existing connectivity corridors, including stands of native vegetation and littoral rainforest situated on the Camden Head Lookout Reserve. The importance of maintaining these habitat corridors is recognised in the [Kattang Nature Reserve Plan of Management \(2005\)](#), which includes the following strategies:

- *2.3 Specific Objectives for Kattang Nature Reserve - "to maintain a viable corridor for native plants and animals from the reserve to Gogleys Lagoon, Crowdy Bay National Park and Dooragan National Park".*
- *4.1.2 Native Plants strategies and actions – "work with relevant neighbours, conservation groups and others to encourage conservation of remaining vegetation in the vicinity of the reserve and identify potential wildlife/habitat corridors to link other native vegetation areas".*

Any significant removal of native vegetation within the existing habitat corridor in the Camden Head Lookout Reserve will negatively impact biodiversity values of Kattang Nature Reserve.

### PMHC Endorsed Draft Camden Head Master Plan

NPWS support the proposed PMHC Draft Camden Head Masterplan, which is currently on exhibition. This plan addresses concerns raised by NPWS in September 2023 regarding the loss of habitat connectivity to Kattang Nature Reserve. It provides additional recreational amenity whilst retaining littoral rainforest and habitat connectivity to Kattang Nature Reserve. The plan appears to be consistent with recommendations from the Pilot Station Vegetation Management Plan (2000) and the Camden Head Biodiversity Assessment Report (2010). Additionally, it aligns with strategies identified in the Kattang Nature Reserve Plan of Management (2005).

## Individual stakeholder plan

NPWS firmly opposes the individual stakeholder plan currently on exhibition alongside the endorsed PMHC plan. This alternative plan seeks to remove regenerating littoral rainforest, koala habitat and vegetation connectivity to Kattang Nature Reserve. It is not consistent with recommendations in the Pilot Station Vegetation Management Plan (2000), Camden Head Biodiversity Assessment Report (2010) or the Kattang Nature Reserve Plan of Management.

This alternative plan seeks to create a supposed 'endangered grassland'. NPWS does not believe this area was ever naturally occurring grassland of any type. The site aspect, topography and adjacent vegetation suggest it was more likely Coastal Littoral Rainforest Endangered Ecological Community. The Camden Head Biodiversity Assessment Report (2010) confirms this:

*"The area is in the preliminary (ie scattered young rainforest pioneers such as Tuckeroo in the shrub layer and understorey competing with recruits of the woodland), middle (pioneer rainforest species common 111 in the understorey, secondary species becoming established eg vines, and no or limited recruitment of woodland species) and advanced (Banksias emerging out of understorey of rainforest species and vine thickets with no recruitment of Banksias, and Leptospermums succumbed or succumbing to natural attrition without recruitment) stages of succession to Littoral Rainforest EEC". (Camden Head Biodiversity Assessment Report, 2010, pg 110-111).*

This report strongly recommends ongoing support and encouragement of littoral rainforest succession at this site.

NPWS has reason to believe there is an ulterior motive to this individual stakeholder's plan, with the proponent representing a group of residents who seek improved coastal views from their properties through implementation of this plan. Given ongoing illegal vandalism of vegetation in this area, NPWS supports additional surveillance and compliance action to protect this crucial habitat linkage to Kattang Nature Reserve.

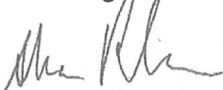
Furthermore, NPWS notes this alternative stakeholder plan includes an action to remove vegetation on NPWS estate to increase car parking in the area. **NPWS do not support this proposal and any removal of this vegetation would constitute an offence under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974.**

## Friends of Camden Head

NPWS work closely with three volunteer groups that are very active in bush regeneration and weed control on Camden Head, including in the Pilot Station area. NPWS is aware that this additional proposed group is creating significant division in the community. As per our previous submission on this issue, NPWS believes PMHC would benefit from supporting existing Hastings Landcare affiliated volunteer groups to assist the manage the area.

If you have any further questions about this issue, please contact Mr Benjamin Stevenson, Ranger at [Benjamin.stevenson@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Benjamin.stevenson@environment.nsw.gov.au).

Kind regards



Shane Robinson

**Area Manager, Hastings Macleay Area**

**18 June 2024**

cc: Lucilla Marshall  
Ben White