



15 December 2022

Department of Planning and Environment
Parramatta Square
12 Darcy Street
PARRAMATTA NSW 2150

ATT: GARY HINDER AND NEALA GAUTAM

RE: GILEAD STAGE 2 AND APPIN (PART) PRECINCT PLANNING PROPOSALS

I write on behalf of Museums of History (MHNSW, formerly Sydney Living Museums) regarding the proposed Gilead Stage 2 and Appin (part) Precinct planning proposals currently on exhibition through the Department of Planning and Environment website. It is understood that the two proposals seek to create extensive new homes and neighbourhoods in the Greater Macarthur Area and are in response to the recently released strategic planning document *Greater Macarthur 2040: An Interim Plan*. MHNSW is the owner of the state heritage listed Beulah property which is located immediately between both proposed precincts.

Beulah property located at 767 Appin Road, Gilead is of State Heritage Significance for its historic, associational, aesthetic, research, and representative values and for its rarity. Beulah comprises early colonial structures including intact original colonial homestead (1830s) and rare stone bridge over Woodhouse Creek (c.1836), remnant 19th century farm, cultural plantings and landscape elements and remnant forest. Beulah represents a comparatively intact example of a small 19th century homestead group (c.1836-1890) and along with the adjacent homesteads of Mount Gilead and Meadowvale; Beulah demonstrates the continuation of settlement along the Appin/ Campbelltown Road and early agricultural practices and development in the Appin area more broadly. The property is associated with the early pioneering Hume family and forms part of the early 19th century emancipated Irish convict settlement in the County of Cumberland. The site also incorporates areas of high indigenous archaeological sensitivity in association with the Woodhouse Creek and its four tributaries.

Beulah contains a significant cultural landscape that retains its original 1830s curtilage within its rural setting and its historic views and vistas include the expansive view from the ridge over the Cumberland Plain to the Menangle Valley, views from the ridge to the homestead and the neighbouring Meadowvale and views from the access road to the homestead, which currently remain unencumbered.

The site is subject to a Biobanking Agreement (ID number 058 dated 26 May 2011) for approximately 60 hectares of Cumberland woodland fronting Appin Road which includes a rare and intact surviving area of Cumberland Shale Sandstone Transition Forest (CSSTF), Cumberland Shale Hills Woodland (CSHW) and Cumberland Plain Woodland (CPW). The area has significance as a rare remnant natural forest which has important value in terms of biodiversity for threatened flora and fauna and as part of the Georges/ Nepean River corridors. A range of threatened species have been recorded in the Beulah area including:

- Koalas
- Cumberland Plain Land Snail
- Little Lorikeet

- Little Bent-winged Bat.

In consideration of the above, MHNSW makes the following comments on the Gilead Stage 2 and Appin (part) proposals:

- Beulah property forms an integral link between both proposed major developments which have the potential to affect change to the area resulting in adverse impacts to this state significant site.
- With the intensification of proposed urban development on the surrounding properties, the Beulah homestead and biobank area will become increasingly important public assets of open space and cultural history that will form an integral part of the future of the region; therefore, these assets must be adequately protected to ensure the retention of their heritage and conservation significance.
- The planning proposal allows for sprawling development throughout the area which poses significant changes to the setting and historic views to and from Beulah resulting in adverse impacts to the heritage significance of the place (specifically Appin (part) proposal).
- The current surrounding rural landscape and environment assists in fulfilling our responsibilities for the long-term protection of the biobank. The Gilead Stage 2 proposal seeks to drastically change this environment through the establishment of a sprawling neighbourhood which abuts the property line of this biobank.
- There is insufficient assurance provided that the proposed neighbourhood will have satisfactory measures in place to support the long-term protection of the threatened flora and fauna that reside in this conservation area. Key concerns from the Gilead Stage 2 proposal include:
 - o Lack of ongoing management of restricted pedestrian access through the biobank,
 - o Increased risk of the introduction of household pest species and domestic pets which pose a direct threat to known threatened species occupying the area,
 - o Adverse impacts from lengthy construction activities (increased traffic, use of heavy plant and equipment) which have the potential to negatively impact threatened fauna population,
 - o General increase in public vehicular traffic due to introduction of up to 3,300 homes and associated infrastructure which increases risk to local threatened species.
- The Beulah biobank site forms part of the primary koala corridor from the east of Appin Road, along Woodhouse creek to the Menangle creek and Nepean River corridor (Corridor B, *GLN 11239 Gilead Planning Proposal*, November 2022), therefore it is vital that sufficient steps are taken to ensure the long-term protection of this key connection for fauna corridors.

If you would like to discuss anything further relating to this matter, please do not hesitate to contact Amy Keighran, Head of Heritage on 8239 2485 or amy.keighran@mhnsw.au.

Regards,



Kathryn Natoli
Director, Strategy and External Relations
Museums of History NSW