

Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
Hon Simon O'Brien MLC
Chairman

Dear Sir & Committee Members

Re: Petition No 134

I Susan McCann on behalf of "Save the Wetlands and Lake Committee" of Helena Valley, represent the 884 residents and concerned citizens who petitioned and lodged submissions for the retention of the lake and wetlands in Helena Valley.

Mundaring shire, DPAW and 77 submissions fully supported these valuable wetlands and lake be retained in the said subdivision SP 71. Ref WAPC 50-145-HV SP 71 lots 2, 3+6 Helena Valley Rd Helena Valley

We are totally opposed to the Wetlands and Lake, being filled in for residential housing. These wetlands and lake have been here for decades and provide their own wonderful ecosystem. It has a thriving wildlife breeding habitat, varieties of birds, ducks, and long neck tortoise, other wildlife species and multitude of plant life.

There have been suggestions made about **Kadina Brook** acting as a relocation point for the wildlife. Please note! This is a "winter brook" only, barely a metre in width, no way, a feasible possibility for the relocation of wildlife.

To save the lake and wetlands the developer only needs to delete 5-6 housing lots and delete the extension Road Carabeen Ave as it goes straight through the Lake

274 mature eucalypt trees will be destroyed, as well the understory for the wildlife. They will be cut down and lost forever. The valuable tree canopy provides coolness and shelter on a very hot days. Helena valley has had wonderful tree canopies but sadly over 70% has been lost already in previous housing subdivisions and we want to retain as many as possible for our future generations. These trees play a vital part in providing habitats, for the large variety of nesting birds and act as a buffer against the contaminated land and pollution that lies beyond.

Areas the land owner covered in with contaminated land fill, can never be built on, as it is geologically unstable.

We seek the "bushforever" classification to save the lake and wetlands.

Why has WAPC gone against its own **Liveable Neighbourhood Manual/Policy** by not incorporating the lake and wetlands of Helena Valley into the SP71 plan?

Who is responsible for this?

Why has it been allowed to happen?

Liveable Neighbourhood Manual: *"To protect and conserve margins of watercourses, water bodies and wetlands and to establish public foreshores along the coast and watercourses adjacent to urban development."*

With regards to flora and fauna, the WA state government Parks & Wildlife have specific regulations over the management of such wetlands and the animals that live within them

I would like to draw your attention to document “Protecting Our Wetlands” issued by DEC. This document states how we must protect Wetlands. By allowing this development they would be going against the very principles of the WA Government environment policy which prohibits the non- essential clearing of native vegetation and habitat of native animals.
<http://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/plants-and-animals/threatened-species-and-communities>

Rally No Houses in Wetlands Parliament house 11 October 2016

Speakers outlined their concerns about the lack of legal protection for wetlands: the revoking of the Environmental Protection (Swan Coastal Plain Lakes) Policy 1992 by Minister Albert Jacobs last November; the State Government’s Wetland Coordinating Committee hadn’t met since September 2014; and the Guideline for Determination for Wetland Buffer Requirements —put out for public comment in December 2005 — has never been actioned. We humans are to blame.

Speech by Dr Jane Chambers Murdoch University

“Wetlands are the unsung heroes, the quiet achievers. People often don’t notice or think about them. But they’re there, working hard for our good. Cleaning our water, filtering out fertilisers, reducing algal blooms, cooling our cities, mitigating flooding in storms... A quiet place for bird watching or walking the dog or just five minutes of peace. No dollar can replace these values. “

*“We’ve already lost 80 per cent of wetlands on the Swan Coastal Plain. We cannot afford planning classifications that suggest they have no worth ... **or weren’t on the map**. We need strong legislation, legal protection and a commitment to incorporate wetlands into our urban development, policies and planning. Let us make it happen.”*

Our committee members and concerned residents, need you to understand the benefits to our community and the significant role the wetlands and lake play, in both indigenous and non-indigenous cultures, this lake and wetlands are highly valued as spiritual places and a source for relaxation, peace, tranquillity and recreation for our community.

I have personally spoken to hundreds of residents and give you my personal oath, that every word is a true and correct. I have not approached the Ombudsman as this point.
“At this moment two long neck tortoise based on a log, the water is rippling, the birds land, each year they build their nests and start their family, some have two or four chicks, the ducks they average 12 ducklings. Their parents take care and nurture them, every now and then we get a visit. We as humans are responsible to keep their homes safe. “

Sincerely

Susan McCann

Save the Wetlands and Lake Convenor of Helena Valley

