



PRESERVING AUSTRALIA
A'S OLDEST GARDEN SUBURB

P.O. Box 85, HUNTERS HILL, N.S.W. 2110

25 November 2017

The General Manager
Hunters Hill Council
Alexandra St
Hunters Hill

Dear Sir

Declaration of Wildlife Protection Area for Boronia Park & Buffalo Creek Reserves

The Hunters Hill Trust is writing in support of Council's proposed declaration of Wildlife Protection Areas for Boronia Park and Buffalo Creek Reserve. We share the concern about the ability of these reserves to continue to act as habitat that supports viable, long-term populations of native animals while being seriously compromised by feral animals and uncontrolled domestic pets.

These reserves form part of a regionally significant wildlife corridor along the Lane Cove River. The presence of native wildlife within an ever expanding city is highly valued by the community. We are fortunate to enjoy a variety of wildlife within our local bushland and appreciate the contribution that Council's participation in regional programs provides for the control of feral animals.

The declaration of Wildlife Protection Areas (WPAs) designated under the *NSW Companion Animals Act 1998* that allows for cats to be prohibited from key wildlife habitat areas should assist in reducing harm and predation of native species, particularly our diminishing small birds and reptiles. Both feral and domestic cats have serious implications for the viability of local species in urban bushland. We support active management through targeted education of local residents, legally requiring pet owners to prevent their cats from entering these reserves and strategic trapping programs within the designated WPAs.

We agree that community education is essential for encouraging responsible behaviour and providing pet owners with the information necessary to understand the impact their cat is having on wildlife and bushland. Predation by feral cats is listed as a Key Threatening Process under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*. It is vital that cats are prevented from roaming freely where wildlife can be harmed.

The Trust supports the declaration of key bushland reserves as WPAs under the *Companion Animals Act 1998*. Prohibiting domestic cats from entering WPAs and placing responsibility onto their owners to ensure they do not allow their pets to freely roam into these bushland reserves should significantly assist in local native fauna conservation.

We would also be keen to see the WPA designations extended to other Council reserves such as Riverglade/Tarban Creek.

Yours sincerely

Alister Sharp, President