

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2005

Dear Councillor

Next Monday night you are faced with a vitally important decision for the future of the Illawarra region. You will be voting on the **draft Illawarra Escarpment Management Plan (IEMP)** and I am hopeful you will vote in favour of adoption of the plan.

Healthy Cities Illawarra has been involved with various environmental issues in the Illawarra over many years and we are particularly concerned about the link between the physical environment and the health of the population.

Increasing urbanisation along the coastal fringe has placed enormous pressure on our natural environment and local government has a weighty responsibility in balancing the pressures of urban development with the need to retain high quality natural areas.

I believe that the Illawarra Escarpment Management Plan provides the framework for the successful management of these competing pressures. The Illawarra Escarpment Management Plan is a landmark document which has been based upon a range of independent assessments and studies recommended by Commissioner Simpson following the Commission of Enquiry in 1998.

There has also been significant levels of consultation with the community and I believe that overall people in Wollongong support planning which will protect and preserve natural areas including the Illawarra escarpment. Clearly there are some powerful business and landowner interests which seek to subdivide and develop the natural areas of our region. These are motivated by personal and financial interests and not considerations of the future good of the broad community as well as the plants and animals which live in the escarpment. The IEMP provides a sustainable approach to the management of the natural assets of the region. Without this plan I have no doubt that ultimately we will see here, on the Wollongong escarpment, the urban sprawl which has already decimated large tracts of natural land along Australia's East coast.

I do hope that, on Monday night, you place the regions' environmental and health interests first by voting in favour of the Illawarra Escarpment Management Plan. Future generations will appreciate the foresight and resolve you showed.

Yours sincerely

Frank Wallner  
SECRETARY/MANAGER

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***Better Health For All***

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