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24 June, 2024

To whom it may concern,

Objection to the issue of a lease for three groups of cabins in the Gardens of Stone State Conservation Area

FOKE wishes to express its objections to the Wild Bush Luxury lease proposal. If approved, it would allow three non-compliant sets of cabin accommodation as well as other structures to be built. This overdevelopment would destroy pristine view lines within the Gardens of Stone State Conservation Area. If approved, the development would adversely impact the cultural and natural heritage of this globally rare and significant pagoda landscape.

Friends of Ku-ring-gai Environment Inc (FOKE) is a community group dedicated to protecting and conserving the built and natural environment in Ku-ring-gai. It is also active in advocating for the protection of Greater Sydney's environment and heritage. FOKE has also taken a great interest, over many years, in the campaign to protect the Gardens of Stone. Members of FOKE were active in advocating for the gazettal of the Gardens of Stone State Conservation Area (achieved in 2022).

FOKE strongly objects to the proposed lease to build serviced luxury tourist cabins in the Gardens of Stone State Conservation Area because they threaten to:

- damage this internationally renowned pagoda landscape
- destroy the outstanding scenic values of this unique pagoda landscape
- pollute the pristine Carne Creek
- have adverse impacts on area's unique and fragile biodiversity
- set a bad precedent for all NSW national parks and reserves
- exclude the public from the site and essentially privatise a public conservation area
- undermine the NPWS Sustainability Guidelines for Visitor Use and Tourism sustainability assessment that disallows intrusive developments spoiling pristine scenic environments
- undermine the rules-based decision-making processes for our national parks
- undermine the strategic visitor management priorities for the town of Lithgow

The pagoda landscape of the Gardens of Stone should receive the highest possible level of protection. **Please reject the proposed lease.**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Yours faithfully

Kathy Cowley

Kathy Cowley
PRESIDENT