

MINNIPPI AGAINST DEVELOPMENT

The Brisbane City Council commissioned a study, *Squirrel Glider Impact Analysis and Amelioration Strategy*, Sharpe & Burgess, April 2002, which investigated the impacts on the resident squirrel glider population of five development options and two no development options, ("no development" with habitat enhancement and "do nothing") at Minnippi West, (seven options in total).

"Four key criteria were identified to assess the impacts of the seven options on the viability of the squirrel glider population on the subject site. The agreed Performance Criteria were: habitat consolidation, diversity of habitat, habitat enhancement and retention of key linkages."

The report's Summary states, **"If the conservation of a viable squirrel glider population on the subject land is a priority, the option that minimises the initial loss of gliders, maximises the amount of additional habitat that can be established and does not increase the glider mortality rate (eg predation) is clearly preferred.** Fundamental to the preceding analysis was the effect the various options had on these factors. **This comparison of the development options against the agreed Performance Criteria resolved that only the no development option attained the criteria."**

- **"The no development option, the best option, enables 100% more of this habitat to be improved than Option 1, the worst of the development options."**
- **"All development options would result in the creation of extensive edge habitat."
"Moreover, all the development options require an access road from the north-west."**
- **"Only the no development option can guarantee a long-term population increase greater than 50%."**

Please note: the proposed residential development submitted in the current development application most closely resembles "Option 1", which the study found was, "the least desirable development option" of the options assessed.

Why did Brisbane City Council sign a contract with BMD in December 2003 with the knowledge that its own 2002 study concluded that "only the no development option attained the criteria", in protecting the gliders?

Why did Brisbane City Council allow its preferred developer, BMD Properties Pty Ltd, to proceed with an application based on Option 1, which council's commissioned study concluded would result in the highest impact on the squirrel glider colony?

Why has council not refuted untrue public statements made by BMD's spokesman, Mr Geoff James, regarding the identified impacts of the development on the squirrel glider habitat, should it proceed?

Mr James' statements include:

- **"The residential precinct is located totally in the cleared areas." (Courier-Mail, 21 October 2004 and South-East Advertiser, 3 November 2004).**
- **"Claims of significant bushland loss are not supported by the facts." (Wynnum Herald, 27 October 2004 and South-East Advertiser, 3 November 2004).**

Why did Councillor for Doboy, Cr John Campbell publicly state, "The glider habitat would not be affected by the development." (Courier-Mail, 16/10/04)?

If, as Mr Geoff James stated on ABC Radio 612, 9 February 2005, that the survival of the gliders was, **"*the fundamental precept on which the whole proposal is based.*"**, council must immediately abandon the proposal, consider no future development applications, spend public money from the Environment Levy for rehabilitation works and preserve this significant site.

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DEVELOPMENT THREATENS ENDANGERED VEGETATION AND SIGNIFICANT SPECIES HABITAT

Despite misleading public statements made by Cr John Campbell, "The glider habitat would not be affected by the development." (Courier-Mail, 16/10/04), and developer BMD's Project Manager, Mr Geoff James, "The residential precinct is located totally in the cleared areas" (Courier-Mail, 21 October, 2004), an Information Request to BMD Properties Pty Ltd, dated 11 November 2004 states::

Flora and Fauna

- **"Council has concerns with the intrusion of the proposed residential precinct within the existing core habitat areas."**
- **"The site contains endangered regional ecosystems and the development footprint encroaches within this ecosystem. Clearing of this vegetation is not permitted."**
- "The bushland habitat on the site is listed as State Significant using the SEQROC endorsed Common Nature Conservation Classification System. Seven significant species are listed including the rare Grey Goshawk. There is a likelihood of fourteen others using the site."
- **"Remove Precinct E from proposed development to maintain habitat values."**
- **"Amend Precincts A, C and F (Hub) to ensure ALL remnant vegetation on site is retained."**

Wetlands/Waterways

- **"The wetland system on the site is the largest intact freshwater wetland system outside Boondall and Bayside Parklands."**
- "No loss of wetland or riparian vegetation will be permitted." "Layout and design must protect all existing wetlands both fresh water and marine. This will require the redesign of Lakes 1, 3 and 5 and golf holes 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12 and the academy area."
- "Relocate Precinct C and Lake 3 from Bulimba Creek waterway corridor."
- "Remove Lake 5 from Northern corridor." "Waterways and wetlands are to have no breaks in the riparian vegetation for fairways."
- "Remove the proposed weir construction in waterway corridors."

The Brisbane City Council-commissioned study *Minnippi Conservation Assessment Draft report, 2001*, prepared by Ecotone Environmental Services (EES) states:

Habitat Values:

The bushland in the Minnippi study area should be regarded as a significant habitat remnant for the range of native fauna recorded by EES. It provides all vertebrate groups with considerable opportunity for roosting, breeding and foraging in an otherwise substantially altered, urban landscape.

Many of the older upper stratum trees, particularly in the *Eucalyptus tereticornis* and *Lophostemon confertus* woodlands provide numerous hollows for roosting and breeding birds and microbats. Numerous standing stags are also present in the remaining woodland and forest areas. These, too, provide important habitat for hollow-dependent fauna.

"The *E. tereticornis* woodlands in the study area also provide a significant source of nectar and pollen for birds and megabats (flying foxes) during flowering season.

During the EES survey, many *E. tereticornis* trees carried abundant blossom, which was visited by many hundreds of birds (eg honeyeaters and lorikeets) during each day. Similarly, those flowering trees were supplying food for dozens of grey-headed and black flying foxes each night." **"More than 60% of the gum-barked trees (eg *E. tereticornis*, *E. major*) inspected in the study area show signs of koala usage** (numerous claw-marks), suggesting that this area provides a significant habitat resource for that species. The presence of koalas is perhaps not surprising given the proximity of the Koala Coast Core conservation Area to the southeast. **The maintenance of small sized sub-populations of koalas such as at Minnippi is likely to be important for maintenance of the overall koala population in southeastern Brisbane given the continued development pressure on habitat for the species."**