



**LAKE
BAROON
CATCHMENT
CARE
GROUP**

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'Working with our community...for our waterways'

Councillor Jenny McKay,
SCRC

1/11/2013

cc. The Mayor, Mark Jamieson, The CEO, John Knaggs, Richard Hill, Narelle
McCarthy, SCEC.

Dear Jenny

I am writing to express my concerns over proposed plans to establish sporting facilities in the south west corner of the Maleny Community Precinct that will have an adverse impact on habitat corridors and water quality.

Under previous proposals Council envisioned sporting fields with a fairly intact riparian buffer with some areas reduced to a 20 metre width but predominantly established at 40 metres or better. LBCCG has become aware that Council is now considering a polo field proposal which would also provide use for other horse codes. My understanding is that if the polo proposal is agreed to, buffers to the Obi Obi creek would be reduced to six metres or less in a number of areas with less than 20 metres in most areas and little if any areas obtaining a 40 metre buffer to the creek.

Whilst the areas concerned along the Obi Obi Creek may seem small compared to the overall precinct frontage, LBCCG is concerned that the intention to allow the proposed polo field would clearly be against the aims of the Council's MCP Master Plan as outlined below.

The aim of the plan is to:

- *protect and enhance significant vegetation and ecosystems*
- *preserve and enhance the quality of stormwater and natural waterways*
- *improve habitat corridors*
- *create habitat cores—larger pockets of environmental protections areas that will increase regional biodiversity.*

LBCCG has spent over twenty years improving riparian vegetation along the Obi Obi Creek. The provision of adequate riparian buffers is the single most important factor when considering water quality in Baroon Pocket Dam, but also has significant impacts on wildlife survival and distribution of animals and plants throughout the catchment.

The Obi Obi creek is known to contain at least one endangered species, and it is considered likely that other threatened and endangered species are also present.

LBCCG also has further concerns regarding the proposed polo field.

- Use of the proposed area by horses is a heavy use and will disrupt the surface area leading to increased discharge of sediments into the Obi Obi Creek. This is especially true as Maleny regularly has high intensity rainfall events exceeding 150mm within 24 hrs and those exceeding 300mm have occurred in the last three years. In the absence of a drainage plan and/or an adequate width riparian buffer, these events will lead to excessive siltation of the creek.
- Similarly, the use of horses on an area in such close proximity to the creek will result in pathogens being conveyed to the creek from urine and excrement of the horses.
- From a practical point of view, the proposed size of the polo field and five meter runoff zone to the field would directly abut the riparian area. This would mean that almost 75% of the perimeter of the field would have no room for spectators or public access during matches. My understanding is that 200+ spectators would be expected to attend a polo match. This cramping of the facility would seem to make a polo field impractical and against all the aims of the master plan.
- The sharp corner in the Obi Obi Creek on the top side of this lease area presents serious problems for long term stabilisation. To avoid major hard engineering in the future Council would be well advised to establish a solid buffer in this area.

LBCCG intends to raise these issues if possible in upcoming public meetings, Precinct Advisory Group and other interested forums where appropriate. As you know, LBCCG does not often comment on planning issues in this area. The proposed uses that Council is now encouraging on the MCP would appear to be against the aims of MCP Master Plan, not in keeping with the intent of Councils own planning scheme, and is against many of Councils own published strategies, such as the Biodiversity Strategy etc, etc. Even the intent of the Master Plan states that the plan will *'embrace the importance of ecology and balances environmental protection areas with community activity and benefit'*. The proposed community activity clearly does not do this because of its scale, proximity to the Obi Obi Creek, and disregard for an adequate riparian buffer.

LBCCG does not accept that vegetation on the opposite side of a creek minimises impacts to the side in question. LBCCG would value an opportunity to discuss these issues and how they might be reasonably resolved.

Yours sincerely

Peter Stevens
President
LBCCG