



## COMMISSION RECOMMENDS BELROSE LAND NOT BE REZONED DUE TO BUSHFIRE RISK

22 January 2019

Bushfire-prone land on Sydney's Northern Beaches should not be rezoned for residential development because of the risk to human life and property, the state's Independent Planning Commission has found.

The Department of Planning & Environment asked the Commission to provide advice on a proposal to amend local planning controls to allow a new residential development at the western end of Ralston Avenue, Belrose.

It follows concerns raised by government agencies and the community in relation to bushfire risk, the proximity to TransGrid's Sydney East Substation and potential impacts on biodiversity and threatened species.

Commissioners Annelise Tuor and Stephen O'Connor were appointed to review the proposed changes to the Warringah Local Environment Plan 2011 and provide advice to the Department.

Following an exhaustive 12-month examination of the matter, the Commission has today (Tuesday 22 January 2019) recommended the planning proposal should not proceed, finding it "presents an unreasonable risk to human life and property".

"While the priority of protecting human life and minimising risk to property from bushfire threats is acknowledged, the Commission finds that other aspects of the Planning Proposal also contribute to its recommendation that the Planning Proposal should not precede... this includes ongoing uncertainty regarding the impacts to biodiversity and essential public infrastructure," the Commission stated in its report to the Department.

Notably, the Commission found the proposal is inconsistent with the objective of section 9.1 of *Policy Directions for Plan Making* "to protect life, property and the environment from bush fire hazards, by discouraging the establishment of incompatible land uses in bush fire prone areas".

It also found the proposal "is likely to significantly impact a number and range of threatened species and native vegetation communities and that there is uncertainty regarding the extent, management and mitigation of these impacts."

And it found "that potential impacts of the Planning Proposal to the safe and effective maintenance and operation of TransGrid's infrastructure are not acceptable from a public interest perspective and .... may elevate the risk to those seeking to evacuate the subject land and to firefighters."

The Commission's advice can be read in full here: <https://www.ipcn.nsw.gov.au/projects/2018/01/request-to-rezone-land-at-the-western-end-of-ralston-ave-belrose-pp-2015-warri-001-00>

### **Disclaimer**

*This media statement has been prepared by the Commission's media unit for general information only. It does not form part of the Commission's Advice Report, and should not be read as part of, or as a substitute for, that Report.*