



## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

### Petition

Registration No.	56
Title	Bushland in the suburb of Muirhead Breeze
Presented on	24 November 2011
Presented by	Chief Minister (Henderson)
Referred to	Lands & Planning (G McCarthy)
Date referred	24 November 2011
Response due	29 March 2011
Response received	15 March 2012
Response presented	27 March 2012

#### **Petition**

TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

This petition of residents of Leanyer and greater Darwin draws to the attention of the House:

Defence Housing Australia and Investa propose to bulldoze an important area of natural bushland along Fitzmaurice Drive, Leanyer, for the Muirhead Breezes suburb. This area supports about 30 hectares of natural bushland bounded by Fitzmaurice Drive, Lee Point Road, a firebreak running parallel to Fitzmaurice Drive, and the eastern boundary of the Muirhead Breezes suburb. The area is a wildlife corridor linking Casuarina Coastal Reserve and Shoal Bay area.

The bushland is highly valued by locals who watch the wildlife, enjoy the beauty of the bush, walk with their family and friends and dogs through the bush, and hear the birdlife in the mornings and evenings. We have observed many species of wildlife in the area.

We want this bushland protected from being bulldozed and retained as 'Muirhead Reserve' to conserve wildlife, retain landscape connectivity, allow locals to enjoy the area, and provide public spaces for passive recreation.

Also, the suburb of Muirhead Breezes will smell of sewage for months during the dry season as the prevailing wind direction is from the east and southeast – from the direction of the Leanyer Sewage Treatment plant. Leanyer residents already suffer from this smell, and if homes were built along the northern side of Fitzmaurice Drive they would be bathed in an even stronger smell of sewage as the suburb would receive even more breezes from the direction of the sewage plant.

YOUR PETITIONERS THEREFORE HUMBLY PRAY THAT

The Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory reject plans by Defence Housing Australia and Investa to bulldoze the 30 hectares (approx) of bushland currently proposed for the suburb of Muirhead Breezes between Fitzmaurice Drive, Lee Point Road, the firebreak and the eastern boundary of the suburb. We want this area to instead be protected as 'Muirhead Reserve' to conserve the wildlife, maintain local amenity and provide for public enjoyment.

AND YOUR PETITIONERS, AS IN DUTY BOUND, WILL EVER PRAY

## **Response**

The suburb of Muirhead is owned by Defence Housing Australia, who have entered into a joint venture arrangement with Investa property Group to develop the new suburb.

The land was rezoned to a specific use zone in 2009 and 2010, to facilitate the subdivision, use and development of the land as a residential estate that provides for housing choice through a range of lot sizes and housing types. The rezoning process included a public exhibition period to allow the community to comment and make submissions. This was followed by a public hearing of the Development Consent Authority (DCA).

In response to concerns raised about the loss of the natural vegetation, the specific use zone has a condition that a landscaped buffer of not less than 20 meters wide be retained along the entire length of Fitzmaurice Drive. The subdivision design for Muirhead also ensures that there is no development within 700 metres of the sewerage treatment ponds. This requirement is in accordance with the guidelines provided by the Power and Water Corporation.

The Muirhead subdivision was referred to the Department of Natural Resources, Environment, The Arts and Sport, who advised that it did not require assessment under the *Environmental Assessment Act*. The site has also been assessed under the Commonwealth's *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act*.

Development application for stage 1 of the Muirhead development was approved by the DCA in 2010. Stages 2 and 3 were approved in November 2011.

Defence Housing Australia and Investa are now proceeding with development of the suburb of Muirhead, in accordance with the specific use zone and the approved development permits. Stage one was completed in December last year.