



Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc

ABN 38 686 119 087

PO Box 29 Wentworth Falls NSW 2782

Phone: 0490 419 779 E-Mail: bmcs@bluemountains.org.au

Web Site: www.bluemountains.org.au

Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow

6 December 2022

The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones
Minister for Families and Communities
Minister for Disability Services
Parliament House,
Macquarie St, Sydney NSW 2000
Lodged online:

Dear Ms Maclaren-Jones

Re: Clairvaux Centre, Katoomba

The Blue Mountains Conservation Society (the Society) is a community-based volunteer organisation with over 900 members. Its mission is to help conserve the natural environment of the Greater Blue Mountains and to increase awareness of the natural environment in general.

The Society is concerned at the proposal to sell the Clairvaux Centre in Katoomba (Clairvaux). Clairvaux, which is currently owned by the Department of Communities and Justice (the Department). It is home to a number of community organisations, including an environmental organisation (The Blue Mountains Wild Plant Rescue Service) and the Blue Mountains Aboriginal Culture and Resource Centre.

Clairvaux is a key site in Katoomba with an important history, having been a Government-run children's home established in the late 1960s. In view of its current importance to the community and its historical significance, the Society is firmly of the view that Clairvaux should remain a community resource.

In addition, the Society is concerned that if the site is sold, there is a high likelihood that it will be earmarked for more intensive development. The Society notes that this site is situated on a ridgeline, very close to an escarpment that overlooks a World Heritage listed national park. The Society submits that intensive development so close to the escarpment is inappropriate, noting that stormwater and other run-off drains into the surrounding World Heritage Area. Governments at all levels have an obligation to protect the region's World Heritage values from the adverse impacts of urban development on the ridgetops.

The Society is aware that the Blue Mountains City Council has also voiced its concern over the proposed eviction of three important community non-government organisations from the Clairvaux site.

The Society urges the Department to reconsider its plans to sell the Clairvaux site, and to take steps to ensure it remains in community hands, and that its historical significance is preserved.

We look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Madi Maclean.

Madi Maclean
President, Blue Mountains Conservation Society
mobile 0412 428 202 or email president@bluemountains.org.au

cc. Ms Trish Doyle MP for Blue Mountains,
Mr Mark Greenhill, Mayor, Blue Mountains City Council.