

# Questions For Candidates

## Blue Mountains City Council

### 2012 Election



The Blue Mountains Conservation Society is providing a set of questions to candidates in the 2012 Blue Mountains City Council Election. The answers to these questions will be published.

Questions have been grouped into five broad topic areas and are deliberately framed to provide a “yes” or “no” answer. The last question provides an opportunity to relate their conservation values.

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|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. natural areas and wildlife. | 4. planning and development.                |
| 2. urban sustainability.       | 5. public participation and accountability. |
| 3. pollution and waste.        | 6. personal conservation values.            |

<b>Candidate's Name:</b>	<b>Matt Hodgson</b>
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## The Questionnaire

Except for the last question, each question has an implicit preface of “As a BMCC Councillor would you”.  
Please answer each question with a “yes” or “no”.

### 1. natural areas and wildlife

#### a. Bushland protection and restoration

1.	Support Council's current funding to Bushcare activities being maintained.	<b>Yes</b>
2.	Support the Council taking measures to oppose recreational hunting in National Parks.	<b>Yes</b>

#### b. Responsible Pet Ownership

3.	Support the Council continuing to advocate to extend the existing state Companion Animal legislation to domestic cats.	<b>Yes</b>
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### 2. urban sustainability

4.	Support the introduction of water bubblers so people can recharge their water bottles.	No
5.	Support Council extending its existing environmental levy for another five years to support essential Council environmental programs.	-
6.	Support Council in supporting and promoting practical sustainability initiatives developed by local community organisations to lower the community's greenhouse gas emissions.	-

### 3. pollution and waste

7.	Support the introduction of a Green Bin for garden waste while retaining the chipping service.	Yes
8.	Support the introduction of an annual e-waste collection.	Yes

### 4. planning and development

**Preamble.** Council has two local environmental plans (LEPs) governing how and where new development can proceed, and what environmental assessment standards new developments must meet.

LEP 2005 was developed after extensive and thorough community consultation and covers the more developed areas such as the towns and villages.

The older LEP 1991 covers the bushland and rural areas.

Both LEPs must be reviewed and updated as part of the NSW government planning reforms, including conforming to a consistent format and style set by the NSW government (the "LEP standard template").

9.	Support ensuring all the existing environmental protection measures currently included in LEP 2005 are not undermined or removed in any updating or revision, including existing provisions related to Protected Areas and those related to minimising environmental impacts of new development, and retaining all areas currently zoned environmental protection.	Yes
10.	Support ensuring that LEP 1991 is updated and developed consistent with the provisions, methodology and approach taken in LEP 2005, including provisions related to Protected Areas and those related to minimising environmental impacts of new development, as well as retaining all areas currently zoned environmental protection.	Yes
11.	Support Council taking all reasonable steps to restrict one-off "spot" rezoning of land outside of the process of reviewing LEP 2005 and LEP 1991.	Yes

### 5. public participation and accountability

12.	Support the opportunity for the community to provide informed and timely input into Council decision-making at a strategic and policy level prior to decisions being made - particularly in respect to LEP planning processes.	Yes
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### 6. personal conservation values

Provide a brief statement of your personal conservation values – limit your statement to 100 words.

Council finances are currently such that all non-core expenditure needs to be curtailed. Water bubblers, especially lavish ones like at Wentworth Falls are an unaffordable luxury. Council's existing environmental levy imposes an unaffordable burden on ratepayers. Council's environmental programmes need to be funded out of ordinary rates revenue, which can be achieved by curtailing Council extravagance such as on raw materials and consumables, contractor and consultancy costs, legal fees, non-core capital works – such as the millions to service the Hat Hill development, borrowing costs and advertising.

Blue Mountains heritage conservation is vital and I recommend that Council reinstate a full time Heritage Officer to assess all planning decisions in respect to environmental and cultural heritage objectives and impacts.