



Sharing sustainable solutions with communities

General Manager
Hawkesbury City Council
PO Box 146
Windsor NSW 2756
(Attention: Mr Peter Jackson)

20 February 2009

Dear Mr Jackson

Permaculture North is a community organisation, which has in excess of 350 members and is active in promoting permaculture in the northern suburbs of Sydney. In 2008 Permaculture North hosted the 9th Australian Permaculture Convergence which was attended by over 500 delegates from around Australia and from many other countries. Permaculture North is also a member of the Sydney Basin Permaculture Network in partnership with Permaculture Sydney West and Permaculture Sydney South. Permaculture itself is a design system for the development of sustainable communities.

Permaculture as a comprehensive philosophy and discipline came into being in the mid 1970's with the publication of "Permaculture One" by Bill Mollison and David Holmgren. However, their work drew on that of some of the early pioneers of sustainable agricultural practices.

One of these pioneers was P.A. Yeomans who developed the 'keyline system' for managing water in the landscape and those books are still much in demand throughout the world.

It is understood that Council has received a development proposal (DA0852/08) that, if allowed to proceed, would destroy much of Yeoman's demonstration property 'Yobarnie', located at North Richmond.

We strongly urge Council to reject this development proposal in its entirety and to preserve 'Yobarnie' intact as a working property. There are many reasons as to why this should be done:

- Yobarnie is an icon of Australian agriculture. It features as an illustration of the keyline system in Bill Mollison's 1988 text "Permaculture – A Designers Manual" (Page 162). The property has been highlighted as an outstanding example of the application of keyline principles in courses held around the globe. 'Yobarnie' should be preserved as a unique piece of Australia's agricultural heritage. Destroying 'Yobarnie' would be akin to demolishing Elizabeth Farm for high rise development.

- Sydney needs to preserve prime agricultural land close to the city in order to develop a sustainable food supply. When oil depletion starts to impact it will become necessary to grow much of the food required by Sydney's large population close to the City. Long distance transport of large volumes of food from remote locations will become increasingly expensive and at some point will no longer be possible.
- The most effective way to sequester carbon dioxide is to develop the organic carbon content of soils. Superbly designed properties such as 'Yobarnie' can demonstrate how effective leading edge farming practices can be at carbon sequestration and can inform national strategies for addressing climate change.

We strongly urge Hawkesbury Council to reject DA0852/08 and to protect 'Yobarnie'.

Please provide all Councillors with a copy of this letter.

Yours Sincerely

Barry Hadaway
Advocacy Team Leader - Permaculture North