



Newsletter – June 2021

Friends of Lee Point (**FLP**) are a community-based group of Darwin residents campaigning to conserve Lee Point while encouraging the efficient use of land, infrastructure and services in Darwin. We acknowledge that the Larrakia are the traditional owners of Lee Point and the land and surrounding sea require protection, management and respect from all.

We have just passed the shortest day in the year (21 June) and longest day in the northern hemisphere. This means our migratory shorebirds will start heading home to Darwin soon from the arctic circle ie. Siberia. Expected time of arrival at Lee Point is from late August on.

Migratory Shorebirds



Migratory shorebird sculpture near Sandy Creek erected mid-June 2021. It was funded by Aust Govt (thru Luke Gosling OAM MP office) and organised by Planning Action Network in conjunction with BirdLife Top End, Larrakia Nation and others.



Eastern Curlews resting and putting on weight near Sandy Creek in Feb 2021, they left in April. Migratory shorebirds can spend Sept-May in Darwin (eight months) which makes them locals.

Save Lee Point campaign

FLP were at Malak Markets on Saturday 26 June collecting petition signatures. On-line/paper signatures total over 1500.

The petition calls on the NT Parliament: *to place a moratorium on the current housing development proposal until the NT Planning Commission has developed a comprehensive Area Plan for the whole of Lee Point.*



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Raising awareness of Lee Point housing issues

Only 12.7%* of people in Darwin's northern suburbs prior to 2020 knew about the Lee Point Area Plan or the proposed development to house thousands of people at Lee Point.

Fortunately this is changing. For Lee Point in the past 10 weeks; the NT News has published over 30 letters, ABC held five radio interviews plus two TV 7pm News segments, and Plan /FLP held one public meeting at Lee Point. A Larrakia elder, Tibby Quall, spoke on ABC Darwin Radio and said he did not want to see Lee Point developed. The NT News letters, ABC TV segments and one radio interview have been posted on the FLP Facebook page.

*Note: On-line survey by FLP of 370 people from Darwin's northern suburbs in May-June 2021.

Take Action



Lee Point March 2021 – photo by Teresa Laird

Clearing works at Lee Point is imminent. Please take action: sign the petition (if you haven't already), send your comments to the NT News Editor and your local member. The links are:

PETITION – www.saveleepoint.org.au

NT News - fill out form at: <https://www.ntnews.com.au/news/opinion/letter-to-the-editor> or email comments with your name and address to: news@ntnews.com.au

NT Parliament - for electoral email address (click on your local members name at LHS)

Link: <https://parliament.nt.gov.au/members/by-name>

Planning for Lee Point: provides key information on Lee Point, click here:

<https://saveleepoint.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/2021-06-30-Planning-for-Lee-Point-web-version.pdf>

Mangroves of Lee Point

Mangroves are salt-tolerant trees that have adapted to life in harsh coastal conditions. They provide a sanctuary/nursery for marine life, and are important for protecting coastal areas.

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Cannonball Mangrove - also called Cedar or Puzzle Mangrove (*Xylocarpus granatum*)



We were going to feature a different mangrove this month however the Cannonball Mangrove leaves are changing to a yellow gold and falling. – see our May 2021 newsletter for more info.



Note the large breathing roots.

Lee Point and defence of Darwin

Lee Point played an important role in the defence of Darwin during World War II and Indonesian confrontation in the 1960s.

Explosives/ammunition were stored in structures like this; 40mm Bofors (anti-aircraft autocannon) were part of the defence.

Source

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bofors_40_mm_gun



Military relic at Lee Point.

Walk at Lee Point

About 30 people enjoyed the walks held 8am Saturday 19 June 2021. One walk went to the Lee Point Dam and the other through a variety of habitats. Thank you for the donations made on the day to the Save Lee Point campaign – we really appreciate your support.

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One of the groups on the habitat walk



Rainbow Bee-eaters at Dam



Wasp/Tiger moth

Lee Point trivia (answer at bottom of page)

Q1. The flatback sea turtle nests at Lee Point; where are their known breeding sites?

- A. Aust/New Guinea B. Aust/SE Asia C. Northern Australia D. Australia

Planning for Lee Point (Part 5) – Lee Point Area Plan

Part 4 - discussed zoning plans and NT Planning Commission's involvement in planning.

The development of the Lee Point Area Plan¹ is unusual in that it:

- focusses on one quarter of the area (the disused defence land at Lee Point)
- did not involve the NT Planning Commission (other Area Plans have)
- had a brief exhibition period² (4 weeks prior to Xmas 2014) and
- did not consider public benefit (from housing defence personnel at other sites).

The community engagement was inadequate with most people being unaware³ of the Lee Point Area Plan prior to 2020. Today more people are aware of the proposal to house thousands of people at Lee Point (aka Lee Point Area Plan). However, very few support this plan despite its refinements over time. There have been numerous letters to the NT News, over 1500 petition signatures plus hundreds of written and verbal comments to FLP.

Land use plans for any region should be dynamic (not static) and need to adapt to changing circumstances⁴. Much has changed since the Lee Point Area Plan was approved in 2015, (refer link on page 2). A new plan is needed. The NT Planning Commission is the most appropriate organisation to develop a new Area Plan for Lee Point.

Notes:

1. The above assessment of the Lee Point Area Plan is based on information from the internet and information provided by the NT Government on consultation for the Lee Point Area Plan.
2. A proposal to house thousands of people at Lee Point has a high impact on the public which implies a collaborate/empowering approach under the Commission community engagement policy.
3. From an on-line survey by FLP of 370 people in May-June 2021. The survey found that; prior to 2020 only 12.7% (about 1 in 8) of people in Darwin's northern suburbs were aware of the Lee Point Area Plan or the proposal to house thousands of people at Lee Point.
4. Based on the 2015 Darwin Regional Land Use Plan–Plan Purpose.

Until next time, enjoy the dry season.

Answer Q1 – C Flatback sea turtle breeding sites have only been found on the north Australian coast. All six species of marine turtles that occur in Australian waters are protected under law.