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Mr. Stephen Dunshea
CEO
Shoalhaven City Council
PO Box 42
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C.c. All Councillors

By email: council@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au

2 September 2021

Dear Sir

Vincentia Golf Club – Objection to the proposed road closure under Section 38B of the Roads Act 1993

BirdLife Shoalhaven (BLS) has over 1,000 members and supporters. Our charter is to help our members and the wider community enjoy and learn more about birds and to advocate for the conservation of birdlife across the Shoalhaven.

BLS strongly objects to Shoalhaven City Council’s proposed road closure and sale of land on the Vincentia Golf Course to St Georges Country Club.

The Club has admitted that it is reviewing options to sell parts of the course to a developer, which will require the proposed sale of land. This will have significant consequences for the many bird species found in the area.

All golf courses with their open habitat, mature trees, shrubs and under-storey, dams and areas of native vegetation support a wide number of bird species and other fauna and flora. This is especially the case with the Vincentia Golf Course.

Its numerous mature trees, such as scribbly gums, bloodwoods and casuarina, offer numerous nesting hollows, and nectar and other feeding opportunities. There are also significant areas of trees, shrubs and understorey, supporting large and small birds. These include honeyeaters, wrens, thornbills, kookaburras, parrots, and owls, as well as **the threatened Glossy Black-Cockatoo, Square-tailed Kite and Powerful Owl**. Open habitat specialists, like lapwings and magpies, are also found on the fairways. It has six dams with areas of surrounding native vegetation, providing habitat for ducks and other waterbirds. The course also includes areas of intact heathland, supporting heathland birds, such as **the**

threatened Eastern Bristlebird and Ground Parrot, and other threatened fauna and flora species. It is also **part of an important habitat corridor** from the coast through the Violet Clarke Reserve to Jervis Bay National Park and **borders the internationally recognised Jervis Bay Key Biodiversity Area**.

The course's diverse native vegetation and bird life also add greatly to the social amenity and enjoyment of everyone accessing the course, not just birdwatchers.

Bird conservation is especially relevant to the extension of the course from nine holes to 18 under Development Application 01/1213 dated 19 June 2002. The DA conditions specifically include actions to help conserve the threatened Eastern Bristlebird and Ground Parrot. The public roads in this development area go across four completed holes, two other holes where clearing was illegally recommenced in June 2021, and the remaining heathland. As well as the recent illegal recommencement of clearing, there have been several other infringements under the DA conditions, which in most cases did not result in any penalties. Given its importance for the conservation of the Eastern Bristlebird and Ground Parrot and other heathland specialists, and the Club's poor compliance to DA conditions to date, we would be especially concerned that any roads in this part of the course were closed and sold to the Club.

To ensure the conservation of the birds that rely on the course's diverse habitats and resources, it is vital that the public roads stay in their current ownership, and the course layout of 13 holes and its private recreation zoning remain unchanged.

The Club needs to clarify its intentions on its future plans for the Vincentia Golf Course. BirdLife Shoalhaven will then reconsider its position, based on an assessment of the environmental impacts of any proposed development. However, in the meantime the ownership of the public roads must remain unchanged.

Yours sincerely



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