

Mount Panorama/Wahluu site protected

3 May 2021

Minister for the Environment Sussan Ley has made a declaration to protect an area on Mount Panorama/Wahluu under section 10 of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984 (ATSIHP Act).

The declaration protects the site from the proposed construction of buildings and significant earthworks (including the type required for a proposed go kart track), while also protecting the existing public use of the land for recreation, camping and as open space.

"I am satisfied that the area identified at the top of Mount Panorama/Wahluu, one that helps define the iconic shape of the mountain top, is culturally significant and should be protected under the ATSIHP Act," Minister Ley said.

"In making this declaration, it is important to also address some of the issues that have been raised in a passionate community debate.

"The declaration covers a reduced area than that previously sought. It does not, and nor did the applicant seek to, prevent existing motor racing, existing sporting and recreational activities or other public activities on the Mountain.

"It acknowledges the cultural significance Mount Panorama/Wahluu has for the Wiradyuri people, in contributing to local Aboriginal narratives, songlines, ceremonies and cultural heritage.

"The declaration protects the public use of the area as well as protecting its heritage value.

"I have met with people from all sides in Bathurst, and reviewed all reports and submissions and there are earnestly held views on all sides that I respect.

"The initial report did recognise the cultural significance of the site to the Wiradyuri and further submissions and consultation with a number of parties strengthened my views about the significance of the site.

"I strongly hope that the Bathurst Regional Council can continue to explore options for a Go Kart Track which seems to have significant support if it were to be placed at another location than the top of the mountain."

Protections take effect on 5 May 2021 for a period of 10 years.

The Minister's declaration and explanatory notes can be found here: <https://minister.awe.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/s10-declaration-wahluu-mount-panorama->