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Premier, Mr Mike Rann,
The Premier's Office,
State Administration Centre,
200 Victoria Square,
Adelaide, South Australia, 5000.

9th September 2008

Alan Burns
Secretary / Treasurer
Friends of Glenthorne Inc
22 Westall Way,
Sheidow Park SA 5158.
Ph 83812708(Hm), 83405509(Wk)

Dear Mr Rann,

It has been more than 2 and a half years since I last wrote to you regarding the community's concerns about the future of Glenthorne farm and little has changed in that time. Little if we ignore the lost opportunities over that period and little if we measure the advancements made by the University of Adelaide in coming up with an acceptable, community supported concept plan. Little if we measure community consultation and involvement initiated by the University. If we measure the deterioration allowed to occur to heritage buildings dating back to the 1840s, then plenty has happened, including the collapse of one of these important structures. Olives continue to grow through them, destroying more and more each year.

Over 12 years ago the Trott Park and Sheidow Park Residents Association presented a petition of over 2,000 local residents who were opposed to any form of housing or similar development. They wanted open space and heritage preserved. This represented over 90% of those residents approached. The CSIRO completed a similar survey in 1998 and a similar result of 80% of respondents wanted open space retained.

The Friends of Glenthorne Inc recently had the pleasure of hearing Professor David C Paton from the University of Adelaide speak at the group's AGM and again at a Community Meeting held to discuss the future of Glenthorne. At this meeting a similar survey indicated that again 80% of the local community demand that the open space be preserved. This latest result may appear to be similar to previous survey results, but its true meaning demonstrates the local people's resolve to never allow housing or any other development on what is left of Glenthorne farm.

At this Community Meeting, David Paton detailed his plan to use Glenthorne farm as a research facility aimed at the restoration of native habitat throughout the Mount Lofty Ranges. His aim is to restore native habitat to more than 30% of the Adelaide Hills and in doing so, save the threatened woodland bird species that are fast declining and in threat of local extinction. David's plan was supported by those at the meeting, but when the detail was explained, that 30% of Glenthorne farm or more would need to be sold for housing to fund the project, 80% in attendance would rather such an important habitat restoration project be dumped rather than lose any of the farm to housing. We are down to our last chance regarding these threatened species yet the community is adamant that Glenthorne farm must not be housed. If threatened species are not to be lost throughout the Mount Lofty Ranges then another way of funding David Paton's project must be found.

The southern suburbs are increasingly losing open space. Large areas owned both privately and by the State Government are being rezoned and subdivided. The pockets of open land surrounding

O'Halloran Hill, Trott Park and Sheidow Park are rapidly disappearing and with it the chance to save what is left of the local biodiversity. Glenthorne farm provides wildlife links to the Happy Valley Reservoir, the O'Halloran Hill Recreation Park and the Field River precinct all the way to the Hallett Cove Beach and as such is the cornerstone of protecting southern biodiversity.

Despite all of this local will, the University of Adelaide is preparing to present to the State Government, the latest version of its long overdue Concept Plan which we are lead to believe includes this housing proposal. I remember the Messenger headlines from December 15th, 2004 which stated "RANN FARM ANGER". The Roth of Rann seems hardly a force to be reckoned with if after almost 4 more long years, the University of Adelaide is allowed to even propose another housing proposal on such a locally sensitive property. On top of this, they believe that local will can be changed by a few community meetings. If this proposal is not stopped dead in its tracks, there will be an outcry from local voters that will swing the already marginal State and Federal seats. The current Mayo by-election is just one example of massive voter unrest with State Government inaction and the move away from the larger political parties.

This proposal is an insult and although David Paton's habitat restoration project deserves support and funding, it will not come from the sale of any part of Glenthorne farm. There are many reasons why the proposal to house Glenthorne farm is wrong.

- The political danger of supporting the University's plan is huge. In fact, not to be seen to be supporting southern local open space is politically dangerous. The local media is already printing articles about the threats to Glenthorne farm, including housing, GM crops when a moratorium is current on GM crops in SA and the desalination plant's pipeline to the Happy Valley Reservoir. All threats must be discussed with the community before plans are made and the best options chosen.
- The environmental dangers are obvious with the site's links to other areas of open space and the Field River and many of the locals continue to wonder why nothing positive is ever done by the Rann Government. Funding to the environment is being cut continually and when we already own 200 hectares of local open space at Glenthorne, it is ridiculous to see that nothing has been done in the past 7 years by the University or the Government to improve the site environmentally. The Friends of Glenthorne Inc will plant over 800 locally indigenous plants this year, taking our total to well over 5,000. This has all been achieved in a 3 hour window at monthly working bees by local volunteers and funded by volunteers and grant funding. We can get things done without selling the farm.
- Legally the deed signed in the purchase of Glenthorne farm from the Federal Government and funded by a State \$7.0 million grant to the University of Adelaide, states that housing and development is specifically excluded. The Friends received a letter from Pamela Martin in January this year stating that this status quo would remain and that the "South Australian Government remains of the view that the site must remain as open space". We certainly hope that the State has not altered its original obligation to the people of the south. The northern end of Glenthorne farm also falls within the Hills Face Zone.
- The social benefits of allowing the community to participate, not only in the application of any future plan, but in its planning are great. Volunteers could provide many hours of free labour and local schools and other organisations would happily contribute. The educational potential as well as the health benefits will all be lost if housing is developed.

- Financially, the University has closed its mind to funding options other than housing and this is disappointing given its access to experts in many fields. Carbon trading and other means of funding the habitat restoration of Glenthorne farm and the Mount Lofty Ranges must be explored with the exclusion of any idea of housing. As I write this letter, a meeting is being organised involving prominent locals and local organisations to seriously explore other options to protect Glenthorne's future. It should be noted that the work being planned by the University costing \$20 million over the first 4 or 5 years could be completed by Trees for Life for about \$220,000. We should not fund the University's environmental research program through the sale of Glenthorne land, which is another form of cost transfer which will not be tolerated. Perhaps the State's profit from LMC owned and rezoned suburban land could be channelled into habitat restoration at Glenthorne farm as well as David Paton's larger Mount Lofty Ranges project.

The ideals of the Friends of Glenthorne are not restricted to just a few in the community. Our membership has been strong over the 12 years of fighting housing and demanding protection for the environment and the heritage of Glenthorne farm. We have been patient and over the past 12 years we have educated ourselves in many aspects of the local environment and our network of supporters is widespread and diverse and includes many academics. We urge the Government of South Australia to at last stand up for the environment by taking back control over Glenthorne farm, denounce the University of Adelaide's plan to sell off Glenthorne for housing and put in place a board of local and qualified individuals to independently and openly plan and control the future of the farm, with community participation.

This much, the southern residents and the environment deserves after waiting 6 and a half years for the State Labour Government to act on this critical local issue and 12 years since the fight first began.

I have enclosed a short DVD to give you a feeling of this wonderful site and the work we are doing.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'AB', with a long horizontal line underneath it.

Alan Burns
Secretary / Treasurer
Friends of Glenthorne Inc