

9 January 2013

Chief Executive Officer
City of Wanneroo
Locked Bag 1
Wanneroo 6946.

Dear Sir

**Submission by Urban Bushland Council WA concerning Land disposition:
Proposed land lease Portion of 41 (Lot 5483) Park Lane, Alexander Heights**

The proposal: The City of Wanneroo proposes to enter into a land lease with the Vietnamese Community in Australia/WA Chapter Inc. as an exempt disposition in accordance with S 3.58 (5) (d) of the Local Government Act 1995.

The Urban Bushland Council WA Inc is the peak community association for urban bushland conservation comprising some 70 member groups. The Council participates in research and education projects, provides information and support to its members and has been active since 1993. The Council provides 'a voice for the bush' with government agencies and other organisations and increasingly is contacted about the loss of both native and introduced trees in suburbia.

Summary

The Urban Bushland Council is opposed to the proposal which would result in the clearing of parkland native trees, in particular Banksia trees, on the portion of 41 (Lot 5483) Park Lane, Alexander Heights. Further it is strongly recommended that the proposal for a Vietnamese Community Centre be relocated to a suitable site that is already cleared and is not in this parkland.

The benefit of retention of the area as parkland for passive recreation by the local community and for wildlife is obvious. This is not a case of either/or, as the Vietnamese Community and the City of Wanneroo have options other than building on this site. Notably the local community does not support the proposal and wants the area fully retained as parkland with its mature Banksias for their community's health and enjoyment, and for the black cockatoos, other birds and wildlife.

The provision and protection of parks and reserves is an essential part of infrastructure for our community. We consider such reserves as priceless public assets to be retained, managed and protected. As George Seddon wrote in 'The Old Country Australian Landscapes, Plants and People,'
"The natural flora is one of incomparable interest and richness, our real heritage and responsibility, in global terms."

Climate change:

Climate change is changing rainfall and temperature. To help future generations of not only plants and animals but also humans, we need to protect and manage areas of natural bushland and parkland and all the connecting linkages between them.

Black cockatoos

The populations of black cockatoos continue to decline due to loss of habitat in the Perth region and in the south west of Western Australia. Fragmentation of habitat is also an important factor. Dr Denis Saunders (formerly CSIRO) stated in 2011 that now every Banksia tree is important for the survival of Carnaby's Cockatoo.

Birdlife Australia in conjunction with the Department of Environment and Conservation, has reported on results of the Great Cocky Counts of 2011 and 2012. Carnaby's Cockatoo was the targeted species for these counts.

1. In the Greater Perth Region there was a statistically significant decline of almost 40% from 2010 as counted in 2011
2. In the Swan Region there was a statistically significant decline of 40% to a population of 4036 individual birds counted in 2012 compared with 2010.
3. Counts from 38 roost sites which have been monitored for 3 years showed a statistically significant decline of 58% in the number of Carnaby's cockatoos counted since 2010.
4. It was as little as 40 years ago that flocks would regularly include over 1,000 birds. However to 2011 there was a 66% increase in the number of roosts that had 150 or fewer birds.

Carnaby's cockatoos are facing extinction and we need to stop clearing their habitat and trees little by little, patch by patch on which they rely for food. This is the classic death of a thousand cuts.

The state government's clearing regulations are underpinned by a set of principles, one of which states '*Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises the whole or part of, or is necessary for the maintenance of, a significant habitat for fauna indigenous to Western Australia.*' Every Banksia tree provides significant habitat for black cockatoos. Notably Banksias take 20 - 30 years to grow to maturity and to provide substantial food.

As a responsible land manager, it is incumbent on the City of Wanneroo to ensure the retention and protection of all black cockatoo habitat, including the ecological linkages provided by individual and clusters of Banksias and Eucalypts across the City's landscape.

We urge you as a local government with a comparatively large area of Banksia Woodlands within its boundaries, to consider an alternative proposal which will result in a win/win for both the portion of 41 Park Lane, Alexander Heights, and for the Vietnamese Community.

Conclusion

The Urban Bushland Council strongly recommends the City of Wanneroo reconsiders and withdraws the proposed disposition such that this beautiful parkland with its mature trees can remain into the future for the benefit of the community and for its conservation values.

Yours faithfully