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Mayor and Councillors  
City of Swan

**Proposal by Vintage Sports Car Club, and proposed Henley Brook Avenue Dual Carriageway in Bush Forever site 200: *Caversham Airbase Bushland***

Dear Mayor and Councillors and Officers

The Urban Bushland Council WA Inc (UBC) hereby gives comments and recommendations on two proposals relating to Bush Forever site 200 'Caversham Airbase Bushland West Swan/Whiteman'.

The UBC understands that the two proposals are:

- 1.) the consideration and recommendation to the WAPC re the proposal from the Vintage Sports Car Club of WA to build clubrooms and a workshop on the site and
- 2.) the Henley Brook Avenue Dual Carriageway through Bush Forever site 200.

The Bush Forever program, endorsed and introduced by the State Government in 2000 as a *whole of government program for the conservation reserve system for the Swan Coastal Plain portion of the Perth Metropolitan Region*, was to be fully implemented by 2010, but still many Bush Forever sites are threatened by inappropriate development proposals or have been compromised.

The 'Implementation Recommendation' for Bush Forever site 200 in Bush Forever document Volume 1 page 235 is '*The existing care, control and management intent of the reserve is endorsed.*' This document also lists the qualities that have led to the inclusion of this site in the Bush Forever plan including: size 97 ha, vegetated uplands and vegetated wetlands, part of Greenway 39.

The vegetation complex is Southern River Complex of which **only 1.5% remains** 'Secure for Conservation' in the Perth Peel Region compared with the original extent. (EPA advice July 2015, 'Perth and Peel @ 3.5 Million').

The UBC has been advised that 'the State Government remains committed to the implementation of the Bush Forever program' (letter from Premier McGowan 27 November 2020). Whilst this statement is encouraging, the UBC sees continuing incursions into Bush Forever sites for roads, rail, infrastructure, sports facilities and in one case a housing development.

**The UBC therefore strongly recommends the City of Swan embraces and respects this site and indeed all Bush Forever sites as the last vestige of our rare natural heritage and as irreplaceable habitat for plants, animals and fungi as well as cultural heritage.**

The UBC believes and submits that **both proposals are totally unacceptable in this Bush Forever site 200. We therefore respectfully request that the City acts to refuse and prevent these inappropriate developments.** The Henley Brook Avenue dual carriageway extension would fragment the Bush Forever site and put our precious native fauna at risk.

We note that the City of Swan has completed its Local Biodiversity Strategy *'that will guide the City in future decision making and development, to achieve sustainable conservation outcomes.'* The policy states that *'While many of these Bush Forever sites occur within the City of Swan, few of these areas are formally protected. It is important that protection of these areas is considered in the implementation of this strategy and in accordance with State Planning Policy 2.8' (p10).* **The City of Swan is thus obliged to ensure retention and protection of Bush Forever sites in the City of Swan.**

### **Climate change**

An article by James Purtillin of the ABC on-line news of 24 January 2021 states: – *'Heatwaves may mean Sydney is too hot for people to live in 'within decades'',* and warns of the danger of highly urbanised parts of Australia becoming unliveable. The ambient air temperature gets close to 50 degrees Celsius in summer, 'radiant heat from bitumen carparks can push 80 degrees C 'and 'the surface temperature of playground equipment has been measured at 100 degrees C.'

The article goes on to quote Sebastian Pfautsch, an urban heat expert at Western Sydney University' who states that 80% of some of Western Sydney is sealed with roads etc 'and other kinds of construction that trap heat'. 'That figure, he says, needs to get down to 25%.' The obvious conclusion to be drawn from this example is to protect and manage the natural areas that remain and to stop allowing incursions such as buildings and roads that fragment and destroy natural areas and cause the heat island effect. .

### **Larger areas have more chance of maintaining biodiversity**

Larger areas have the chance of having a larger number of species. Habitat destruction is a leading driver of biodiversity loss as areas become isolated through fragmentation and habitat loss. Bush Forever site 200 is relatively large and its size is a factor for celebration.

### **Black cockatoo habitat**

The UBC understands that the three species of black cockatoo forage in Bush Forever site 200 – Carnaby's Cockatoo, Forest Red-tailed Black Cockatoo, and Baudin's Cockatoo. Each is listed as **nationally threatened**. Carnaby's Cockatoos eat the nectar and seeds of proteaceous plants (Banksias) and Marri seeds and also eat insect larvae within the flowering cones and within branches of various Eucalypts and Acacias.

Forest Red-tailed Black Cockatoos eat Jarrah and Marri seeds.

BirdLife WA has stated that Carnaby's Cockatoos will begin to starve in three years as the State Government continues to allow logging of what remains of their most significant feeding site – the Gngangara pine plantation. There is no large-scale revegetation for this land. Over the last ten years the population of Carnaby's cockatoos **has declined a further 35%**. (article *'Three years until Carnaby's cockatoos starvation starts, BirdLife warns'* WA Today January 20 2021 by Emma Young)

Destruction of and fragmentation of black cockatoo habitat would contribute further stress to these gallant birds. In addition, they could suffer death and injury from vehicle strike.

### **Banksia woodlands TEC**

Banksia Woodlands are a Threatened Ecological Community listed as **endangered** under the federal EPBC Act and with this listing, they are to be protected from destruction. The three key approaches to achieve the conservation objective for the Banksia Woodlands are: *to PROTECT the ecological community to prevent its further loss of its extent and condition; and to RESTORE the ecological community within its original range by active abatement of threats, and by revegetation and other conservation initiatives; and thirdly to COMMUNICATE with and support....to increase understanding of the value and function of the ecological community...*

This advice applies to all Banksia Woodlands over the Swan Coastal Plain. Therefore the City of Swan should ensure that Bush Forever site 200 does not have any further building and road incursions. **Thus it is strongly recommended that the two development proposals are refused by the City of Swan.**

### **CONCLUSION**

We look forward to your consideration of all this advice above and your action to refuse both the proposal by the Vintage Car Club and for the dual carriageway in this Bush Forever site 200.

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