



12th May 2021

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Bronwyn Slater
on behalf of the City of Melville

Submission – Attadale Alfred Cove Foreshore Master Plan

Dear Ms Slater

Thank you for your invitation to provide input into the City's efforts to establish a vision for the Alfred Cove and Attadale (and a small section of Applecross) foreshore area that will promote its wellbeing, guide future investments and support decision making processes.

The Urban Bushland Council WA Inc. (UBC) is a peak community conservation body currently with 80 member groups. It focusses on the protection and appropriate environmental management of remnant native vegetation in and around the Perth Metropolitan Area.

The group has been active for over two decades and has been involved in research projects and community education in addition to its core advocacy activities.

Of key interest to the UBC is *Bush Forever*.

Bush Forever is an implementation plan and a whole of government initiative designed to identify, protect and manage regionally significant bush land in order to achieve a sustainable balance between conservation of our bush land and development in metropolitan Perth.

The policy framework aims to protect the biodiversity of bush land representing the 26 vegetation complexes of the Swan Coastal Plain portion of the Perth Metropolitan Region and amounts to about 18% of the original vegetation on the Swan Coastal Plain.

Regionally significant bush land has been identified on the basis of criteria relating to its conservation value. Important among these criteria is the achievement where possible of a comprehensive representation of all the ecological communities occurring in the region, principally through protecting a target of at least ten percent of each vegetation complex.

Bush Forever Sites are representative of regional ecosystems and habitat and play a central role in the conservation of Perth's biodiversity.

Aiming to secure long-term protection of biodiversity and associated environmental values, Bush Forever policy recognises the protection and management of significant bush land areas as a **fundamental consideration in planning processes**.

The area under consideration is of particular interest as it involves much of Bush Forever Site 331. Hence we write in response to your invitation to comment.

I refer you to the following link for specific information about BFS 331:

[BiodiversityProject > Project/Programs > Perth Region Plant Biodiversity Project > Bush Forever Reference Sites > Bush Forever Site 331 \(walga.asn.au\)](#)

The Site covered by the proposed Master Plan is of both Regional and International significance.

Alfred Cove retains the only relatively natural and extensive estuarine wetland saltmarsh on the lower Swan River Estuary.

Its floristic community is the Vasse Vegetation Complex, of which **less than 1% remains** in the Region. Its coastal salt-marsh has been listed federally as a **Threatened Ecological Community**.

Some **140 species of bird have been recorded** at the site, including threatened species. Alfred Cove is considered to be one of the most important waterbird habitats in the south-west. The area forms a part of a network of wetlands including the chain of wetlands to the south and Rottnest Island salt lakes. The mud flats are the main feeding area for waders on the lower estuary and are linked closely, as a resource, with Pelican Point and the Como foreshore (Milyu).

Thirty bird species are covered by international agreements for the protection of species habitat. The area is used as a staging/holding area for intercontinental migratory wader species whose numbers are diminishing through habitat loss.

The tree-covered areas of the Cove form a corridor for bush birds in their north-south migration and also facilitate nomadic movements. The river is a flight path for birds and also provides a route for species moving from inland areas to the coastal plain and Rottnest.

Past planning decisions – eg housing and sports developments, refuse tips, transport corridors - have already destroyed much of the original natural values of the site and placed enormous pressures on the biodiversity of what remains. For example, the buffer of riparian vegetation along the River at that place is extremely narrow – approximately one tree wide or less in places – and does not meet the recommended width for such an important wetland. Climate change is anticipated to exacerbate this as an issue. The buffer should be widened as a matter of priority.

UBC suggests future planning should aim at reversing past mistakes, reducing these pressures and taking steps to conserve, protect and improve the condition of BFS 331 - rather than cause additional stresses and prevent required remedial efforts.

In summary, all planning should take into account the best interests of the natural heritage values of the site.