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South Trigg Beach Class A Reserve No 46248

The 13.37ha of remnant vegetated Quindalup coastal dunes between Scarborough and Trigg Beach was reclassified from a Class C Reserve to a **Class A Reserve** in 1998. The South Trigg Beach Reserve (between Scarborough and Trigg Beach) remains the only coastal reserve in the City of Stirling that has Class A Reserve protection. This classification is for natural areas of high conservation value.

- The South Trigg Beach Reserve is part of the Trigg Bushland Reserve and is included in the City of Stirling's Trigg Bushland Reserve Management Plan (Sector 6). It is part of **Bush Forever Area 308** in recognition of its regional significance as an increasingly rare coastal bushland on the Swan Coastal Plain. Bush Forever is given statutory effect through the Metropolitan Region Scheme and an amendment is required to make any boundary changes to a Bush Forever Area.



In 2022, the Minister for Planning released a Media Statement celebrating 21 years of Bush Forever accompanied by a new interactive on-line feature "Keeping the bush in the city". The importance of protecting these natural areas cannot be overstated, as clearing of bushland in the Metropolitan Area continues apace.

<https://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/Pages/McGowan/2022/10/21-years-of-keeping-bush-in-the-city.aspx>

- A **Threatened Ecological Community (TEC)** of *Callitris preissii* (Rottnest Island Pine) is located in the South Trigg Beach Reserve and is documented in an Addendum to the Trigg Bushland Management Plan dated 2018 (Ref: City of Stirling). The Management Plan emphasises the importance of protecting this TEC from uncontrolled access. No signs or identification of the TEC is publicised to ensure maximum protection. Confidentiality regarding its location is requested and respected.



The TEC contains Rottnest Is Pines which are healthy, producing new seedlings and have been protected from fire for many decades. Some of the trees are estimated to be over 100 years old. The TEC is highly intact with 80% of the community classified as being in excellent condition and the remaining 20% in very good condition. The populations present in the Trigg Bushland and the South Trigg Beach Reserve (which are linked) are among the last places in Perth where natural groves of Rottnest Is Pines can still be found. It is imperative that no incursion or fragmentation of this bushland occurs that will put the TEC at risk.



- The South Trigg Beach Class A Reserve was expanded in 2019 to include the old road reserve on land west of West Coast Highway between the dual path and apartments at North Scarborough. This expanded the original 10 ha reserve to 13.37 ha. The City has revegetated this area using local provenance to ensure its incorporation into the vegetation in the original reserve. By ensuring patches of vegetation remain connected, the ecological functions of the natural Quindalup dune system are supported and a healthy habitat for wildlife exists across the landscape including the adjacent Trigg Bushland.

- The South Trigg Beach Class A Reserve is an unusual dune formation of parallel dunes that form a sequence of sea cliff sand ridge, linear depression, second sand ridge, second depression and a third sand ridge – all displaying “chaot” (sand hills and their intervening depressions) features (Ref: Semeniuk, V, Assessment of the coastal dunes between Scarborough Beach and Trigg Island November 2016). Sector 6 of the Trigg Bushland Bush Forever Area 308 (South Trigg Beach Class A Reserve) forms a natural sequence from the foreshore east to the adjacent Tuart, Banksia and Marri woodlands to Karrinyup, a sequence now rare in the Perth Metropolitan Area. (Ref: Trigg Bushland Management Plan City of Stirling)
- There have been two proposals over the past 20 years by Coastal Ward Councillors to construct a path and/or boardwalk through the South Trigg Beach Reserve. One in 2005 and one in 2011-13. Both were rejected by the City of Stirling Council on the grounds of cost, environmental damage and community opposition. Public consultation in 2012 on three proposals with an estimated cost of \$1.8m (excluding lighting, maintenance and the cost of dune rehabilitation etc) resulted in overwhelming opposition (502 submissions opposed and 75 supported).
- Some of the potential problems identified were:
 - Erosion of the sand dunes caused during construction and the effect of strong winds on the path or boardwalk would cause irreparable damage to the fragile dune system and vegetation.
 - Fragmentation of the Quindalup coastal dune system Bush Forever Area would reduce biodiversity, damage ecosystems, impact on connectivity, cause damaging “edge effect”.
 - The introduction of litter into the reserve requiring bins and access;
 - Reduced safety for users at night, requiring lighting and security.
 - Increased fire risk requiring access for emergency vehicles;
 - Potential conflict between bikes, other vehicles and pedestrians;
 - Even if fenced, the path or boardwalk would enable uncontrolled access to the protected sand dunes opening them to unwanted and undesirable human activity.

- On-going maintenance of a long structure – up to 1km, would be costly and cause on-going environmental damage to the fragile mobile dunes (example boardwalk between Floreat and City Beach).

These were unable to be addressed to the satisfaction of Councillors and the public.

- In 2011, a community group named **Stop the Boardwalk Action Group** was formed with representatives from the Friends of Trigg Bushland, local residents and beach users, which co-ordinated a successful campaign against the proposed three boardwalk/path options, all of which would have resulted in fragmentation and substantial damage to the dunes and the environment.
- Several outcomes were achieved apart from the abandonment of the boardwalk proposal, including construction of a low-key accessible look-out off West Coast Highway; improvements to the dual path and the upgrading of the reserve fence along the dual path.
- During the debate over the boardwalk options in 2012, the Stop the Boardwalk Action Group proposed the following to address concerns raised about safety and comfort for pedestrians using the dual path alongside West Coast Highway between Scarborough and Trigg Beach:
 - (i), the widening of the existing dual path and the installation of a safety barrier between the path and the road.
 - (ii) reducing the 80kmph speed limit to 60kmph for north travelling vehicles to align it with the 60kmph speed limit for south travelling vehicles
 - (iii) the duplication of the overpass at Bournemouth Parade.

Unfortunately, these positive suggestions for improvement and safety for users of the dual path, were not adopted by the City of Stirling or Main Roads.

- In 2015, the Stop the Boardwalk Action Group's membership and supporters formed a new group, the **Friends of Trigg Beach** with the following aims and objectives:
 - ❖ Help to protect the natural environment at Trigg Beach
 - ❖ Help to stop inappropriate development at Trigg Beach
- The Friends of Trigg Beach is a member group of the Urban Bushland Council. We have a particular interest in the protection and preservation of the natural Quindalup dune system between Trigg and Scarborough Beach which represents a unique and valuable example of how the coastline looked before European settlement.
- No incursion into or fragmentation of the South Trigg Beach Class A Reserve Bush Forever Area 308 is acceptable and its preservation and protection is a top priority for the Friends of Trigg Beach and other local conservation groups.

21 February 2024