

22/10/2021

# Hillview-Seacrest Reserve Community meeting

Report



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# 1 Background

Over the last few years, Drummond Cove residents have raised a number of issues and concerns regarding the Hillview-Seacrest Reserve, which is designated by Landgate for Public Recreation, and for environmental conservation under the City's LPS No 1. Issues identified include:

- Fire risk;
- Encroachment and clearing of vegetation;
- Erosion and stability of the slope;
- Weeds;
- Protecting habitat for fauna; and
- Privacy.

On Thursday 23 September 2021 from 5:30pm-6:30pm, the City held a community meeting at the Hillview Drive access point to the reserve to discuss the above mentioned issues and concerns with residents who live adjacent to the reserve. Letters of invitation to the meeting were letterbox dropped to these residents. The meeting was attended by 14 community members.

# 2 Objectives

1. To inform residents of the installation of a mulched fire break around the perimeter of the reserve to meet firebreak compliance. The 3m wide fire break will follow the existing track along the west side and along the boundary line on the east side of the reserve.
2. To inform residents of the staged removal of African Boxthorn and Black Wattle in the reserve.
3. To determine level of interest of local residents to collaborate with the City to develop a site plan to rehabilitate the reserve.

# 3 Notes

## 3.1 Immediate Planning and Works

### 3.1.1 Bushfire Compliance

- It was requested the City not slash the entire reserve as previously done in 2008. This resulted in loss of habitat for native birds and other animals when it was cleared.
- It was said over the years most had maintained some type of fire break on the back of their properties which included creating lawn areas.
- Although it was said grassed areas comply with bushfire guidelines and is a reasonable mitigation measure it was explained that grass or lawn is not considered a legal fire break measure under the act.
- Concerns were raised over installing a mineral earth fire break and potential wind erosion. It was explained that mineral earth fire breaks are standard for paddocks and not for bush reserves. Residents were reassured the firebreak will be mulched.
- It was requested when the fire break is installed that it isn't cut into the high side of the track if possible and that the lower side of the track should be filled instead.
- It was asked how piles of leaves under the trees could be mulched into the fire break. The site would be walked with the contractor so that options for how best to reduce this fire load can be identified.
- It was requested that boxthorn planted that they had removed from behind their fence that were piled in the entrance to the reserve be removed. A work order to have them removed will be submitted by staff.

### 3.1.2 Consensus Outcomes

- Mulched firebreak along existing track at the bottom of the reserve.
- Undertake temporary retention of cleared and grassed areas to enable firebreak access.
- Issue a work order to remove stockpiled boxthorn at bottom of reserve.

## 3.2 Future Planning and Works

### 3.2.1 Erosion

- Residents on the lower side of the reserve stated erosion, which had been exacerbated by trees being removed to grow lawns, has destabilised the sand dune slope and resulted in more debris than before coming into their backyards.
- Potential works in the reserve to stabilise the sand dune including coir logs, coir matting and revegetation could be implemented as part of a plan to rehabilitate the reserve.

### 3.2.2 Weed Management

- It was requested all the boxthorn be removed and the reserve returned to its natural state.
- It was requested that boxthorn planted that they had removed from behind their fence that were piled in the entrance to the reserve be removed. A work order to have them removed will be submitted by staff.
- It was requested that the removal of Black Wattle, a native plant that grows when there has been a disturbance, be removed in stages to ensure wildlife habitat isn't lost (birds are currently nesting) and further erosion doesn't occur.
- It was requested that chemicals aren't used to spray weeds.

### 3.2.3 Reserve Rehabilitation

- It was mentioned that when the land became freehold conversations amongst the residents were had and they agreed to look after the reserve but that when people do things individually, their work may not be suitable for the purpose of the area.
- It was questioned how lawn fits with the environmental outcomes for a conservation area.
- It was asked who is responsible for fencing the reserve. It was explained that properties that adjoin crown land the private property owner is responsible for the cost of building and maintaining the boundary fence. More here <https://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/building-and-energy/dividing-fences>
- Residents were asked if they would be interested in working together to develop a site plan to rehabilitate the reserve using a similar method as the Rum Jungle project where community partnered with the City to achieve an environmental outcome. It was explained that the City did the 'heavy lifting' rubbish and boxthorn removal and the community undertook final clean up and revegetated the block.
- Residents requested only native plants be used to rehabilitate the reserve including quandong.
- It was mentioned that plants required to revegetate the reserve would come from the Community Nursery and other clean-up efforts would be covered under the operational budget.
- It was requested whatever works happen in this reserve they also be undertaken in the reserve on the other side of Tailor Street.
- It was requested some type of formalised walk trail for residents to traverse the reserve also be included in the works.
- All residents still at the meeting volunteered by show of hands to work with the City to develop a site plan for the reserve that will address erosion, remove weeds and reduce Black wattle in a stage

approach and revegetate the barren and/or illegally cleared spaces and develop a walk trail through the reserve.

#### 3.2.4 Consensus Outcomes

- Provide community meeting report to residents.
- Invite residents to take part in the development of a site plan for the reserve.

END