



PO Box 1040
Milton, QLD 4064

23rd September 2016

Brisbane City Council
Chief Executive Officer
GPO Box 1434
Brisbane Qld 4001

Dear Sir,

Protect the Bush Alliance (PTBA) is an alliance of 31 NGOs and community groups in Queensland and Australia representing over 30,000 people. Our goal is to implement ways of preventing the continuing loss of areas of high conservation values to inappropriate development. One of the ways we do this is by conducting flora and fauna surveys on properties of high conservation value and on the properties which link them. Members of PTBA have had, and will continue to have, close association with communities when developments strategically impact on areas of biological significance and diversity of concern to that community.

Re: BCC Application Ref: A004383514

Site: 34 Kirkdale Road, Chapel Hill 4069

Protect the Bush Alliance has received advice from members acting as community representatives in the matter of this development at Kirkdale Road, Chapel Hill. It is considered there remains the potential for destructive impacts on the health of Cubberla Creek.

The following assessment has been provided to the Alliance by a neighbour of the development site.

The group concerned are to be commended for their comprehensive overview of this development. In writing for the Alliance there is little required to expand on this. However, I would note the paucity of assessment in the EIS. One visit to site in dry weather, fails to elicit frog species and other macro-fauna. There is no evidence of nocturnal assessment. A similar assessment was provided to Council for the development of the Karana Downs Golf Course. The consultant quoted; 34 bird species, none of significance and 4 frog species, 1 being a cane toad. In contradiction neighbours of that development were able to provide records of bird species abundance in excess of 165 and 18 frogs identified.

The work of Tim Low supports the group in their determination to save trees along this rich riparian corridor. Connectivity from the D'Aguiar Range to the Brisbane River must be a priority as neighbourhoods face the challenge of chipping away at green spaces, to accommodate growth in the outer city suburbs. If 'offsetting', is to provide for no net loss; rehabilitation cannot be used as simply a tool to compensate for the loss of integrity of the existing system, albeit with some exotic species present.

Summary provided by local group; this I understand, has been provided to BCC:

Flora and fauna

- The development proposes some earthwork within the tree protection zones of the retained vegetation. It is likely that a number of trees that are shown on the VMP will require to be removed at a later stage. Some trees are likely to overhang proposed townhouses and could be removed by future property owners.
- I understand that any vegetation that is located within 6m of a building can be cleared without Council's approval for safety reasons. Most of the trees along the road boundaries and a significant number along the eastern boundary and within the environmental set back line are closer than 6m to a property
- The revised tree retention plan provided by Saunders Havill Group dated 02/09/2016 does not reflect the advice from the arborist's report and an additional trees 8 are likely to be removed. This includes trees number 25, 34, 36, 39, 58, 118, 119 and 120. All of these trees are located within the waterway corridor and along the southern site boundary. According to the arborist, these trees are recommended for removal due to the "poor vitality and structure". However, these trees would likely be retained if the development did not encroach within the TPZ. The ecologist /arborist has counted 150 trees, native and exotic on the site. Of these 51 are scheduled to be removed, 38 natives and 13 exotics. They have counted 9 trees with hollows, 5 will be removed; and 9 trees with new scratches, 4 will be removed. 7 trees which provide food for sugar gliders will be removed.
- "Hollow formation takes about 100 years. Hollows of a medium size and suitable for animals such as parrots will take around 200 years to form, and the larger and deeper hollows can take a lot longer" National parks & Wildlife Service 'Natural Tree Hollows'.
"In South East Queensland alone, over 130 species of wildlife have been identified as being dependent on hollows for their survival." Land for Wildlife Queensland. Losing these trees is a tragedy.
- The site visit revealed that a number of trees contained medium to large hollows. A pair of Lorikeets was seen nesting in one of hollow. This information is not mentioned in the ecological report. The information regarding the number and/or size of habitat trees in the VMP is incorrect.
- The ecological report has ignored all locally significant vegetation that are classified threatened under the Brisbane City Plan – Biodiversity Areas Code. Locally significant vegetation identified on site include *Eucalyptus saligna*, *Eucalyptus grandis*, *Corymbia citridora*, *Eucalyptus moluccana*, *Eucalyptus tereticornis*, *Corymbia henryi* and *Eucalyptus microcorys*. The site contains a total of 47 trees of local significance. Of these 47 trees, 17 will be removed and 10 of them are located within the High Ecological Significance and Interface areas. An additional two trees will need an arborist supervision when civil works will be undertaken. The removal of 17 locally significant vegetation (matter of local environmental significance) is not acceptable

and does not comply with the overall outcomes of the Biodiversity Overlay Code (no net biodiversity benefit is provided).

- The proposed development mentions that the waterway will be rehabilitated. It appears that the rehabilitation is used as an “offset” to compensate for the removal of some vegetation and encroachment into the HES. However, we note that the city plan 2014 requires for the improvement of the waterway corridor as part of the overall outcome of a development and compliance with the Waterway Corridor Overlay Code. Consequently, the rehabilitation should not be considered as an offset to compensate the loss of locally significant vegetation.
- Furthermore, the site does not provide sufficient space to facilitate the offset for the removal of 17 significant trees (the appropriate ratio would be 3 trees to be planted per tree removed). The proposed development does not comply with Waterway Corridor or the Biodiversity Area Code.
- The EBA ecologist, made a visit to the site on a sunny day on the 2nd February 2016 and found very little fauna. The Qld Government ‘Wildlife Online Extract’ states that there are 440 native species within 2 km of the site (this information is in the process of being collated and verified so this data may contain errors and it is likely incomplete).
- There are 11 frog species, including threatened tusk frog, 177 bird species, 21 mammals and 29 reptiles. Tusked frogs are a threatened species under the *Nature Conservation Act 2002* and the ecological report has totally ignored the potential impacts of the development on this species. The ecologist did not undertake any on-ground surveys to demonstrate the presence/absence of this species on site. Tusked frog habitat is being clearing or degraded around Brisbane due to the cumulative impacts of development and the accumulation of sediment within waterways slowly destroying their habitat. There is a significant lack of information regarding the potential impacts of the development on this species in the ecological report, which is not compliant with requirement of the city plan.
- From a recent Microbat study by Monika and Martin P Rhodes 10 microbat species were identified within this area of the Cubberla Creek catchment. This represents half of the total microbat species known to occur in the S E Qld corner. 7 of these are listed as ‘significant fauna species’. No mention is made of this.
- The ecologist report states that “No trees within the mapped HES on the southern lot are considered to provide high ecological value or significant features” and yet trees in this area have animal scratches on them showing that they are used by the local fauna.
- 6.2.6.2 This development is non-compliant. It will have an effect on the environmental values of the site by clearing locally significant vegetation protected under the city plan and by potentially clearing habitat for threatened species of

amphibians (e.g. tusked frogs) and mammals (short beaked echidna, gliders sp, microbat sp).

- 9.3.14 The current proposal fails to ensure that the location of a new building, car parking, driveway or a crossover will not adversely impact the long-term viability of trees to be retained. Moreover, the close proximity of the tree to the building and associated infrastructure will not allow for future trees to grow to a minimum height of 15m at maturity. Vegetation is likely to interfere with the proposed townhouse and as a result significant pruning may be required in the future which may compromise the health of the vegetation.
- Cubberla Creek is a viable functioning and important wild life corridor connecting the Brisbane River to Mt Coottha and essential for preserving biodiversity.
- The development layout does not provide appropriate setback to the vegetation being retained or the waterway corridor. The proponent has ignored the requirement for the interface area between the townhouses and the waterway corridor in order to minimise edge impacts of the development on biodiversity. There are no mitigating measures proposed by the development to minimise direct and indirect edge effects from the development (e.g. future noise, light, rubbish, weeds, pollution, etc.).
- There are inconsistencies between the bushfire report and the proposed rehabilitation. The bushfire report mentioned that the rehabilitation area is to be “mowed” to reduce the bushfire risk. This is inconsistent with the overall biodiversity outcomes for the waterway corridor.

Quoting from the Ecologist, EBA’s amended report:

- *“The increased area of retention also increases the width of the waterway corridor on-site, which in the previous development layout was already greater than the widths achieved on the waterway corridor up and down stream of the site”*

This increase is minimal and the estimate is based on the methodology used for assessing the average corridor width. In measuring and averaging the habitat corridor, I notice that there are two transects between Brushbox and Satinwood and then another transect near Rebecca. The area missed between these transects is wider than 20-40 metres. If an average is going to be used to suggest that a major improvement is being made to the development then the transects should be done at regular intervals and not just at what looks like selected narrow points.

In conclusion; the Alliance supports members working with Brisbane City Council to improve outcomes for the health of this wildlife corridor and important green space for their community.

Yours sincerely

Sheena Gillman

Project Coordinator PTBA.

Email: sheenagillman@gmail.com

Tel: 07 3201 1982 Mb: 0409 268 076