

Carseldine Development Threatens Urban Bushland

Summary

Plans to develop an “Urban Village” in Carseldine on Government owned land on Beams Road threatens the integrity of this green space. The development has been announced without any concrete plans, any consultation with residents and without any consideration of the impact on flora and fauna. Various structured surveys and anecdotal reports show that this piece of urban bushland has a very rich flora and fauna. Further, pieces of bushland such as this in the middle of our suburban environment are becoming increasingly rare and valuable. There are numerous studies that show the value of green space in urban and suburban environments. Should this development proceed, it must take into account the need to preserve the green space and protect the rich flora and fauna.

Background

A plan to redevelop the QUT/DOT site on Beams Road, Carseldine as the Carseldine Urban Village has recently been announced by the Deputy Premier. The announcement has raised the ire and outrage of many local residents with the announcement being made without any concrete plans or any consultation.

The campus is bounded by Beams Road to the North, Dorville Road to the West, Cabbage Tree Creek to the South and the railway line to the East. The 45Ha site currently has an old vacated QUT facility, a DOT facility with around 1,000 staff, sports grounds, parking, roads, bike paths and urban bushland. There is a significant patch of bushland to the South of Cabbage Tree Creek, adjacent to Dorville Road.

At the moment, buildings take up approximately 4% of the site, sports grounds approximately 12% and roads and parking, around 4%. Open forest and partially cleared land comprises approximately 25% of the land with the remaining 55% being bushland with significant understory. This includes the bike path which comprises a cleared corridor around 10m wide.

It is planned to redevelop the site and build 900 apartments in buildings 3 stories high facing Dorville Road going up to 8 stories high within the precinct. It is anticipated that this will house approximately 3,500 people. Parking will be constructed at the rate of less than 1 space per unit due to the proximity to the train station. There appears to have been no consideration to parking for the approximately 1000 DOT staff who currently park on site. It is planned to build a busway through the site to Dorville Road. It is stated that 18ha (40%) of vegetation will be protected and an additional 3.5ha of open space created. This means that around 40% of the current open forest will be lost. The protected land will be to the South of the road that runs from Gate 3 on Dorville Road through to the baseball ground.

Flora and Fauna

The area currently has many trees in an open forest with no understory on much of the site. The land closer to the creek has a thicker understory with some invasive weeds. Many of the trees are mature eucalypts with nesting hollows. Indeed long billed corellas were nesting in such hollows. The bird life seen on a short walk in the middle of the day suggested that the

precinct has a rich avifauna. Over 100 species of birds seen include long billed corellas, red-backed fairy wrens, owls, flycatchers, honeyeaters, kingfishers, rails and raptors. This is in addition to the common urban birds. A bat colony sometimes roosts in the forest close to the creek. Gliders have been reported. Frogs have been identified along with reptiles.

The area is a rich piece of urban bushland. A list of flora and fauna identified on the site is below. Of particular note is the sighting of powerful owls, a species listed as vulnerable.

Specific considerations

I met with 4 local residents for a site inspection who are concerned that the development will result in damage and destruction of the bushland. They are concerned about the absence of any consultation prior to the recent announcement and are alarmed at the speed at which this has been proposed and the potential irreversible damage without the whole plan being properly considered. The goal is that there be no net loss of green space.

The current plan is a "concept plan"; a detailed site plan needs to be provided as soon as possible and before consultation. It is imperative that there be a genuine and considered consultation period in relation to the proposed development. It is entirely inappropriate that a decision has been made prior to consultation and any consideration of the impact on flora and fauna.

Surveys of birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians should be conducted prior to any construction and followed up with post-construction/residence surveys.

Mature trees should be retained throughout the whole site and protected in clusters of vegetation. Mature trees are a vitally important part of the ecosystem providing habitat for many birds and animals. Nesting hollows will only develop in trees that are several hundred years old. Such trees are becoming increasingly rare in urban areas.

Should the development proceed, it should be restricted to a corridor adjacent to Dorville and Beams Roads. There should be no development south of the road from Gate 3 on Dorville Road to the baseball field.

Continuity with the Cabbage Tree Creek corridor to the West and north East be a priority.

Flood modelling be conducted to examine the affects of increased runoff from the development.

Any work in the bushland to the South of gate three road to be done in a manner that protects and enhances current habitat; no trees removed, understory protected. Only local indigenous plants used in any replanting. The bike path corridor be narrowed. Rubbish removed, possibly some erosion control in creek but kept to a minimum so as not to damage the creek environment.

The bushland to the South of Cabbage Tree creek, bordering Dorville Road be protected.

Modelling of the impact of increased traffic be conducted with outcomes made public.

Parking for the DOT employees be constructed as a part of the development. Underground parking be included in the development to the extent of more than one space per unit.

The route of the busway be explicit. Should the busway follow the current Gate three road, could this be the demarcation line between residential land and bushland?

Consideration be given to the impact of an additional 3,500 people and associated vehicles, and their pets on the bushland flora and fauna and how to minimise any adverse impact.



The precinct under consideration showing Beams Rd at the top, Dorville Rd on the left and the railway line to the right. Cabbage Tree Creek can be seen winding through the centre of the picture.

Dr Stephen Prowse
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Dr Prowse is a scientist with over 20 years experience in leading research centres. He is currently the Conservation Officer for Birds Queensland (birdsqueensland.org.au) and is on the Management Team at Protect the Bush Alliance (ptba.org.au) He has a particular interest in the translation of research data into changes in policy and practice. He has over 100 publications in various refereed journals, conference proceedings, on-line and in industry magazines and newsletters.

Flora and Fauna at Cabbage Tree Creek, Carseldine – Nov 2016

Compiled by James Hansen with some minor additions from data supplied to Stephen Prowse

Flora	Birds	Mammals	Reptiles	Frogs
Ironbark Wattle	Australian Hobby	Black Flying Fox	Brisbane Short-necked Turtle	Broad-palmed Rocketfrog
Brisbane Wattle	Australian King Parrot	Common Brushtail Possum	Carpet Python	Eastern Sedgefrog
Green Wattle	Australian Magpie	Common Ringtail Possum	Common Tree Snake	Graceful Treefrog
Black Wattle	Australian Magpie-Lark	Grey-headed Flying Fox	Dwarf-crowned Snake	Green Treefrog
Blackwood	Australian White Ibis	Koala	Eastern Water Dragon	Ornate Burrowing Frog
Hairy Bird's Eye	Australian Wood Duck	Microbat species	Eastern Water Skink	Spotted Marshfrog
Black Sheoak	Bar-shouldered Dove	Northern Brown Bandicoot	Friiled Lizard	Striped Marshfrog
Red Ash	Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike	Squirrel Glider	Golden-crowned Snake	Tusked Frog
Rusty Gum	Blue-faced Honeyeater	Swamp Wallaby	Grass Skink	
Broad-leaved Apple	Brown Goshawk		Rough-scaled Snake	
Grey Myrtle	Brown Honeyeater			
Velvet Leaf	Brown Treecreeper			
Brown Kurrajong	Brush Turkey			
Pink Bloodwood	Buff-banded Rail			
Native Laurel	Bush-hen			
Tuckeroo	Bush Stone-curlew			
Hop Bush	Cattle Egret			
Hard Quandong	Channel-billed Cuckoo			
Narrow-leaved Ironbark	Chestnut-breasted Mannikin			
Tallowwood	Cicadabird			
Small-fruited Grey Gum	Crested Pigeon			
Scribbly Gum	Dollarbird			
Red Stringybark	Double-barred Finch			
Narrow-leaved Red Gum	Dusky Moorhen			
Grey Ironbark	Eastern Spinebill			
Forest Red Gum	Eastern Whipbird			

Creek Sandpaper Fig	Eastern Yellow Robin			
Small-leaved Fig	Fan-tailed Cuckoo			
Cheese Tree	Figbird			
Native Hibiscus	Forest Kingfisher			
Foambark	Galah			
Heath	Golden Whistler			
Cabbage Palm	Great Egret			
Brush Box	Green Catbird			
Swamp Box	Grey Butcherbird			
Broad-leaved Paperbark	Grey Fantail			
Creek Bottlebrush	Grey Goshawk			
Orange Thorn	Grey Shrike-thrush			
Brisbane Laurel	Indian Mynah			
Lilly Pilly	Pacific Koel			
Bush Peach	Laughing Kookaburra			
Tree Heath	Leaden Flycatcher			
Grass Tree	Lewin's Honeyeater			
Three-awn Speargrass	Little Black Cormorant			
Gristle Fern	Little Corella			
Scented-top Grass	Little Egret			
Binung Fern	Little Friarbird			
Commelina	Little Lorikeet			
Barbed-wire Grass	Little Pied Cormorant			
Blue Flax Lily	Little Shrike-thrush			
Rasp Fern	Little Wattlebird			
Wiry Panic	Long-billed Corella			
Love Grass	Masked Lapwing			
Saw Sedge	Mistletoebird			
Star Goodenia	Nankeen Night Heron			
Creek Mat Rush	Noisy Friarbird			
Mat Rush	Noisy Miner			
Creeping Beard Grass	Olive-backed Oriole			
Rainforest Beard	Pacific Baza			

Grass				
Slender Forest Grass	Pacific Black Duck			
Broad-leaf Forest Grass	Pale-headed Rosella			
Hairy Panic	Peaceful Dove			
Love Flower	Pheasant Coucal			
Bracken Fern	Pied Butcherbird			
Kangaroo Grass	Pied Currawong			
Wild Pansies	Powerful Owl			
Wombat Berry	Rainbow Bee-eater			
Supplejack	Rainbow Lorikeet			
Scrambling Lily	Red-backed Fairy-wren			
Bell Vine	Red-browed Firetail			
Cockspur Thorn	Rock Dove			
Bower of Beauty	Royal Spoonbill			
Monkey Rope	Rufous Fantail			
Austral Sarsaparilla	Rufous Whistler			
Staghorn	Sacred Kingfisher			
Mistletoe	Scaly-breasted Lorikeet			
	Scarlet Honeyeater			
	Shining Bronze Cuckoo			
	Silvereye			
	Southern Boobook			
	Spangled Drongo			
	Spectacled Monarch			
	Spotted Pardalote			
	Spotted Turtledove			
	Straw-necked Ibis			
	Striated Pardalote			
	Sulfur-crested Cockatoo			
	Superb Blue Fairy-wren			

	Tawny Frogmouth			
	Tawny Grassbird			
	Torresian Crow			
	Varied Triller			
	Variegated Fairy-wren			
	Welcome Swallow			
	White-breasted Woodswallow			
	White-browed Scrubwren			
	White-faced Heron			
	White-throated Gerygone			
	White-throated Honeyeater			
	White-throated Needle-tail			
	Willie Wagtail			
	Yellow-faced Honeyeater			
	Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo			
	Sacred Kingfisher			
	Lewins Rail			