



## TOWNSCAPE REVIEW STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

# MINUTES

### Committee Brief

Guide the process of reviewing the Townscape Improvement Plan for the Shire of Plantagenet that will:

- Serve as an overall framework for streetscape upgrading projects over the next ten years; and
- Lead to the enhancement of the visual and practical amenity of the area.

Meeting of the  
Townscape Review Steering Committee  
held in the Committee Rooms, Lowood Road, Mount Barker WA 6324  
3.00 pm Wednesday 4 February 2009

Rob Stewart  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

### Committee Members

Mr Peter Thorn (Chair); Mr Roger Bartley (Deputy Chair); Cr K Clements; Cr J Mark; Cr D Nye-Chart; Cr A Budrikis (Deputy); Mr Peter Duncan (Manager Development Services); Ms Karen McKenzie; Ms Larissa Seah.

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## 1 DECLARATION OF OPENING / ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

3:00 PM Mr P Thorn – Chairman, declared the meeting open.

## 2 RECORD OF ATTENDANCE / APOLOGIES

### Present

Mr Peter Thorn  
Mr Roger Bartley  
Ms Larissa Seah  
Cr Ken Clements      Town Ward  
Cr John Mark          Town Ward  
Mr Peter Duncan      Manager Development Services

Ms Nicole Selesnew    Manager Community Services  
Mr Vincent Jenkins    Planning Officer  
Mrs Cobie MacLean    Administration Officer (Planning)

### Apologies

Mr Rob Stewart        Chief Executive Officer  
Ms Karen McKenzie

## 3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

**Moved Mr Bartley, seconded Cr K Clements:**

**That the Minutes of the Townscape Review Steering Committee Meeting held 8 October 2008 be confirmed.**

**CARRIED (6/0)**

## 4 REPORTS OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

### 4.1 WILSON/CENTENARY PARKS

The Council's Manager Community Services, Ms Nicole Selesnew provided an update.

The precinct plan for Wilson and Centenary Parks will cover the area from the Town Hall to Mondurup Street. Once the plans are completed they will be made available for public comment for a period of thirty (30) days. The results from the public submission period will be presented to this Committee at its 10 June 2009 Meeting.

Mr Duncan has completed an application to the Minister for Planning to release \$50,000.00 of Public Open Space cash-in-lieu funding for the upgrade of these parks.

The plan includes public toilets near the playground, upgrade of playground equipment, landscaping, trail developments and a raised broadwalk through the wetland area.

The total budget for this project is in the area of \$650,000.00 to \$700,000.00. This includes \$23,000.00 towards new playground equipment and \$60,000.00 from the Royalties for Regions allocation.

A community working group has been established to look at and comment on the plans as they have been developed.

The Wilson Inlet Catchment Committee will be applying for funding to build the boardwalk.

## **4.2 BANNERS**

The Council's Manager Community Services, Ms Nicole Selesnew provided an update.

The money which was allocated to design and make the banners was used to make the banners currently on display in Lowood Road.

Staff are looking at a budget reallocation to create the banners with the landscape photographs previously agreed by the Committee.

## **4.3 MOUNT BARKER GARDENS**

The Council's Chief Executive Officer, Mr Rob Stewart was to discuss the following three (3) matters:

1. Department of Housing and Works garden competition and Best Street Competition.
2. Verge bush gardens.
3. Claret Ash in Lowood Road.

This item will be carried forward to the Meeting to be held on 10 June 2009 as the Chief Executive Officer is an apology due to illness.

#### 4.4 LARGE TREES IN MOUNT BARKER

<b>File No:</b>	<b>PR/99/4</b>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<a href="#"><u>Plan showing Mount Barker Townsite</u></a>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>Rob Stewart</b> <b>Chief Executive Officer</b>
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Peter Duncan</b> <b>Manager Development Services</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>4 February 2009</b>

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#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to consider a proposal for an assessment of large trees in the Mount Barker Townsite.

#### BACKGROUND

The Townscape Review Steering Committee at its meeting held on 8 October 2008 when discussing the issue of large trees in the Mount Barker towncentre resolved:

*'That the Manager of Development Services be requested to prepare a report for the next meeting of the committee relating to the possible appointment of a suitably qualified consultant able to assess large trees in the Mount Barker Townsite on aesthetic and heritage values with a view to ensuring such trees are preserved wherever possible on both public and private land.'*

In 1991 a 'Mount Barker Townscape Improvement Character Study' was prepared by Hames Sharley Australia which mainly addressed buildings and other physical elements of the town. That study did state:

*'Mount Barker is generally a well vegetated town. Early photographs indicate that much of the bush and woodland in the town centre was cleared at an early stage. There is also evidence that pine trees were planted liberally in the early days – some evidence of these remain today. The naturally occurring trees such as jarrah, marri, wandoo and yate may not necessarily be suitable for planting in a town centre.*

*Selecting a distinctive street tree requires careful consideration and should be addressed when the townscape plan is being prepared. Of note, the selected tree species should be available in the required numbers, be of suitable size, should not grow too tall and should not have thorns. They should be uniform in growth, shape, flowering time and foliage texture.*

*Generally it is considered preferable to use an indigenous species. Local native trees can be used in parks and in the central railway land.*

*One of the drawbacks of the eucalypts is that they can not easily be pruned. Deciduous trees, however, can be pruned without major problems.'*

In 1992 the 'Mt Barker Townscape Improvement Plan' was prepared by Richard Pawluk and Associates. The objectives of that Plan were:

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- *to improve the visual image of the Mount Barker town site;*
- *to identify and reinforce positive aspects of the town's character;*
- *to introduce the promotion of community co-operation in upgrading Mount Barker generally; and,*
- *to identify a structure for on-going management and implementation of improvements.'*

The study area of that Plan was basically in a small area restricted to Albany Highway, Lowood Road and Langton Road. The Plan in respect to landscape stated:

*'Presently the landscape – planting in the Study Area is one of the weakest townscape elements. A survey of the town indicated that the town centre is almost devoid of trees. Even beyond the town centre trees are sparse. There are a few areas that are relatively well treed, namely, the northern entry, caravan park and museum precinct; Plantagenet Winery and along Albany Highway. What this means, however, is that there are a number of opportunities in this area to make improvements.'*

In 2002 the 'Mount Barker Townscape Plan Review' was prepared by Michael Tooby and Associates. That review made comment in a limited way on existing trees as follows:

*'Mount Barker has some very good treed areas on the outskirts of town, and the vegetated areas on the approaches are a good example of welcoming shade. There is, however, considerable room for improvement in the centre of town where there are few trees. A good start has been made with the planting of a variety of tree species in Centenary Park.'*

The Review then provided a list of suggest plant species for new trees to be established in town. That list included both Australian and exotic tree species. That list has been used extensively for new trees required as conditions of planning consent for developments and also for street trees as subdivision conditions.

The Hon Minister for Local Government, Heritage, Citizenship and Multicultural Interests (G. M. Castrilli MLA) in a recent circular (No. 07-2008) to all Mayors and Presidents advised:

#### *'PRESERVATION OF MATURE TREES ON PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LAND*

*In 2007, the Environment and Public Affairs Parliamentary Committee considered a petition regarding the removal of mature trees from public land in urban areas. It recommended that the Minister for Local Government, with the support of the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure in conjunction with local governments, develop a model tree policy for protecting mature trees in urban areas (on both private and public land).*

*This recommendation has been considered by the Department of Local Government and Regional Development, the Department for Planning and Infrastructure (DPI) and the Western Australian Local Government Association. As a result, I have*

*decided that the development of a model tree policy need not be progressed at this stage.*

*The general competence power of the Local Government Act 1995 and delegated land use planning powers provide local governments with significant decision making autonomy. This includes the type of content of laws and policies they may wish to adopt. Accordingly, many urban local governments have utilised mechanisms, such as significant tree registers and other policies, for the preservation of trees in response to the particular demands expressed by their local communities.*

*In arriving at my decision, I have been mindful that the local government sector already has sufficient information to develop new, or review existing, approaches to the preservation of trees if it so chooses. This includes resources and advice available from DPI and from local governments that have already taken action in this area. Further involvement of the State Government is therefore not required.*

*While I do not consider it necessary for the Government to intervene in this matter, I encourage all local governments, particularly those in established areas, to ensure that your approach to the preservation of mature trees on private and public land is in accordance with the wishes of the residents and other stakeholders in your area and incorporates effective measures to achieve this outcome.'*

## **STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT**

Local Government Act 1995 – provides the ability for Council's to adopt Local Laws.  
– Council also has the ability to adopt Council Policies.

Planning and Development Act 2005.

Shire of Plantagenet Town Planning Scheme No. 3 (TPS3) – provides the ability for the Council to adopt Town Planning Scheme Policies.

## **CONSULTATION**

This matter has been discussed with various Council staff and also external planning consultants to provide advice. Numerous Council's websites have been researched to establish if such policies exist. The matter has been discussed with Mr David Wheeler from Landscape Planners who are preparing the Wilson/Centenary Park upgrade.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

This is the kind of work which will require the engagement of suitably qualified consultants to assess large trees and provide advice in terms of a possible Council Policy draft.

To assess all large trees in the Mount Barker Townsite (shown on the plan attached) would be an exhaustive task and it would also be extremely expensive. It is considered the preferred approach as a starting point would be an assessment of all large trees located with existing road reserves. This and guidance on the formulation of a draft Council policy could cost in the order of \$10,000.00 to \$20,000.00 as suitably qualified consultants will need to be engaged.

Following that assessment of large trees in road reserves could be a second phase which would be an assessment of large trees within Council controlled reserves. It is not possible to estimate the cost of this phase but it is likely to be quite significant.

### **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

If progressed this could lead to the preparation of a new Council policy.

### **STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS**

One of the aims of the Council's Strategic Plan at key result area 2 (Infrastructure) is to 'manage public open space and natural resources to equitably meet the community's social and economic needs in an environmentally responsible manner'.

### **OFFICER COMMENT**

The concept of preparing an assessment of large trees in the Mount Barker Townsite with a view to preparing a Council policy on the protection of identified significant large trees is one which will need the Council to engage consultants with suitable qualifications and experience. In respect to what is a large tree, perhaps an appropriate height to set as a benchmark is 10.0m. The new light/banner poles in Lowood Road for example are 10.2m high.

As stated earlier it is considered appropriate that the first phase of such a project would be an assessment of all large (10.0m or higher) trees in road reserves within the Mount Barker Townsite. The first phase could also include the formulation of a draft policy for the consideration of the Council for the protection of the identified trees.

The assessment would need to address matters such as native trees and planted exotic trees together with recommendations for pruning and maintenance.

Rather than assessing all large trees in road reserves in the Mount Barker Townsite, perhaps an alternative less extensive exercise may be to assess all large trees within a 200m distance from Lowood Road from Albany Highway to the north and Mondurup Street to the south. That area has been marked on the plan attached which shows the Mount Barker Townsite also. With the area reduced, then the cost could be contained to in the order of \$10,000.00 but it must be remembered this is only a preliminary estimate.

### **VOTING REQUIREMENTS**

Simple Majority

### **OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**

**Moved Mr R Bartley, seconded Ms L Seah:**

**That it be a recommendation to the Council:**

**That the matter of the engagement of consultants to prepare an assessment of all large trees within road reserves generally within a 200m distance of Lowood Road (as shown on the attached plan), Mount Barker including the preparation of a draft policy for the protection and maintenance of identified trees be considered by the Council as part of 2009/2010 Budget deliberations.**

**CARRIED (6/0)**



**5 NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 10 June 2009 – 3.00 pm

**6 MEETING CLOSURE**

3:50 pm The Chairman declared the meeting closed.

**CONFIRMED: CHAIRPERSON** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_