

## Sustainability and Environmental Advisory Panel

### MEETING MINUTES – 16 MAY 2023

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#### **Sustainability and Environmental Advisory Panel (SEAP)**

Date & Time:	16 May 2023 – 5:30pm
Location:	Council Chambers, 21 Saunders Street, Wynyard
Council Representatives:	Cr Celisa Edwards (Chair), Cr Andrea Courtney (Deputy Chair)
Members:	Brenton Hosking, Colin Hocking, Fiona Loughran, Hannah Sadler, Ian Ferris, Ian Newman, Peter Lawrence, Robin Krabbe, Sarah Smith, Wendy Bryant
Staff in Attendance:	Dana Hicks, Kassandra Steward, Daniel Summers, Bill Walker
Apologies:	Cr Celisa Edwards, Cr Andrea Courtney

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#### **AGENDA:**

1. Welcome
2. Confirmation of Minutes
3. Review of Actions List
4. WWC Trees Policy & Strategy
5. Arboreta, Biodiversity, Vegetation Planning & Wildlife Corridors
6. Proposed Sisters Beach Sub-Division
7. Upcoming Meetings
8. General Business
9. Closure

#### **ACTIONS TAKEN:**

1. D. Hicks to circulate current waste education documentation to group for reference and review ahead of any formal recommendation Council.
2. C. Hocking, P. Lawrence and I. Ferris to collate and summarise best practice tree and other vegetation policy framework with D. Hicks and D. Summers
3. D. Hicks to provide to SEAP members information including natural values found on site at Ballad Avenue to help inform members ideas on land use.
4. SEAP members to review Ballad Avenue information and provide in return ideas for possible land use at Ballad Avenue.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL:**

1. SEAP recommends Council to investigate opportunities for greater take up and usage of the Home Energy Audit Toolkit (HEAT).
2. SEAP recommend Council request a speed limit reduction for Sisters Beach Road from the Transport Commissioner.
3. SEAP recommend Council consider extending the virtual fencing along Sisters Beach Road.

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#### 0 PRE-MEETING DISCUSSION - UPDATES

Council heard all recommendations from the 21 March SEAP meeting. Council representatives provided the following updates on these recommendations:

- **Recommendation 1:** *SEAP recommends Council to amend its Sponsorship Signage Policy to exclude fossil fuels in recognition of their health and climate impacts as Council has already done in regard to gambling, alcohol and tobacco.*
  - Council have agreed and implemented changes to the Sponsorship Signage Policy as recommended.
- **Recommendation 2:** *SEAP recommends Council to introduce an annual Eco Fair event in conjunction with Spring Loaded to raise awareness in the community and promote sustainable living and a healthy relationship with the environment.*
  - Council have agreed to introduce an “Eco Village” area to the Tulip Festival with the intention that the first year be small and impactful, leveraging off of the festival. The aim will be to use a small well received first year as a foundation to build on in future years.
  - D. Hicks to provide details from festival organisers to SEAP for information.
  - Discussion following the update involved early ideas for this first year, these included:
    - A TasNetwork’s stall on being energy wise,
    - Land for Wildlife or Gardens for Wildlife stalls,
    - Children’s thoughts on paper which would pose a question and give children a medium to answer (paint, draw, write, etc),
    - Promotion of the SEAP and its purpose.
- **Recommendation 3:** *SEAP recommends Council to participate in the Cities Power Partnership which presents an opportunity to join dozens of other councils across the country leading the way to a zero emissions future by providing the necessary tools, resources, and connections to help accelerate their climate and energy goals.*
  - Council have agreed to the recommendation and will implement as part of its commitment to progressing iCEP initiatives. Council Officers are reviewing the participation requirements including the pledge list.
  - SEAP members may be requested to assist in the choice of pledges out of session with recommendations to be made at a future meeting.
- **French’s Road Reserve:** Council Officers relayed updates regarding recent discussions on management and use of the Reserve.
  - Following the update discussion developed around the possibility of utilising the edges of the reserve as an example of a wildlife corridor which could help to inform policy. Ideas were raised around signage to help highlight what is there.
  - Discussion continued about corridors on private properties and potential misgivings in the community regarding identification of fauna on private property. It’s noted that there are some perceptions that if an identification is made on private land, that owners could have issues with their own land use. It was thought that promoting a Reserve land corridor could provide opportunities to help change attitudes in the community on this issue.

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#### 1 WELCOME

- A quorum was established with the nomination of SEAP member W. Bryant to Chair in the absence of Councillor representatives.
- The meeting was officially opened at 18:17.

#### 2 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Moved by P. Lawrence, Seconded by I. Ferris & S. Smith

That the minutes of the SEAP meeting held on 21 March 2023, as circulated to Members, be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

Carried.

#### 3 REVIEW OF ACTIONS LIST

Action Item 1 to discussion meeting frequency was postponed to the July meeting due to a full May agenda.

Action Items 3, 4, 11, 12, 15 and 17 were all confirmed complete and closed.

Action Item 5 to form a sub-group to look at weed reduction program and education has progressed. F. Loughran & C. Hocking are in collaboration. Updates to be provided at July meeting.

Action Item 6 requested the provision of details regarding the Home Energy Audit Toolkit (HEAT). P. Lawrence provided details to the group. As part of the discussion around the HEAT Council Officers confirmed that there is currently an energy tool held, however it's not well publicised. A recommendation was raised that Council investigate opportunities for greater take up of the HEAT tools and materials.

Action Item 7 to seek information on possible funding for waste education through the state government was discussed. The group suggest a recommendation be made to Council to investigate funding, the decision to formally recommend was set aside until the next meeting until current waste education documentation can be circulated to the group for an informed recommendation to Council.

Action Item 8 to reorganise the action plan based produced as part of the January brainstorming session. It was suggested that this action be suspended for the time being until SEAPs direction is clearer.

Action Item 9 to provide an outline of a food security proposal for the group to consider was noted as in progress. An update to the group will be forthcoming prior to or during the next meeting. W. Bryant requested to be added to this action.

Action Item 16 to provide details of a shared environmental officer discussion with Cradle Coast Authority was noted and discussed. The outcome of this conversation was that it would take a couple of months to progress in assessing the needs, both strategic and day to day. This action will be revisited at the September meeting with a view to consider recommendations to Council.

Remaining actions confirmed

**Action 1.:** *D. Hicks to circulate current waste education documentation to group for reference and review ahead of any formal recommendation Council.*

**Recommendation 1.:** *SEAP recommends Council to investigate opportunities for greater take up and usage of the Home Energy Audit Toolkit (HEAT).*

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#### 4 WWC TREES POLICY & STRATEGY

Discussion began with acknowledgment of proposed policy and outline documents provided by P. Lawrence and C. Hocking.

It was thought that if the SEAP and Council could consider an interim plan, clarify how and by whom decisions are currently made with relation to trees and what the guidelines are, through that process a policy would result. Further discussion highlighted that combining trees and vegetation would provide for a more unified policy. It was suggested that a better understanding of the living parts would be provide greater opportunity to appropriately manage environment. The creation of one all-encompassing policy with greening aspects but also the engineering aspects including subdivisions, and consideration of penalties for removing trees and vegetation.

It was proposed, as part of this process, there is a need to understand that the living part of the environment should be seen as an asset in order to have a management strategy. It was noted that historically, Councils put trees in and forget about them as assets or how to manage them. The implication was that some Councils can fall short in this area as they do not see or manage landscape in the same way that they manage facilities, infrastructure or digital tools.

A suggestion was to begin by identifying what is currently in place. Another was to utilise the GIS mapping tool then, with research, identify current state; wildlife corridors, trees and other significant vegetation, and parcels of land. Then to ensure items and/or locations are categorised, especially land, so there is an idea of how each might be managed into the future rather than starting over each time. Following on from this was the suggestion that some strategies and objectives be set around these items while mapping and recording, to add value to the first cut and future proof the policy.

The Chair requested SEAP volunteers to collaborate with Council representatives on a way forward then come back to the group. Volunteers C. Hocking, P. Lawrence and I. Ferris to collaborate with Council reps. D. Hicks and D. Summers.

**Action 2.:** C. Hocking, P. Lawrence and I. Ferris to collate and summarise best practice tree and other vegetation policy framework with D. Hicks and D. Summers

#### 5 ARBORETA, BIODIVERSITY, VEGETATION PLANNING & WILDLIFE CORRIDORS

Discussion began with a small update on Ballad Ave given its potential relevance to the vegetation planning and wildlife corridors. A recap was given on the previous possible use of the site as a dog park and freedom camping area. It was noted that there are some special species of tree and other flora and fauna on and near this parcel of Council owned land.

The current advice was that the idea of freedom camping and/or dog park had been put on hold. It was further suggested in light of the natural values found, there is a view that a dog park and freedom camping may not be appropriate for the site. It was thought that perhaps the SEAP could review the details of the location and recommend an alternative option for Council to consider.

The next discussion produced conversation on wildlife corridors. An extension of earlier discussion that may inform strategy and policy, it was suggested that once possible corridors are identified, both SEAP and possibly community volunteers could then research fauna known to frequent the areas. Initially areas of French's Road Reserve and Sisters Beach Nature Reserves were nominated as corridors to begin with. It was noted that there may be funding available for this type of project.

The conversation continued and raised a question regarding public open space contributions, particularly as part of subdivisions. It was explained that the practice of contributions never stopped but rather that without Council knowing what to do with this land in the past, it has tended to default to cash contributions over land. It was noted that the Public Open Space Contribution Policy was up for review.

It was suggested that a contribution of 5% of land for the use of wildlife corridors be considered, particularly in semi-rural, rural and semi-urban areas in planning and could be included in a Wildlife Corridor Strategy.

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Discussion continued on the topic of the Tiny Forests with the inclusion of the Tiny Forest Handbook by S. Smith to the Agenda as a potential project idea for Council to consider on smaller plots of land and with some potential alignment with the idea of Arboreta. The premise of a Tiny forest was described along with the method, and potential funding availability for projects like this. It was noted that a number of similar projects had been completed around Australia and the world. The questions were raised whether Council would put land aside for these projects, if it could become part of a vegetation policy, and what promotion of a project like this might look like.

Further analysis of the ideas raised an important point in relation to the current state which was that there is an as yet untapped knowledge base currently residing with scientists in nearby areas that should be captured before it's gone.

**Action 3.:** *D. Hicks to provide to SEAP members information including natural values found on site at Ballard Avenue to help inform members ideas on land use.*

**Action 4.:** *SEAP members to review Ballard Avenue information and provide in return ideas for possible land use at Ballard Avenue.*

## 6 PROPOSED SISTERS BEACH SUB-DIVISION

The proposed Sisters Beach Sub-Division was raised in order to flag potential issues that could arise should the sub-division be approved. It was suggested that the greatest potential issue with the inclusion of a new sub-division to the area would be traffic. The conversation continued with issues of vehicular speed and wildlife safety along Sisters Beach Road.

It was suggested that the group could make a recommendation to Council to request a lowering of the speed limit. In considering a recommendation it was also suggested that Devil fencing be extended. One SEAP member noted from own observations, that the incidences of roadkill have decreased in areas where protective fencing are known to be but increased outside the extents of the current fence. From this discussion a recommendation was formally raised that Council seek a reduction in speed and an extension of the wildlife fencing along Sisters Beach Road.

**Recommendation 2.:** *SEAP recommend Council request a speed limit reduction for Sisters Beach Road from the Transport Commissioner.*

**Recommendation 3.:** *SEAP recommend Council consider extending the virtual fencing along Sisters Beach Road.*

## 7 UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Next meeting on 18 July 2023 located at Council Chambers has been confirmed

## 8 GENERAL BUSINESS

The Chair called for members to raise other general business; the following discussions were noted:

- Regional Renewable Energy Project proposal discussion was postponed due to time constraints.
- H. Sadler noted positive feedback and appreciation for the speed at which the recommendation of Council to amend its Sponsorship signage policy was implemented.

## 9 CLOSURE

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 19:42.