



*Working to conserve and
restore water quality and
wildlife habitat In the
Perth inner city catchments*

Chief Executive Officer
City of Perth
GPO Box C120
Perth WA 6839

27th April 2010

Dear Mr Edwards,

SUBMISSION ON AN URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

The Claise Brook Catchment Group (CBCG) is a community based environmental group working to improve water quality and habitat within Perth city area. Our group is particularly interested in seeing urban developments manage surface and groundwater more sensitively to achieve improved water quality of Swan River. We are also concerned with protecting or enhancing the biodiversity within the City of Perth. Landscaping and appropriate species selection plays an important role in achieving both of these outcomes.

Our members discussed the City of Perth's Urban Design Framework (UDF) at our April meeting and would like to forward the following for consideration.

- The UDF indicates that the City of Perth is considering landscaping of Langley Park, as shown in the diagram on page 82. We support such a proposal on the basis that the plant species selection is suitable for the prevailing conditions, which being on reclaimed foreshore land, is likely to be affected by salt-laden winds and brackish groundwater. The Perth Biodiversity Study (CBCG 2008) recommended a landscaped strip along Langley Park, using local flora species, to create a biodiversity link between Point Fraser and the city centre. We consider that with proper species selection, local plants would create a unique urban landscape which would resist the hostile natural conditions and create an area of great interest both to local residents and interstate and overseas visitors. Also, the inclusion of species suitable for foraging by Carnaby's Black Cockatoo will assist in increasing the river foreshore's value as a vegetated link along which this endangered cockatoo can traverse across the metropolitan area.
- The Perth Biodiversity Study (2008) also identified opportunities for green linkages across areas of Perth, strengthening existing landscape pockets. We would urge the City of Perth to revisit these recommendations and incorporate them into the UDF.

- Historically Perth has been recognised as '*"A Garden City" where in addition to a 'mosaic of open spaces within the city itself, many public buildings which have survived from the early twentieth century still stand in garden settings (ie St George's Cathedral, Perth Railway Station, Parliament House)'.* [Richards Oline (1982) A fairer Athens and a freer Rome: historic public gardens in Perth, WA. Western Australia, Journal article.] We would urge greater recognition of this in the framework.
- Street trees contribute to a city in many ways, providing shade, shelter for animals and a softening of the urban environment. Street trees can also impact on the environment in negative ways, particularly if the species used is exotic and not adapted to the local environment. The Swan River, which surrounds the city on two sides, is greatly valued and the health of the river is of importance. Choosing street tree species which do not impact negatively on the river is an important way in which the city can contribute to improving the health of the river. Careful species selection should enable the city to achieve the desired "civic" effect while also creating streetscapes which reflect Western Australia's unique biodiversity and create a real sense of place for locals and visitors.
- Piazza Nanni in Northbridge is a piazza which has been landscaped with local plants, to the benefit of the local community who supported and participated in the re-landscaping of this area. The piazza connects to the lakes within the Hamilton Interchange. The lakes have the potential to be a great natural area on the city's doorstep. The piazza is not shown as either a park or an open space and should be included in the UDF.

Finally we would urge the City of Perth to revisit other recommendations of the Perth Biodiversity Study (2008), which assessed the natural resources of the city and considered how it could develop as a living city, through the recognition and enhancement of its natural assets.

Recommendations of the Perth Biodiversity Study (2008)

- *Restoring indigenous vegetation to Heirisson Island to create an area of natural beauty and provide a uniquely Western Australian setting for complementary uses.*
- *Developing a linear native flora park along the northern perimeter of Langley Park adjacent to Terrace Road, which would add visual interest and provide a shaded walkway connecting the city to Point Fraser and Heirisson Island.*
- *Restoring the river foreshore, particularly around East Perth, where it is urgently needed as erosion and couch grass threaten remnant native vegetation.*
- *Linking landscaped areas by creating "greenways" along the railway line and roads to increase the biodiversity value of individual patches, with the most important "greenway" being along the river foreshore.*
- *Recognising two "green belts" to facilitate the enhancement of all landscaping within these areas to improve biodiversity value. The approach would be to develop cooperative initiatives between the City of Perth and*

government, commercial and private building owners and tenants of these areas to increase the use of native flora and replacement of exotic flora in landscaping within the “green belt” areas.

- *A greater use of indigenous vegetation in landscaping and as street trees to achieve multiple outcomes including reduced water consumption, improved surface and ground water quality as well as added visual interest to public landscaping.*
- *Developing demonstration gardens, particularly in high visibility locations. Information about indigenous culture and the State’s unique local flora would add interest for locals as well as interstate and overseas visitors.*
- *Policy and management change to incorporate consideration of biodiversity into the design and management of landscaped areas.*
- *Include habitat areas for the black swan along the city’s foreshore.*

Thankyou for the opportunity to comment on the Urban Design Framework.

Regards



Warren McGrath
Chair

Cc: Mark Cugley, Swan River Trust