

Deputation to the City of Melville Council

Item : John Connell Oval Extension – Clearing permit

14.04.2026 – Agenda Briefing Forum Meeting

Speaker : Sally Sibbald – Lead Petitioner

Good evening Madam Mayor, Councillors and City Officers. Thank you for providing this opportunity to speak. My name is Sally Sibbald and I am the lead petitioner of over 600 signatures for saving the bushland from clearing to extend the oval. As I have said before I do not belong to any particular group or organization but am a resident of Melville and concerned about the catastrophic consequences of habitat destruction on native flora and fauna in the Perth metro.

I spoke on the subject last October 2025 and since then have met with the President of the Cricket club Mr Coombs and city officers and I acknowledge the thought, time and energy that has gone into this complex matter. I have read the six options being put forward by the officers to resolve the issue of finding space for another pitch to accommodate the clubs and the increasing population. As noted before petitioners are in favour of a second cricket pitch but not at the expense of the remnant bushland corridor which is a noted foraging and resting place for red tailed and Carnaby cockatoos and also a buffer to the threatened banksia woodlands.

It is noted that some options have no clearing required. Option 3 which seeks to simply reconfigure the existing fields at John Connel to achieve an additional cricket field which still comes at a cost. Option 5 to look at developing and enhancing Beasley Park 1 km away to standard required around \$308,000.

The petitioners signed for Option 4 which would be a significant cost but would achieve the best outcome for the whole community and involve remediating and significantly upgrading the wasteland area. More facilities, fields, car park, toilets and access roads would be the most desired outcome. If funds could be channelled into rectifying any perceived issues around the wasteland area in

terms of its height and with the offset avoided this would be a great asset for wider population for years to come and preserve precious bushland.

What is proposed in Options 1 and 2 will come at great expense to the environment and triggers an offset required at Ken Hurst reserve namely a whopping 7.34 hectares of revegetation. This reveg will be very costly, unlikely to achieve the growth and survival rate being required by DWER and will require many council staff and volunteers time and energy over some years to undertake this massive task.

The offset is significant because the bushland corridor is so valuable. While some may see degraded scrub the truth is there are few areas within the city of Melville with the high number of grass trees, mature natives and wildflowers that grows within this corridor of bushland. Remnant bushland is disappearing in piecemeal fashion across the metro . These places cannot be replicated and have taken years to establish. Reveg is not a quick fix and not a simple task. A couple of long dry summers will likely see most of the reveg die off and I believe water for the plants to Ken Hurst will need to be trucked in.

I would urge the Council when voting on this important matter to consider that the Aboriginal advisory group said on many different occasions when asked to comment – don't destroy the bushland. Further to consider an option with the least impact to the environment and cockatoo population. If there is a vote to clear I would urge the Council to commit to replacing the bushland corridor further back from the oval with food source trees for Cockatoos as a matter of priority.

Thank you

Sally Sibbald

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