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**From:** Neal Masters <neal.masters@lizzy.com.au>  
**Sent:** Sunday, 31 July 2022 4:58 PM  
**To:** Devonport City Council  
**Subject:** Re: Amendment AM2022.01 / Application No: PA2022.0024

FAO: General Manager, Devonport City Council

With the recent release of Australia's 'State of the Environment' report showing that our biodiversity is declining and habitat loss is a key threatening process, it has never been more urgent to reconsider the way in which we view high quality habitat in urban environments. Between 2000 and 2017, 7.7 million hectares of habitat for terrestrial threatened species was cleared or substantially degraded across Australia. Wholesale clearing of land for housing and agriculture not only devastates Australia's wildlife but has a catastrophic effect on human health and well-being. Here in Devonport we are blessed to still have reasonable areas of intact and connected high quality habitat for our wildlife and this was one of the main reasons I chose to make my home here.

I have a background in the management of areas containing threatened species and this informs my comments below:

- 1) In light of Australia's declining biodiversity and the knock on effect that is already having on our health and wellbeing in areas where natural values have been lost we should be looking to protect the intact forest that currently exists in Lot 4 (proposed) and not be allowing its wholesale destruction for a 50 home subdivision.
- 2) The creation of long, narrow conservation areas sandwiched between housing estates such as that being proposed here to 'protect' the burrowing crayfish is grossly inadequate and will greatly increase the risk that this population of burrowing crayfish will go locally extinct. Long and narrow conservation zones in urban areas are subject to high levels of disturbance from the surrounding community through inappropriate use, rubbish dumping and the creation of tracks and trails (see point 3 below). These areas also experience a much higher level of weed invasion through the edge effect and are very difficult to manage and maintain. The width of the protection zone on the Northern side of Lot 4 (proposed) needs to be significantly increased to ensure the ongoing survival of both the burrowing crayfish and the remaining area of Eucalyptus ovata which provides important habitat for our critically endangered Swift Parrots.
- 3) An example of the recent damage to a small linear reserve alongside Laphorne Close capturing media interest. This linear reserve is similar to that being proposed for the Northern boundary of Lot 4 and is sandwiched between housing estates. It experiences high levels of damage from the surrounding community along with rubbish dumping and invasive weed pressure.

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**NEWS**



**EFFORT WASTED:** Phil Hrstich alongside Friends of Don Reserve volunteers Angela Tyson and Neal Masters. Picture: Brodie Weeding

# 'Thoughtless' display

**BY MEG WHITFIELD**

THE discovery of a "thoughtless act" of vandalism at Don Reserve has been criticised by the Devonport City Council, with about 100 trees and shrubs discovered to have been ripped up.

Devonport City Council natural resource management officer Phil Hrstich said he made the "disheartening" discovery earlier this week, during a regular site visit to a patch of the reserve being actively revegetated.

"I went down there to check how they were going and they were all ripped out and a freshly raked and swept bike path was put in their place," he said.

"It's disappointing, because Kelsey Tier is a five minute ride away and there are plenty of tracks for mountain bike or pushbike riding up there.

"Any sort of disturbance made... really affects the connectivity and habitat for the animals that live there."

The plants, of which the council has been able to locate 50, are a combination of greenery planted in the last month and last year.

Mr Hrstich said he estimated it was about 100 hours of work from volunteers and council staff that had been wasted as a result of the pulled out plants.

"It's pretty disheartening," he said, with this not the first time something like this had happened.

Devonport City Council mayor Annette Rockliff said it was disappointing to see hours of work at the Don Reserve wasted, with the matter reported to the police.

"Unfortunately, an estimated 100 hours of work by volunteers and our NRM Officer have now been in vain due to the thoughtless act of a minority," Cr Rockliff said.

"The fact is any act of vandalism ends in a cost to our community - and it is illegal to remove these trees.

"Council is grateful to support the Don Reserve has received over the years by the Friends of the Don. ...We hope this doesn't deflate their hopes too much and they continue to do the great work they have done for many years."

A collection of tools were allegedly left at the site, including a rake and some shovels. Anyone who knows anything about the incident should contact Tasmania Police at 6478 4011.

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Best Regards

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