

Representation – 22 Goodwins Road Rezoning Balancing Housing, Biodiversity and Bushfire Resilience

I support Clarence City Council's commitment to increasing housing supply within the Clarence component of the Greater Hobart Urban Growth Area. Concentrating growth within established urban areas is a sound planning principle that reduces urban sprawl, makes efficient use of existing infrastructure and protects broader rural landscapes.

I also commend Council for adopting the Clarence Natural Areas Strategy 2024–2033, which recognises threatened vegetation communities such as Eucalyptus Ovata Forest and Woodland (DOV) as important components of a connected, resilient and improving municipal biodiversity network.

The challenge presented by the Goodwins Road rezoning is that three legitimate public objectives now converge within the same landscape: housing supply, biodiversity conservation and bushfire resilience.

The appended map illustrates the proposal within the urban growth area. It suggests that the subject land occupies part of one of the remaining ecological corridors associated with Stokell Creek and the Clarence Plains Rivulet. While this proposal retains portions of the riparian corridor, it also demonstrates how successive urban expansions may progressively fragment the remaining DOV landscape.

At the same time, future residential development adjacent to retained native vegetation is likely to require Asset Protection Zones, ongoing fuel management and other bushfire mitigation measures. These are essential for community safety, but can also impact biodiversity by reducing understorey complexity, limiting natural regeneration and increasing edge effects. Consequently, the planning challenge is not simply avoiding vegetation clearing but designing neighbourhoods that can safely coexist with functioning ecological corridors.

Viewed in isolation, the direct vegetation loss associated with this proposal may appear relatively modest. However, the map also identifies substantial undeveloped land immediately north and south within the Urban Growth Boundary. If those areas are ultimately developed in a similar manner, the cumulative outcome may be a series of increasingly narrow, highly managed creek line remnants surrounded by residential development. Over time, both urban edge effects and bushfire management requirements will progressively diminish their ecological function.

Rather than viewing these objectives as competing, I encourage Council to use this proposal as an opportunity to develop a planning framework capable of delivering all three outcomes simultaneously.

In particular, I respectfully ask Council to consider:

- Has Council assessed the current extent, condition and connectivity of DOV across the entire Clarence Urban Growth Area, rather than only within individual development sites?
- Has Council identified the minimum connected DOV network required to maintain the long-term ecological function of that vegetation community as urban development proceeds?
- Has the cumulative effect of all anticipated rezonings within this urban growth area been assessed against the objectives of the Natural Areas Strategy?
- Has Council assessed the cumulative ecological implications of future Asset Protection Zones and ongoing fuel management on retained DOV corridors?
- Could this proposal and future neighbourhoods be realistically designed around wider ecological corridors that simultaneously provide biodiversity connectivity, recreational open space and bushfire separation? If not, how should Council's planning mechanisms be revised to avoid net biodiversity loss?
- Should Council prepare a landscape-scale ecological and bushfire planning framework to guide all future rezonings within this Urban Growth Area?
- Should future development proposals demonstrate how they contribute to improving the condition, connectivity and resilience of retained DOV (and other threatened vegetation communities) while maintaining appropriate bushfire protection for residents?

Clarence has demonstrated leadership through its Natural Areas Strategy. The next challenge is translating that strategic vision into practical land-use decisions as the municipality continues to grow.

By addressing these questions now, Council has an opportunity to establish a planning model that accommodates much-needed housing while conserving natural capital and delivering safer communities. Such a framework might provide greater certainty for developers, the community and future decision-makers, while ensuring that incremental urban growth strengthens—rather than progressively erodes—the ecological values that the Natural Areas Strategy seeks to protect.

Prepared by John Pitt 20 July 2026 E: [REDACTED] M: [REDACTED]

Appendix A : Map illustrating the Goodwins Road proposal within the Clarence component of the Greater Hobart Urban Growth Area and its relationship to the Eucalyptus Ovata Forest and Woodland (DOV) Vegetation Community

Appendix A : Map illustrating the Goodwins Road proposal within the Clarence component of the Greater Hobart Urban Growth Area and its relationship to the Eucalyptus Ovata Forest and Woodland (DOV) Vegetation Community

