

DEPUTATION

To

City of Bayswater

Ordinary Council Meeting

On

Tuesday 21 September 2020

Re

Opening of Roadway – Swan Bank Rd, Maylands

On behalf of the FOML group I thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight in opposition to the motion put by Councillor Ehrhardt:

"That Council requests the Chief Executive Officer to investigate the feasibility of reopening Swanbank Road between the existing southern and northern portions of Swan Bank Road, Maylands, and undertake consultation in relation to the proposal with residents on Clarkson Road (Tranby Road to Swan Bank Road), residents on Swan Bank Road, the WA Police and FESA and provide a report back to Council by December 2020."

As a regular user of Clarkson Road, both walking and driving, I am aware of the volume of traffic it carries. Clearly it will increase with the imminent additional housing on the new subdivision. However, I would have thought it timely for the residents to express their concerns prior to the approval of that subdivision, rather than at this late stage.

While I empathise with the concerns of the Residents on behalf of whom Councillor Ehrhardt is putting this motion, wider consultation by Councillor Ehrhardt prior to putting this motion would in my view, have better served the interests of all affected residents. On the face of it, modification of Clarkson road, including prohibiting parking on the stretch in question, would surely present as a preferable option to mitigate traffic congestion, which is currently negligible.

For the benefit of those Councillors who may not be fully across the history of the Maylands Lakes, I will in this deputation, repeat excerpts from FOML's March 2017 deputation, seeking funding for remediation of the lakes. In that deputation I stated, albeit not verbatim that:

*"The independent 'Stage 2 Management Options Report', prepared for the City of Bayswater, by Essential Environmental, attributes the condition of the lakes to an overload of nutrients – mainly nitrogen and phosphorous. There are primarily two reasons for this – **the first being:***

The design of the lakes and their environs was flawed.

The Peninsular Estate occupies what was once the site of the Maylands Brickworks. Following the closure of the Brickworks in 1983, the clay pits from which it sourced its material, developed by default over 16 years, into a pseudo

wetland inhabited by frogs, turtles, snakes; a wide variety of birds, including migratory species and other fauna as well as flora. The development of the Lakes was the Satterley Group's strategy to counter the objections of those who opposed the destruction of this semi-natural habitat and hence threatened to stall or worse still sink his project.

In their material promoting the Peninsular Estate Development, Satterley stated under the heading (I quote) *"Your environment concerns answered"* that *"Nutrient levels in the clay pits are low and will remain at low levels following development, due to the volume of water in the pits relative to inflows, and the management of drainage from urban areas into the pits"*.

"The nutrient stripping basins provided will filter nutrients prior to the discharge of water into the lakes and therefore maintain the good water quality".

We now know that the drainage from the urban areas into the Lakes is in fact the main source of nutrient inflow because the drains installed were not designed to remove the nutrients and precious little has been done, or is proposed, to filter out the nutrients before the drainage water enters the lakes. **The proposed road will almost inevitably result in further unfiltered drainage water entering the lakes. Of concern too, is the disturbance of contaminated and acid sulphate soils associated with building the road. Being within metres of the lakes' edge this would be potentially disastrous for the lakes' fragile ecology**

We also know that the most critical water purification feature of the project, the 'nutrient stripping basins', were by some sleight of hand, never installed, presumably because they would have taken up too much good saleable land space. The closest we have to a 'stripping basin' is the Brickworks Lake, which filters input from only 2 of the 10 storm water inlets.

Satterley's promotional material claimed that as a result of their proposed nutrient removal measures *"...the discharge water (from the lakes into the Swan River) will be low in nutrients and therefore will not pose any risk to the Swan River"*.

I can assure you that right now, there is nutrient laden, putrid, green water flowing from the Maylands Lakes into the Swan River. This is an ominous sign

of the continuing exponential decline in the condition of the lakes. It is exacerbating the already high risk of seasonal algal blooms and heightening community concerns about a potential large-scale health hazard. Irrefutably, the condition of the lakes is not only affecting nearby Maylands residents but the wider community.

Much has been learnt about man-made lakes since ours were established and the FOML is working closely with Council, on behalf of the community, to incorporate this learning in our remediation efforts. The works include addressing a major design flaw of insufficient and inappropriate foreshore vegetation, essential to:

- Filtering the water run off entering the lakes.
- Providing habitat, nesting places and protection for the many species of fauna referred to earlier as inhabiting the previous wetlands. The stretch of land in question is a long-established breeding area for many species, particularly the long-necked turtle and the purple-necked swamp hens. Countless baby and adult turtles are ushered across the path and into the lakes by nature-loving pedestrians and cyclists.
- **Very importantly – the vegetation is also essential to absorbing the massive nutrient overload, which at one stage rendered the lakes anaerobic, resulting in a wholesale fish die-off.**
- **It is also critical in redressing the shortfall of habitat for the midges that are instead, plaguing lakeside residents for the third year in a row**

The potential for greenbelt strips on the perimeter of Lake Brearley is unfortunately very limited, due to the extensive stretches of retaining walls in front of residences bordering the Lake. Consequently, it is paramount we preserve the foreshore than can be vegetated. The area of the proposed road extension forms a very significant part of the precinct already programmed by the City of Bayswater, in consultation with FOML, for revegetation. I implore you not to about-face on this crucial aspect of the Lakes remediation program, on which agreement has already been reached. We desperately need more natural vegetation on the perimeters of our lakes, not less.

Finally, the extension of Swan Bank Road will simply transfer the perceived problem in Clarkson Road, by creating traffic congestion on the already busy Golf

course end, as well as the inevitable induced demand for further increasing vehicular access in the future.

Excuse the pun but going down this road will have a disastrous impact on the remediation of our precious lakes and place further pressure on their already tenuous long-term sustainability. Therefore, I urge Councillors not to vote in favour of this motion.