



KEMPSEY
Shire Council

DIRECTOR CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES REPORT

8th May 2007

DCCS10	HEYSON STREET BIRD SANCTUARY
	FILE: LA1342 SJR {Folio No. 345251}

SUMMARY:

Reporting on approaches to restore the Heyson Street Bird Sanctuary.

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DESCRIPTION:

At the 20 June 2006 meeting of Council when discussing the Heyson Street Bird Sanctuary it was resolved;

"That the following land be further investigated with a view to future sale."

The property is Lot 193 DP 752439 Heyson Street, West Kempsey. The property has a prior use as a sanitary depot and Council previously set the land aside as a bird sanctuary.

Through neglect the site has become overgrown and severely infested with weeds and exotic plant species.

A group of interested local ornithologists (bird watchers) within the community approached Council with a proposal to restore the site, remove weed growth, clear a fire break zone, undertake replantings and encourage bird watchers to utilise the site once restoration is complete.

The local ornithologists group advise that they have no funds at this stage to make an offer to purchase the block from Council. The group have requested that Council consider the restoration and future maintenance of the former Bird Sanctuary as an attraction and a service to the community. It is difficult to ascertain if the group would be successful in obtaining grant funding for the restoration, ongoing maintenance or purchase of the property.

Should the block be restored as a bird sanctuary with the use of volunteer labour and grant funding for equipment and weed spraying there would be ongoing maintenance costs for Council.

To allow Council to offer the block for freehold sale on the open market an assessment of contamination of the site due to its prior usage would be required.

REPORT IMPLICATIONS:

- *Environmental*

The block is quite small (1 acre) and perhaps other areas within the shire such as Riverside Park, the Nestle' Community Vegetation Project at Jerseyville or the current Gills Creek Rehabilitation Project are more suited to focussing on bird watching needs.

- *Social*

Nil implications

- *Economic (Financial)*

Ongoing maintenance requirements for Council would be considerable and detract from current recreational facilities maintenance.

- *Policy or Statutory*

Nil implications

- *Director's Review*

The recommendation is supported.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That Council decline to restore the Heyson Street Bird Sanctuary.
2. That local ornithologists be invited to submit an offer for purchase of the property once it is listed for sale.

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G B Snape
DIRECTOR CORPORATE & COMMUNITY SERVICES