

Address to City of Nedlands Council Meeting

Tuesday 28th July 2015

Item 14.3 The City consults with all stakeholders on the closure of Sayer Street, Swanbourne (A Class reserve 19283) and reinstate the area to its original natural state.

Your Worship and members of Nedlands Council - Good evening

Thank you for the opportunity to address council tonight with a little bit of personal history about Sayer Street.

My family bought our house in Sayer Street in 1987. There were and still are just 8 houses in the street.

On all the official lands department, council and UBD road maps at that time Sayer Street was shown as a cul de sac. It had been a cul de sac since 1926 when Councillor John (Jack) Allen with astounding wisdom and forethought set about closing roads and acquiring land blocks from Kirkwood Rd to the beach in order to create recreational reserves and preserve bushland "...for the people for all time." The lots of land beyond no 11 Sayer Street were officially gazetted closed 90 years ago, and advertised as permanently closed in the Government Gazette of the day, for the sole purpose of including them in the A Class reserve.

Unfortunately, some time in the 1980s, and without permission from the Nedlands Council, bitumen had been laid on portions of Reserve 19283 (Lots 177 and 178). The real estate agent who sold our house to us in 1987, who was himself a respected Nedlands resident, assured us that Nedlands Council was going to sort that out, and reinstate the cul de sac and the A Class Reserve "within 6 months"!

It has been a long 6 months!

The legal opinion sought by council in 1988 informed the Council that it would have been quite within its rights to take up that bitumen. But the Council of that day did not have the will to do it.

Meanwhile, plans for the extension of West Coast Highway were underway and in 1991, there was an understanding that the use of the A Class Reserve as an unofficial "road" leading into Sayer Street and the other small streets would be tolerated until the ring road, Langouland Drive, was opened at the completion of West Coast Highway. This ring road would provide a very satisfactory route for families from Seaward Village to drive to Claremont and Cottesloe.

Now it's quite understandable that the "corporate memory" of council and its administration from that time has been lost. It was a turbulent and unpleasant

time, leading in 1995, to the council being replaced by a State Government-appointed Commissioner. So in the late 1990s, when Langoulant Drive was opened, and Seaward Village residents were able to use a safe and purpose built ring road to gain access to Claremont and Cottesloe, council did not automatically act as it should have done to remove the bitumen from the A Class Reserve.

The fact that the illegal street is still in place has now led Defence Housing Australia (DHA) to develop concept plans that show the A Class Reserve being used as the main route for all traffic from the proposed private development, and possibly traffic from the newly developed Seaward Village. Traffic consultants have told us that the private development alone would bring an additional 1600 vehicle movements a day into Sayer Street and onto the adjoining streets. Add that to the current 200 or so cars and the cars from the proposed additional houses in seaward village and you are looking at traffic of more than 2000. It doesn't even stop there!!

DHA is proposing, as the initial part of its redevelopment to build a new childcare facility that is to be built on the boundary of the A Class Reserve with access along Sayer Street and the A Class Reserve that will bring an unknown quantity of daily car movements.

I am very heartened that our Councillors appear to have the will that has been missing from councils in the past, to rectify this situation.

It is not appropriate for this level of car movements to be traversing an A Class Reserve

An illegal, ungazetted road should not be allowed to remain in use just to facilitate a development.

Councillors, please note that this motion is not about closing a road. There is no road to be closed. Sayer Street officially runs from no 1 to no 11. Beyond that, Lots 177 and 178 were gazetted closed 90 years ago and nothing has happened to change that gazettal.

The job of council tonight is to work out how to restore the A Class Reserve 19283 that was the vision of one of its longest serving and most dedicated councillors, John Allen.

Denise Murray