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Thursday, 15 December 2016

Re: Proposed planting & tree removal at Pacific Vista Drive, Byron Bay.

Dear resident,

I'm writing to briefly outline a proposal for a planting project at the end of Pacific Vista Drive (See Figure 1). The proposal has been developed through conversations with many of you over the past year.

BACKGROUND

As you are aware, the National Parks & Wildlife Service have been undertaking restoration works of the Clay Heath in Arakwal National Park - most notably the staged removal of encroaching trees that shade out the Clay Heath. However, the *Byron Clay Heath Restoration Plan* (2013) recommends that a **strip of forest trees be retained** as a 'weed buffer' between the weedy road verge and the National Park **until the weeds are replaced with low-growing native vegetation** (See Figure '7c'). Neither the NPWS or Council currently have any funds or plans to restore the weedy road verge in the near future.

However, several neighbouring residents have expressed a keen interest in funding revegetation works along the slope to a) **remove the unsightly weeds**, and b) **allow the timely removal of the trees making up the 'weed buffer'**.

The proposed planting project would be a win for the Clay Heath and for residents, in that:

- the project is consistent with the *Byron Clay Heath Restoration Plan*, and is a rare opportunity to address a difficult and problematic area for Clay Heath restoration, and
- neighbouring residents would benefit from having their views to the coast restored, and an unsightly area of degraded land will be beautified.

WHAT'S INVOLVED?

The proposal is to replace the existing weedy road verge with low-growing native vegetation through planting. However, to ensure the success of the planting the project will be staged over time as outlined in the table below.

Stage	Action	Timing
1	Treat weeds on the road batter.	Month 1
2	Remove and chip trees on the road batter	Month 2
3	Stem Inject all remaining trees within "weed buffer" (See Figure 7c).	Month 2
4	Collect seed and propagate plants	Months 1-8
5	Plant out area	Months 12
6	Maintain area	Years 2-4

WHO'S INVOLVED?

Local Residents – Currently four residents from Pacific Vista Drive and Shelley Drive have expressed interest in collectively funding the project.

Brunswick Valley Landcare – BVL have expressed interest in managing the project, including the coordination of contractors, processing invoices and arranging appropriate insurance. The involvement of BVL also provides the easiest pathway for a resident-funded project to occur on public lands. BVL is very experienced and skilled at managing planting and restoration projects in Byron Shire. Final support of BVL is awaiting approval of the BVL committee.

Byron Shire Council – BSC own and manage part of the road verge. BSC is currently funding a broader Clay Heath restoration project at Clarkes Beach, Ruskin Street, Paterson Street and Honeysuckle Hill.

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service - NPWS own and manage part of the road verge. NPWS is currently funding a 10-year Clay Heath restoration project throughout the broader Arakwal National Park.

HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

The total project cost is estimated at **$23 084** (inc. GST). This includes all aspects of project delivery, maintenance and administration as outlined in the Table below and the attached quotation.

Item	**Cost**
Weed removal, site preparation, seed collection, plant propagation, planting, mulching and 3 years of maintenance (See attached quotation)	**$19 002.50**
Tree Removal	**$1 310.00**
Project Administration (15% of project cost)	**$2 771.25**
TOTAL (inc. GST)	**$23 083.75**

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF THERE IS NO PLANTING?

A strip of native trees will be retained along the boundary of the National Park. This strip of trees is needed to provide a shady 'screen' to help prevent the spread of weeds from the degraded road verge down into the Clay Heath and Cibum Margil Swamp below. The tree strip creates a band of shade where weeds can be managed to ensure they don't rapidly spread downslope in the storm water.

WHY ISN'T THE PLANTING BEING PAID FOR BY COUNCIL OR NATIONAL PARKS & WILDLIFE SERVICE?

Both Council & NPWS are making a large investment in the restoration of the Clay Heath generally. This funding is currently fixing issues across the broader areas of Clay Heath (e.g. weeds, tree removal & fire). However, works to repair heavily degraded edges like the Pacific Vista Drive road verge are a lower priority and relatively costly. While these works may be funded by Council/NPWS in future, it is very unlikely to happen for many years, if at all.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

This proposal is being distributed to the four residents who have expressed interest. Feel free to distribute to any other residents you feel may be interested.

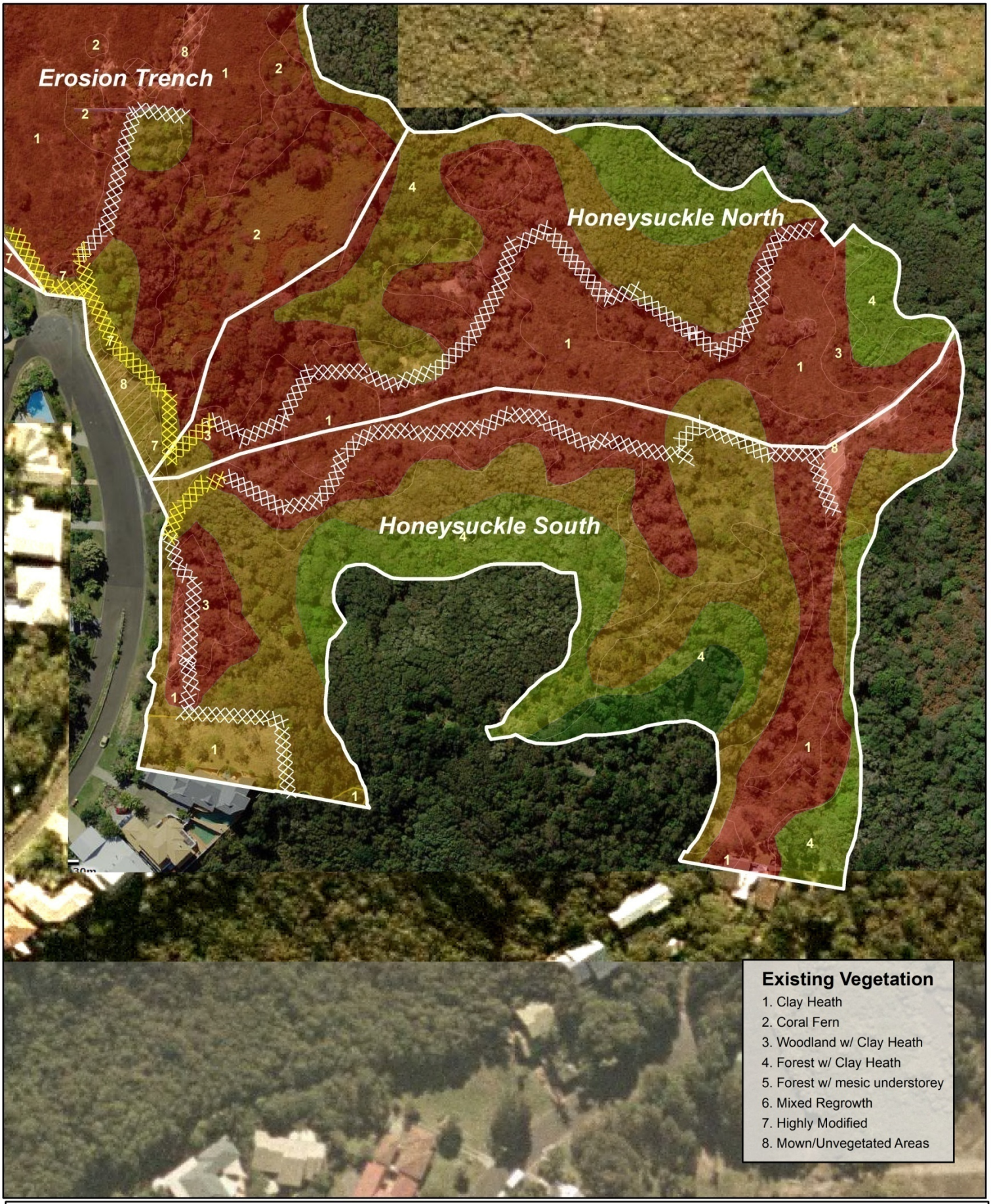
It is now up to the residents to consider and discuss the proposal collectively. I will be available to answer questions, on the proposal by phone or email until next Wednesday, December 22, 2016, and again at the end of January 2017.

Should the proposal go ahead, works could commence in February 2017.

Yours sincerely,

Andy Baker
Director / Vegetation Ecologist
wildsite

Figure 1. Proposed Planting Area



BYRON CLAY HEATH RESTORATION PLAN

Arakwal National Park

Figure 7C

Restoration Sites & Restoration Extent

Restoration Sites

- Milne Site (See Plan)
- Visual Buffer
- Weed Buffer
- 4 Existing Vegetation (see inset)

Target Community Extent

- Clay Heath
- Woodland w/ Clay Heath
- Forest w/ Clay Heath
- Forest w/ mixed understorey

N

0 10 20 40 60 80 100 Meters

Prepared by Andy Baker
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June 2013

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Quote – Pacific Vista Clay Heath Planting

Please find a quote for the revegetation of Clay Heath adjacent to the end of Pacific Vista Dr.

The area to be planted requires two separate approaches;

1. Jute Mat and planting at 50cm spaces.
   Area 1: 850 m2
2. Chip mulch and planting at 100cm spacing
   Area 2: 400 m2

All plants will be watered in when planted.

Price:

Labour: @ $45 / hr Seed Collection Site prep Planting Planting maintenance – 18 months	 $450.00 $225.00 $3800.00 $1600.00
Plants: @ $2.20 Tube stock	 $8360.00
Jute Mat Pins Shipping	$2040.00 $360.00 $440.00
Total	**$17 275.00**

Nb. Prices do not include GST.

Footprint looks forward to the opportunity to continue to restore Byrons Clay Heath

Thankyou

Stuart McDonald