

24 April, 2010

Alex Jones  
Address deleted  
0409291398  
[www.saveourtrees.net](http://www.saveourtrees.net)  
PO Box 474 Nedlands WA 6009

City of Nedlands,  
Mayor, Councillors and Staff,

I read with shame, anger and frustration the Post Newspaper article: "Underwood bush backflip", page 11, April 24, 2010.

Firstly, it is shameful that the University of Western Australia and so many in this generation of adults show little or no understanding or concern about the deleterious effect on the health of our children, the broader community and wildlife due to the senseless destruction of nature in our midst. This unmanicured piece of bushland is precious to us as a community because of its value to wildlife and the health of our children and the broader environment. Such rare pieces of land should be valued by our places of higher education and the obvious question is:

**"Were there any independent experts in environmental science and public health present at the meeting between Nedlands Council and the University of Western Australia? If not, why not? If yes, who were they?"**

The recent lecture by Richard Louv, on the "nature deficit disorder" experienced by so many of our children and young people around the world, in which he referred to studies showing that there are beneficial effects on various medical and mental health conditions such as ADHD and depression from activities such as "a walk in the woods", gives strength to the argument that we need to stop destroying nature. Furthermore, his lecture was sponsored by the Department of Sport and Recreation, Western Australia and the Department of Environment and Conservation WA who have just officially launched the campaign to promote good health in the outdoors: "NaturePlay WA". This is not about structured play on manicured (and possibly herbicide- poisoned) lawns but about children experiencing "wild" nature.

**What is the point of this newly launched campaign to reconnect our kids with nature if other levels of government or other state departments allow the destruction of our ever diminishing natural spaces?**

**Why can't Underwood Avenue Bushland and others like it in the middle of our urban areas be used by our state authorities to promote nature and public health?**

I note that the Councillor proposing "Nedlands drop its opposition to development" is a Hollywood Councillor. My family has lived in Hollywood for 26 years and this councillor has not made contact with us over this issue.

**How many Hollywood residents or Nedlands residents generally have been contacted over this very important environmental and health issue in our City?**

**What are the environmental and health credentials of the councillors proposing or supporting this development and how much time have they devoted to understanding what we will lose if this area is developed?**

As promoter of [www.saveourtrees.net](http://www.saveourtrees.net) as well as being a resident of Nedlands, I have been involved over several years in promoting the protection of this Bushland. Along with many in the community, I fully support the wonderful work by Margaret Owen who has devoted countless hours and days of her life over 10 years to the preservation of Underwood and other areas of remnant bushland. Through her detailed knowledge of the plants and creatures that live in the Bushland and her vast collection of wonderful photographs she has enlightened and brought pleasure to many Post readers. **How dare some of our councillors take it upon themselves to make such decisions in favour of**

**development without evidence of there having been any recent community consultation other than with the proponent of the development!**

The argument about UWA's ownership of the Bushland under the anachronistic Endowment Law is simply not acceptable in the 21st century. It is a disgrace that the University is using this outdated Endowment Law to protect its rights to destroy the Bushland. Once the Bushland is destroyed it will be gone forever and no rights under Endowment Law or "Off- setting" with other random pieces of bushland in distant places will bring it back or justify the damage that will have been done.

Please also see the Radio 6PR attachment with comments from Premier Barnett. **After his apparent interest in protecting Underwood Avenue Bushland as was indicated by his attendance at a picnic for supporters of the Bushland prior to his becoming Premier, why does Mr. Barnett now do nothing to protect the Bushland, and why does he so readily dismiss efforts by the community to protect nature including biodiversity and threatened wildlife?**

**The Premier's comments suggest that he does not agree with the listing of the Carnaby's Cockatoo as a threatened species. On what scientific basis does he make his comments?**

I urge all Councillors to consider the above questions and not be swayed by the bizarre and relentless push by the financial drivers of UWA to develop the land at any cost to our environment, our wildlife and public health.

Yours sincerely,

Alex Jones