

**DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE MEETING**

**TUESDAY 18 MAY 2021**

**ATTACHMENT 1 OF 2 TO ITEM DV21.47**

**FOOD FOREST EMAIL REQUEST 29 MARCH 2021**

## Janine Roets

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**From:** Michael Collie <mco\_cka@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, 29 March 2021 1:25 PM  
**To:** Janine Roets  
**Subject:** Community Food Forests Inc. to Sustainability Officer Town of Cambridge  
**Attachments:** Community Food Forest Inc - Proposal 29 March 2021 FINAL.pdf; Supporters.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Flag for follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear Janine

Attached are two documents

- 1) Community Food Forests Inc. proposal
- 2) A PDF file of supporters of the proposal (sorted by Office Bearers, Suburb, Surname)

We wish to use part of the former City Beach Kindergarten site initially.

We understand that this site is zoned for future residential development in perhaps 3 years time.

We wish to use this site during these three years at least and until development does take place.

We have selected this site because it is unused wasteland, has support from surrounding residents, is easy to convert to a Food Forest and we hope will be able to be approved very quickly so that we can take advantage of the winter rains to grow food

The proposal goes into greater detail on pages 4 and 29 (click on page number as the contents are indexed to allow rapid access).

Then, we would like to convert the Fred Burton Way site into a long-term perpetual Food Forest and seek approval for that site also.

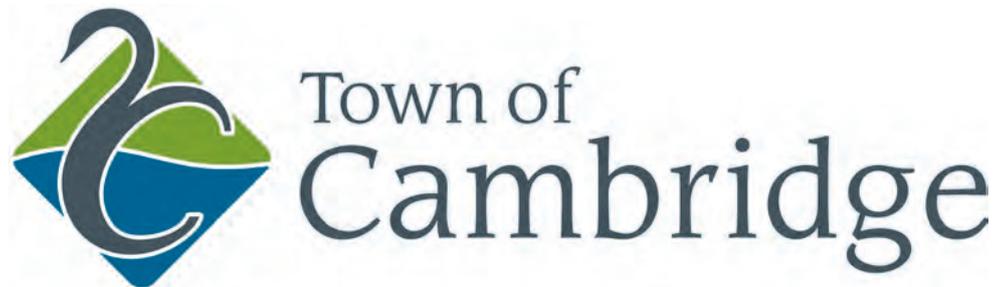
Please email me if you have any questions.

We are available to meet with staff on the sites or elsewhere if you wish to discuss anything more.

Yours sincerely

Michael Collier  
Chair Community Food Forests Inc.  
24 Truro Place  
City Beach  
PH 92850351

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**DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE MEETING**

**TUESDAY 18 MAY 2021**

**ATTACHMENT 2 OF 2 TO ITEM DV21.47**

**COMMUNITY FOOD FOREST INC PROPOSAL**

# COMMUNITY FOOD FORESTS INC.

incorporated 25 March 2021

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## **COMMUNITY FOOD FORESTS INC.**

### **OBJECTS AND PURPOSES OF THE ASSOCIATION**

The establishment of Food Forests for the community by the creation of rich arable soil.

The planting of fruit trees and vegetables to create Food Forests from community supplied seeds and propagation materials.

The on-going maintenance of Food Forests as a community food resource.

The establishment of Food Forests to serve as a model for educational purposes.

### **LOCATION**

Three possible land areas have been identified as being suitable for the objects and purposes of the association.

A discussion was had with a Town of Cambridge Sustainability Officer on 24 March 2021 to determine the long term availability of each area.

The Fred Burton site appears to be the best possibility.

The other two sites are proposed for residential development which does not preclude their use but would mean that when such development occurred the food forest would be destroyed in perhaps as little as 3 to 4 years.

Council staff are to consider other sites to propose and are open to considering any other sites we may propose.

Maps of the three areas being considered follow

## **Fred Burton Way - area on corner of West Coast Highway Cycle Path**

Eastern boundary is cycle path.

Northern boundary is grass

Western boundary are natural sand dunes with coastal plants

Southern boundary is Fred Burton Way – a very quiet little used road access to parking



### **Advantages**

- Area is reticulated and watered regularly
- The land is below the level of the bounding road and cycle way so no need to remove soil
- Can use organic matter eg mulches, grass clippings to build up soil level. Easy and free
- Easily accessible to community from cycle path
- Could locate 220L Gedye Compost Bins to be used by cyclists
- Restaurant businesses food preparation materials can be dug into soil on site and in-ground composted
- Is a further attraction to the area for non-local residents and hence to local restaurants
- The area is currently partially covered with grass and appears to be seldom used

### **Disadvantages**

Have to determine what is current use, if any

## Former City Beach Kindergarten Centre site

### Bounded by Boronia Crescent and Templetonia Crescent and Telstra Exchange

The northern area (the upper area on this image) is the proposed area.



Closeup of northern area showing the fences and bush land to east which will be retained



### Advantages

- Land is not being used. It is wasteland. It invites anti-social behaviour and the dumping of rubbish. A Food Forest will be a vast improvement.
- High wire fences already exist to north and part of west and east. They can be used to plant dragon-fruit and passionfruit and other climbing vegetables
- Sand can be moved from kindergarten site and used to build up southerly areas rather than having to be taken away
- Site is surrounded by residents who are supportive
- One resident neighbour will allow his bore water to be used for irrigation
- A beautiful path can be created through the forest for primary school children to use as a short-cut to the school and to enjoy produce on the way
- Residents will be able to enjoy easy access
- Could locate 220L Gedye Compost Bins to be used by nearby residents to cut down on green waste for Council rubbish collection

### Disadvantages

- Land is zoned residential and perhaps in as little as 3 years may be redeveloped so only plant with vegetables or short-lived fruiting trees

### **City Beach Civic Centre (33 Templetonia Crescent, City Beach WA 6015).**

The eastern area (the lower area on this image) is the proposed area.

The eastern edge of this eastern area has a stone wall some 2 metres high to a terrace garden (shielded by trees in this image).

The northern edge has a lower stone wall.

The western and northern edges are kerbed to the driveway and parking bays.



#### **Advantages**

- These areas are reticulated already
- A Food Forest will require less water than the grassed areas
- A Food Forest will require no chemical fertilisers or weed sprays
- Easy access
- Plenty of parking
- Could locate 220L Gedye Compost Bins for bridge club members to use

#### **Disadvantages**

- A lot of grass to remove – either expensive or difficult

## WHAT IS A FOOD FOREST?

A Food Forest is best thought of as being like a natural forest (eg Bold Park) but which only contains plants that humans can and wish to eat.

At the end of this document, there is an excerpt from the Picasso Food Project (in Italy) which summarises the concept of a Food Forest.

Full details of this case study can be read at [http://www.fruttortiparma.it/foodforest\\_en.html](http://www.fruttortiparma.it/foodforest_en.html)

Later on in this document the **BENEFITS** of a **Food Forest** are detailed.

A **Food Forest** is to be distinguished from the following other terms used by Community Groups growing food in the form of fruit or vegetables.

A Food Forest is **not** a Community Garden. It has

- No individually assigned plots for cultivation
- No compost bays
- No raised vegetable growing beds
- No worm farms
- No fences / locked gates
- No defined paths

A Food Forest is **not** an Orchard: It has

- No defined (forced) planting plan.
- No defined planting lines for fruit trees
- No plan to achieve maximum production

A Food Forest is a densely planted, productive ecosystem of edible plants. It is not a forced system where inputs are necessary to keep the plants productive, rather it is an ongoing experiment in micro climates which allow individual plants to grow naturally. Its value lies not only in food production but also in creating a self-sustaining ecosystem with aesthetic values related to wonder and discovery.

A Food Forest is a microcosm of beauty, relaxed atmosphere and mentally calming. It should not express itself as an economic unit of production.

The forest can also be a place of exploration, wonder and observation.

Instead of attempting to be maximally productive or economically efficient the forest will be valued for the atmosphere it will generate and the environment it creates to open up possibilities within visitors' minds.

To this end human endeavour will be focused on providing the conditions within which nature can flourish in what most would consider a harsh environment. In Perth this means deep soil creation. No fertilisers will be used. No chemical sprays for 'weeds' or insect pests will be used. Excessive insect infestation will be observed and examined to attempt to understand what conditions are the cause; a healthy plant will not be attacked severely. Other than limited manual control, if it is determined that the conditions do not support the health of a particular plant then it will be removed. This is a natural part of the evolving nature of a forest. Fruit crops that are eaten by birds or other animals will be accepted as 'half for them, half for us'.

Maintenance will be by chop-and-drop pruning, addition of organic layers of mulch, lawn clippings and compost (all inputs otherwise going to waste) and the harvest of fruit and vegetables. The Food Forest will be maintained and regulated with a light touch so that at all times aesthetic values are to the fore.

The Food Forest has become successful when one wants to visit the Forest regularly just to 'see what is going on in it' as seasons change and plants/trees bloom with health, fruit ripens, vegetables fill out, herbs release their fragrance underfoot and wildlife creates a home.

## **HOW TO ESTABLISH – CONCEPTUAL**

A food forest garden is self-sustaining once the soil conditions have been established such that the trees and vegetables planted flourish, self seed and respond to 'chop and drop' soil replenishment.

No fertilisers or chemical sprays will be needed or used. Soil replenishment will be by the regular addition of manures covered by surface mulches.

All infrastructure such as worm farms, raised vegetable beds, compost bays, fences, paths etc will be eschewed. Only some trellis materials will be required for climbing beans, melons and such

Let us analyse.

**Worms** – earth worms will migrate into the soil once enriched. There is no need to 'farm' worms which are only suitable for worm farms.

**Raised vegetable beds** – require constant maintenance and in Perth's climate suffer heat and water stress

**Compost Bays** – require constant maintenance, attract vermin and flies and unless properly managed do not usually have enough material to create compost. In-ground composting will be used and also possibly a few Tumbleweed 220L Gedye Compost Bins (if local residents wish to use for organic waste ).

**Fences** – not required as community use and engagement is to be encouraged and the thought of 'free-loaders' 'stealing' produce is to be ignored. Birds and insects will also take produce.

**Paths** – as the forest develops, nature itself will tell us where we should and should not walk depending on the season and which trees live and die, so natural paths will develop as the area is developed and constraining the forest by artificial paths and lines will be counter productive.

## **HOW – PRACTICAL**

As the actual site has yet to be determined, a practical guide has been formulated for only the **City Beach Civic Centre**.

This guide will necessarily have elements that only apply to this site, however, the basic elements of this plan will remain relevant for any site.

If an alternative site is selected , a similar comprehensive plan will be prepared for the specific parameters of that site.

The Practical Guide for the City Beach Civic Centre is an addendum to this document.

The most important activity regardless of which site is selected is the creation of rich arable soil so that the foundation for a self-sustaining Food Forest is established first .

As the soil foundation is developed, the following stages can be expected to be observed

Numerous varieties of fungi will appear. These can be fascinating to observe and try to identify but best treated as poisonous. However, they are a sign that nature is creating the necessary conditions in the soil for the food forest.

Numerous bugs and beetles will also begin their work and in particular slaters will be devouring the rotting matter and creating humus for us.

Finally worms will appear and is a sign that the soil is becoming a living medium.

## **BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY FOOD FOREST**

### **Community Benefits**

The community will be engaged in a volunteer project, even if not by active participation in the Food Forest, at least by witnessing an alternative natural way of food growing and by it being accessible and developing an interest in the changes in the Food Forest mix of plants as seasons change and the years progress.

The food forest will increase community participation in the town. It will be inclusive and for all ages and serve as a focal point for bringing diverse people together.

The community will feel a sense of wonder that this can be created within a city environment and thus share in the achievement and pride of being a part of the beautiful natural space and the fresh organic produce grown enhancing the experience.

### **Social Benefits**

The above sites present no invitation to visit or stay or interact with others. A Food Forest will always have a mix of plants to generate interest and conversation. The atmosphere that will be generated by the micro-climates of the Food Forest will be conducive to people lingering and conversing and the subject of conversation will be at hand – edible plants.

A food forest will expand those places where community groups can interact to encourage greater community participation. It aligns with the diverse needs of the community to include all ages, cultures and abilities.

There are a number of people who rent properties where landlords do not permit them to grow fruit and vegetables. A Community Food Forest will allow them to.

### **Sustainability Benefits**

Currently the areas under investigation are either regularly watered to maintain lawn or are a wasteland of sand and weeds. A Food Forest will use less water than lawn maintenance and the water use will be productive.

Covid-19 demonstrated that obtaining food from existing supply chains is not guaranteed. The Food Forest will demonstrate by example what can be grown with minimal effort and how one can sustain oneself to a significant extent on home grown food.

### **Environmental Benefits**

The grassed and sandy sites are not environmentally friendly. There is limited carbon capture in the current vegetation, the sandy areas are heat islands in summer, there is no shade for community use and they require synthetic fertilisers and/or toxic chemicals just to maintain in their current format. A Food Forest addresses all these issues. The arable soil and the vegetable mass will capture carbon, the site will be shaded or covered by some form of vegetation, no harmful fertilisers or chemicals will be used and waste products will be recycled into the soil. The urban canopy will be increased and wildlife will have better habitats.

This demonstration of a Food Forest may encourage visitors to turn their own gardens or parts thereof into Food Forests and replace their environmentally destructive lawns. The reduction in grassed areas would see a reduction in water use, synthetic fertiliser use, noise pollution (from mowers, whipper snippers and the like), pollution from fuel (from petrol driven mowers) and chemical weed killers (used to keep lawns neat and tidy) all of which given our sandy soils end up in our water table or the ocean.

A food forest will help to enhance the Town's urban forest by increasing the overall tree cover, tree diversity and shrub cover and the example encouraging the community to follow.

### **Educational Benefits**

The City Beach Primary school is very close to two of the areas. Children will be able to visit and play in the Food Forest and even eat produce directly from the garden. Teachers may be able to use the Food Forest in their curriculum regarding food security, food sources and natural methods of production.

There will undoubtedly be children who will be interested in planting out their own plants and this can be encouraged with no rules as to what they can and cannot plant or in what area. These can have their own 'hundred acre wood' to dream in.

Engaging young people in the processes ensures actions are captured in their thoughts and ideas for the future of our environment and climate change.

There are a number of trees / plants that have significance to various ethnic groups which can be difficult to obtain and which have educational value to broaden ones knowledge of edible plants and can be grown in a Food Forest eg for the Indian community: holy basil, drumstick tree and ajwain, Malay: sambung Chinese: winter melon, angled melon, celtuce bush food: quandong, native ginger, finger lime

There are a number of trees / plants that have significance to ethnic groups which can be difficult to obtain and which have educational value to broaden ones knowledge of edible plants that can be grown in a Food Forest eg for the Indian community: holy basil, drumstick tree and ajwain; Malay: sambung; Chinese: winter melon, angled melon, celtuce; Indigenous bush food: quandong, native ginger, finger lime and by doing so encouraging diversity and inclusion in the community.

### **Financial Benefits**

A vibrant Food Forest will be a further attraction to the Town of Cambridge. Visitors who linger in an area seek out other entertainment options near the area.

It is also possible that there may be people in financial stress who will appreciate being able to obtain free food from the Food Forest.

Contractors who supply mulch or lawn clippings for free will save long drives to tips and tipping fees.

Other producers of waste organic matter (eg restaurants, coffee shops and local residents) will reduce the quantity of rubbish collected by Council and save on their own rubbish removal costs .

### **Mental Health Benefits**

Vast amounts of research show that forest visits promote physical and mental health. Unfortunately, forests in Western Australia while physically accessible to the young and fit are not always so accessible to the elderly. A Food Forest can be visited by everyone as distance is not such a factor and the ground is flat and 'soft' underfoot.

Mental health benefits accrue to those people actively involved in the creation of the food forest and those who take ideas away and implement them in their own spaces.

### **Spiritual Benefits**

It cannot be denied that the act of planting seeds, watching it grow and develop fruit is immensely rewarding and spiritually satisfying. It gives hope and a sense of expectation. It offers a re-connection with nature. These feelings encourage people to share their thoughts with others and otherwise lonely people may feel a part of something and have their spirits lifted. .

## STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN

### OUR COMMUNITY

#### Goals

- A sense of community, pride and belonging

*Community Food Forests are accessible to the community and provide fresh organic food which will draw people in to enjoy and share the experience.*

*The Food Forest will be a different form of community space unique to the Town of Cambridge (although we hope this doesn't last).*

- Quality local parks and open spaces for the community to enjoy

*A Food Forest is a space that is enjoyable all year round as a micro-climate created by pockets of densely planted shading fruit trees.*

- An active, safe and inclusive community

*Volunteers creating and maintaining the Food Forest will be active, encourage visitors by welcoming them when present and explain the purpose to them, offering them the opportunity to participate, share ideas to take away and create a safe environment.*

#### Future Focus

- Activate major public spaces

*Currently a number of major public parkland spaces only uses are sporting activities and dog walking. Allocating a portion of the space to a Community Food Forest would provide another dimension to the area. Multi use of public spaces provides a holistic approach to the community.*

- Generate the most value from the Town's community facilities and services by increasing community participation in:

- events and activities
- clubs and groups
- use of facilities

*Community Food Forests Inc has many members who wish to participate in the community maintenance of a Food Forest where the events and activities are focused on the creation of a beautiful community resource, which constantly grows and evolves, as it is dynamic in nature.*

### OUR ENVIRONMENT

#### Goals

- The Town is environmentally responsible and leads by example

*As previously set out, a Food Forest not only reduces environmental damage caused by the current use of existing spaces but replaces it with a model that is environmentally responsible on a number of fronts.*

*The Town will have the opportunity to showcase the benefits of its Food Forests to other Councils as has been done in other urban environments around the world where Food Forests have been created*

- A community that embraces environmentally responsible practices

*Food Forests are intrinsically environmentally responsible. Soil conditions will be created from the recycling of waste products which allow nature to sustain its food producing capability with little maintenance beyond mulching and pruning. No chemicals will be used for weed or insect control. Local residents can bring their kitchen scraps and garden waste to compost.*

#### Future Focus

- Embedding sustainable practices into the operations of the Town

*Food Forests are more sustainable than the equivalent area of lawn / grass. They do not require mowing (fossil fuel use), spraying for weeds (chemical use), power tools to tidy (noise pollution), use less water than grass and have tangible benefit in the form of fruit and vegetables for humans, birds and insects*

- Education, access and management to enhance experience of the natural environment

*Food Forests were a natural environment for nomadic graziers. A few generations ago it was normal for most people to grow at least some of their own fruit and vegetables. This experience and knowledge has been lost to all but a few. There is a need for education / exposure to a Food Forest so anyone in the community can see how to grow food by re-creating a natural environment.*

- **Climate change resilience**

*Climate change and Covid-19 mean people are more aware of insecurity in the production and obtaining of food. A Food Forest is resilient to climate change as it evolves to suit the external conditions but also creates its own microclimate to shelter the more susceptible plants within. It also can demonstrate to people how easy it is to grow food under changing conditions and what is achievable if simple self-sustaining processes are followed.*

## **Parks and Reserves**

The Town of Cambridge is an inner city urban district, boasting some of Perth's most beautiful open spaces and reserves. Significant parklands and recreational areas provide local residents and visitors with facilities for picnics, sporting activities and play.

*Food Forests should be seen as another way people can be active, contribute and be involved in a activity which is equally valid as any 'recreational activity' but which is not catered for in the Community. So while significant areas of reticulated, chemically maintained lawn are provided for golf, bowls, tennis, cricket, football, **no** areas are provided for the pleasurable non-competitive healthy activity of soil creation and food production of fruit and vegetables. This activity is available to all ages and expertise and yet is not facilitated.*

Within the boundaries of the Town there are 15 Bushland Conservation areas where residents and visitors can walk the many nature trails and enjoy the abundance of native wildlife and flora. The Town's 477Ha of managed open space includes 22Ha of Sports grounds, 29Ha of Garden Beds, 190Ha of Areas under irrigation, 147Ha of Bushland and coastal dunes and 84Ha of Lakes/wetlands.

*And ZERO areas for Food Forests despite the fact of there being a large community of people who could/would participate in such an activity and benefit equally from their participation*

In addition, the Town has over 11,300 trees in parks and a further 14,000 trees on street verges.

*And extremely few that provide any human edible food other than some olive trees and lilly-pillies. The range of trees providing edible food that require no more maintenance than any tree but are likely to be more valued because of their fruit include: macadamia, pecan, almond, plantain, drumstick tree, pomegranate, mulberry, pawpaw...*

## **FUTURE CHALLENGES**

Looking ahead, the Town must continue its focus on balanced development, retaining the charm, heritage and character of the Town.

It is facing increasing needs at both ends of the age spectrum, with a higher than average proportion of both seniors and families in its growing population.

*Food Forests are ideally suited for seniors and families. Seniors have the time and a need for outlets. They usually have some experience with edible plant production.. Seniors can provide education to children where physical disability may prevent active participation. Children will delight in being able to eat freshly picked fruit and learn about food cultivation. Most seniors will also be able to recall fondly their childhoods when fresh produce from their parents' garden was common and re-living happy childhood memories has a socially beneficial effect.*

Climate change is also an ongoing challenge, highlighting in particular the importance of water management, tree canopy cover, drainage and coastal management.

*Water is not managed appropriately when it is used to irrigate great swathes of grass. Food Forests*

*provide tree canopy cover and because of the high content of organic matter in the soil are water conservation areas. There is some research and evidence which suggests that increasing tree canopy cover increases rainfall.*

People are seeking a high standard of amenity and desire well-presented and lively hubs of activity where they can socialise and recreate.

*Food Forests provide a high standard of amenity albeit different to the conventional understanding. However this enhances diversity in amenities and attracts a broader range of people as a result. Food forest create their own micro-climate which is aesthetically pleasing and comfortable to visit and a source of wonder to the uninitiated. Socialisation in such a green environment is natural because the source of inspiration and conversation is at hand – the Food Forest itself will speak of abundance and life. Although minimal, Food Forests require ongoing activity in the form of maintenance and improvement joining people together in the satisfaction of sharing and creating.*

## **OUR ENVIRONMENT**

There is a strong message from the community to continue to focus on all areas of environmental sustainability and conservation and provide opportunities for the community to better access and participate through education and incentives. The highest priorities for the community are water management, bush land conservation, waste management and promoting biodiversity.

*Food Forests are environmentally sustainable and conserve resources. They provide education as to what is possible by creating soil through the use of 'waste' organic matter and provide incentives to re-think what is rubbish and how the waste can be managed locally in the soil. They demonstrate biodiversity in an accessible natural setting.*

The Plan therefore aims for proactive environmental leadership which will see the Town improve its energy and water efficiency, better manage and protect our natural bushland areas, reduce waste and take action to protect native plants and animals. It also aims to educate and inform the local community on how to increase their participation in environmentally responsible behaviours.

*Food Forests are water efficient and what little water they use produces beneficial food. Local birds and animals have an alternative food source. It is not environmentally sustainable to put grass clippings, leaves and pruning in a 'green' recycle bin which must then use fossil fuels to transport, process and then return to the community. If it is all composted in the ground, soil is created locally in which plants will flourish. A Food Forest will have this educational value in demonstrating environmentally responsible behaviour.*

### **Goal 2: Quality local parks and open spaces for the community to enjoy**

#### **Strategies**

Adopt a more strategic and coordinated approach to the planning of our parks and greenspaces recognising their diverse roles and local community preferences

*Food Forests are a local community preference as demonstrated by the attached list of supporters. At present, there is little diversity – the parks and green spaces are only what were native forest, turned into expanses of grass. There are no Food Forests*

Improve the maintenance and provision of amenities in our local parks and district open spaces reflecting local values and priorities and the broader regional demand on facilities

*Food Forests reflect local values and priorities. They are not being met by the current local parks and district open spaces maintenance.*

### **Goal 3: An active, safe and inclusive community**

#### **Strategies**

- Focus on improving and expanding those places where community groups interact to encourage greater participation

*Food Forests provide an ideal location for community groups to interact and will be maintained by the members of Community Food Forests Inc*

- Continue to deliver more programs which support local clubs and community groups and their capacity to run their community activities

*Community Food Forests Inc is a local community group that requires the Town of Cambridge to have a program to deliver land for their activity*

3.3 Encourage a range of activities that better align with the diverse needs of ratepayers of all ages, cultures and abilities

- Act to create and maintain safe, friendly and open environments that residents can access and enjoy

*Community Food Forests Inc allows anyone to participate by creating soil, spreading mulch, chop-and-drop pruning, grafting, seed planting, propagation and harvest in an open environment*

**Goal 7:** The Town is environmentally responsible and leads by example

#### **Strategies**

- Optimise our use of ground water and improve the efficiency of our clean water consumption

*Food Forests optimise the use of water over reticulated grass*

- Minimise waste to landfill and increase recycling

*Food Forests especially in the creation stage will take large amounts of organic 'waste' and by in-ground composting create soil. On-going maintenance will use some organic waste in soil improvement and local 'fertilisation of trees' by incorporating organic matter into the soil by light tilling*

**Goal 8:** A community that embraces environmentally responsible practices

#### **Strategies**

- Encourage the community to self-manage minimising energy consumption, water use, emissions and waste

*Food Forests will demonstrate how organic 'waste' can be used to create productive soil and encourage the community to consider digging their own vegetable scraps directly into their own gardens to minimise rubbish bin waster'. This is particularly so with lawn clippings and leaves which are routinely thrown away into the 'green' bin rather than being used to replenish the local soil.*

#### **Our Environment**

- Embedding sustainable practices into the operations of the Town

*Food Forests are more sustainable than expanses of grass*

- Education, access and management to enhance experience of the natural environment

*Food Forests educate residents in how to improve their soils so that attempts to grow fruit trees and vegetables do not fail. The experience of being able to harvest from a forest of food will enhance understanding of how the natural environment can produce food*

- Climate change resilience

*Food Forests are another source of food when crops on commercial scale fail because of climate change*

- Amount and proportion of annual residential waste:

– recycling

– landfill

– green waste

*Food Forests educate residents in how to use their green waste especially grass clippings and leaves) to improve their local soil fertility and reduce the use of the 'green waste' bin. Landfill should not be composed of organic matter than can be used locally*

## SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY 2019-2023

The Town of Cambridge recognises the importance of embedding sustainability in our daily practices to create the best liveable suburbs and foster a sense of community, ownership, belonging and wellbeing

### **Our Community Our Neighbourhoods**

#### **Goals**

- A sense of community, pride and belonging

*Food Forests will be maintained and enjoyed by the local community*

- Quality local parks and open spaces for the community to enjoy

*While the Town of Cambridge has many local parks and open spaces it has no Food Forests*

- Neighbourhoods where individual character and quality is respected, and planning is responsive to residents

*Food Forests have strong local support and will create an individualised character wherever they are created and maintained by the community as the community will, over time, determine locally the preferred fruits and vegetables both by local taste and what prospers and what fails*

#### **Future Focus**

- Activate major public spaces

*Food Forests will be activate community participation on an almost daily basis as seasons change.*

*Grassy expanses have little change or interest day to day*

- Generate the most value from the Town's community facilities and services by increasing community participation in: events and activities

*Food Forests are a continual event. They require little to no organisation to motivate activity especially in harvesting seasons which will be at different times for different crops.*

### **Our Environment Our Council**

#### **Goals**

- The Town is environmentally responsible and leads by example

*Food Forests will 'lead by example' by demonstrating how some grass expanses can be more productive, more sustainable and less polluting if the soil is nurtured and the grass removed*

- A community that embraces environmentally responsible practices

*Large expanses of grass are not environmentally responsible and even less so if they are 'plastic' grass. Food Forests with soil improved by using green 'waste' are environmentally sustainable.*

*To quote*

*<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-12-01/lawn-porn-and-australias-love-of-green-grass-harming-environment/10570548>*

*The study conducted by the University of Western Australia and the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences looked at research from across the world at the impact of maintaining lawns.*

*Lead researcher Maria Ignatieva, from UWA's School of Design, said she was surprised by how much space lawn took up in our cities.*

*The study found that the upkeep of lawn such as high water consumption, the use of pesticides, and the gas emitted from mowing, were all factors that had a significant impact on the environment.*

*"In Perth, the annual volume of groundwater for irrigating public greenspaces and private open spaces is around 140 gegalitres," Dr Ignatieva said.*

#### **Future Focus**

- Embedding sustainable practices into the operations of the Town

*"In Perth, the annual volume of groundwater for irrigating public greenspaces and private open spaces is around 140 gegalitres," - this is not sustainable practice. Food Forests will use less water and use it productively*

The Town provides education and incentives to the community to adopt more sustainable

practices and initiates ideas and actions to improve the sustainability of council assets. A variety of workshops and initiatives are offered to residents to encourage them to live more sustainably including garden workshops, worm farm and compost bin rebates,

*Food Forests demonstrate a more sustainable way of gardening without using worm farms or compost bins neither of which are productive for the average home gardener. A Food Forest will be a demonstrative work-shop accessible at any time*

At a corporate level, the Town has been recognised as a Waterwise Council since 2010 and endorsed as a Gold Waterwise Council in 2018. The Town was one of the first councils in Perth to deliver a three bin service to the community including the introduction of a green bin for garden waste.

*Food Forests demonstrate a better way for green 'waste' to be used rather than treating it as 'waste' to be thrown away. If it is labelled as 'waste' it will be seen as 'waste'. In fact, all organic matter is not 'waste' – it is free soil improver / fertiliser and should not be put into any bin to be taken away anywhere. It should be used locally and composted in-ground.*

A number of initiatives have also been implemented to improve the energy and water efficiency of council assets, reducing the environmental impact and saving utility costs.

*Removing vast swathes of grass will improve water efficiency. Food Forest can replace the grass.*

These challenges were also recognised as opportunities, with the feedback indicating that the Town has an opportunity to draw on best practice examples from around the world to deliver more sustainable outcomes in balance with economic drivers

*Urban Food Forests are best practice.*

For young people, the key aspects of sustainably shaping the future of the town was ensuring our natural assets were protected, reducing waste and littering and utilising resources in a more efficient way. To achieve a sustainable future, young people recognise that decisions and actions need to be taken by citizens, the government and themselves to ensure real change is realised. They highlighted that young people should be engaged in the process, ensuring actions captured their thoughts and ideas for the future.

*The idea of creating Food Forests today is to build Food Forests for future generations to enjoy especially in the case of long-lived productive trees such as macadamia, pecan, avocado, mango.*

## **5.1 Water**

**Aspiration:** To use water in a more sustainable way including improving efficiency and using more sustainable potable and ground water sources.

*Removing vast swathes of grass and replacing them with Food Forest uses water in a more sustainable way and is more efficient to maintain since no chemicals (weed control) or fossil fuels (powering mowers, blower and edgers and the like) are required*

The Town of Cambridge recognises that water is a precious resource. The declining rainfall and shifting availability of groundwater has been a driver for investigating alternatives for better water management.

*So replace the vast swathes of grass that proliferate everywhere and which need constant maintenance and massive amounts of water*

1.5 Undertake scenario planning on reduced groundwater allocation and impacts on irrigation of parks and green spaces.

*Food Forests will be sustainable on any reduce groundwater allocation, So where such reduction is planned and the grass becomes unsustainable a Food Forest with thick layers of wood mulch can replace the grass*

1.9 Continue providing support to community gardens and groups and encourage development of new projects.

*Food Forests will be a new project. They are **not** community gardens. They require less maintenance and allow far more members of the community to be involved: community gardens are fenced off*

*and only involve those member of the community that rent a plot to grow in.*

1.10 Identify and transition high water intensive grass areas to more water wise vegetation.

*Food Forests are a more water wise vegetation that are also productive.*

1.16 Continue providing community education on saving water inside and outside the home.

*Food Forests demonstrate and educate by example how water can be saved by not watering lawns*

1.17 Continue to provide incentives for water wise products and services including pool covers, water audits, waterwise showerheads and waterwise mulch.

*Food Forests rely on thick layers of mulch creating a rich soil replenished by chop and drop pruning.*

1.21 Undertake a pilot of soil moisture monitoring to monitor the moisture content of areas trialling waterwise irrigation.

*Food Forests can be a trial area for waterwise irrigation and experiments on soil moisture*

## **5.2 Waste**

**Aspiration:** To avoid unnecessary waste, reuse waste and promote recycling and recovery.

Improved waste management has been identified as a significant opportunity for the Town to transition to the more efficient use of resources, avoid higher costs associated with disposal of waste to landfill and keep our parks and urban environment clean.

A range of initiatives have already been implemented around better waste management including the introduction of green waste bins for residents, subsidies for worm farms and compost bins and a comprehensive education program on recycling.

*Food Forests demonstrate a better way for green 'waste' to be used rather than treating it as 'waste' to be thrown away. If it is labelled as 'waste' it will be seen as 'waste'. In fact, all organic matter is not 'waste' – it is free soil improver / fertiliser and should not be put into any bin to be taken away anywhere. It should be used locally and composted in-ground.*

2.8 Identify at least two council assets to implement an organic waste collection and recycling system

*Food Forests are an ideal location for organic waste collection when the site is initially being prepared. Large amounts of organic 'waste' will be used to create soil. If the two council assets are identified, a Food Forest can take the waste.*

2.9 Investigate transitioning all parks and public realm to include landfill and recycling bins by 2024.

*Food Forests can be setup to allow organic landfill to be accepted year round to continually make soil with in-ground composting.*

2.12 Continue providing community education on reducing, reusing and recycling at home, including organic waste recycling.

*Food Forests educate the community of what can be grown by using organic waste locally to create soil*

2.13 Investigate providing education to local businesses on reducing, reusing and recycling waste, including organic waste recycling.

*Food Forests can take vegetable matter waste from food preparation activities. Michael Collier used to collect from a local restaurant a bin of waste each week for home soil improvement. A Food Forest will be able to take all the food preparation waste plus coffee grounds from all the local restaurants who will be happy to reduce their 'waste' disposal costs. Local lawn mowing contractors who often routinely dispose of lawn clippings in the green recycle bin or have to travel to tips to pay to dispose will be happy to provide to a Food Forest.*

2.16 Continue to provide incentives and rebates for waste wise products and services including worm farms and compost bins.

*Food Forests do not need worm farms. The soil is the worm farm. Compost bins can be provided on*

*the periphery of Food Forests where they are easily accessible to willing residents.*

2.17 Advocate the use of share libraries / sharing of resources through schools, community and businesses.

*Food Forests are inherently a shared resource as there will be no fences.*

### **5.3 Natural Environment**

**Aspiration:** To protect our natural assets, foster green public realms and facilitate rehabilitation of natural areas.

*While grass is coloured green, at least when it is heavily watered, it is not a green that should be fostered and is not natural. A more natural asset is a Food Forest which can be used to rehabilitate areas and make them more natural.*

The Town of Cambridge has an abundance of natural assets and green public realms from the 4.3 km stretch of coastline to the natural areas of Bold Park and Perry Lakes to the leafy green streets across the Town.

*Food Forests are the epitome of leafy green and many of the leaves will be edible.*

The natural environment, whether it be bio-diverse bush lands or the established street trees and urban canopy, plays an important role in ensuring the Town protects the biodiversity of the region. Addressing coastal erosion, providing shade and green amenity, improving air quality and creating green corridors are emphasised.

*Food Forests provide shade and are green. A Food Forest has high air quality. Grass provides no shade, is only green if huge amounts of water are used and do nothing for air quality as grass provides no barrier to dust or wind blown particles. Few animals can use grass as a 'green' corridor because it is not 'green'.*

3.6 Continue with implementation of weed and pest management in local reserves in accordance with the Biodiversity Action Plan.

*Swathes of grass require 'weed' management which is usually done with chemical sprays and necessarily reduce biodiversity. These are harmful to the environment and costly. Food Forests have no weeds that need management.*

3.8 Identify the opportunity to provide a nature play parkland within the Town.

*A Food Forest is a nature play. It provides a playful environment of food.*

3.12 Continue to provide community education workshops on sustainable gardening and biodiversity, such as the Beyond Garden workshops, frog talks and “breakfast with the birds”.

*Food Forests are the epitome of sustainable gardening as once soil conditions are created where nature can flourish it will do so in a self-sustaining manner. Birds and frogs are natural paths of Food Forest eco-systems.*

3.14 Provide education to the community on value of wildlife habitat elements such as nesting hollows/boxes, flowering plants, native understorey and low chemical use.

*Food Forests required no chemical use. Trees in a Food Forest provide nesting sites as well as food for birds.*

### **5.5 Climate Resilience**

**Aspiration:** To be adaptive and resilient to the changes in our weather and climate

*Food Forests are a system that once created with fertile soil will adapt themselves to weather changes.*

5.2 Investigate the identification of areas potentially impacted by the heat island effect and strategies to alleviate the potential risks, through an Urban Forest Strategy.

*Food Forests counter heat island effects by providing islands of calm with their own micro-climate. The rich soil and diverse trees and crops have a cooling effect.*

5.7 Provide community information on adapting to a drying climate and gardening in a drying climate.

*Food Forests will demonstrate to the community how gardening may be carried out successfully once rich soil is created from 'green waste' and organic matter currently disposed of in land fill.*

## **5.6 Leadership and Governance**

The Town of Cambridge recognises that clear and effective internal processes are important to implement sustainable practices. Appropriate governance structures and leadership at all levels facilitates the implementation of the Sustainability Strategy across the Town.

This includes managing reporting processes and strengthening stakeholder relationships to achieve our shared goals with the broader community. These structures must also be flexible enough to adapt to changing circumstances and stay relevant to local conditions

*No Food Forests exist in the Town of Cambridge. Circumstances have changed. There is a community demand for other than vast expanses of grass with occasional trees. Food Forests are more relevant to local conditions if sustainability is a strategy and there is community support in the broader community.*

Strategy 11.1 Invest our wealth wisely so that current and future generations benefit from broader strategic planning and major projects

*Food Forests will benefit in particular future generations as fruit trees develop to maximum production over the years, for example, macadamia, pecan etc*

Strategy 12.3 Take actions and make decisions that adopt a “locals first” approach at all times

*Food Forests will benefit primarily local citizens as they will be able to access the produce*

## **6. Links to Social and Economic Sustainability**

While this strategy is primarily focused on the environmental aspects of sustainability, the Town acknowledges that achieving environmental outcomes is closely connected with social advancement and cohesion and economic prosperity. Equally, actions relating to environmental sustainability benefit society and economy whether it be through facilitating happy and healthy lifestyles or reducing the resource cost of buildings.

*Food Forests encourage physical activity in mulching, pruning and harvesting and an engagement with the seasons and the natural environment as food is produced. People will be socially engaged and for some of the senior people in the community it will recall a happy past when food growing was a common occupation.*

Age Friendly Community Plan which focuses on strengthening community connections and building the capacity of people to participate in the achievement of age-friendly outcomes.

*Food Forests are welcoming to all ages and there are activities that anyone can partake in: for example, collecting seeds and storing them*

Urban Forest Strategy

- Recognition of the role of the urban forest as a carbon sink.
- Links to climate resilience and adaptation in reducing urban heat island effect.

*Food Forests are a carbon sink and reduce heat island effects.*

## **Public Open Space Strategy**

- Inclusion of biodiversity management principles in the Public Open Space Strategy to ensure delivery of biodiversity outcomes in the design and construction of new and existing public realm.

*Food Forests are a perfect thing to construct in the public realm. They can not only be constructed with minimal (if any) cost they utilise materials that are otherwise seen as waste. They require no built infrastructure. The design elements are minimal and guided by nature as the Forests mature.*

## URBAN FOREST STRATEGY

Despite the inherent value of our urban forest, A report commissioned by The Town has found a downward trend in the Towns tree canopy cover over the last 4 years. These changes can be attributed to pressure from urban development. As our population rapidly increases, urban development puts pressure on urban tree and shrub cover.

*Food Forests will lead to an increase in tree canopy cover.*

This strategy defines the urban forest in terms of vegetation typologies and their individual roles within our public, private and natural spaces. Benefits of a healthy urban forest are found within the social, environmental and economic realms of urban life including direct and indirect health benefits, natural management of environmental systems, and significant household cost and property value benefits. For the Town of Cambridge to ensure the sustainability and resilience of the urban forest, some key objectives and actions will be required which the embellishment of trees and vegetation existing streetscapes and open spaces, and encourage landowners to contribute where possible

*Food Forests are a natural embellishment to the environment*

### 2. INTRODUCTION

The Town of Cambridge is home to some of Perth's most iconic open spaces, streetscapes and natural areas. Along with private trees and gardens, the vegetation in these spaces are the building blocks which create the urban forest.

As recognition for this, the Town of Cambridge acknowledged the development of an Urban Forest Strategy as a key strategy in the Community Strategy Plan 2018.

The Towns urban forest contributes significantly to the character and identity of the Town. A healthy urban forest can have the potential to:

- Provide aesthetic and functional outcomes which enhance the overall quality of life of residents and establish a sense of place, character and theme;
- Improve the comfort of pedestrians and residents by providing summer shade, windbreaks, visual screening of unwanted views, noise reduction and a passive form of traffic calming;
- Reduced energy use in cooling and heating indoor spaces;
- Improve environmental values and conditions through air pollution removal, absorption of heat, moisture retention, energy savings, carbon storage and storm water run-off reduction;
- Provide fauna with habitats and a source of food, ecological linkages and bird corridors to parks and remnant bushlands within and outside the Town;
- Provide historical values, where they are part of an historic setting, have identifiable associations with important past events, people, phase or activity of historic importance; and
- Enhance property values as trees establish and mature

This strategy analyses the challenges and opportunities facing the Towns urban forest and proposes actions to ensure its continued health and benefit.

### 3. VISION

"To ensure the sustainability of the Towns urban forest and to retain & strengthen the existing tree canopy within the Town through development of key strategies and actions"

To protect and enhance the Towns urban forest

- Increase overall tree cover
- Increase tree diversity

- Increase shrub cover
- Maintenance & assessments

To foster an appreciation and pride for our urban forest

- Inform and educate the community of the role of the urban forest in all its forms

*Food Forests is a form of urban forest. None exist in the Town.*

- To promote strategies and projects within the town which celebrate the urban forest

*Food Forests can be promoted by the town. Community Food Forests Inc has been formed to create such projects in the town and only requires the town to identify land that can be used and make it available to Community Food Forests Inc.*

- To engage with the community to share goals about the towns urban forest

*Community Food Forests Inc has engaged with the community to create a list of supporters who wish to see the town's urban forest strategy incorporate Food Forests.*

To ensure the resilience of our urban forest

- Continue to monitor the urban forest through assessment and analysis

*Food Forests is a form of urban forest. None exist in the Town.*

- Refine policy and strategy to protect the urban forest

*There is currently no policy document that outlines a strategy for the creation of Food Forests.*

*Community Food Forests Inc is happy to assist in the formulation of a policy document and create and maintain Food Forests as part of the urban forest strategy*

To implement green infrastructure initiatives to improve the Towns spaces

- Prepare and promote master planning works for our public domain
- Implement projects which connect people with urban forest

*Food Forests can be prepared as detailed in Community Food Forests Inc proposal documents. The community will be naturally connected to a forest producing edible food.*

#### **4. DEFINING THE URBAN FOREST**

The urban forest can be defined as the collection of trees, shrubs, groundcovers and grassed areas within an urban environment. These elements can be located on public land such as streetscapes, parkland, bushland and wetlands as well as in private lands such as residential gardens, institutions and commercial areas.

Grassed spaces such as lawn areas in gardens and turf spaces within parklands, are also part of the Town's urban forest. The contribution of grassed areas to the urban forest is to suppress weeds, reduce water loss through, evaporation and also provide a cooling function.

*Food Forests are significantly better at suppressing weeds, reducing water loss and providing cooling than grassed areas. It is a stretch to suppose grassed spaces are part of an urban forest as evidenced by the need to control weeds in them by the use of chemical sprays: weeds being symptomatic of degraded areas which is what lawns are albeit by the use or large quantities of water and work with chemicals and polluting machinery they can be made to look pleasing to some people.*

#### **Vegetation Typology Description**

Large tree	15m+ in height
Small - Medium tree	3 - 15m in height
Shrubs & groundcover	0.05 - 3m
Grass / turf	0-0.5m

## **Parklands**

Parklands consist of mainly irrigated grass, tree plantings and occasional shrub cover. Turfed areas are important within parkland areas for activity such as sports, movement, kick about space, etc.

*Not everyone wants to partake in sports, kick about. A good many people want to be able to enjoy gardening in Food Forests. No such areas exist in the Town. Irrigated grass with few trees is not conducive in Perth summers for lingering on. Food Forests are conducive to leisurely visitation and such spaces should be created.*

Tree plantings can be native or exotic, and are generally around the perimeter of parklands and along movement corridors to provide shade and comfort to the space. When implemented in place of turf, garden areas with native shrub plantings can reduce irrigation water use and provide biodiversity and habitat

*Food Forests can also reduce irrigation water use and edible foods are more of an attraction than turf.*

## **Natural Areas**

The Towns natural areas include bushlands, wetlands and sand dune areas. Human activity within natural areas is generally limited to pathways and the landscape is dominated by endemic species. Vegetation within these systems includes a diversity of vegetation typologies (trees, shrubs, groundcovers, reeds and grasses) to support the natural systems which depend on the landscape. Natural areas are mainly self-governing and maintenance is generally for the treatment of weeds, revegetation and monitoring of ecologies.

*Food Forests can be naturalised to be largely self-governing. Maintenance will be generally for pruning (chop-and-drop) , mulching and harvesting.*

## **5. BENEFITS OF THE URBAN FOREST**

An emerging body of knowledge has found that a healthy urban forest can have many benefits on an urban environment. Also known as 'Green infrastructure', trees and vegetation perform a crucial role in many urban & natural processes. These benefits include environmental, social and economic as well as contributing to the landscape character and identity of a place.

### **Reduced Urban Heat Island**

The urban forest is an important mitigating factor in reducing the urban heat island effect. Vegetation provides a natural cooling effect through evapotranspiration and solar reflective processes

*Food Forests – yes.*

### **Economics**

Tree and shrub cover can also reduce irrigation water by creating shade and reducing evaporation. This reduces water use which has a domestic and capital cost benefit.

*Food Forests – yes.*

### **Improved Air Quality**

Urban trees filter air pollutants and create oxygen. This can in turn lead to mitigate the impact of climate change and counteract health conditions associated with air quality such as asthma.

*Food Forests – yes.*

### **Health benefits**

The urban forest provides direct benefits for human health through heat reduction, air and water cleansing, and protection from harmful rays. A healthy urban forest also provides indirect health benefits such as promoting an active outdoor lifestyle. There are key links between an active lifestyle and physical health. There is also a number of mental health benefits associated with exposure to green surroundings.

*Food Forests – yes. A further mental health benefit amongst the elderly is to happily reminisce about their childhood when growing one's own food was prevalent. All age groups participating in*

*maintenance of the Forest will be involved in a healthy outdoor activity.*

### **Climate change mitigation**

Trees play an important role in the fight against climate change by capturing and storing carbon dioxide and other air pollutants. Cooling effect of tree canopy also assist in the mitigation of a warming climate.

*Food Forests – yes and also a source of food when large scale crop failures occur or when food is not easily purchased such as in the Covid-19 pandemic.*

Apart from Wembley Downs (Golf Course only) all Suburbs indicated a decline in canopy cover between 2014 and 2018, but figures are ultimately steady during the study period between 2012 and 2018.

*The initial Food Forest is proposed in City Beach and will help arrest the decline in canopy cover.*

### **Parklands**

Town managed parks and facilities represent 252.6ha or 12% of the Town's land. Significant areas within these parklands are dedicated active zones for sports and as such require turf or a hard surface. However, opportunities exist to supplement tree and shrub cover within parklands which are not active zones.

*Food Forests are active zones that do not require turf. The surface will be soft mulch covering rich life filled soil. They provide supplementary tree and shrub cover.*

Implementation of urban forest initiatives within these spaces address a number of this strategy's objectives, such as increase tree canopy and shrub cover, reduce irrigation water, improve groundwater conditions and improve biodiversity.

*Food Forests do all these things with minimal effort.*

### **Private Land (commercial/residential/industrial)**

Private land holdings represent the largest area of land within the town at 939ha. By nature, this land use contains a high portion of hard surfaces, including buildings, driveways, paved spaces; etc. Pressure on the urban forest in private land includes removal of existing trees and vegetation for development and reduced areas for planting due to more built up areas.

The urban forest within private land areas has been found to be the most at risk, with a declining trend in canopy cover shown by the Towns analysis, as well as other similar analysis across urban areas of Australia.

*A Food Forest will demonstrate by example to members of the community what is possible and how pleasant it can be to have a food source on the door step. There will be an impetus to follow by example. Peer pressure to maintain a lawn will be resistible if an example is provided to the community of alternative garden design.*

While private land is not managed by the Town, significant opportunities exist to enhance the urban forest within these areas. Creating a native garden and improving tree coverage can enhance a home's comfort and aesthetics, contributing positively to the liveability.

Healthy tree canopy can also increase a property's value and real estate potential. Tree canopy can shade hard surfaces around the house, cool internal and external spaces and attract bird life.

*Creating a Food Forest achieves all these objectives as well as providing food.*

### **Community engagement**

A key vision of this strategy is to foster appreciation and pride for our urban forest and community engagement was identified as a key finding in the Town's Strategic Community Plan 2018-2028.

The Town will continue to inform and educate the community of the role of our urban forest, through events such as:

- Arbour Days school plantings
- Cambridge Coastcare community planting events
- Garden and nature based workshops
- Nature tours such as frog stalks

- Adopt a park community events
- Celebrate our urban forest through social media

*Community Food Forests Inc has already demonstrated a desire for a Food Forest by circulating a proposal and obtaining widespread community support, The creation of a Food Forest will inform and educate the community on what is possible if good soil is created from 'waste'.*

## 8.2 Challenges

### Climate & Soil Conditions

The Town of Cambridge's urban forest is subject to highly alkaline nutrient deficient soils, and often direct coastal winds. As such a rigorous species selection criteria must be applied to ensure vegetation establishment is achieved. In addition to this, regular maintenance and assessment is required to ensure successful establishment.

*Community Food Forests Inc can demonstrate the possibility of growing valuable fruits in the local area provided only that the soil is improved by using 'waste' organic matter freely available*

### Species Selection

The Towns 'Street Tree Masterplan' lists proposed tree species for all streetscapes. Along with climatic adaptability, factors for species selection include:

- Overall form and appearance of the species including predictable form, ultimate height, density and spread of the trees canopy;

*Community Food Forests Inc would encourage the consideration of trees that produce fruit and /or nuts that will be appreciated by future generations*

1.1 Encourage and support participation in a range of activities and events at which communities can gather and interact. Promote community planting programs to instil pride in environment

*Community Food Forests Inc will involve the community in creating soil for the creation of a food forest to promote pride in the environment.*

2.1 Focus on activating our major public open spaces. Promote new park works within the community

*Community Food Forests Inc wishes to have the idea of food forests promoted by the Town*

3.1 Create and improve the places where community groups can attend

*Food Forests will at all times be open to the community*

4.3 Make neighbourhoods green and pleasant

*Food Forests maximise greenery and pleasantness*

7.2 Optimise our use of groundwater and improve the efficiency of our clean water consumption

*Food Forests use less water than reticulated grass*

8.1 Encourage the community to self-manage minimizing energy consumption, water use and waste. Promote benefits of private tree planting

*A Food Forest will demonstrate the possibilities of what trees can be planted by having trees that may be unknown or considered difficult to grow. The benefit of obtaining food from the tree will not need to be promoted.*

## STREET TREE MASTER PLAN

### TREE SPECIES LIST

Summary list for all Tree Species

- 44 Native trees, 17 exotics
- 61 Tree Species in total
- Deciduous vs Evergreen

*A Food Forest will demonstrate that there are trees with edible fruits that can also be considered. The current Street Tree Master Plan includes few that have edible fruits: lilly pilly is one.*

## FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is often thought that money is required to create a Community Garden.

This may well be so for a Community Garden but as this vision is for a Food Forest money should not be required.

A Community Food Forest is **not** a Community Garden

Money will not be required for any infrastructure since there will be none.

Materials to make soil are readily available for free from numerous sources. It will most commonly be delivered for free by happy contractors.

Work will be done for free by volunteers using their own rakes, spades and secateurs.

Money may be required if Council charge for the land they make available. It is to be hoped they can make the land available for free and save Council the cost of maintaining the land with the use of mowers and chemicals.

Money may be required for access to water if the site chosen does not already have water by water connection fee and / or reticulation pipes. These are obtainable for minimal cost second-hand or free from demolition sites.

If the site selected does have water already and it is being used to water grass then less water will be required for a Food Forest hence it is to be expected that no money will be required to pay for water which was being used anyway.

Money may be required for Insurance.

Council may be able have their own policies extended to Food Forests and then pay any insurance. As there will be no infrastructure there will be material items to insure.

Alternatively, Community Food Forests Inc can affiliate with Garden Clubs Australia (\$40 / year after \$55 joining fee) and then obtain 'reasonably priced' insurance through them.

See <https://gardenclubs.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Form-A-Application-for-Affiliation.pdf>

## **CONCLUSION / SUMMARY**

The vision can be achieved if the following occur

- A number of people want it to occur – many hands make light work
- No regard is had to worrying about who will pick what and when – that is a sense of possessiveness or ownership of any particular planting or plantings is to be avoided
- It should be a hobby – so one does not consider anything done as work
- One should be able to imagine a food forest – see in ones own mind green grass wastelands gone: read (although it is a US article) <https://usrepresented.com/2015/07/08/our-green-wasteland-the-great-american-lawn/> and share that vision
- One should be able to imagine a food forest – as described by the Picasso Food Forest Project
- One should be able to imagine ...

## **PICASSO FOOD FOREST**

The history of urban food forestry is very recent and early projects represent highly valuable operational case studies to obtain precious information on challenges, best practices and results.

The Picasso Food Forest represents the earliest documented case study of urban community food forest in Italy.

By hosting several perennial woody plants, it provides ecosystem services typical of a tree system including making bio-diverse fresh edible fruits, vegetables and herbaceous plant easily accessible to adults and children reconnecting them to healthy eating habits, food growing and the special experience of foraging and harvesting food directly from the plant in a nature-like setting.

It has contributed to develop a neighbourhood community, place attachment and meaning among the citizens that participate to its implementation or that simply attend the area.

Compared to more traditional community gardens, the food forest provides a deeper interaction with the natural world and related benefits. This is achieved by exposing people to a greater understanding of ecological processes that are at the base of the food forest design and functioning, and to a more complex physical structure and biodiversity, more similar to wilderness, stimulating sense of wonder, exploration, curiosity and observation.

The Picasso Food Forest represents a hot spot of biodiversity providing a plant and wildlife nursery and shelter, and a genetic bank by including several heritage and local varieties.

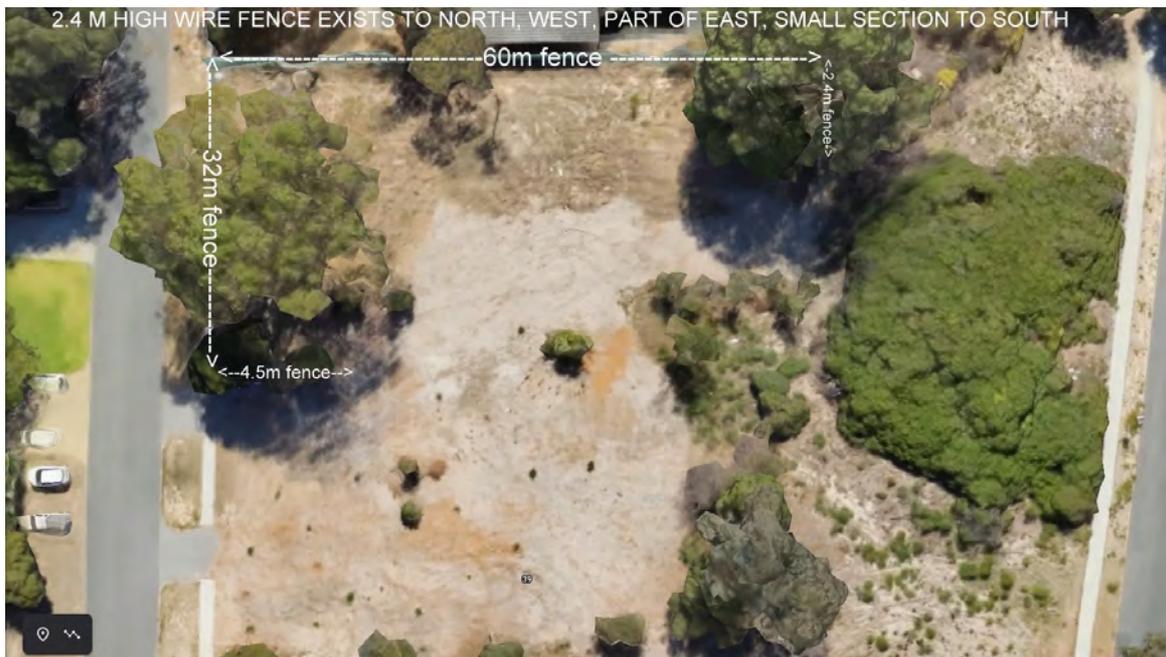
The setting of a case study that provides inspiration for new analogous projects in Italy and Europe is one of the main achievements.

The Picasso Food Forest successfully challenges issues such as biodiversity loss, community segregation, food insecurity, climate breakdown, unsustainable consumption and production systems and it provides a model to rethink not only how cities should be designed but also how we, as a species, shall provide for our needs and live on this planet.

See [http://www.fruttortiparma.it/foodforest\\_en.html](http://www.fruttortiparma.it/foodforest_en.html)

## PRACTICAL GUIDE for former City Beach Kindergarten site

The initial area of activity will be to the north which is already fenced off as in this image.



The entire area is now sandy wasteland with couch grass, weeds and a few volunteer bushes and a few large native trees.

All existing trees and native shrubs will be retained. Digging will be kept well away from trees and bushes so that their roots are not damaged.

The couch grass and weeds need to be removed by mechanical means. This will involve digging up all the weeds and grass to a depth of at least 300mm.

Possible ways it can be removed

- There may be people who want free sand fill who are happy to come and dig up take away.
- The material can be spread on southern parts of the site that are hollowed out

The removal of surface grass and weeds can be by manual labour (dig and wheelbarrow) or by hire of a bobcat (\$180 per day with \$70 delivery and pickup fee if not trailer available).

Then by hand (free) or machine (costs) dig out the sand to 1m deep and fill the holes with organic matter. The removed sand will be either 1) taken away 2) smaller amounts mixed in with organic matter and returned to the holes 3) used to create small mounds (see below under asparagus).

The entire area is to be seen as one huge in-ground compost heap at this stage of construction and creation of the soil conditions suitable for the establishment of a food forest.

Although the entire area will be dug out to 1 metre deep it can be done in stages.

Along the north and west boundaries where the fences are located, it will be necessary to stay at least 300mm away from fence to avoid damaging it or the walls it is built on. These areas will be the first to be dug out as the fences will be useful for any number of crops.

It will be best if the work is commenced April or May so that winter rains will provide water and so that a crop of Fava Beans can be planted.

Organic matter to fill the entire area to be gardened (dug out to 1 metre deep) can be obtained (free) as follows.

### **Newspapers and cardboard boxes**

Whenever a hole is dug it is best to line the bottom thickly with cardboard and newspapers. They will eventually break-down but initially they provide a barrier to the rich nutrients draining away into the sand as the compost is forming in the soil

### **Grass clippings**

These can be obtained by the truck load during autumn when grass tennis courts around Perth are dethatched and during most of the year (not so much in winter) from local lawn mowing contractors who will be thrilled to have their clipping utilised and save them driving and tip fees

### **Horse manure**

This can be obtained from Claremont Showgrounds and Ascot horse trainers but need to pick up from these places

### **Leaf litter**

This can be obtained year round from companies that vacuum gutters from public buildings and schools. This litter also very often contains worms who have established their homes in gutters. The companies are happy to save driving and tip fees.

### **Mulch**

This can be delivered from Mulch.net (local tree lopping contractors) for free

### **Food Preparation scraps**

Local restaurants are happy to provide access to vegetable scrap bins from the food preparation activities to save them bin fees.

### **Coffee Grounds**

Many coffee shops provide free their grounds in bags.

### **Tumbleweed 220L Gedye Compost Bins**

It may also prove useful to place a few Tumbleweed 220L Gedye Compost Bins on Boronia Crescent near the 4.5m fence corner for use by local residents. They can bring their food scraps and place them in the bins. The compost that will be made can be spread into the food forest.

During this soil construction phase, it will be important for the site to be visited daily to ensure that organic matter that may have been dumped or is being delivered is 1) dumped in the correct area as per the signs that can be erected 2) the organic matter is covered with wood chip mulch. In this regard, it will be important for there to be at all times a large mound of wood chip mulch that can be spread thickly (at least 150mm) on all other organic matter that has been put into the dug holes.

If a team of people is almost daily visiting the site with what ever organic matter they have obtained, digging a hole for it then it should only take a matter of months for the entire area to be filled with organic matter.

As an example, from experience, I can dig (since the digging in Perth is all sand) a one square metre hole to 1 metre deep in under two hours and then fill it with horse manure, grass clippings and cover with mulch.

Tools required will be 1) wheel barrow, 2) fork 3) shovels 4) spades 5) rake. Apart from the wheel barrow the other tools can be brought and taken home by the volunteer. A wheel barrow can be left on site perhaps chained to a tree if necessary.

There is only the matter of mineral trace elements to be considered.

I have found it necessary to at times provide some commercially available trace elements. Usually this is a once only treatment because Perth sandy soils are so deficient and most of the organic matter listed above is also deficient.

It is probably beneficial also to spread bentonite clay into the soil. This costs \$585.64 for 1 tonne.

## **FOOD FOREST PLANTS**

The copious use of mulch can mean the soil is initially nitrogen depleted.

If the area is prepared before winter, the initial planting can be of Fava Beans.

These can be planted over the entire area. They do not need staking, have pretty white and black flowers, are delicious to eat and have nitrogen fixing nodules that can remain in the soil after harvest. This is the first cover crop.

Then in spring can plant melons and cucumbers. These will all thrive in the soil and because there will be no trees at this stage will enjoy the full sun and can cover the entire area.

Then as time and availability of plant dictates trees can be planted. I list below an example of what may work. It is a rough guide only. For many plantings I give the thinking behind it

It is important to understand that perhaps in as little as 3 years the entire site may be redeveloped for residences so only annual plants or quickly producing and / or short-lived fruiting trees have been considered.

### **Northern fence and short fence to east**

- 1) Dragon fruit – they like sandy well drained soil and full sun and intense heat. They can grow up the fence and with good soil will be very productive
- 2) Passionfruit – these can climb up the fence. Fruit in one year.
- 3) In spring climbing beans, snake beans, cucumber, melons can all be trained up the fences. Beans can be planted until the dragon fruit and passionfruit takeover and become so dense beans cannot grow

### **Boronia Crescent fence (western side)**

This fence can also grow dragon fruit and passionfruit but as it will take the brunt of westerly sea-breezes it may also be advisable to plant behind the fence and a little way from it

- 1) Plantain – a staple food in South America and West Africa. Large wind-break and provide shade from the hot afternoon sun and will fruit in two years.
- 2) Banana – Large wind-break and provide shade from the hot afternoon sun

### **Central area**

Trees that can produce quickly

- 1) Mulberry – various varieties. Hick's Fancy is very hardy and easy to propagate and will produce in one year if propagated from cuttings.
- 2) Artichoke – They like full sun and have very pretty flowers
- 3) Pomegranate – these will thrive and can provide a hedge to southern side of area. They like full sun, are drought resistant, look beautiful and some varieties (eg Ben Hur) are good eating. They will fruit in one year from cuttings.
- 4) Pawpaw – these grow prolifically and provide an immense amount of fruit in a small footprint. Not prone to fruit-flies and can be easily managed by picking the fruit green for salads and soups and chutneys. Will produce fruit in less than two years grown from seed.
- 5) Tamarillo – prone to aphid attack but will manage itself – expensive to buy and delicious. Will fruit within one year from cuttings. Trees last only about five years.
- 6) Cape Gooseberry – these can multiply as weeds but the fruit is nice to eat and as they are undemanding can be beneficial to grow
- 7) Various melon varieties that are favoured by Chinese people and are difficult to obtain in shops include Dong Gua (Winter Melon / 冬瓜), Si Gua (Loofah / Angled Melon / 菱角瓜), Hami Gua (Fragrant Melon / 哈密瓜) can be grown successfully
- 8) Beans – Australian Climbing Beans, Purple King Climbing Beans, Snake Beans, Purple

Snake Beans can all be grown on simple tripods made from branch prunings

It may be pleasant to construct in this area a simple arch pergola for climbing plants such as beans, melons, passionfruit, grapes. These can be constructed from galvanised steel mesh sheets (SL52 Galvanised Mesh (6m x 2.4m) with 200mm openings. An arch is created by fixing the ends to the ground with stakes and the sheet will naturally bend to create an arch of the width required. The arched area will be a shade area for shade appreciating plants. The mesh can be removed easily and redeployed when necessary.

Green vegetables can be planted by random scatter of seeds in spring. For example, mizuna, rocket, kale, celtuce, daikon turnip, rainbow chard, silver beet, spinach, sambung (everlasting spinach) and will tell us where they want to grow and where they do not like.

The southern end of the area can be planted out with herbs so they are available easily for people walking through the area (Boronia to/from Templetonia). For example, a lot of thyme varieties, rosemary, pineapple sage (my favourite for its beautiful flowers), parsley, oregano, marjoram and mint (although best in pots buried in ground to contain their root system), chamomile and Mexican tarragon (to make your own tea), coriander, sweet basil, thai basil. Garlic can be grown in a dedicated patch.

Other herbs that can be experimented with are ginger, galangal and tumeric.

Root vegetables include sweet potato and daikon turnip both of which can be grown as green leaf vegetables also. They are both undemanding and in fact sweet potato can become weed-like.

The list above is meant to fire the imagination. It is definitely possible to all the food forest to contain all these plants and more with minimal maintenance provided only that the soil has been prepared well and (for some) water is available.

It make take up to four years for the soil to become a living environment capable to sustaining densely planted trees and vegetable crops merely by the (constant) addition of surface manures and mulch. That is, no digging growing except to make a hole to plant a new tree.

However during this period it is still possible to grow any of the crops detailed above. So the fact that in maybe three years time the site will be re-developed need not be a deterrent.

## **PRACTICAL GUIDE for City Beach Civic Centre site**

The area is now reticulated buffalo grass.

This has to be removed by mechanical means. This will involve digging up all the grass to a depth of at least 300mm (possibly 400 or 500mm).

Possible ways it can be removed

- Often people advertise seeking free grass turf who will be happy to come and dig up what they require and take it away.
- There may be people who want free sand fill who are happy to come and dig up take away.
- Failing that, the Council may provide machines and labour to remove – they may well consider doing that in lieu of a cash grant if we apply and it is accepted
- Failing that, one can pay contractors to do the work - using any cash grant that Council may accept on application

In all cases, it will be important initially to dig by hand along the lines of the existing reticulation pipes to expose them so that they can be seen and protected from any mechanical digging.

Then by hand (free) or machine (costs) dig out the sand to 1m deep and fill the holes with organic matter. The removed sand will be either 1) taken away 2) smaller amounts mixed in with organic matter and returned to the holes 3) used to create small mounds (see below under asparagus).

The entire area is to be seen as one huge in-ground compost heap at this stage of construction and creation of the soil conditions suitable for the establishment of a food forest.

Although the entire area will be dug out to 1 metre deep it can be done in stages.

Along the north and east edges where the stone walls are located, it will be necessary to stay at least 1.5 metres away from the wall and only take away the surface grass to avoid undermining the wall foundations.

The west and north edges (alongside the sealed road surfaces) will also only be dug out to a shallower depth, The trench holes will be filled with manures and then mounded to about 300mm above the kerb level. These mounds will serve two purposes: 1) discourage vehicles from mounting the kerb and driving into or onto the food forest 2) be planted with asparagus which like free draining salt laded area and will thrive for decades and in spring / summer provide a beautiful green hedge with red berries.

Organic matter to fill the entire area (dug out to 1 metre deep) can be obtained (free) as follows.

### **Newspapers and cardboard boxes**

Whenever a hole is dug it is best to line the bottom thickly with cardboard and newspapers. They will eventually break-down but initially they provide a barrier to the rich nutrients draining away into the sand as the compost is forming in the soil

### **Grass clippings**

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### **Food Preparation scraps**

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### **Coffee Grounds**

Many coffee shops provide free their grounds in bags.

### **Tumbleweed 220L Gedye Compost Bins**

It may also prove useful to place a few Tumbleweed 220L Gedye Compost Bins in the south alongside the car parking bays. As the Civic Centre is used daily by bridge club members, some of them may wish to bring their food scraps and place them in the bins where the compost can be spread into the food forest.

During this soil construction phase, it will be important for the site to be visited daily to ensure that organic matter that may have been dumped or is being delivered is 1) dumped in the correct area as per the signs that can be erected 2) the organic matter is covered with wood chip mulch. In this regard, it will be important for there to be at all times a large mound of wood chip mulch that can be spread thickly (at least 150mm) on all other organic matter that has been put into the dug holes.

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Then in spring can plant melons and cucumbers. These will all thrive in the soil and because there will be no trees at this stage will enjoy the full sun and can cover the entire area.

Then as time and availability of plant dictates trees can be planted. I list below an example of what may work. It is a rough guide only. For many plantings I give the thinking behind it

Working from the western road boundary

- 4) Asparagus – in mound alongside road curb with some small walk-way gaps for pedestrians

to enter area. As described above the mounds are a vehicle deterrent and asparagus will thrive for decades and in spring / summer provide a beautiful green hedge with red berries.

- 5) Artichoke – like full sun and very pretty flowers
- 6) Pomegranate – these will provide a hedge wind-break for the rest of the forest, like full sun are drought resistant, look beautiful and some varieties (eg Ben Hur) are good eating.
- 7) Plantain – a staple food in South America and West Africa. Large wind-break and provide shade from the hot afternoon sun
- 8) Banana – Large wind-break and provide shade from the hot afternoon sun

#### Working from eastern stone wall boundary

- 3) Passionfruit – these can climb up and cling to the stone wall
- 4) Dragon fruit – these can climb up and cling to the stone wall
- 5) Mulberry – various varieties. Hick's Fancy is very hardy and easy to propagate. Near the wall falling berries cannot stain anything and they can be allowed to grow tall as one will be able to pick the higher berries from the terrace
- 6) Mulberry – Shahtoot variety – hard to get but a much smaller tree with very sweet long fruits which sometimes crop twice a year

#### Central area

- 9) Pawpaw – these grow prolifically and provide an immense amount of fruit in a small footprint. Not prone to fruit-flies and can be easily managed by picking the fruit green for salads and soups and chutneys
- 10) Custard Apple – very delicious and expensive to buy. Can be prone to branch snapping in strong winds (hence the wind-break plantings)
- 11) Black Sapote (Chocolate Pudding Fruit) – no pests, picked green, ripen off tree for delicious chocolate pudding
- 12) Tamarillo – prone to aphid attack but will manage itself – expensive to buy and delicious
- 13) Jujube – latest fashion
- 14) Cape Gooseberry – these can multiply as weeds but the fruit is nice to eat and as they are undemanding can be beneficial to grow
- 15) Rhubarb – once established can be for-ever
- 16) Various melon varieties that are favoured by Chinese people and are difficult to obtain in shops include Dong Gua (Winter Melon / 冬瓜), Si Gua (Loofah / Angled Melon / 菱角瓜), Hami Gua (Fragrant Melon / 哈密瓜) can be grown successfully
- 17) Beans – Australian Climbing Beans, Purple King Climbing Beans, Snake Beans, Purple Snake Beans can all be grown on simple tripods made from branch prunings

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#### The south-west corner

- 1) Ice-cream bean tree – this will provide shade to the car-park, as a legume provide nitrogen to the soil and the pods are delicious

Other trees that may be considered but with which I have had no success in my own garden in City Beach are avocado and mango although I see them growing well in older established gardens. Maybe they like to have sandy soil with organic matter only on the surface. If so, can leave some sandy patches for avocado and mango.

Trees that may be planted but which seem unnecessary as they are so prolific: olive, lemon

Fruit trees that have to be cautious about because of possibility of fruit-flies – all citrus, loquats, figs, persimmon

Nut trees that should grow well for posterity are macadamia and pecan.

Green vegetables can be planted by random scatter of seeds. For example, mizuna, rocket, kale, celtuce, daikon turnip, rainbow chard, silver beet, spinach, sambung (everlasting spinach) and will tell us where they want to grow and where they do not like.

The southern end of the area can be planted out with herbs so they are available from the car parking area. For example, a lot of thyme varieties, rosemary, pineapple sage (my favourite for its beautiful flowers), parsley, oregano, marjoram and mint (although best in pots buried in ground to contain their root system), chamomile and Mexican tarragon (to make your own tea), coriander, sweet basil, thai basil and a dwarf bay-tree. Garlic can be grown in a dedicated patch.

Other herbs that can be experimented with are ginger, galangal and tumeric.

Root vegetables include sweet potato and daikon turnip both of which can be grown as green leaf vegetables also. They are both undemanding and in fact sweet potato can become weed-like.

There will also be the possibility of leaving other sandy areas, perhaps even mounded to grow quandong and Jenny in City Beach is an expert in growing these from seed. There are many other Australian edible plants that can be grown: midyim berries (mine was killed when neighbour sprayed weed killer on his driveway), native ginger *Alpinia caerulea/coerulea* etc

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## OFFICE BEARERS OF COMMUNITY FOOD FORESTS INC.

Chair:	Michael Collier, City Beach	mco_cka@yahoo.com
Deputy Chair:	Susan Brannon, City Beach	ebrannan@iinet.net.au
Secretary:	Jane Law, City Beach	sunnybay8@bigpond.com.au
Treasurer:	Dawn Testrow, City Beach	testrow@westnet.com.au
Committee:	Wendy Appleyard, City Beach	beula@iinet.net.au
	Josephine Armstrong, City Beach	joarms9@yahoo.com
	Julia Cheung Hornel, City Beach	juliacheunghornel@gmail.com
	Ying Emery, City Beach	yingemery@gmail.com
	Amy Heckford, Wembley Downs	Amyrebecca2004@hotmail.com
	John Testrow, City Beach	testrow@westnet.com.au
Supporters:	133 as of 29 March 2021	

Copy of Certificate of Incorporation



Government of Western Australia  
Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety  
Consumer Protection

**WESTERN AUSTRALIA**  
*Associations Incorporation Act 2015*  
(Section 10)

IARN: A1040378A

**Certificate of Incorporation**

This is to certify that

**COMMUNITY FOOD FORESTS INC.**

is an association incorporated under the  
*Associations Incorporation Act 2015*

The date of incorporation is the  
twenty fifth day of March 2021

Lanie Chopping  
Commissioner for Consumer Protection

**CERTIFICATE**