

26 August 2020

### Council takes on illegal tree destruction

The people have spoken – fence off the section between Mant Street and the Esplanade in Hervey Bay where trees were illegally poisoned, and replant.

Cr David Lewis said almost 450 people responded to a Fraser Coast Regional Council call for feedback on how it should respond to illegal destruction of trees in parks and reserves, in particular Mant Street.

“I am pleased with the response. The destruction of trees in Council parks and reserves, especially along the Hervey Bay foreshore, has gone on for too long,” he said.

“Residents have been calling for action and the response to the survey indicates that they are behind Council.”

Council received 446 formal responses to the survey.

The results showed:

- 90% of respondents were ‘somewhat concerned’ to ‘really concerned’ about incidents of illegal vegetation damage on the foreshore.
- 55% of respondents believed the Mant Street area should be rehabilitated;
- 56% (248 respondents) supported draping mesh panels printed with information on the temporary fencing, and;
- 8% considered illegal damage and poisoning of vegetation to be appropriate and acceptable.

“While the survey indicated residents were not satisfied that offenders were not held accountable, and there was potential for residents adjacent to the poison site to be unfairly punished, there was consistent support for Council’s response to tree destruction on Council parks and reserves.

“They want Council to enforce its policies, and they want fines for people caught damaging trees increased.”

As part of the rehabilitation of the Mant Street site, in accordance with the policy on Illegal Vegetation Damage on Council Managed Land, a 2.1metre-high temporary-fence will be erected around the damaged area in Mant Street.

The temporary fencing will have a printed mesh cover installed on to it which explains that illegal vegetation damage has occurred at this location and information about the importance of native vegetation.

The fence will remain in place until the replanted vegetation reaches 2.1 metres high.

**ENDS**