

Questions from Member of Public

Last week a barrier was erected around the 100 year old Eucalyptus tree within the Lakeside Drive Community Garden. This barrier consists of plastic bollards placed around a meter apart strung with white plastic rope.

This operation required the use of at least 4 heavy duty trucks and machinery and the holes were made with a high pressure machine which blasts the soil out under pressure. Not ideal near any plant.

This garden is a very valuable, Permaculture garden which is a showcase for year round organic/ Permaculture food production in the Tropics and where those interested in Tropical food production can come to learn how to grow food, gain information or collect plant materials.

At the moment there are around 70 species of food /medicinal or useful plants within this garden and it attracts a good many visitors both locals and from interstate and overseas.

This barricade is totally out of place within this garden and though other alternatives more in keeping with the ethos and aesthetics of this valuable space were put forward by members of The Lakeside Drive Community Garden Committee who actually care for and maintain this garden these were ,it seems, ignored and it seemed to be yet another case of "We are the Council and we will do what we like".

This is yet another example which shows clearly that those who are responsible for the care of our recourses and are paid to look after our interests are totally lacking in imagination and also have little respect for those who actually care for this space at no cost to the Council.

These plastic bollards were apparently sourced from Queensland , took a great deal of heavy machinery to install, which not only would have cost a great deal but also compacted the soils in these areas even more, and are totally out of place in this valuable Permaculture garden.

They also detract from the aesthetics of the beautiful (and also very expensive) cultural poles which are now right next to these ugly lumps of plastic. These poles are a draw card in themselves with many locals and visitors coming into the garden intrigued by these beautiful sculptural works.

A low barrier of rocks or logs (sourced locally) and perhaps simple signage would have more than sufficed to cordon this area and would have taken far less machinery and money and would not have looked so ridiculous and out of place.

1. During the installation shavings were removed from these plastic bollards and now slivers of black plastic litter the ground around many of these bollards. Who will remove them? Are the members of the Lakeside Drive Community Garden who were opposed to the installation of these monstrosities expected to pick them up or are they to be left to litter the ground?

2. How does one get to view the plans for this operation? Could these please be forwarded to me or included in the minutes for all to view?

3. What was the total cost of installing these bollards including the cost of the bollards themselves and the cost of their transport? Could an itemised list of these costs be included with the reply to this question please?

4. What alternatives other than these plastic bollards were considered?

5. For what reason were alternatives that would have been far cheaper and more in keeping with this garden rejected?

Response from the City of Darwin

A1. The contractor engaged to carry out these works has been directed to return to the site

	and remove any shaving's left behind. This will be completed within the week.
A2.	Council Officers worked from the Tree Management plan that had produced by a Diploma qualified arborist. This had been forwarded to the Lakeside Drive Community Garden committee for their comment and agreed on previously, and the standard drawing for the installation of bollards from the manufacturer.
A3.	The total cost of this work came to \$5,300.00. Council Officers cannot provide an itemised account as the job was raised as a single "supply and install" order to the contractor.
A4.	<p>Council Officers considered "pool type" fencing, chain mesh fencing and wooden bollards with rope similar to the recycled plastic bollards that were used. The treatment chosen needed to provide a continuous barrier in order to meet the legal requirements of an exclusion zone, so large rocks were not considered a suitable option. Pool type and chainmesh fencing were considered too "intrusive" in the landscape and overkill for the purpose at hand. Timber bollards, while providing the same fencing type as chosen, have proven to be short lived in the top end environment with the exception of CCA treated timber which poses known health risks and is therefore considered unsuitable.</p> <p>The option of recycled bollards and rope was chosen, after consultation with the Lakeside Drive Community Garden committee and the groundskeeper, due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing a visual and physical barrier that a reasonable person would be expected not to cross • Being less visually intrusive than a more traditional fence • Ease of construction in a manner that would have minimal impact on the tree • Long useful working life and ease of maintenance • Standard fencing material in COD Parks and reserves, supplies readily available for replacement if necessary.
A5.	The answer to this question has been provided above at A4.