

PUBLIC HEARING AND SUBMISSIONS REPORT FOR PROPOSED CATEGORISATION OF MARRONG RESERVE

FINAL REPORT

5 SEPTEMBER 2023





CUMBERLAND CITY COUNCIL

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Parkland Planners

ABN: 33 114 513 647

PO Box 41 FRESHWATER NSW 2096

> ph. (02) 9452 6377 mob: 0411 191 866

sandy@parklandplanners.com.au

www.parklandplanners.com.au

DIRECTOR: Sandy Hoy

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of this report

The purpose of this report is to convey to Cumberland City Council the submissions made in relation to a public hearing held on Thursday 17 August 2023 regarding the proposed categorisation of Marrong Reserve in Pemulwuy.

This report has been prepared under Section 40A of the Local Government Act 1993.

1.2 Background to the public hearing

Marrong Reserve comprises land owned by Cumberland City Council which is classified as community land under the *Local Government Act 1993*. Community land is required to be categorised under the *Local Government Act 1993* as either Natural Area, Park, Sportsground, Area of Cultural Significance or General Community Use.

Cumberland City Council proposes to categorise Marrong Reserve as Natural Area-Bushland and Park which is consistent with the guidelines for categorisation of community land in the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, and the core objectives for each category in the Local Government Act.

Community land is also required to be included in a Plan of Management prepared under the Local Government Act. A Draft Plan of Management has been prepared for Marrong Reserve which was placed on public exhibition for comment until Wednesday 30 August 2023.

A public hearing is required under Section 40A of the *Local Government Act 1993* to receive community submissions about categorising or recategorising community land. Under the Act the public hearing must be chaired by an independent facilitator. The public hearing was held on Thursday 17 August 2023.

1.3 Land covered by this report

Marrong Reserve and its surrounds are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Location of Marrong Reserve



1.4 This report

The remainder of this report presents the relevant requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993* regarding Plans of Management and categorisation of community land, and submissions regarding the proposed categorisation of Marrong Reserve. The submissions comprise verbal submissions made at the public hearing held on 17 August 2023, and a written submission received by Council between Thursday 20 July 2023 and Wednesday 30 August 2023 which referred to the proposed categorisation.

2 PLANNING CONTEXT

2.1 What is community land?

The *Local Government Act 1993* sets out a range of requirements for the management of public land that Cumberland City Council is legally bound to adhere to.

The Local Government Act requires that all public land owned by Council must be classified as 'community' or 'operational' land (Section 26). Marrong Reserve comprises community land owned by Cumberland City Council.



Figure 2 Classification and categorisation of community land

Community land is intended to be managed for use by the community for purposes including environmental protection, recreational, cultural, social and educational activities. Community land may only be leased or licensed for up to 21 years without the Minister's consent or up to 30 years with the Minister's consent, it cannot be sold, and its use is restricted to the above purposes.

Conversely, operational land is land that can be used for any purposes deemed fit by Council such as those that it may want to restrict public access to (for example a works depot), may be used for commercial purposes, be leased for a longer period of time, and can be sold.

2.2 What are the categories of community land?

The *Local Government Act 1993* requires that all land owned by the Council which is classified as community land be categorised.

As shown in Figure 2, community land may be categorised as one or more of the following categories under Section 36(4):

a natural area.

- a sportsground.
- a park.
- □ an area of cultural significance.
- general community use.

Land that is categorised as a natural area is to be further categorised as one or more of the following under Section 36(5) of the Act:

- bushland.
- wetland.
- scarpment.
- watercourse.
- foreshore.
- □ a category prescribed by the regulations.

2.3 What are the guidelines for categorising community land?

Guidelines for categorising community land as a particular category are in Clauses 102 to 111 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*.

The Department of Local Government's revised Practice Note on Public Land Management (Department of Local Government, 2000) made general recommendations on the guidelines for categorising community land. The Practice Note stated:

"Council must have regard to the guidelines in determining a category (cl.9) but are not required to adopt any category merely because the land fits the description in the guidelines. Council should look at all the circumstances of the land in making a decision as to categorisation. For example, a piece of land may seem to satisfy the guidelines for more than one category. Council has a discretion in this case to look at the land in context, taking into account all relevant material before determining a category. It is important that Council be able to justify a decision."

Also, Council may have a piece of community land, parts of which may be best managed as different categories, for example a piece of land with remnant bushland in one part and children's play equipment in another. Council is able to categorise land as part 'Natural Area – Bushland' and part 'Park'. It is strongly recommended that the land in each category not overlap. Overlapping categories may cause conflict in management objectives and will create confusion in the minds of Council staff and the community."

2.4 Core objectives for managing community land

Each category and sub-category of community land has core objectives that apply to it under the Local Government Act. The core objectives outline the approach to management of the land covered by the particular category. The core objectives for each category of community land are set out in Sections 36E to 36N of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

2.5 Guidelines and core objectives for categories of community land proposed for Marrong Reserve

The guidelines and core objectives for the proposed Natural Area-Bushland and Park categories are in Table 1.

Table 1 Guidelines and core objectives for proposed categories of community land

Category	Guidelines ¹		Core objectives ²
Natural Area	Land should be categorised as a natural area under section 36(4) of the Act if the land, whether or not in an undisturbed state, possesses a significant geological feature, geomorphological feature, landform, representative system or other natural feature or attribute that would be sufficient to further categorise the land as bushland, wetland, escarpment, watercourse or foreshore under section 36(5) of the Act.	-	conserve biodiversity and maintain ecosystem function in respect of the land, or the feature or habitat in respect of which the land is categorised as a natural area, and maintain the land, or that feature or habitat, in its natural state and setting, and provide for the restoration and regeneration of the land, and provide for community use of and access to the land in such a manner as will minimise and mitigate any disturbance caused by human intrusion, and assist in and facilitate the implementation of any provisions restricting the use and management of the land that are set out in a recovery plan or threat abatement plan prepared under the <i>Threatened Species</i> <i>Conservation Act 1995</i> or the <i>Fisheries Management Act</i> <i>1994</i> .
Natural Area- Bushland	 (1) Land that is categorised as a natural area should be further categorised as bushland under section 36(5) of the Act if the land contains primarily native vegetation and that vegetation— (a) is the natural vegetation or a remainder of the natural vegetation of the land, or (b) although not the natural vegetation of the land, is still representative of the structure or floristics, or structure and floristics, of the natural vegetation in the locality. (2) Such land includes— (a) bushland that is mostly undisturbed with a good mix of tree ages, and natural regeneration, where the understorey is comprised of native grasses and herbs or native shrubs, and that contains a range of habitats for native fauna (such as logs, shrubs, tree hollows and leaf litter), or (b) moderately disturbed bushland with some regeneration of trees and shrubs, where there may be a regrowth area with trees of even age, where native shrubs and grasses are present in the understorey even though there may be some weed invasion, or (c) highly disturbed bushland where the native understorey has been removed, where there may be significant weed invasion and where dead and dying trees are present, where there is no natural regeneration of trees and strubs and grassely bushland where the land is still capable of being rehabilitated. 	-	ensure the ongoing ecological viability of the land by protecting the ecological biodiversity and habitat values of the land, the flora and fauna (including invertebrates, fungi and micro-organisms) of the land and other ecological values of the land, and protect the aesthetic, heritage, recreational, educational and scientific values of the land, and promote the management of the land in a manner that protects and enhances the values and quality of the land and facilitates public enjoyment of the land, and to implement measures directed to minimising or mitigating any disturbance caused by human intrusion, and restore degraded bushland, and protect existing landforms such as natural drainage lines, watercourses and foreshores, and retain bushland in parcels of a size and configuration that will enable the existing plant and animal communities to survive in the long term, and protect bushland as a natural stabiliser of the soil surface.

Category	Guidelines ¹		Core objectives ²		
Park	Land that is, or is proposed to be, improved by landscaping, gardens or the provision of non- sporting equipment and facilities, for use mainly for passive or active recreational, social, educational and cultural pursuits that do not unduly intrude on the peaceful enjoyment of the land by others.	-	encourage, promote and facilitate recreational, cultural, social and educational pastimes and activities, and provide for passive recreational activities or pastimes and for the casual playing of games, and		
		-	improve the land in such a way as to promote and facilitate its use to achieve the other core objectives for its management.		
1 Loca	I Government (General) Regulation 2021				

1 Local Government (General) Regulation 2021

2 Local Government Act 1993

2.6 Plans of Management for community land

Council must prepare a Plan of Management for community land (Section 36(1)).

Community land is required to be used and managed according to a Plan of Management applying to the land (Section 35).

Among the requirements of the Local Government Act for the contents of a Plan of Management for community land are:

- **categorisation of the land**
- □ core objectives for management of the land according to the category.

2.7 Public hearings

2.7.1 Why hold a public hearing?

A public hearing is required under Section 40A of the Local Government Act 1993 if:

- a Plan of Management proposes to categorise (that is, the Plan has not been previously been prepared and adopted by Council, or has not categorised community land) the public land covered by the Plan of Management
- a Plan of Management proposes to re-categorise (changing the adopted category) the public land covered by the Plan of Management.

Note: Public hearings regarding categorisation or re-categorisation of community land are not related to reclassification. Reclassification is when community land is re-classified as operational land that can then be managed differently and has the ability to be sold by Council. Community land is protected under the Local Government Act and cannot be sold.

2.7.2 Who conducts a public hearing?

An independent chairperson conducts the public hearing, and provides a report to Council with recommendations on the proposed categorisation of community land.

Under Section 47G of the Act, the person presiding at a public hearing must not be:

- a) A Councillor or employee of the Council holding the public hearing.
- b) A person who has been a Councillor or employee of that Council at any time during the 5 years before the date of his or her appointment.

2.7.3 What happens after the public hearing?

Council must make a copy of the report regarding the outcomes of the public hearing available for inspection by the public at a location within the area of Council no later than four days after it has received the final report from the person presiding at the public hearing.

The public hearing report will be presented to Council for its information when it considers adopting the Marrong Reserve Plan of Management, and the proposed categorisation of community land in Marrong Reserve.

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3 PROPOSED CATEGORISATION OF MARRONG RESERVE

3.1 Introduction

Marrong Reserve is community land owned by Cumberland City Council. Marrong Reserve has not yet been formally categorised under the *Local Government Act 1993*. Background information about the proposed categorisation of Marrong Reserve is set out below.

3.2 Draft Landscape Master Plan

The Draft Landscape Master Plan for Marrong Reserve is in Figure 3 (Sheets 1 and 2).



Figure 3 Marrong Reserve - Draft Landscape Master Plan (Sheets 1 and 2)

MARRONG RESERVI Landscape Master Plan Sheet 1 of 2

SCALE 1:5000 @ A4





MARRONG RESERVE Landscape Master Plan Sheet 2 of 2



Source: Draft Marrong Reserve Plan of Management (July 2023)

3.3 Proposed categorisation of Marrong Reserve

Council proposes to categorise Marrong Reserve as Natural Area-Bushland and Park. The proposed categorisation of Marrong Reserve is shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4 Proposed categorisation of Marrong Reserve



Source: Draft Marrong Reserve Plan of Management (July 2023)

PUBLIC HEARING AND SUBMISSIONS REPORT: PROPOSED CATEGORISATION OF MARRONG RESERVE PARKLAND PLANNERS

The Park category corresponds with the two parklets in Marrong Reserve opposite Boraga Street and at the Saddle Bund opposite Waiana Avenue. The Natural Area-Bushland category would apply to the remainder of the reserve.

3.4 Features of Marrong Reserve in proposed categories

Features of Marrong Reserve in each category are shown in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5 Features of Marrong Reserve by category

Natural Area-Bushland category







Marrong Reserve central



Marrong Reserve south

Park category



Park opposite Boraga Street



Park opposite Boraga Street



Saddle Bund (under construction)

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4 THE PUBLIC HEARING

4.1 Advertising and notification

4.1.1 Public notification and exhibition requirements

Section 38 of the *Local Government Act 1993* states that Councils must give "public notice" of a draft Plan of Management, and the length of time that it must be on public exhibition and for submissions to be made. The public notice contents are set out in Section 705 of the Act.

4.1.2 Online notification

Council notified the community of the public hearing and the Draft Plan of Management public exhibition on its website <u>https://haveyoursay.cumberland.nsw.gov.au/marrong-reserve-pom</u> from Thursday 20 July 2023 until Wednesday 30 August 2023, as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6 Online notification of public hearing



Council has prepared a Draft Plan of Management for Marrong Reserve in Pemulwuy. The plan has been prepared within the legislative requirements of the Local Government Act 1993, and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, to support how the open space is managed into the future.



Find out more information

There will be a Public Hearing about the Marrong Reserve Draft

Plan of Management on Thursday 17 August in Pemulwuy for those interested in finding out more information. Background reading for the Public Hearing is available in the document library.

Find out more details and confirm your attendance here.

Now we want your feedback!

Council values the opinions and suggestions of the community, and would appreciate your thoughts on the Marrong Reserve Draft Plan of Management.

During the consultation period, we encourage you to download a copy of the Marrong Reserve Draft Plan of Management in our document library.

The consultation period runs from **Thursday 20 July 2023 until Wednesday 30 August 2023**. During this community consultation period, residents are encouraged to give their feedback about the Marrong Reserve Draft Plan of Management. **Submissions are open until Wednesday 30 August 2023**. Your Language

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To translate this page into another language, use the 'Select Language' dropdown below. Please note, automatic translations are provided as a guide only and may not be accurate.

Call us using an interpreter

To call us using an interpreter service, call the National Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450, and ask them to call us on 8757 9000.

Select Language 🗸 🗸

What's On



Public Hearing - Marrong Reserve Draft Plan...

From : Thu, 17 Aug 2023 06:00 PM To : Thu, 17 Aug 2023 07:30 PM At : Pemulwuy



A background information document explaining the proposed categorisation and the public hearing, and an online submission form, were also provided on the project page. A one-page summary of the background information was added to the Have Your Say page on Council's website after a request was made at the public hearing.

4.1.3 Other notification methods

Council also advertised the public hearing and the invitation to make a submission about the Draft Marrong Reserve Plan of Management and Master Plan by:

- social media posts directing those interested to the Have Your Say page
- placing six A3 corflute posters in or surrounding Marrong Reserve, bounded by Durawa Street, Bundeluk Avenue, and Naying Drive/Driftway Drive (refer to Figure 7 below)
- placing a flyer on the community notice board at Pemulwuy Marketplace
- placing flyers at Greystanes Library, Merrylands and Auburn Service Centres
- distributing 555 flyers into letterboxes closest to the park on 20 July 2023
- placing newspaper advertisements in the Auburn Review and Parra News on 8 August 2023
- emailing a letter to Heritage NSW notifying them of the exhibition
- emailing details of the exhibition to Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee (as well as presenting at their 25 May 2023 Committee Meeting)
- posting letters to adjoining industrial landholders.

Figure 7 Marrong Reserve Plan of Management sign



We want your feedback on the Marrong Reserve Plan of Management

Council would like your feedback on the Draft Marrong Reserve Plan of Management. Submissions are open until Wednesday 30 August 2023.

A Public Hearing will be held on Thursday 17 August 2023 at 6pm. Scan below to book your place.



Scan here for your translation

ابحث هنا عن ترجمتك. 扫描二维码查看中文翻译。 तपाईंको भाषामा अनुवादित पुस्तिका हेर्न यहाँ स्क्यान गर्नुहोस्। உங்கள் மொழிபெயர்ப்புக்கு இங்கே அலகிடவும் (scan).

Çeviriniz için burayı tarayın. 번역은 여기를 스캔하십시오.

Cumberland City Council

16 Memorial Avenue, PO Box 42, Merrylands NSW 2160. **T** 8757 9000 **W** cumberland.nsw.gov.au **E** council@cumberland.nsw.gov.au **f** Cumberland City Council Sydney **@** cumberlandcitycouncil

4.2 Public hearing arrangements

The public hearing for the proposed categorisation of Marrong Reserve was held on Thursday 17 August 2023 from 6.00 pm - 7.30 pm at Alan G Ezzy Community Centre, 1 Newport Street, Pemulwuy.

4.3 Attendance at the public hearing

As required under Section 47G of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council appointed an independent chairperson, Sandy Hoy, Director of Parkland Planners, to chair the public hearing. Ms Hoy has not been a Councillor or employee of Cumberland City Council at any time.

Lisa Ivicevic (Urban and Open Space Planner) and Adam Ford (Landscape Architect) represented Cumberland City Council, providing information and answering questions on Council's behalf during the public hearing.

One local resident and one Councillor (Clr Dianne Colman) attended the public hearing.

4.4 The public hearing

Ms Hoy opened the public hearing at 6:05pm.

Ms Hoy explained the purpose of the public hearing, the legislative basis for categorisation and recategorisation of community land, and the requirement for public hearings, based on the background information document provided online.

Council representatives explained the Draft Master Plan and the background to and reasons for Council proposing to categorise Marrong Reserve.

The question that the Chair asked people attending the hearing to address is:

Do you agree or not with the proposal to categorise community land in Marrong Reserve as Natural Area-Bushland and Park as shown in Figure 10 of the Draft Marrong Reserve Plan of Management (July 2023) and Figure 3 of the background information document?

Why or why not?

The content of submissions which are relevant to the proposed categorisation are outlined in more detail in Section 5 of this report. Other comments and questions about Marrong Reserve are noted but are outside the scope of this report. Such comments and questions will be addressed with the submissions to the Draft Plan of Management for Marrong Reserve.

With there being no further submissions or questions, Ms. Hoy closed the hearing at 6.45pm.

4.5 Submissions

Submissions about the proposed recategorisation of Marrong Reserve could be made:

- verbally at the public hearing
- by completing an online submission at <u>https://haveyoursay.cumberland.nsw.gov.au/marrong-reserve-pom</u>
- □ by emailing Council@cumberland.nsw.gov.au
- by posting to The General Manager, Cumberland City Council, PO Box 42, Merrylands NSW 2160.

5 CONSIDERATION OF SUBMISSIONS

5.1 Introduction

Verbal and written submissions relating to the proposed recategorisation of Marrong Reserve are set out below, according to:

- verbal submissions to the public hearing and Council's response
- other topics raised at the public hearing outside the scope of recategorisation and the public hearing
- □ written submissions about the proposed recategorisation.

5.2 Submissions about proposed categorisation

5.2.1 Public hearing

The Chair asked the people attending the public hearing if they agreed with the proposed categories of Natural Area-Bushland and Park or not.

There was general agreement that the proposed categories of Natural Area-Bushland and Park are appropriate for Marrong Reserve.

Adam Ford explained that an alternative categorisation of Area of Cultural Significance was considered to reflect the 'Marrong' name and the NSW heritage listing of part of the reserve. However Council considered that Marrong Reserve is primarily managed as bushland so the Natural Area-Bushland category is more appropriate than Area of Cultural Significance.

The two attendees agreed that Natural Area-Bushland is the more appropriate category, for reasons including that bushland makes the suburb of Pemulwuy, people call it "the bush", and people expect it to remain as Natural Area-Bushland.

5.2.2 Written submissions

One of the six written submissions received by Council during the public exhibition of the Draft Plan of Management and Master Plan referred to the categorisation of Marrong Reserve.

A resident of Pemulwuy wrote:

"I support the proposal to classify Marrong Reserve as Community land (categorisation of Bushland and Park). I believe this will keep the beautiful suburban atmosphere of Pemulwuy partitioned from the industrial area over the western ridge of the suburb. Pemulwuy is quite dense in living spaces already and the Marrong Reserve is a great attraction for outdoor activities."

5.3 Submissions to public hearing outside the scope of categorisation

Submissions made at the public hearing which are not related to the proposed categorisation, but are relevant to the Draft Plan of Management and Master Plan for Marrong Reserve, include:

Overview of Landscape Master Plan

Adam Ford and Lisa Ivicevic explained the Draft Master Plan for Marrong Reserve:

- □ Most works in the Master Plan are already complete.
- Chainwire fencing is proposed to be upgraded to palisade fencing for safety and to facilitate views. Palisade fencing is expensive but could be done in increments.
- □ A proposed bridge (at A) will link Marrong Reserve with Prospect Hill.
- □ The plan identifies weed removal and bush regeneration priorities.
- In 2014 land in the northern section of Marrong Reserve was transferred to Council. In 2017 land to the south was transferred to Council.
- Two land parcels have been dedicated as part of new southern residential subdivision. One parcel to the east will join to Grey Box Reserve and the parcel to the west is included as part of Marrong Reserve.
- The area identified at D could be turned into a parklet in the future, with heritage trees (near the former location of Greystanes House).
- Possible future passive recreation could be considered in the southern part of the reserve at location E, bit would be low priority because the area is isolated.

Clr Colman observed that the dead trees in the southern part of the reserve look terrible. Adam Ford explained that was the result of the bushfires on 31 December 2019. Part of the Boral Deed of Agreement was to remove the pine forest and revegetate it into natural vegetation. The dead pine trees will slowly be removed once the development at the south provides better access.

Adam Ford explained that one purpose of the Plan of Management is to allow for an easement for rock anchors in the retaining walls at the new residential subdivision. The developer needs access to Council's community land to insert pins for the structure to hold up the wall. It requires an easement which requires authorisation in a Plan of Management.

Adam Ford explained that the large lots adjacent to Marrong Reserve in the industrial area have lots of weeds. Council will contact the adjoining land owners about removing weeds from their land to enable views from Marrong Reserve to the west.

Clr Colman asked if the weeds are at the back of the factories along Clunies Ross Street. Adam Ford replied that the weeds are on the unstable cliff faces south of Butu Wargun Drive.

The local resident asked whether the park to the south is open. Adam Ford replied that the saddle bund park will open in late August. The local resident replied that they are looking forward to it.

The local resident asked that handrails are provided at the stairs into the reserve from Boraga Street Parklet to support people who find the stairs difficult to use without handrails.

The local resident commented that seats in the reserve are very good.

The local resident mentioned a plaque commemorating a quarry worker is attached to a tree in the reserve. Adam Ford explained the tree is on a steep and unstable slope which would be dangerous to access, so the plaque cannot be safely retrieved.

6 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 Consideration of submissions

The verbal and written submissions regarding the proposed categorisation of Marrong Reserve have been carefully considered and assessed.

There was support for the proposed categorisation from the people attending the public hearing and in the only written submission, with no objections received about the proposed categorisation.

The proposed categorisation of Marrong Reserve as Natural Area-Bushland and Park is consistent with the existing features of the reserve, Council's management and maintenance of the reserve, the publicly exhibited Draft Master Plan for Marrong Reserve, and with community expectations for the reserve.

6.2 Recommendations

Based on the representations to the public hearing on 17 August 2023 and the written submission received, my recommendations to Cumberland City Council are that Council:

- 1. Note the verbal submissions made to the public hearing and the written submission to the public exhibition of the Draft Marrong Reserve Plan of Management set out in Section 5.
- 2. Categorise Marrong Reserve as Natural Area-Bushland and Park as shown on the categorisation map in Figure 8 below.



Figure 8 Recommended categorisation of Marrong Reserve

6.2 Adoption of proposed recategorisation

This public hearing report will be presented to Council for its information as part of its approval of the proposed categorisation of Marrong Reserve.

If Council adopts the proposed categorisation of Marrong Reserve, Council will reflect the categorisation in the Marrong Reserve Plan of Management and its Land Register to reflect the categorisation.

If Council decides to alter the proposed categorisation of Marrong Reserve from the categories and boundaries considered at the public hearing, Council must hold a further public hearing (Section 40A(3) of the *Local Government Act 1993*).

6.3 Reporting

Within four days of receiving this final report, Council is required under Section 47G(3) of the *Local Government Act 1993* to make a copy of this report available for inspection by the public at a location within the area of the Council. It is recommended that Council:

- send a copy of the public hearing report to the people who registered for and attended the public hearing and made a written submission
- keep a copy of the public hearing report for inspection at:
 - Council's Service centres at Merrylands and Auburn
 - Greystanes Library
- **o** post an electronic copy of the public hearing report on Council's website.

Dandra Moy

Sandy Hoy Director Parkland Planners

5 September 2023

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