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Nature Reserves Preservation Group, Inc.

TO: Mr James Trail, CEO, Kalamunda Shire
CC: Ms Tamara Wilkes-Jones, Environmental Coordinator, Kalamunda Shire

**SUBJECT: Housing subdivision development Berkshire Avenue between Apricot St
and the sports college**

Dear Mr Trail,

NRPG is concerned about the lack of consideration for the vegetation on and around this development. Initially, there were many old jarrah and *Allocasuarina* trees on this site, some of which could, and indeed should have been preserved, by incorporating them into the proposed design of the subdivision. Now we see that accepted guidelines to ensure the protection and survival of the row of street verge trees that front Berkshire Road are not being followed. The brick wall now being built on Berkshire Road will most certainly ensure the demise of those trees in time, either through damage to the roots and the subsequent introduction of pathogens or future complaints that the tree roots are damaging the wall.

The national industry body, the International Society for Arboriculture (Australian Chapter)(ISAAC), guidelines clearly state that when work is being carried out around established trees, a tree protection zone must be established around the tree and the size of that zone is to follow the drip line of the canopy of the tree. In this case work is being carried out right up to the trunk of the trees and we now see a brick wall being built well within 0.5 m of these trees which have a canopy area of several square metres and a drip line of over one metre. In time, the roots of these trees will undoubtedly start lifting sections of the brick wall – an action which will inevitably result in requests to have them cut down.

Adding insult to injury, pruning done to the trees to clear them from the brick wall has not been carried out according to the Australian Standard for Amenity Tree Pruning AS 4373-2007 which clearly states that branches being removed should be removed to an appropriate growing point.

NRPG is of the opinion that the shire should have a policy of adopting and adhering to accepted industry guidelines where these exist. Guidelines published by the Tree Guild of Australia and of Western Australia follow those of the International Society for Arboriculture and have been constructed to provide for the long term health and safety of trees in urban and rural settings. Work around these trees carried out by these developers will only serve to further degrade their health and stability in an environment which is already stressful due to recent extreme weather conditions and resultant water stress. This makes them more likely to be a danger to the public through dropping limbs or otherwise failing as a result of fungal infection of the roots.

NRPG requests:

1. The trees be re-pruned to the Australian Standard as cited above.
2. The trees be protected against future removal since the wall has been sited in an inappropriate position.
3. The value of the trees be assessed according to the Burnley method of tree valuation and that council acknowledge that it has put at risk assets to that value by not ensuring proper supervision of the developer.
4. A qualified member of the Tree Guild of WA be called in to give an assessment of the remaining trees, to establish the current level of damage and put in place a management program to help restore the trees as much as possible.

Yours sincerely

Tony Fowler
Acting President NRPG.