

Grasstree Court Development Girraween Estate

Where we are now.

The site at Grasstree Court was identified as being suitable for Community Services use in the 1997 Strategic Plan.

This was also reflected in the Girraween Master Plan, endorsed by council in 2006.

The site had always been set aside to cater for an expanding need for aged care infrastructure. In 2011 a development approval was issued permitting the development of an aged care facility and a retirement village.

At the time, and today, it was identified that a significant need for aged care accommodation exists.

The approval is lawful and cannot be changed by Council. Any change would need to be applicant driven and subject to assessment. Conditions, including those for offsets, bushfire management, water quality outcomes and construction management, are included to protect and reduce impacts on the environment and the amenity of the surrounding area.

Council has and always will support community efforts to help conserve the Glossy Black-Cockatoo across the shire. It has placed a number of conditions on this development and has program to better protect the endangered

Glossies are found along much of Australia's east coast, also at Kangaroo Island in South Australia.

species. (Read the Girraween Estate – History and Ecology brochure)

The land to the south of Lot 9 is now zoned Environmental Management and Conservation. It was previously identified as being suitable for Community Services uses.

Clearing offset program

The offset program is required to include topsoil and mulched vegetation from the site to be translocated to a degraded receiving site within the Girraween estate for rehabilitation purposes and transfer of rare and threatened plant species.

The developer has a responsibility to carry out the offsets in two stages.

The offset site, identified in 2011 is a former landfill site within the Girraween Estate.

An independent assessment of the site has deemed it suitable to be used for offsets.

When the developer started the offset process as part of stage one in February 2022 there was some disturbance to the landfill cap. This was exacerbated by the significant weather event at the time, further works in this area were paused.

Stage 1 offset works were permitted to proceed on the basis that it was relocated to occur outside of the capped area. These works have been completed with identified Glossy Black food trees propagated from the parent tree.

A ratio of an 8:1 offset for the whole development has already been achieved and Stage two provides additional planting.

Why was there a minor change to Operational Works

A minor change to the existing Operational Works approval for vegetation clearing and earthworks was recently approved under delegation. The existing approval, issued in July 2019, had already approved the clearing of Lot 9.

This minor change approved on 10 May 2023 was to incorporate remediation works to the former landfill cap.

These works are incorporated in an updated Ecological Management Plan.

The application was assessed under delegation due to the minor nature of the change noting that approval had already been granted for the vegetation clearing on Lot 9 back in 2019.

The original approval required that the works were substantially started by 8 July

2021, however due to extensions provided to development approvals by the Queensland State Planning Minister in response to COVID-19, this date is now 8 July 2023.

What changes were made?

Remediation works to re-cap the former landfill area include

- installation of a geosynthetic clay liner over the affected area incorporating a 300mm confining layer
- additional 1500mm of imported live soil, above the geosynthetic layer, as a growing media for rehabilitation.

The proposed methodology to remediate the disturbed capped area has been reviewed and supported by Council's Manager, Waste and Resource Recovery Infrastructure Branch.

The updated Ecological Management Plan also incorporates revegetation works within stage two to include an additional 300 *Allocasuarina littoralis* and 300 Eucalypt species.

This is in addition to the 8:1 'feed tree' offset completed as part of Stage 1.

This will result in a substantial net gain of she-oaks in the area.

In addition to the changes to the rehabilitation methodology, the updated Ecological Management Plan has also included supplementary fauna management requirements to undertake pre-clearing surveys and fauna relocation.

Bushfire Management on the site

The development includes construction and management of the use in accordance with an approved bushfire hazard assessment and management plan.

This report contains a number of recommendations relating to specific bushfire mitigation measures and activities. These recommendations must be implemented by the developer and the operator both during the construction and in perpetuity.

The developer has agreed to voluntarily comply with the Australian Standard for the construction of the facility in a bushfire-prone area. This means an increase of the construction requirements for the building façade and entirety of the roof.

How we got to today!

JUNE 2006

The Girraween Master Plan was endorsed by Noosa Council. It included requirements that identified environmental/rehabilitation areas be changed to "Nature Refuge Areas" under the Nature Conservation Act.

Specific exclusions from the Nature Refuge were a sewerage treatment plant and related future infrastructure; the footprint of a proposed sporting

complex on a rapid infiltration basin site; a 20 metre-wide service track between these facilities; and a works operations stockpile site with buffer and access road off Cooyar Street.

In addition, a parcel of Council's freehold land in the eastern section fronting Grasstree Court and Ben Lexcen Drive were again identified in the master plan as a 'future community area' (aged care facility).

JANUARY 2007

A lot reconfiguration was earmarked to allow part of the lot to be sold to a private developer to meet aged care demand.

The developer would be responsible for the lot reconfiguration and obtaining the development permit for an independent living and aged care facility.

MARCH 2007

Noosa Council entered a two-stage Conservation Agreement for gazettal of the Environmental/ Rehabilitation area within Girraween as Nature Refuge.

JULY 2007

Blue Care contracts to purchase the land, the contract being subject to gaining a development approval.

MARCH 2008

Noosa Council is amalgamated into Sunshine Coast Regional Council along with the former Maroochy and Caloundra shires.

JUNE 2008

Blue Care lodges a development application subject to a protracted assessment process including referral to state agencies due to the site's vegetation, and amendments to the Noosa Plan to address zoning anomalies.

The lengthy process resulted in the application remaining dormant until May 2011 when the scheme

amendments were adopted and the then-Department of Natural Resources and Mines issued its approval in June 2011.

The application being impact-assessable, public notification was required, attracting five properly made submissions - all of which were primarily concerned with stormwater treatment and vegetation removal.



DECEMBER 2011

The application is approved by Sunshine Coast Regional Council.

The approved development included the 96-bed residential aged care facility, medical/respite facility, 54 apartments with basement car parking, 55 single level villa style independent living units and a central facility building comprising 20 serviced apartments and a recreation centre.

Numerous conditions were imposed to address the habitat loss including:

- Identification of all active Glossy Black Cockatoo food

trees within the development footprint or areas likely to be impacted

- A vegetation clearing offset program with a five-year required maintenance period
- The offset program was required to include topsoil and mulched vegetation from the site to be translocated to a degraded receiving site within the Girraween estate for rehabilitation purposes and transfer of rare and threatened plant species
- Identified Glossy Black Food trees to be propagated at a ratio of 8:1 from the parent tree and replanted.

NOVEMBER 2017

Noosa Council (now de-amalgamated) approves an extension to the currency period to December 2021 for the first stage.

Staff reviewed the development's compliance with regulations and requirements as at 2017 and found

it remained compliant apart from updated Bushfire Management requirements.

The applicant responded with an updated fire management plan showing greater setbacks to adjoining reserves.

2018, 2019

Blue Care-appointed environmental consultant Biodiverse Environmental, with assistance from Coolum Community Nursery, began collecting she-oak seedlings from Glossy Black-Cockatoos feed trees on the lots to be cleared for construction, to be planted in Girraween Nature Refuge.

Operational works approval for vegetation clearing of Lot 9 issued July 2019.

Ongoing collections of she-oak and other Australian native seeds are occurring to ensure additional plants can be grown from seeds from the project site.

As previously stated, a development approval condition was that Blue Care deliver back a propagation of she-oaks at the rate of 8 to 1 for each she-oak removed from the construction site.

JANUARY 2022

Clearing work begins on the site.

The clearing is to be done in stages to minimise the impact on Glossy Black-Cockatoos with Lot 9 being the southern lot not permitted to be cleared until the

offset planting has been undertaken at Girraween Estate.

The first clearing will be 0.8 hectares of a total of approximately 4.6 hectares in total to be cleared.

2023

Amended Operational Works approval issued for Lot 9 to incorporate remediation works to the former landfill cap and updated offset methodology for Stage 2.

Clearing of Lot 9 anticipated to commence in mid-June.