Attachment B - Assessment of Received Submissions regarding Revocation of VPO 3

Local Law No.6 Protection of Vegetation

1.	***Issue*** *Revocation of the VPO will likely result in the removal of the tree and consequently the destruction of the annual nesting site for Ospreys. Ospreys have nested in the tree for many years returning every year.*
	Officers Comments The trees height and proximity to Moreton Bay provides important ecological value by providing habitat for arboreal birds, particularly the Eastern Osprey (*Pandion heliaetus*). The Eastern Osprey requires high roosting sites with an uninterrupted view to the water for food-gathering and observation. The Eastern Osprey is territorial with a forage-range of around 30 square kilometres. During the tree assessments carried out an active breeding pair of Osprey were observed nesting in a stick nest located in the apex of the subject tree. Council officers are aware that a breeding pair of Eastern Osprey occupy the nest annually and have done so for many years. This year, the nest was occupied by a breeding pair of Eastern Osprey, and the parents and chicks have only just recently vacated the nest. The Eastern Osprey including their nests is protected under the Queensland *Nature Conservation Act Wildlife Management Regulations* and the Federal *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC)*. Ospreys are also listed under the Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, the China-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (CAMBA) both of which fall within the Federal Government's EPBC Act and the RAMSAR Convention to protect the ecological integrity of Moreton Bay. If the VPO is revoked, the property owners will be responsible for the management of the Osprey nest in accordance with the legislative requirements of the Act. Revocation of the VPO will likely result in the removal of the tree and if this occurs, the destruction of the Osprey nesting site. Consequently the breeding pair of Ospreys that utilise this tree as a nesting site will seek a nesting site elsewhere. As these species require high roosting sites, such as the one provided by this tree, it is unlikely that they will find a suitable replacement within the locality.
2.	***Issue*** *The Cook Island Pine is evidence of the early settlement of Wellington Point and provides a link between the present and the historical past of the Redlands dating back to the 19th Century, removal of the tree with remove this link.*
	Officers Comments The removal of the VPO will allow the removal of the Cook Island Pine. The tree is estimated to be about 130 years old. If it were removed the link that it provides to the origins of Wellington Point will also be removed. Although there is no evidence pointing to the tree being planted by an historical figure or to commemorate an historical event it nevertheless is a constant reminder of the age of the area and is certainly part of the local history.
3.	***Issue*** *The tree provides a unique contribution to the landscape and a valuable aesthetic quality to the Wellington Point area. The tree is a landmark and important to the visual amenity of the area. Destroying the tree will result in the loss of a well-known, highly-visible landmark and attraction in Wellington Point for locals and tourists.*
	Officer's Comments The trees aesthetic value is reinforced by its dominating height and girth. Being visible from, across Moreton Bay, Manly, Cleveland and other areas, the trees presence imparts a definitive and unique visual amenity to the Wellington Point locality. The tree is a significant landmark of Wellington Point which helps to define and reinforce its sense of place and uniqueness. The tree contributes to visual appeal and ambiance of the area. Although the construction of the 2 storey dwelling in front of the tree has blocked part of the base of the tree from view, the true aesthetic value lies with the trees height and visibility from afar.

	The removal of the tree will have a negative impact on the visual amenity of the area and will detract from the character of Wellington Point. The tree is used by members of the boating community as a navigational aid when navigating the bay.
4.	***Issue*** *Photos of the tree taken in 1950 show the extraordinary age and height of the tree even then. Its vast age and contribution to our history cannot be replaced*.
	Officer's Comments The first Cook Island Pine seedlings reportedly[1] came to Australia (Kew Gardens) in 1851 from England. There is reference in the 1865 Brisbane Courier[2], of a young Cook Island Pine growing in 'The South Brisbane Nursery'. The nursery was 13 years old at the time, so this particular pine at South Brisbane would perhaps have been planted around 1852. The land around Douro Rd was in private ownership around 1880. It is reported by previous owners of the property that the subject Cook Island Pine at Wellington Point was already large and dominating in 1949. Based on these facts, it can be concluded that the tree was planted around 1880, aging the tree around 133 years old – consistent with the growth characteristics and size of this tree. The subject tree is the oldest Cook Island Pine recorded in the Redland area, making its value in this regard significant. **References;** *[1]Hortus Camdenensis: An illustrated catalogue of plants grown by Sir William MacArthur at Camden Park, NSW Australia between c.1820 and 1861.* *[2]The Brisbane Courier (Qld: 1864-1933), Wednesday 1 November 1865, page 3*
5.	***Issue*** *The community needs special landmarks to be protected for future generations to provide a sense of place and link to our past.*
	Officer's Comments The trees unique contribution to the landscape consists of both an amenity and an environmental perspective. From an amenity perspective, the tree provides a timeless 'sense of place' that only veteran trees of this age and size can provide. 'Sense of place' created by veteran trees is rare and becoming uncommon due to the loss of such trees to urbanisation.
6.	**Issue** *The tree poses a significant risk to people and property. There has been some level of damage to the trees root system as the wastewater connection point is within the trees protection zone. Given the changes to the subject land the trees health may deteriorate quickly. Should the tree fall, the impact would be to at least 3 properties depending on which way it falls.*
	Officer's Comments The Tree Assessment Report has identified that the tree is currently structurally sound and in good health. With appropriate arboreal management, the trees risk will be minimised and it should have a long and safe life expectancy. The impacts caused to the root zone from the recent development activities have been identified as not being adverse to the trees structural integrity or health. This species of tree is capable of living well in excess of 200 years. With the implementation of a tree management plan, the tree can be monitored for any adverse changes that may require immediate action.