



Laverton Park's future directions plan, the south-west corner

1 message

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Submission by Transition Hobsons Bay

Transition Hobsons Bay would like to see drought tolerant fruit and nut trees included in public parks for the future benefit of the community. Our feedback assumes neither the 'proposed native tree', nor the 'proposed feature trees' marked on the future directions plans for Laverton Park are food trees. It is difficult to read from the plans on the internet the specific species proposed under these headings.

An internal working document by Transition Darebin identify a dozen criteria for food trees in public spaces including 'drought tolerant / climate adaptable' and 'no maintenance once established'. The document claims 20 species of food trees meet these criteria, including mulberries, figs, pomegranate and pine nuts.

Transition Hobsons Bay understands Council is likely to have some potential issues and concerns about food trees in public places. We would like planning to begin to identify and manage these issues and concerns, including research into precedents from other councils. There is interest within Transition Hobsons Bay to partner the Council in exploring these issues.

Rationale

Transition Hobsons Bay believes existing patterns of food production will be changed by climate disruption and peak oil :

- Industrialisation has already released enough greenhouse gasses to raise the temperature by 1.4 degrees celsius (0.7 degrees change already measured plus 0.7 degrees in the system)¹ . We are told global warming will impact climate stability, with more extreme events² . **Our food crops have been selected under conditions of relatively predictable periods of cold and hot, wet and dry. The impact of climate disruption on agriculture and food production is worrying³ .**
- Demand for energy is continuously rising from developed and developing economies. But fossil fuels are non-renewable resources. Until recent years, more barrels of oil were pumped each year⁴ . When global oil production starts to decline (due to geological constraints), the unmet demand will raise prices. Many credible oil industry commentators are on the record predicting the production of oil will peak before 2015⁵ . **The existing pattern of food production is energy**

intensive. It has been estimated that 1 kilojoule of food is currently produced from 10 kilojoules of inputs (supplied by fossil fuels)⁶. This model is unsustainable (and crazy). It is critically vulnerable to increased energy prices. The impact of peak oil will be felt throughout our economy and society, including the most critical area of food production and distribution.

Planting food trees in places accessible to the community has the potential to mitigate impacts from both climate disruption and peak oil. As a risk mitigation strategy, planting food trees in public places cannot be undertaken soon enough. For these reasons we would like to see fruit and nut tree species planted in the south-west corner of Laverton Park.

¹Rob Hopkins, 'The Transition Handbook', Finch Publishing, 2008, p25

²<http://www.abc.net.au/news/events/climate-change/faq.htm><http://www.abc.net.au/news/events/climate-change/faq.htm> Accessed 28 April 2010

³<http://www.ipcc.ch/ipccreports/tar/wg2/index.php?idp=57#1212>. Accessed 28 April 2010

⁴Rob Hopkins, 'The Transition Handbook', Finch Publishing, 2008, p12

⁵Rob Hopkins, 'The Transition Handbook', Finch Publishing, 2008, pp18-20; David Strahan, 'The Last Oil Shock', John Murray Publishers, 2008, p200-203.

⁶David Strahan, 'The Last Oil Shock', John Murray Publishers, 2008, p129