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News

Springfield City Group leaves forest a mess

05/02/2025



Rob Mellett

TWO years after a large section of Woogaroo Forest was cleared as part of a sewer line upgrade, Ipswich residents say they have given up hope the area will be revegetated and have begun planting trees themselves.

Springfield City Group (SCG) should have revegetated a stretch of land around 2.3km long and 20-40m wide which was bulldozed for a sewer line upgrade in 2021.

The upgrade was completed in 2022, but the cleared corridor remains barren.

Queensland Urban Utilities ticked off on a SCG revegetation plan after refusing to accept an earlier proposal but the delays continue.

Save Woogaroo Forest Group Inc. (SWFG) said they recently sought a copy of the revegetation plan and budget from Qld Urban Utilities, Ipswich City Council (ICC) and SCG but had no luck.

It is now trying to obtain a copy through the Freedom of Information Act.

ICC took control of the cleared sewer line land after the upgrade was finished.

Around 6 hectares of the forest was cleared by contractors BMD on the significant wildlife corridor.

An area along the Louise Clews' Walk, which runs close to the cleared section, is now choked with weeds including an infestation of invasive species Giant Devil's Fig.

Erosion and siltation of the creeks continues.

"A local resident approached SCG at the time, asking to see the plan and what budget was allocated; the resident was informed that there was no plan, but that revegetation would occur 'naturally'," a SWFG spokeswoman said.

"When Ipswich City Council was contacted with the same questions, it also said that there was no plan or budget associated with revegetating the area cleared due to the sewer line upgrade.

"Locals have begun planting koala food trees in the cleared area, but success has been compromised due to the compacted earth and large quantity of road base material – 'blue metal', which was deposited during the sewer line upgrade works."

Meanwhile, yet another tree has been felled at the forest in western Springfield, adding to the scores of others that have been mysteriously axed over past months.

Only a hacked stump with shards of wood remained of the tree that was estimated to be several hundred years old.

Council officers on February 24 will decide the fate of the forest as they prepare to sign off on Stage 3 of the proposed plan.

The Stockland development will see around 167 hectares cleared for a housing development.

The University of Queensland's Professor and Vice-Chancellor's Senior Research Fellow, Hugh Possingham, along with ecologist for the Australian Reptile Academy Dr Christina Zdenek also want the development halted because of what would be its devastating impact on a host of threatened and

More than 15,689 people have signed a petition by the Save Woogaroo Forest Group Inc calling on Federal Environment Minister Tanya Plibersek to stop the development.



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