



**PRESERVING OUR HERITAGE**

PO Box 85, HUNTERS HILL, NSW 2110  
[www.huntershilltrust.org.au](http://www.huntershilltrust.org.au)

Mayor Zac Miles  
Hunters Hill Council  
22 Alexandra Street  
HUNTERS HILL NSW 2110

12 October 2023

Via email: [mayor@huntershill.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mayor@huntershill.nsw.gov.au)

Copy to: General Manager and Councillors

Dear Mayor

It has been more than a year since you and I last met to discuss what we could do about tree loss and tree vandalism within our Municipality, especially on private land.

I am now seeking Council's support and immediate responsive action on a serious matter brought to the attention of Hunters Hill Trust regarding the loss, possibly by vandalism, poisoning or neglect of building standards, of a seemingly healthy mature Moreton Bay Fig at 15 Hunter Street, Woolwich. This is the construction site of a new multi-level dwelling with underground basement and garage, under DA 20101105-3.

The attached photos were taken a day ago and it can clearly be seen this magnificent tree, protected in the Development Approval of 16 December 2022 with the payment of a \$20,000 bond, has been killed. We would request an urgent investigation by Council staff into what may have transpired to cause such harm. DA Approval Condition 9 is as follows:

*A bond in the sum of \$20,000 being paid to Council prior to the issue of the Construction Certificate to ensure protection of the Fig tree during demolition, excavation and construction. This bond is to be refundable after a period of eighteen (18) months from the issue of the Occupation Certificate on condition that the tree is inspected by Council's Parks & Landscape Co-ordinator who is to be satisfied that the tree is healthy and viable at that time.*

\$20,000 seems a paltry amount when building costs would be worth multiple millions of dollars. We would strongly urge Council to insist this dead tree remains in place to allow hollows to form for wildlife habitat uses.

We would also like to remind Council of the letter sent 11 January, 2023 from the Trust (see attached) which outlined some very good controls and policies that could easily be implemented, with a will to do so, to prevent such arrogance and disregard for Council's rules and regulations.

A/GM Maria Kennedy sent the following email response:

*The Trust raises many important issues relating to strengthening our policy framework. While also, advocating measures relating to the review of planning instruments, and the promotion of tree management to the wider community. A cross organisational response is required to address these matters comprehensively. This is afoot, with an Internal Tree Management group being convened by the General Manager. As you will be aware, Council is also currently reviewing both its Local Environment and Development Control Plans. The outcomes of the policy review process will be reported to Council in due course. The internal management group will also focus on diversifying the promotional efforts regarding tree management in the community.*

There's no better time than now to tighten controls, implement harsher fines and activate serious consequences to send a very clear and strong message!

A tree loss of this size and significance greatly harms the heritage landscape and scenic views to and from the harbour. It also impacts the community who grieve for the continued destruction of our mature trees and are angered by vandalism of this nature.

We suggest that a banner blocking the harbour view for the next five years, as was recently introduced in Castlecrag, would be appropriate and would send a very loud message that this flagrant disregard of DA rulings will no longer be tolerated in Hunters Hill.

I look forward to your immediate response and reporting of this matter. The Trust would also request a progress report on the strengthening of your tree policy framework and a date for a meeting to learn about the revised policy to promote to our members.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Raisin', written in a cursive style.

Karyn Raisin  
President  
**Hunters Hill Trust**