

10/11/2022

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Oppose

1. OBJECTION

TO THE INSTALLATION OF LIGHTS IN BRISBANE BOTANIC GARDENS FOR THE FISCAL PURPOSE OF CONDUCTING GUIDED TOURS THROUGH THE GARDENS AND ADJOINING ANZAC PARK BETWEEN 5:45 PM AND 11:15 PM.

As a rate-payer, member of three Brisbane garden clubs and frequent visitor to the gardens, I strongly object to the above proposal on the following grounds.

By definition, “a botanical garden is dedicated to the collection, cultivation, preservation and display of an especially wide range of plants, which are typically labelled with their botanical names. It may contain specialist plant collections such as cacti and other succulent plants, herb gardens, plants from particular parts of the world... there may be greenhouses, shade-houses, again with special collections such as tropical plants, alpine plants, or other exotic plants” (Wiki)

Our gardens clearly fulfil all these criteria: we have collections of cactii, orchids, citrus, camellias, sub-tropical plants, as well as fern and bonsai collections, a Japanese Garden, tropical dome and much more. It is a serious repository of plant collections that functions as a source of botanical knowledge much like a public library or museum – not a fun park. It is a resource for professional botanists, horticulturalists, curators of other public gardens, professional growers, landscapers and indeed all people interested in gardening. The colours and form of the plants look their best in natural sunlight.

The Internationally recognised Mt Coot-tha Gardens are funded by the Brisbane ratepayers who are extremely proud of their iconic gardens, with many visiting regularly. To turn it into a nightly lightshow undermines and devalues the wonderful work done by our past and present curators and their various teams of gardeners and other staff. They must be preserved for the enjoyment and source of information for future generations - not for the benefit of a private company or as a source of income for any commercial initiative.

Issues of conservation and sustainability: the gardens and Anzac Park are either home or feeding grounds for a large collection of native birds and wildlife. When living at Chapel Hill, adjacent to Mt Coot-tha Forrest Park, we were commonly visited by numerous wallabies, possums, Frogmouth Owls, the Samford Powerful Owl, Kookaburras, Lorikeets in season, flying foxes, an echidna, Pacific black ducks, magpies etc, green tree frogs, blue tongue and other lizards, bush mice and numerous insects, including native bees. It would take an in-depth study of these animals over several seasons to establish their true numbers. Many of these creatures are nocturnal and would suffer greatly from the installation of lights, especially in the trees. Their very preservation would be threatened and with it the natural cross-fertilisation of plants in the gardens. The environment would be irrevocably damaged both within and around the neighbourhood.

Lastly, the digging and installation of underground electricity cables would destroy understory plants and the roots of taller plants. But far greater damage to garden beds would be caused by the stomping of up to 2400 people per night throughout the year. The theft of precious plants and cuttings is far more likely with less security than that provided by the general surveillance of gardeners, tour guides and Friends of the Gardens during the day. Some of the rare plants

are extremely valuable and would fetch high prices. This in fact did occur to the gardens valuable Woollomi Pine trees some years ago. For these substantial reasons I would urge you to reconsider LUMINA's proposal more critically.

Susan C Keays, PhD