

Wahroonga Fig trees

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Sent: Monday, 24 May 2010 1:21 PM

To: Subject: Letter to the editor from RailCorp re Wahroonga station

Importance: High

Recent coverage in your paper has demonstrated the local community's interest in Wahroonga Station and RailCorp's plans to replace the fig trees to make the platform safe.

As RailCorp have stated on a number of occasions over the last two years, our engineers and external expert arborists examined all options to maintain the trees at the station.

None of these options, most of which were raised by the community at the meeting on May 15, provide a long-term and cost-effective solution that addresses platform safety and integrity issues while retaining the trees.

Left in place the trees will continue to compromise the platform's structural integrity, damage the heritage-listed station building, damage sewage systems and prevent future improvements to station facilities.

The Heritage Council of NSW independently came to the same conclusion, and placed upon RailCorp a number of conditions for the removal of the trees. The issue has existed for over two decades and can no longer be avoided.

The Heritage Office approved two options as a replacement tree – the Blueberry Ash and the Lemon Myrtle. While difficult to match the canopy of a fig tree, the mature Blueberry Ash will be planted in place of the fig trees, as the Lemon Myrtle is not available in mature form.

We appreciate that the replacement trees are an important issue for the area and intend to come back to the community 12 months after replanting to get their feedback on the new trees.

John Minchin
GM Infrastructure Maintenance