

Axe looms for riverbank drawcard

Iconic tree facing the chop

BY SAGE SWINTON

THE owner of a riverfront Maitland cafe has grave fears for the future of her business after an iconic tree on site was approved for removal.

The Camphor Laurel tree at Lavender's Cafe is set to come down, taking with it shade protection for customers and much of the cafe's ambience.

Maitland Council approved the removal after an assessment by tree service company Assurance Trees.

"The tree is very large and is causing significant maintenance issues due to leaf litter and associated water damage," a council spokesperson said. "It is also considered likely that the tree is causing structural damage to the adjacent building."

But Lavenders owner Stephanie Purdon, who rents the space, has reservations about the assessment and has sought legal advice.

Starr Partners manages the property. Commercial property manager Tony



GREENERY: Daniel Purdon, Carol Wagner, Janelle Edwards, Liz Jessup and Lavenders Cafe owner Stephanie Purdon below the prominent riverfront Camphor Laurel tree, which is now likely to be removed. **Picture:** Marina Neil

Compton declined to comment on the behalf of the owners when approached by Fairfax Media.

Ms Purdon said the removal of the tree would seriously jeopardise her business.

"If I lose that tree I'll be

losing a lot of business," she said. "My livelihood is going to be chopped in half."

Ms Purdon said the removal would also require her business to be closed for several days – at a loss of thousands of dollars.

And if she were to install shade cloths, Ms Purdon said that would come with a price tag of at least \$35,000, which she cannot afford.

Ms Purdon said she was most frustrated over the lack of consultation about the

tree removal. She said she was not told exactly when it would happen, just that she would be given seven days notice.

"Nobody will talk to me," she said. "As a tenant, I've been kept out of the loop."

"At least listen to me, then if they had decided to do it I wouldn't be so angry."

Ms Purdon said the tree was one of the drawcards for buying the business six years ago.

"I fell in love with that tree," she said. "It's really sad."

The matter has left both Ms Purdon and her staff very concerned about the future. "Their jobs are on the line," she said. "It's starting to take its toll on me stress-wise."

Council and Ms Purdon were told the property owners were considering using the tree trunk to create a piece of art to replace the loss of the tree. The council spokesperson said while the concept fell outside the approval process, it was "seen as a positive outcome for the site and the broader revitalisation works that are occurring in Central Maitland".

Ms Purdon said it would not be the same after the tree is removed and would consider taking her business elsewhere.

SYDNEY'S LEADING GRANNY FLAT BUILDER

RESCONBUILDERSGRANNY FLAT SPECIALISTS

BRICKGRANNY FLATS

INCLUDING GST

FROM \$109,000*

*price excludes design and approval costs

✓ Brick Veneer 60m²

✓ 2.4m Ceiling Height

✓ Concrete Roof Tile

✓ Stone Benchtops

✓ Aluminium Windows

✓ Smoke Detector

✓ LED Downlights

✓ Optional 3 bedroom designs

✓ High Quality Kitchen

NOW BUILDING INNEWCASTLE

RESCONBUILDERS.COM.AU

FOR A FREE SITE VISIT AND QUOTE CALL 1300 110 046

ADVERTISEMENT

AUSTRALIAN ELECTION COMPANY

MAITLAND CITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Saturday 9 September 2017

Elections for the Mayor and for Councillors for each Ward of Maitland City Council will be held on Saturday, 9 September 2017.

If you will be away from the Maitland City Council Area on election day 9 September 2017, you may apply to vote by Postal Vote or Pre-Poll Vote.

Postal Vote applications can be accessed from the Australian Election Company website: www.austelect.com or from the Returning Officer's Office (Maitland Town Hall, Heritage Room, 281 High Street, Maitland, NSW 2320) or from Maitland City Council or their website.

Completed and signed Postal vote application forms must be returned to the Returning Officer by Monday 5:00 pm 4 September 2017.

You may be eligible to have a Pre-Poll Vote. Pre-Poll voting will be available from:

Pre-Poll Office	Address	Hours
Maitland Church of Christ	1 Garnett Road East Maitland NSW 2323	Mon 28 Aug – Fri 1 Sept 9am – 5pm Mon 4 Sept – Thurs 7 Sept 9am - 5pm Fri 8 Sept 9am – 6pm; Full access available

The locations of Polling Places which will be open on 9 September 2017 are listed within the Australian Election Company website at www.austelect.com. However the list of Polling Places will be advertised in local press, closer to the election date.

For more information about the election, either call the Returning Officer's Office at Maitland Town Hall, Heritage Room, 281 High Street, Maitland, NSW 2320 on Telephone 0497 601 550 or 0497 601 712 or visit www.austelect.com

Written and authorised by Richard Kidd, Australian Election Company, Unit 10, 18-20 Cessna Drive, Caboolture QLD 4510

AV0325763