

## **Western portion McConnell Avenue Reserve to remain open space**

The City of Marion has voted to keep the western portion of McConnell Avenue Reserve in Marino as open space.

The future of this 1,748 sqm piece of land had been in limbo for a year after Council adjourned a decision progressing the revocation process to remove the Community Land Classification on the site for a potential sale.

After considering a report on the use of reserves in the locality as well as a petition signed by 382 people to retain the reserve and a deputation from local community groups, Council Members voted to keep the area as open space and evaluate what needed to be upgraded on-site.

McConnell Avenue Reserve at Marino is comprised of two separate allotments - an eastern portion of 3,965 sqm and the smaller western section - divided by McConnell Avenue.

Around \$220,000 was spent on the eastern section in 2021, including upgrades to the existing barbecue and picnic areas, a new tennis court, separate basketball and netball hoops, a junior bike loop, seating, a drinking fountain, a bike repair station, irrigation and landscaping.

The redeveloped eastern reserve was opened in November 2021 with extra planting installed last year.

At its General Council Meeting last night, Council heard a joint deputation from Travis Smith from the Hilltop Hub and Judy Dangerfield from the 5049 Association was presented to Council regarding McConnell Avenue Reserve.

Council Members also noted a petition signed by 382 signatories, including head petitioner Travis Smith, calling for Council to retain and enhance the western portion of the McConnell Avenue Reserve.

“The residents near the reserve at the top of Marino have been passionately advocating for the retention of this land,” Mayor of Marion Kris Hanna said.

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