



📷 Designs for the Charles Sturt Council coast path at Hallam Tce, Tennyson. Picture: Supplied

West & Beaches

## Why shared bike and walking path could ruin this beach: Ecology expert says too risky for Tennyson Dunes

Patrick Keam, Westside Weekly  
an hour ago

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A COASTAL ecology expert says vegetation would be lost and the Tennyson Dunes system left more vulnerable to being washed away in a storm, if a concrete bike and walking path goes ahead.

Dr Vic Semeniuk's report into the effects of Charles Sturt Council's planned 3m-wide path, to be used in a pending Supreme Court case, states the project would cause irreversible damage to the fragile dunes.

"In terms of biodiversity, the vegetation and floristics of the dunes of Semaphore-Grange coast stand alone," the report reads. "In regard to whether the path will protect the dunes or the biodiversity, the answer is no."

Dr Semeniuk was contracted to carry out the report by the Coastal Ecology Protection Group (CEPG), which is taking legal action against the council and State Environment Minister Ian Hunter to block the path from being built.



📷 Monique Webber, who grew up at Tennyson and retains close connections with the area, is pictured with her young sons Tennyson and William, and her mum, Denise Webber. She wants to ensure the dunes are protected. Picture: Roger Wyman

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Charles Sturt plans to build the path from concrete, as well as a section of boardwalk from Semaphore to Grange.

Some sections would run directly through the dunes.

According to the report, this would leave the dunes at greater risk of erosion during storms.

It recommends building a limestone path along property boundaries, further from the beach.

Dr Semeniuk also argues a boardwalk would disrupt the shade and rainfall patterns that some unique species of vegetation rely upon.

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Nine groynes made of giant sandbags could soon appear at Brighton Beach

Charles Sturt chief executive Paul Sutton said the path's alignment had been determined to avoid disrupting sensitive plants.

“(The) council will be undertaking extensive revegetation and weed removal to offset any vegetation loss and improve the overall structure and health of the dunes,” he said.

“The path will enable improved conservation of the dune environment by reducing the number of people that are walking through the dunes creating informal tracks.”

CEPG spokeswoman Monique Webber said residents and the group were not against a path, as long as its materials and route did not harm the dunes.

“If the native vegetation in the dunes is destroyed and the dunes disappear through erosion, we can never get them back,” she said.

The proposed \$6.5m walking and cycling trail would go from Third Ave, Semaphore Park, to Terminus St, Grange, with a section of state-owned land in the middle through the Tennyson

Dunes.

The parties will be back in court on Tuesday, which will be the sixth directions hearing for the case.