Greenhill exempt from burning ban

By **Elisa Rose**

The community of Greenhill has been exempt from the Adelaide Hills Council's burning ban after more than 100 residents petitioned to retain their freedom to burn-off.

Elected members last week voted to adopt the council's draft Burning Permit Policy, which imposes a burning ban on all townships in the council area.

Council staff had recommended the ban be extended to Greenhill, which, while being gazetted as a township in 1990 by the old East Torrens Council, is not zoned as a township for the purpose of the council's Development Plan.

A staff report said the density of the blocks at Greenhill and their comparatively small average size (1502sqm) were characteristics which were similar to other townships included in the policy.

However, a 152-strong petition – including 148 Greenhill residents – was presented to the council in April requesting that it not be included as a township for the purpose of the policy.

Greenhill resident Ken Collins told councillors at a meeting last week that his community just wanted to "be left alone".

"We've proved over 34 years since the Ash Wednesday fire that we don't have problems with burning off, we're responsible people because of the Ash Wednesday fire," he said.

"We have our own CFS, our own Greenhill community association, our own water supply, we don't need anything from the council – just to leave us alone."

moved a motion which excluded the community from the township burning ban.

He asked the chamber "why a place like (Greenhill), which has the highest fire danger of any of our settlements, is not going to be allowed to protect itself?".

"Human life is a little bit more important than having a permit," he said.

Cr Bailey's motion was carried by all councillors except Crs Malcolm Herrmann and Jan-Claire Wisdom.

Cr Wisdom told the meeting Greenhill's situation was "very similar" to Crafers West and she was concerned about "setting a precedent for other people".

Meanwhile Cr Herrmann told *The Courier* on Thursday while he agreed that Greenhill should be exempt, he was disappointed the vote was taken before councillors had discussed whether to change any other aspects of the policy – particularly whether residents in townships should be allowed to burn dry wood in braziers or chimineas.

Air quality

The council's Burning Permit Policy will replace its Interim Township Burning Permit Policy, which was introduced to enforce the State's Environment Protection Agency's (EPA) *Environment Protection (Air Quality) Policy 2016*.

The burning bans were introduced by the EPA to improve the health of residents and the environment through improved air quality.

The council has agreed to include additional free green waste drop-off days as part of the 2017/18 budget and ensure that everyone affected by the township burning ban has access to a green waste

The Greenhill community has been exempt from burning restrictions which apply to all towns in the Adelaide Hills Council district. A petition presented to the council and signed by 148 Greenhill residents prompted the council to make a special case for the location which suffered badly in the 1983 Ash Wednesday bushfires.

BURNING RULES

Some regional parts of the Adelaide Hills Council are deemed to be 'metropolitan' under the Environment Protection Act. For example rural areas outside the townships of Cherryville, Norton Summit, Ashton, Basket Range, Uraidla, Piccadilly, Ironbank, Mylor, Scott Creek and Bradbury are classed as 'metropolitan'.

If you live within metropolitan Adelaide but outside of a township you will be covered by a five-year permit that allows you to:

- Light or maintain an appropriately sized fire using charcoal, dry wood or other dry plant material for the purpose of preparing food or beverages.
- Burn agriculture or forestry waste or burn vegetation for fire prevention or control.
- Burn vegetation comprising dry wood or other dry plant material in a brazier, chiminea or fire pit in the open for domestic heating.
- Light or maintain a fire in the open using vegetation comprising dry wood or other dry plant material for a campfire or barbecue in the course of camping, scouting or a similar outdoor recreational activity.

If you live within a township either outside or inside of metropolitan Adelaide you can:

- Light or maintain an appropriately sized fire using charcoal, dry wood or other dry plant material for the purpose of preparing food or beverages.
- Burn charcoal (but not wood or other plant material) in a brazier, chiminea or fire pit for domestic heating.
- A permit is required for any other burning activities.

If you live outside of a township and outside of metropolitan Adelaide you can:

- Light or maintain an appropriately sized fire in the open on land using charcoal, dry wood or other dry plant material for the purpose of preparing food or beverages.
- Light or maintain a fire in the open on land using charcoal, dry wood or other dry plant material for the purpose of a campfire or barbecue in the course of camping, scouting or a similar outdoor recreational activity.
- Burn charcoal, dry wood or other dry plant material in a brazier, chiminea or fire pit for domestic heating.
- Burn agriculture or forestry waste, burn off vegetation for fire prevention or control, or burn vegetation for any other purpose, outside a fire danger season.