

Blackbutt Reserve

Plan of Management
2012



Production

Blackbutt Reserve Plan of Management
was prepared by The City of Newcastle Future City Group

Enquiries

For information about this document contact:
The City of Newcastle
Phone: 02 4974 2000

Published by

The City of Newcastle
282 King Street, Newcastle
Phone: 02 4974 2000 (main switchboard)
Post: PO Box 489
Newcastle NSW 2300 Australia
Fax: 02 4974 2222
E-mail: mail@ncc.nsw.gov.au
Web: www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au

February 2012

© 2011 The City of Newcastle

Disclaimer

The City of Newcastle has made every reasonable effort to ensure that the information contained in this document was current and accurate at the time the document was created and last modified. The Council makes no guarantee of any kind, and no legal contract between the Council and any other person or entity is to be inferred from the use of information in this document.

The Council accepts no responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of the information. No user should rely on the information, but instead check for confirmation with the originating or authorising body.

contents

Part A: Part A contains background information and sets the direction for management of Blackbutt Reserve		
1.0	Executive Summary	8
	1.1 Background	8
	1.2 Changes since the 1989 Plan	8
	1.3 Structure of the Plan	9
	1.4 Study Process	9
	1.5 Values, Key Objectives and Key Strategies	10
	1.5.1 Values	10
	1.5.2 Key Objectives	10
	1.5.3 Strategies	11
	1.6 Concept Masterplan	11
	1.7 Implementation	11
2.0	Introduction and Overview	12
	2.1 What is a Plan of Management	12
	2.2 Aims of the Plan	12
	2.3 Land covered by this plan	12
3.0	Planning Context	15
	3.1 State Government Legislation	15
	3.1.1 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>	15
	3.1.2 <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>	16
	3.1.3 <i>Species Conservation Act 1995</i>	16
	3.1.4 <i>Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995</i>	16
	3.1.5 Other relevant legislation and policies	18
	3.2 Local Planning Context	18
	3.2.1 Integrated Planning and Reporting	18
	3.2.2 Council's Management Goals	20
	3.2.3 Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2011	20
	3.2.4 Other relevant Council plans and policies	20
4.0	Site Description	24
	4.1 Cultural and Historical Significance	24
	4.2 Social Significance	26
	4.3 Regional and Local Context	26
	4.4 Landscape Character and Vegetation	27
	4.5 Threatened Species	27
	4.6 Topography and Drainage	29
	4.7 Condition of the land, existing assets and usage	31
	4.7.1 Built environment	31

	4.7.2 Tracks and trails	31
	4.7.3 Natural environment	33
5.0	Existing Site Usage	34
	5.1 Existing site management	36
6.0	Basis for Management	37
	6.1 Legislative and Policy Framework	37
	6.2 Community Values	37
	6.3 Community desired outcomes	37
	6.4 Objectives	38
	6.4.1 Core Objectives	38
	6.4.2 Key Management Objectives	38
7.0	Management Issues and Threats	40
	7.1 Reserve wide	40
	7.2 Issues by catchment	42

Part B: Part B includes specific management strategies and outcomes for Blackbutt Reserve

8.0	Future use and development	44
	8.1 Leases, licences and other estates	44
9.0	Concept Masterplan	45
	9.1 Reserve Management Principles	45
	9.2 Carnley Avenue Recreation Area and Richley Reserve Recreation Area Masterplan	48
	9.3 Carnley Avenue Recreation Area Masterplan	48
	9.4 Richley Reserve Recreation Area Masterplan	52
	9.5 Key strategies	53
10.0	Implementation	55
	10.1 Action Tables	57
11.0	Reference list	104

Figures

1	Study Area Map	14
2	Community land categories	17
3	IP&R Framework	19
4	Green corridors and habitat locations	23
5	Blackbutt Reserve sub-catchments	30
6	Tracks and trails	32
7	Site Issues	42
8	Blackbutt Reserve Master plan	47
9	Carnley Avenue Recreation Area	50
10	Richley Reserve Recreation Area	52

Appendices

1	Local Government Act 1993 and core objectives	105
2	Condition and use of existing built, recreation and natural assets	108
3	Community consultation	120
4	Management issues and threats	128
5	Facilities and activities permissible within Blackbutt Reserve	135
6	Wetland Audit	140

Tables

1	Schedule of land
2	Natural asset condition information

Glossary of terms and abbreviations

Set out below are definitions and explanations of some key words and phrases that are used in this Plan. Further information may be found from websites and documents listed in the References section of this Plan.

Actions	Activity undertaken to achieve the strategies.
APZ	Asset Protection Zone.
BFRMP	Bush Fire Risk Management Plan.
BRIMS	Bush Fire Risk Information Management System.
Bushland	Community Land that contains primarily native vegetation and that vegetation: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. is the natural vegetation or a remainder of the natural vegetation of the land, or 2. although not the natural vegetation of the land, is still representative of the structure or form, or structure and form, of the natural vegetation in the locality.
Community land	Land vested in a Council for the use of the general community for such areas as parks and community facilities.
CSP	Community Strategic Plan.
Core Objectives	Objectives identified under the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> for each category of land. All current and future uses of the land must comply with the core objectives.
CPTED	Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.
DA	Development Application.
Delivery Program	Council's 4 year Delivery Program outlines how each council will deliver the outcomes proposed in the Community Strategic Plan during its term of office and the measures it will use to determine its success.
Development	means: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the use of land, and 2. the subdivision of land, and 3. the erection of a building, and 4. the carrying out of a work, and 5. the demolition of a building or work, and 6. any other act, matter or thing referred to by an environmental planning instrument, but does not include any development of a class or description prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of this definition.
EEC	Endangered Ecological Community.
EP&A Act	<i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.</i>
EPBC Act	<i>Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.</i>
EPI	Environmental Planning Instrument.
Escarpment	Community land that includes such features as a long cliff-like ridge or rock and the land includes significant or unusual geological, geomorphological or scenic qualities.
ESD	Ecologically Sustainable Development.
General Community Use	Community land which is available for use for any purpose for which Community Land may be used, whether by the public at large or by specific sections of the public and does not satisfy the guidelines for categorisation as a natural area, a sportsground, a park or an area of cultural significance.

HCCREMS	Hunter and Central Coast Regional Environmental Management Strategy.
HCRCMA	Hunter - Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority.
Key Management Objectives	High level aims, consistent with the Core Objectives and the community's desired outcomes.
LEP	Local Environment Plan.
LGA	Local Government Area.
LTFP	Long Term Financial Plan.
Means of Assessment	The manner in which Council proposes to assess its performance with respect to the Plan's objectives.
Natural Area	A natural area is land, whether or not in an undisturbed state, which possesses a significant geological feature, geomorphological feature, landform, representative system or other natural feature or attribute that would be sufficient to further categorise the land as bushland, wetland, escarpment, watercourse or foreshore in accordance with the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> .
Newcastle Voice	City of Newcastle Community Reference Panel.
NRM	Natural Resource Management.
OEH	Office of Environment and Heritage (NSW).
Park	Land where it is, or is proposed to be, improved by landscaping, gardens or the provision of non-sporting equipment and facilities, for use mainly for passive or active recreational, social, educational and cultural pursuits that do not unduly intrude on the peaceful enjoyment of the land by others.
PoM	Plan of Management.
RFS	Rural Fire Service.
SAMP	Strategic Asset Management Plan.
SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy.
Stormwater	Stormwater is water that accumulates on land as a result of storms, and can include runoff from urban areas such as roads and roofs.
Strategies	The means by which Council proposes to achieve the Plan's key objectives.
TSC Act	<i>Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995</i> .
Values	Elements the community identify as making a place important.
VMP	Vegetation Management Plan.
Watercourse	Community Land that includes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. any stream of water, whether perennial or intermittent, flowing in a natural channel, or in a natural channel that has been artificially improved, or in an artificial channel that has changed the course of the stream of water, and any other stream of water into or from which the stream of water flows, and 2. associated riparian land or vegetation, including land that is protected land for the purposes of the <i>Rivers and Foreshores Improvement Act 1948</i> or State protected land identified in an order under section 7 of the <i>Native Vegetation Conservation Act 1997</i>.
Wetland	Community Land that includes a waterbody that is inundated cyclically, intermittently or permanently with fresh, brackish or salt water, whether slow moving or stationary.
WSUD	Water Sensitive Urban Design.



Part A

**Planning context, site description,
existing site usage, values and objectives**



1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 Background

As the “Green Heart” of Newcastle, Blackbutt Reserve has an important role to play in supporting the community’s vision of a “smart, liveable and sustainable city”... where we will “celebrate our unique city and protect our natural assets.” (Newcastle 2030).

Newcastle is fortunate to have a 170 hectare nature reserve in the heart of the city. The Reserve is highly regarded by Newcastle residents and visitors to the area. The Reserve forms an outstanding natural setting of relatively contiguous native bushland with outstanding scenic opportunities over the city. Carnley and Richley Recreation Reserve Areas provide the focus for a range of recreational and educational pursuits such as picnicking, animal displays, education programs, functions and events. Other areas of the Reserve contain habitat that supports threatened species such as the Powerful Owl and Grey-headed Flying-fox.

A specific Plan of Management was prepared for Blackbutt Reserve in 1989 to ‘establish Blackbutt Reserve’s future functions, to provide policies for handling divergent or conflicting interests and to present guidelines to conserve its valuable qualities.’ The plan of management called for consolidation of the track system, consolidation of major picnic facilities at Carnley Avenue and Richley Reserve areas; revegetation of grass picnic areas in Rainforest Valley, parts of Main Ridge, Dead Tree picnic area and the Lily Pond.

1.2 Changes since the 1989 Plan

The 1989 Plan of Management was implemented to an extent, but it was superseded by changes to the *Local Government Act 1993*. As a result of the legislative changes, the Blackbutt Reserve Plan of Management remained in place until 2003, when Council adopted the generic Natural Area Bushland Plan of Management

which incorporated Blackbutt Reserve to satisfy the above requirements.

Since this time, there have been a number studies and events which have impacted on Blackbutt Reserve including:

- In 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008 and 2009 Blackbutt Reserve won the Hunter Regional Tourism Awards - Ecotourism category.
- In 2007 a severe storm event caused damage throughout Blackbutt. Stormwater runoff caused major erosion, hundreds of mature tree failures opened up the forest canopy and many of the wildlife exhibits were damaged by wind and falling branches.
- In 2009 a Flying Fox Camp assessment report recommended management of the colony in-situ to deter the colony from moving to a location where it may conflict with humans.
- In 2009 Council’s Sustainability Review proposed removal of the wildlife exhibits from Blackbutt to address financial shortfalls. The community fought successfully to keep the animal exhibits.
- In 2010 Draft Masterplan for Blackbutt Reserve was publicly exhibited. The consultation outcomes have been incorporated into this Plan of Management.
- In 2010 the Newcastle Public Land Bushland Inventory Report identified that six of the top 20 bushland sites in Newcastle are located within Blackbutt Reserve.
- A review and update of the Natural Area - Bushland Plan of Management (2003) is currently being undertaken.



Blackbutt Reserve is highly regarded by Newcastle residents and visitors and has great conservation and recreation significance to the city. As such it is appropriate to develop a specific plan of management for Blackbutt Reserve which explicitly addresses the diverse values, issues and opportunities the community recognise for the site.

This Plan of Management applies specifically to Blackbutt Reserve. It provides the framework and guidelines by which Blackbutt Reserve will be managed both now and in the future. The Plan takes a values-based approach to land planning and management, identifying the Reserve's key values, role and purpose so that these assets can continue to be protected and enhanced. The Plan's actions and directions focus on protecting the values of the Reserve, with the ecological value of the natural areas being the primary value. Council's primary management intention for Blackbutt Reserve is to conserve and restore the natural areas, whilst facilitating the appropriate recreational use and community enjoyment of the site and the wildlife exhibits.

1.3 The Structure of the Plan

The Plan of Management is structured in two broad parts:

Part A contains background information and sets the direction for management of Blackbutt Reserve. This section describes the status of the Reserve and details the values, issues, opportunities that direct the strategies and actions outlined in Part B.

Basis for management outlines the approach to determining management strategies for the site. This includes satisfying legislative requirements, consultation and the identification of values and desired outcomes.

Part B includes specific management strategies and outcomes for Blackbutt Reserve.

Future use and development outlines the uses and future development that is permitted

in Blackbutt Reserve.

Reserve Management Principles establish the basis for the actions in this Plan of Management and provide direction for the design and improvement of future facilities.

The **Action tables** identify the strategies and actions for achieving the key objectives, means of assessment, responsibility, priority and cost and resource estimate.

The **Masterplan** illustrates how the park might appear in the long term, providing a basis for ongoing development of reserve improvements.

1.4 Study Process

This Plan of Management has been developed in consultation with the community. During 2009 and 2010, Council engaged the community through Newcastle Voice in the development of a Draft Concept Masterplan for Blackbutt Reserve. The primary objective of the consultation was to determine the profile of current users and gather opinion on the current and future services and facilities at Blackbutt Reserve.





A Draft Concept Masterplan was placed on public exhibition between 15 November 2010 and 13 December 2010 but not adopted, pending the development of a specific plan of management for Blackbutt Reserve.

A plan of management was clearly necessary to establish Blackbutt Reserve's future functions, to provide strategies for handling divergent or conflicting interests and to present guidelines to conserve its valuable qualities.

Further consultation was undertaken with key stakeholders in June and July 2011 to discuss and confirm community values, objectives, issues and opportunities and develop management strategies.

The Draft Blackbutt Reserve Plan of Management was exhibited for public comment from 17 October to 5 December 2011. Seven submissions from the public exhibition of the draft Plan of Management were received and incorporated into the final document. A public hearing was held on 5 December 2011 to present the draft Community Land categories for Blackbutt Reserve.

1.5 Values, Key Objectives and Strategies

1.5.1 Values

'Values' can be simply described as elements which make a place important. The Reserve's values expressed by the community are:

Ecological - The Reserve provides an important habitat for native plants and animals and contributes to our green corridors. It plays a vital role in conserving regional and local biodiversity.

Nature - The opportunity to experience something of the wild, as well as the picturesque characters of nature in an urban area, providing aesthetic, health and wellbeing benefits.

Recreation - The use of the Reserve for recreational pursuits in a unique natural setting.

Education - The Reserve offers significant learning opportunities through education and interaction.

Scenic - The prominent ridgelines are important features of the Reserve's topographical character. In their forested state they present a significant backdrop and skyline of natural form to a large 'viewshed' spread over Newcastle's suburban development.

Accessibility - An accessible place for all members of the community, in proximity to the city and with good connections both within and to surrounding areas.

Historical - Blackbutt demonstrates a living example, in part, of the original nature of Newcastle and the immense time scale that is represented.

1.5.2 Key Objectives

Eight Key Objectives underpin the strategies and future direction for Blackbutt Reserve. These objectives are consistent with the 26 Core Objectives for the Community Land categories present in the Reserve and the broader Newcastle 2030 strategic objectives.

- 1.0 Manage the Reserve in a manner that protects and enhances the values and quality of the Reserve.
- 2.0 Conserve biodiversity and maintain the ecosystem function of the Reserve.
- 3.0 Provide for the restoration and regeneration of natural areas within the Reserve.
- 4.0 Provide for a range of recreational opportunities that are managed to encourage public appreciation of the Reserve's values, the minimisation of conflict between recreational user groups, and quality experience for all.
- 5.0 Provide equity of access as an integral part of the long-term plan for the Reserve, ensuring affordability, strong public transport connections and connectivity within the Reserve.
- 6.0 Promote and facilitate opportunities for environmental education and research to increase understanding and appreciation of the Reserve's values throughout the community.



- 7.0 Foster public appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of the Reserve's wildlife exhibits.
- 8.0 Ensure sufficient resources to deliver this Plan of Management, enhance management capability and visitor enjoyment.

1.5.3 Strategies

The strategies that will direct the planning, design and management of Blackbutt Reserve are detailed in two sections:

- **Reserve Strategies:** addressing the major actions that apply to the entire Reserve.
- **Catchment Strategies:** addressing strategies particular to specific parts of the Reserve defined by the six catchments identified in the Plan.

The key Reserve-wide Strategies for Blackbutt Reserve are:

- Develop and implement a Way Finding and Interpretative Signage Strategy.
- Develop and implement a Track Strategy which will not include cycling
- Develop Design Guidelines to ensure that the design of the Reserve infrastructure is representative of a single coordinated system.
- Preparation and implementation of a Vegetation Management Plan for all sites contained within the Plan of Management.
- Develop and implement a 4-year Business Plan for Blackbutt Reserve.

The key Catchments Strategies are:

- Activate and increase opportunities at Mahogany Drive, Main Ridge and Lookout Road recreation areas.
- A new multi-purpose facility at Carnley Avenue.
- A new playground and toilet facility at Richley Reserve.
- Further improvements to wildlife exhibits.
- Improved management and interpretation of the Flying Fox Colony.

1.6 Masterplan

The Masterplan is conceptual in nature, illustrating any potential capital works improvements. It is indicative only and will be subject to future detailed design.

The Masterplan is illustrated in three parts:

- The overall Blackbutt Masterplan
- Carnley Avenue Recreation Area Masterplan
- Richley Reserve Recreation Area Masterplan

1.7 Implementation

The implementation of this Plan requires Council to undertake an annual review of each action. All actions within a plan of management are assessed against other areas of Council and final commitment to implementing an action is given once they appear in the Delivery Program and other relevant documents.



2.0 Introduction and Overview

2.1 What is a Plan of Management?

A Plan of Management provides the framework for managing community land. The *Local Government Act 1993* requires that Council prepare Plans of Management for all land classified as “Community Land”. This classification means that the land is owned by Council and is managed for use by the community. Community Land must be categorised in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993*. A category describes the land and has a set of core objectives. All current and intended uses of the land must comply with the core objectives. Appendix 1 lists the core objectives applying to the categories of Community Land.

This Plan meets the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

2.2 Aims of the Plan

This Plan of Management aims to document the key values of Blackbutt Reserve, which relate to its uniqueness as a nature Reserve in the centre of The City of Newcastle, and guide the ongoing management, future use and development of the Reserve.

This Plan aims to provide a clear, concise and practical outline for the management of Blackbutt Reserve. It also aims to assist Council in meeting its broader strategic goals and vision as set out in Council’s Community Strategic Plan (2010).

Specifically the Plan aims to:

- identify and protect Blackbutt Reserve’s intrinsic values
- develop clear and achievable management strategies and actions that reflect Council and community expectations within available resource constraints
- meet legislative requirements for managing Community Land

- clarify permissible and prohibited uses of the Reserve in accordance with the categorisations of the Reserve.

This Plan of Management incorporates a concept masterplan. A masterplan is a design document that illustrates conceptually how the Reserve may look in the long-term and demonstrates how the strategies in the Plan of Management could be realised on the ground.

2.3 Land covered by this Plan

This Plan of Management applies to the area described as Blackbutt Reserve and adjoining Community Land known as March Street Reserve, Grinsell Street Reserve (East and West), Lookout Road North, Aldyth Street West Reserve and Blamey Avenue Park (refer to Table 1 and Figure 1).

All land included in this Plan is community land owned by The City of Newcastle.



Table 1: Schedule of Land

Classification Number	Park Name/Description	LOT//DP	Area (ha)
C97	COUNCIL NURSERY (MARCH STREET RESERVE)	Lot 52 DP 1020846	2.65
C164	ALDYTH ST WEST SIDE PARK	Lot 96 DP 19869	0.31
C166	BLACKBUTT RESERVE	Lot 13 DP 263567	0.64
		Lot 10 DP 263568	0.23
		Lot 1 DP 1148892	0.23
		Lot 1 DP 594058	11.72
		Lot 1 DP 594058	6.73
		Lot 1 DP 1148892	0.94
		Lot 1 DP 1148892	52.19
		Lot 11 DP 263567	1.32
		Lot 181 DP 599648	83.21
C167	BLAMEY AVENUE PARK	Lot 33 DP 19039	0.25
		Lot 60 DP 19183	0.50
C178	RICHLEY RESERVE	Lot 19 DP 555035	7.64
C183	LOOKOUT ROAD PARK NORTH	Lot 39 DP19631	0.61
		Lot 2 SEC R DP 1949	0.14
		Lot 3 SEC R DP 1949	0.15
		Lot 1 SEC R DP 1949	0.12
		Lot 36 SEC R DP 1949	0.15
		Lot 35 SEC R DP 1949	0.15
C353	PART OF BLACKBUTT RESERVE	Lot 37 SEC R DP 1949	0.12
Total Area (ha)			169.99

C = Community land

* All land included in this Plan is owned by The City of Newcastle.



BLACKBUTT RESERVE - PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

Figure 1 Study Area

LEGEND

- Study Area
- NCC Cadastre



File name: BlackbuttReserve_PoM.wor
 Map Created: 24 June 2011
 Source: NCC Data

Newcastle City Council
 DISCLAIMER

Although great care has been taken in the preparation of these documents /maps, Newcastle City Council makes no representation or warranty as to the accuracy or completeness of any information contained in them. Newcastle City Council accepts no responsibility for any misprints, errors, omissions or inaccuracies in these documents / maps or for loss or damages resulting from reliance on any information provided.





3.0 Planning Context

3.1 State and Federal Government

3.1.1 Local Government Act 1993

The Local Government Act 1993 (Section 36), herein referred to as the Act, requires that Council prepare and adopt plans of management for all Community Land.

Community Land is defined for the purposes of the Act to be that land which is set aside for community benefit. Development and use of this land is subject to strict controls set out in the Act. In addition to these controls, a plan of management must govern any land identified as Community Land during the classification process.

In general, a plan of management must identify:

- the category of the land;
- the objectives and performance targets of the plan with respect to the land;
- the means by which these strategies will be achieved; and
- the methods which will be used to assess whether the strategies are being achieved.

A plan of management that applies to just one area of Community Land, as this one does, must also include a description of:

- the condition of the land, and of any building or other improvements on the land, as at the date of adoption of the plan of management,
- the use of the land and any such buildings or improvements as at that date,
- specify the purposes for which the land, and any such buildings or improvements, will be permitted to be used,
- specify the purposes for which any further development of the land will be permitted, whether under lease or licence or otherwise, and
- describe the scale and intensity of any such permitted use or development.

This Plan of Management will address all of the above requirements for Blackbutt Reserve.

Plans of management for Community Land are public documents and can be reviewed or amended, however they usually remain valid for a minimum period of five (5) years from the date of adoption.

Categorisation of land

The Act requires that all Community Land be categorised. A category describes the land and has a set of core objectives. All current and future uses of the land must comply with the core objectives.

The categories given to Blackbutt Reserve in this Plan of Management are:

- Natural Area
 - Bushland
 - Watercourse
 - Wetland
 - Escarpment
- Park
- General Community Use

In order to protect and manage the values and use of these areas, it is important that the individual portions of land are identified and categorised appropriately. A combination of site visits and analysis of Council's Geographical Information System was conducted to identify the category boundaries.

Refer to Figure 2 for a map of the Community Land categories.

Further information relating to the Act, including a description of land categories and their core objectives, is included in Appendix 1.



3.1.2 Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (the EPBC Act) is the Australian Government's central piece of environmental legislation. It provides a legal framework to protect and manage nationally and internationally important flora, fauna, ecological communities and heritage places - defined in the EPBC Act as matters of national environmental significance.

The eight matters of national environmental significance to which the EPBC Act applies are:

- world heritage sites
- national heritage places
- wetlands of international importance (often called 'Ramsar' wetlands after the international treaty under which such wetlands are listed)
- nationally threatened species and ecological communities
- migratory species
- Commonwealth marine areas
- the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park
- nuclear actions.

The EPBC Act comes into play when a proposal has the potential to have a significant impact on a matter of national environmental significance, such as for nationally threatened species within Blackbutt Reserve.

3.1.3 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

The Environmental Planning and Assessment Act NSW 1979 (EP&A Act) provides the legislative power for the preparation of State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs); Regional Environmental Plans (REPs); and the Local Environmental Plans (LEPs). This includes the Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2011.

Instruments made under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007 (the "SEPP") generally

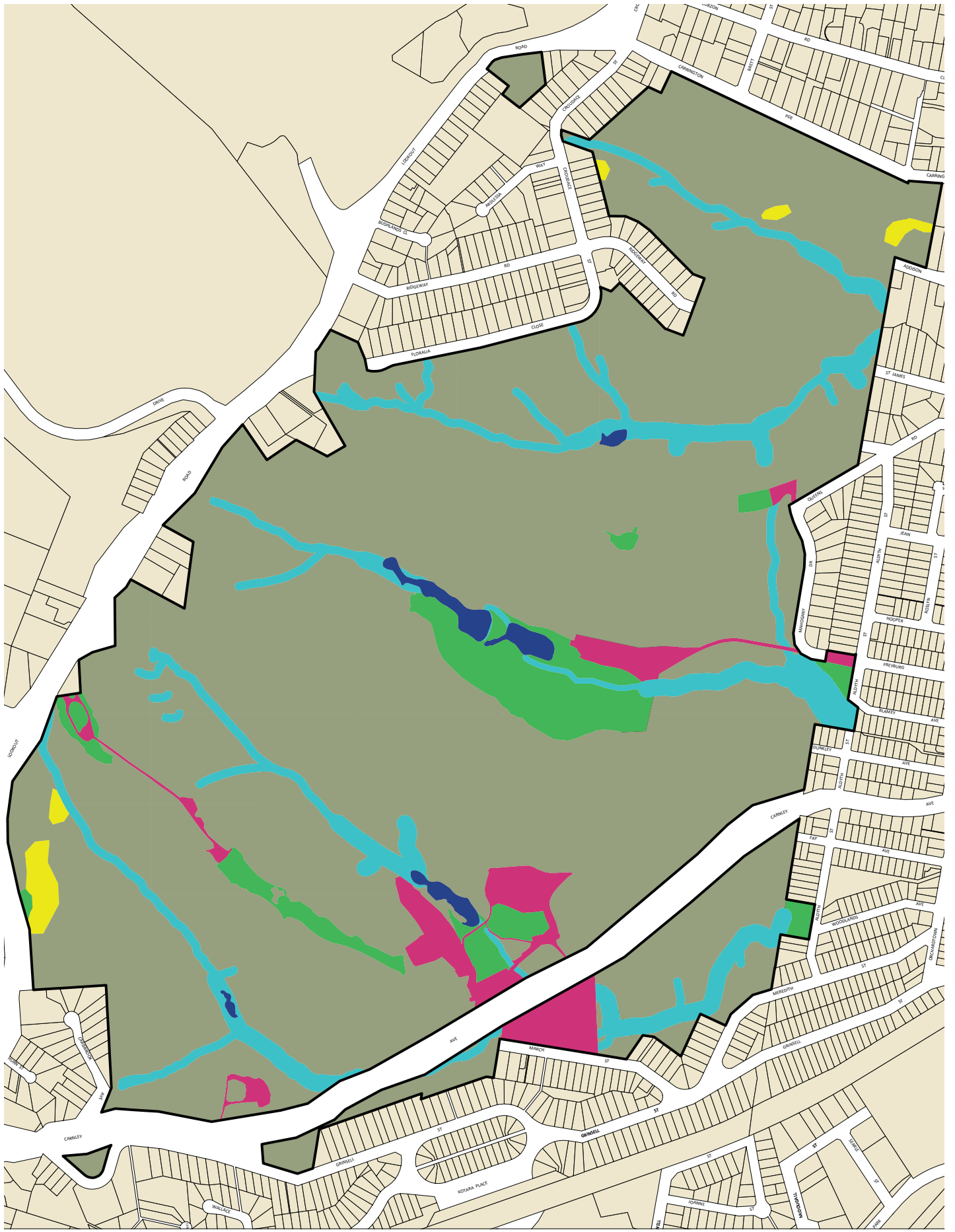
applies to land in New South Wales and aims to facilitate the effective delivery of infrastructure across the State. The SEPP relevantly specifies a range of developments that may be carried out by or on behalf of Council without consent on a public Reserve under the control of or vested in Council, including outdoor recreational facilities, landscaping, amenity facilities, and environmental management works. If threatened species are present, any proposal on these Reserves will still be subject to an environmental assessment under Part 5 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

If there is an inconsistency between the SEPP and any other environmental planning instrument (including Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2011) whether made before or after the commencement of the SEPP, the SEPP would ordinarily prevail to the extent of the inconsistency (though it will not in certain circumstances including those set out in clause 8 of the SEPP - relationship to other environmental planning instruments).

3.1.4 Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995

The Threatened Species Conservation Act NSW 1995 (TSC Act) aims to conserve biodiversity and protect threatened species, populations, communities and their habitats at the landscape scale. Actions have been developed under the Act to encourage recovery of threatened species and communities and to reduce the threats to natural areas throughout NSW. Council has incorporated all relevant actions and threats into this Plan of Management.

The Act requires that a public authority must take any appropriate measures available to implement actions included in a recovery plan for which it is responsible. Public authorities and councils identified as responsible for the implementation of recovery plan actions are required by the Act to report on measures taken to implement those actions. In addition, the Act specifies that public authorities must not make decisions that are inconsistent with the provisions of a recovery plan.



BLACKBUTT RESERVE - PLAN OF MANAGEMENT
Figure 2 Community Land Categories

LEGEND
 [Black outline] Study Area
 [Tan fill] NCC Cadastre

[Grey fill] Bushland
 [Blue fill] Wetland
 [Light blue fill] Watercourse/Riparian

[Pink fill] General Community Use
 [Green fill] Park
 [Yellow fill] Escarpment



File name: BlackbuttReserve_PoM_300112.wor
 Map Created: 31 January 2012
 Source: NCC Data

Newcastle City Council
 DISCLAIMER

Although great care has been taken in the preparation of these documents / maps, Newcastle City Council makes no representation or warranty as to the accuracy or completeness of any information contained in them. Newcastle City Council accepts no responsibility for any misprints, errors, omissions or inaccuracies in these documents / maps or for loss or damages resulting from reliance on any information provided.





3.1.5 Other relevant legislation and policies

Council has to meet many legislative requirements for natural resource management and the management of other activities associated with Blackbutt Reserve, including Federal and State legislation and regulations. Requirements associated with funding agreements may also need to be taken into account. The following is a list of legislation that may need to be consulted during the implementation of this Plan of Management and whilst undertaking operational activities on the site:

- *Catchment Management Authorities Act 2003*
- *Disability and Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Fisheries Management Act 1994*
- *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*
- *Noxious Weeds Act 1995*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000*
- *Protection of the Environment Operation Act 1997*
- *Rural Fires Act 1997*
- *The Roads Act 1993*
- *Water Management Act 2000*

3.2 Local Planning Context

3.2.1 Integrated Planning and Reporting

Plans of management are embedded within Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. The strategies outlined in this Plan of Management are consistent with the community's vision and strategic directions in Newcastle 2030; Community Strategic Plan.

Newcastle 2030 - Community Strategic Plan

Council's guiding document is the Newcastle 2030; Community Strategic Plan (CSP). The City of Newcastle developed the vision and strategic directions in Newcastle 2030 in partnership with the community. The management strategies for Blackbutt Reserve

were also developed with the community and are consistent with and reflect the strategic directions and community expectations in Newcastle 2030.

The community's vision for Newcastle is 'A Smart, Liveable and Sustainable City'.

The three strategic directions, as outlined in Newcastle 2030, that are most relevant to Blackbutt Reserve are:

- **A Protected and Enhanced Environment** Our unique environment will be understood, maintained and protected.
- **Vibrant and Activated Public Places** A city of great public places and neighbourhoods promoting people's health, happiness and wellbeing.
- **Connected City** Our transport networks and services will be well connected and convenient. Walking, cycling and public transport will be viable options for getting around the city.

As outlined in the CSP, the key strategies for achieving these goals include:

- Encourage and support active community participation in local environmental projects (2.2a).
- Protect and rehabilitate degraded and fragmented natural areas and manage major impacts on corridors, remnant bushland, estuaries and coastal areas (2.2b).
- Protect the diversity of flora, fauna and ecological communities, with a particular emphasis on threatened species and endangered ecological communities (2.2c)
- Ensure that future land use planning and management enhances and protects biodiversity and natural heritage (2.2d)
- Improve environmental monitoring and reporting (2.2e).
- Increase opportunities for active and passive recreational use of the city's parks, foreshores and harbour through the provision of child safe spaces, shade,



seating, toilets and other amenities (3.1b).

- Create welcoming and accessible community facilities and attractive public spaces that create opportunities for people to meet and connect to one another (3.1d).
- Provide welcoming facilities and open space that provide for a range of ages and combination of uses and can be easily adapted to suit the changing need of community over time (3.3d).
- Develop a network of safe, linked cycle and pedestrian paths integrated with key destinations and green space (1.2a).

Resourcing Strategies

Council’s resourcing strategies include the Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP), Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) and Workforce Management Plan (WMP).

- The SAMP provides direction on the development and ongoing process improvement for managing community assets. A number of specific volumes of the SAMP have been prepared and many of these relate to assets contained within

Blackbutt Reserve

- The LTFP provides Council with a mechanism to meet the community’s expectations and priorities outlined in the Community Strategic Plan within the context of finite economic and financial resources. The LTFP has identified a capital expenditure component for Blackbutt Reserve, which will be guided both by this Plan of Management and any subsequent special rate variation to fund it.
- The aim of the WMP is to ensure that Council has a robust, yet flexible Human Resource Strategy in place to meet staffing needs into the future.

The strategies proposed in this Plan of Management will need to be supported by the resourcing strategies to ensure that Council has the appropriate mix and delivery of infrastructure services combined with appropriate service levels, sufficient financial and human resources to manage them. In turn, the resourcing strategies will guide the development of realistic strategies for the Plan.

Figure 3: The City of Newcastle Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework



*Includes Plans of Management



3.2.2 Council's Management Goals

Newcastle City Council's Vision for The City of Newcastle is:

Great Place, Great Lifestyle, Great Future.

Mission

Providing services to the ratepayers, residents and visitors to Newcastle that:

- Enhance quality of life.
- Ensure a sustainable future.
- Make best use of our assets.
- Are community and customer focussed.

Core Values:

- Strong leadership
- Community focus
- Community connected
- Continuous improvement
- Develop our people
- Adapt to change
- Decisions based on fact
- Behave responsibly and ethically
- Sustainability

This Plan of Management will assist Council to achieve the strategic priorities in the Community Strategic Plan, aligned with the above mission and values.

3.2.3 Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2011

The Newcastle Local Environmental Plan (LEP) contains the land use planning controls and standards to allow the orderly and economic and sustainable development of lands in the Local Government Area (LGA). All development must comply with the provisions of the relevant zoning. Blackbutt Reserve is zoned as E3 Environmental Management Zone with the exception of Lookout Road North Reserve which is zoned as RE1 Public Recreation.

The objectives of the E3 Environmental Management zone are:

- To protect, manage and restore areas with special ecological, scientific, cultural or aesthetic values.
- To provide for a limited range of development that does not have an adverse effect on those values
- To provide for the conservation of the rural and bushland character of the land that forms the scenic edge of and the gateway to urban Newcastle.

The objectives of the RE1 Public Recreation zone are:

- To enable land to be used for public open space or recreational purposes
- To provide a range of recreational settings and activities and compatible land uses
- To protect and enhance the natural environment for recreational purposes.

3.2.4 Other relevant Council Plans and Policies

Newcastle Public Bushland Asset Inventory Report 2010

In 2008 Council engaged specialist consultants to undertake a detailed audit of all 'urban bushland' under the care and control of Council.

For the purposes of the study, urban bushland was defined as:

A place with endemic vegetation that includes 50% native species and has the opportunity for assisted regeneration.

Six of the top 20 bushland condition sites in the city were located within Blackbutt Reserve. As a result, a significant amount of the ongoing bushland restoration activity in the city will be directed towards the ongoing protection and enhancement of these priority sites.

The key recommendations from this inventory have been incorporated into this Plan of Management.



Recreation Plan 2006-16

The Recreation Plan provides direction for the development of sport and recreation services from 2006-2016.

The Recreation Plan identified that Blackbutt should be explored as the main social family recreation space for the Lambton Planning District.

Other findings from the Recreation Plan include:

- 26% of respondents nominated Blackbutt as the park they used the most, the highest rank in the LGA.
- A Councillor workshop identified Blackbutt as a venue for children focused nature based recreation, through holiday programs, bush and imaginary play and an adventure playground. The area needs to be sensitively managed to protect environmental qualities while allowing walking, and cycling and other pursuits
- The importance of the volunteers at Blackbutt
- More funding required to perform both recreational and conservation functions

Newcastle Cycling Strategy and Action Plan

The draft Newcastle Cycling Strategy and Action Plan represents Council's commitment to enhancement of cycling in Newcastle. The Cycling Strategy and Action Plan establishes targets for cycling in Newcastle and identifies a range of infrastructure improvements and social initiatives, with associated timeframes and responsibility. Its overall objective is to make cycling a safe and attractive travel option to facilitate more people using bicycles for more of their urban trips.

The draft Cycling Strategy and Action Plan labels routes as regional, local or scenic/recreational. Some form more than one role. The draft document includes two routes connecting to, or in the vicinity of, Blackbutt Reserve.

The Kotara to Sandgate route is primarily on road and connects to the south to Lookout Road. In the vicinity of John Hunter Hospital, the route is paralleled in part by off road sections that comprised parts of University to John Hunter Hospital route.

The Lambton to Kotara route is almost exclusively on road route connecting the Newcastle City Centre route at Howe Street/ Tyrone Road New Lambton with the Kotara to Sandgate route at Carnley Avenue/ Charlestown Road.

No linkages will be provided through the Reserve. The recommendation in this strategy will improve cycling connectivity to Blackbutt Reserve from the north, south, east and west.

Newcastle Green Corridors and Landscape Precincts Plan 2005

The Newcastle Green Corridors and Landscape Precincts Plan (2005) aims to provide opportunity for Council to increase the quality and quantity of green spaces within the city. The Plan identifies areas of remnant habitat, identified as 'key habitat localities'. The Plan also identifies a series of 'green corridors' which link two or more larger areas of similar landscape character or habitat or follow the path of an original valley, watercourse, roadside or park. Blackbutt Reserve is connected with several major Reserves via corridors, such as the Glenrock to Blackbutt corridor. The Reserve's linkages are shown in Figure 4.



Newcastle Biodiversity Strategy 2006

Blackbutt Reserve is identified in the Biodiversity Strategy as a key habitat locality. Combined with Jesmond Bushland, the size and relatively compact shape of these Reserves make them a high quality reservoir of biodiversity although they may be still too small and isolated to be sustainable without regular management because of their high recreational use.

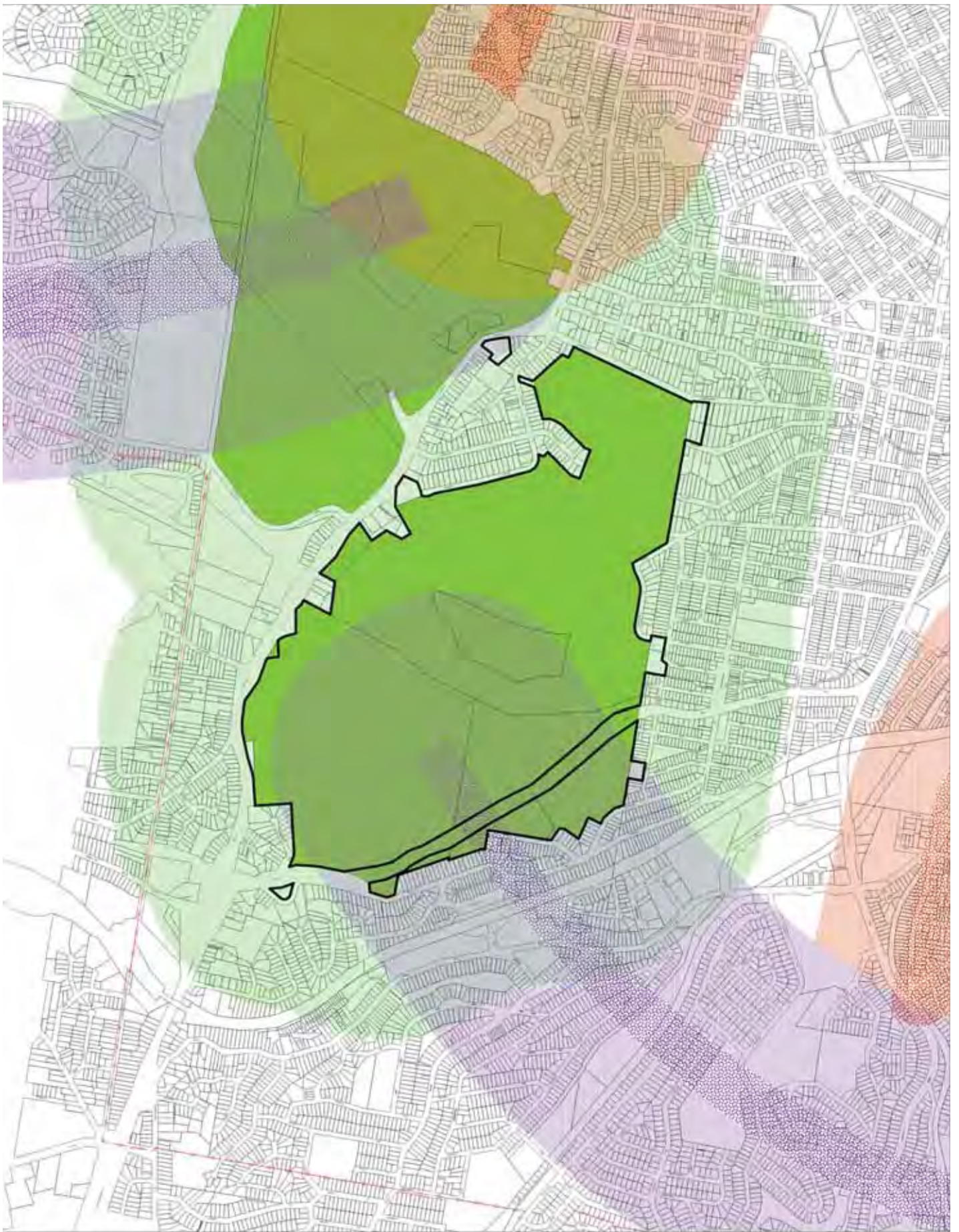
The habitat value of Blackbutt Reserve is threatened by the pressures from surrounding urban settlement, such as recreational pressures, feral plants and animals, nutrients in run-off and service easements all present threats. These threats can be eased by properly designed and managed 'buffer areas' around the Reserve that minimise these types of impacts by educating and encouraging residents to act appropriately.

Habitat loss and fragmentation are key contributors to continuing biodiversity decline across the landscape. In Newcastle, a holistic and integrated approach is required across both public and private lands to help manage natural ecosystems and promote connectivity between remaining habitats.

Other relevant Council Plans and Policies

- Newcastle Environmental Management Plan 2003
- Newcastle 2020 Carbon and Water Management Action Plan
- Disability Action Plan 2005-2010
- Newcastle Urban Forest Policy 2008
- Stormwater Management Plan 2004
- A Commitment by Newcastle City Council to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples of The City of Newcastle 1998





BLACKBUTT RESERVE - PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

Figure 4 Green Corridors and Habitat Locations

LEGEND

- Study Area
- Connecting corridors to adjoining LGA's
- Key Habitat locality
- NCC Cadastre
- Connecting corridors between precincts
- 500m buffer area



File name: BlackbuttReserve_PoM12.ppt
 Map Created: 30 June 2012
 Source: WCC Data

Newcastle City Council
 2012/2015

Although great care has been taken in the preparation of these documents, Newcastle City Council makes no representation or warranty as to the accuracy or completeness of any information contained in them. Newcastle City Council accepts no responsibility for any resulting errors, omissions or inaccuracies in these documents. It may not be liable for damages resulting from reliance on any information provided.





4.0 Site Description

4.1 Cultural and historical significance

The City of Newcastle acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, in this council area Awabakal and Worimi, were the first peoples of this land, and are the proud survivors of more than two hundred years of continuing dispossession.

In 1932 much of the site we now know as Blackbutt Reserve was owned by the Scottish Australian Mining Company. The majority of the sites were subdivided for farmlets, but due to the Great Depression, most of the lots failed to sell and remained undeveloped.

The proposal for the preservation of the bushland and the creation of a nature Reserve was first put forward by Mr R.E. 'Tom' Farrell, a manager at Newcastle Abattoir who enjoyed walking in the Blackbutt bushland with his family on weekends.

During the period 1937-1939 the initiatives of a group of Councils representing Newcastle City, New Lambton, Hamilton, Adamstown, Wickham, Merewether, Waratah and Wallsend in conjunction with the NSW Department of Lands, established the purchase of 144 acres (58 ha) of land at Blackbutt Lookout, Cardiff Heights.

The land was vested in the Department of Lands and by letter dated 4 May 1939, addressed to Greater Newcastle Council (a subsequent amalgamation of the above Councils), the Department stated that the purpose of the acquisition was to establish a national park for Newcastle and District. Newcastle City Council became the appointed trustee of the 144 acres.

During the 1940s mining commenced off March Street and in 1945 Buchanan Borehole Colliery began operating in what is now Richley Reserve. Riding the colliery pit ponies

through the bushland became a popular pastime for local children.

In 1956 Newcastle City Council acquired 306 acres of land at Blackbutt for a 500 lot subdivision. This led to a prolonged period of public agitation for the additional land to become parkland and ultimately this was agreed by Council in 1959, subject to a sufficient portion being subdivided to cover the cost of acquisition.



Aerial view of Buchanan Borehole Colliery 1950



Mining New Lambton 1903



In 1958 a bushfire destroyed much of the rare remnant rainforest canopy in Blackbutt's southern valley. In 1963 Council embarked on a program of native bush replanting, including the establishment of rainforest trees in the southern valley to replace those lost in the fire.

In the 1960s Lookout Road picnic area was established and bird aviaries and exhibits were constructed along the Main Ridge and at Carnley Avenue. Most visitors entered the site at this time via the Lookout Road entrance.

In 1968 the Carnley Avenue extension resulted in another act of disturbance imposed upon the Reserve. This construction severed almost irreparably the southern 10 hectare section of the Reserve (plus the road reservation of approximately 5 hectares). The consequent spill of embankments and disposal of surplus spoil, in conjunction with the establishment of weed growth, seriously depleted the natural qualities of this land and, to a lesser extent, the overall value of the Reserve itself.

In 1976 Council commissioned landscape architect Bruce MacKenzie to undertake a Landscape Study of Blackbutt Reserve. The proposal included rehabilitation of the Buchanan Borehole Colliery site into a picnic area, later named Richley Reserve; relocation of the aviary and animal exhibits to Richley Reserve; returning the main ridge to a picnic area and natural bush; development of new walk and picnic areas; and bus parking and footpath connections to the cliff top lookout. The only two proposals that did not eventuate from this plan were the cliff top parking and connections and the relocation of animal exhibits to Richley Reserve, which were instead located at Carnley Avenue some years later.

In 1979 Buchanan Borehole Colliery closed and Newcastle City Council commenced work on the rehabilitation of Richley Reserve. In recent years the existing water bodies on site were reshaped, bushland was regenerated and footpaths and picnic areas were provided.

It has been acknowledged in the action plan of this Plan of Management, that further work be undertaken to determine the cultural significance of Blackbutt Reserve.

(Refer to Section 10)



Upper Pond, Richley Reserve 1979



Carnley Reserve 1979



Bird Aviary 1970s



4.2 Social significance

Blackbutt Reserve provides a unique opportunity for people in the city to access nature. Research shows that regular physical activity helps reduce the risk of developing a range of serious diseases and improves overall quality of life. City living involves an extraordinary disengagement of humans from the natural environment that is likely to be detrimental to health and wellbeing.

In terms of health and wellbeing, parks and other natural environments have been viewed almost exclusively as venues for leisure and sport. Yet recent research shows that 'green nature', such as Blackbutt Reserve, can reduce crime, foster psychological wellbeing, reduce stress, boost immunity, enhance productivity, and promote healing. In fact, the positive effects on human health, particularly in urban environments, cannot be over-stated. As a result, urban planning should ensure that the communities have adequate access to nature on nature's terms.

Evidence in the literature shows that among other benefits viewing nature is positive for health in terms of recovering from stress, improving concentration and productivity, and improving psychological state, particularly of people in confined circumstances such as the John Hunter Hospital. Furthermore, wilderness and related studies clearly demonstrate that being in a natural environment affects people positively, particularly in terms of mental health.

4.3 Regional and local context

Blackbutt Reserve is located six kilometres west of Newcastle's CBD, in the suburbs of Kotara and New Lambton. As the sixth largest city in Australia, Newcastle forms the economic, administrative and cultural hub of the Hunter region. The Reserve is a local and regional resource, visited by people from both Newcastle and the Hunter Region.

Blackbutt Reserve comprises an area of approximately 170 hectares. The site, which is almost entirely vegetated, provides an unusual sample of the city's remnant natural character.

Surrounding the Reserve's perimeter are residential development and roadways. A large area of bushland is located to the north west of the Reserve, Jesmond Bushland, but this area is physically separated from the Reserve by the heavily trafficked Lookout Road, which is aligned with the north-south Lambton ridge to form the western boundary and top of the catchment. Parts of Jesmond Bushland are designated transport corridor as part of the Newcastle by pass and extensions of the Hunter Area Health's John Hunter Hospital complex, with the remainder proposed as bushland Reserve.

Across the low south eastern margin of the site, Carnley Avenue separates March Street Reserve from Blackbutt Reserve with high traffic volumes and tall embankments. Adjacent residential areas have access to this separated portion but there is no physical connection between it and the body of the Reserve.





4.4 Landscape Character and Vegetation

Blackbutt is a physically complex site with varied geology, topography, microclimates, soil types, vegetation associations and fauna. The evolution of its bushland, open spaces and drainage has been shaped by small and larger scale human interventions over time, such as the introduction of mining, the construction of arterial roads and the selling and subsequent subdivision of portions of the land.

Richley Reserve, a site of approximately 8 ha centrally positioned within the Reserve, was for 25 years the operational surface zone of an underground coal mine network. Since rehabilitated into parkland, Richley Reserve represents a distinct break in the otherwise fairly consistent canopy cover of the Reserve. Other small areas of cleared land occur, such as the Carnley Avenue Recreation Area (also once a mine site).

Nonetheless the site is widely recognised as valuable bushland within an urban environment, containing over 340 species of native plants. These plants exist within five distinct vegetation communities which have been influenced mainly by factors such as soil moisture holding capacity, aspect and shelter:

1. Coastal Foothills Spotted Gum

Canopy is characterised by the following species: *Corymbia maculata*, *Eucalyptus umbra* and *Eucalyptus siderophloia*.

2. Alluvial Tall Moist Forest (Wet Schlerophyll Forest)

Canopy is characterised by the following species: *Eucalyptus saligna*, *Syncarpia glomulifera* and *Glochidion ferdinandi*.

3. Coastal Wet Gully Forest

Canopy is characterised by the following species: *Syncarpia glomulifera*, *Eucalyptus saligna*, *Acmena smithii* and *Guioa semiglauca*.

4. Coastal Narrabeen Moist Forest

Canopy is characterised by the following species: *Syncarpia glomulifera*, *Eucalyptus saligna* and *Eucalyptus acmenoides*.

5. Coastal Plains Smooth-barked Apple Woodland

Canopy is characterised by the following species: *Angophora costata*, *Corymbia gummifera*, *Eucalyptus capitellata* and *Eucalyptus umbra*.

Approximately 395 identified habitat trees are within Blackbutt Reserve. Habitat trees are essential elements of vegetation communities providing protection and enhancement for biodiversity in the city.

4.5 Threatened Species

Blackbutt Reserve is an important local Reserve for protected and threatened flora and fauna species. The abundance of habitat trees within the Reserve provides a significant resource for tree hollow dependent fauna species, ranging from threatened large forest owls to the very small microchiropteran bats.

Blackbutt Reserve contains the Grey-headed Flying-fox (*Pteropus poliocephalus*), which is listed as vulnerable under the TSC Act 1995, and the EPBC Act 1999. This listing has led to added legislative responsibilities in regards to the appropriate management of Grey-headed Flying-foxes and their associated roosting and foraging habitats. The bats are located in a permanent maternity campsite located in a small, yet ecologically significant remnant patch of littoral rainforest within Blackbutt Reserve.

The Powerful Owl (*Ninox strenua*) and Masked Owl (*Tyto novaehollandiae*), which are threatened species, have both bred in the Reserve, and are listed as 'vulnerable' in NSW in accordance with the TSC Act. The occurrence of a nesting pair of Masked Owl is of state significance, as there are very few breeding records for this species. Each pair of Masked and Powerful Owl require extensive areas of habitat (>1,000 ha) in order to obtain



their dietary requirements (i.e. possums, gliders, rodents and birds), and mature trees with large cavities for nesting and roosting. Conservation of these resources is required to maintain these owls in remnant forest areas, such as Blackbutt Reserve (Forest Fauna Surveys, 1997).

The occurrence of populations of Squirrel Glider (*Petaurus norfolcensis*) within Blackbutt Reserve is considered of local and regional significance. The Squirrel glider appears to be locally common in the lower Hunter, but this status is likely to change with time due to habitat removal associated with increased urban expansion. Conservation of bushland remnants on a regional basis is required to ensure long term persistence of the species, in addition to many other species, in the lower Hunter Valley (Forest Fauna Surveys, 1997).

It is the role of this Plan of Management, and the associated master plan, to consider threatened species in the context of how Blackbutt Reserve should be managed over the next 10 years and how these threatened species can be conserved both now and in the future.

Further information regarding the presence of threatened flora and fauna in the Reserve is outlined in Appendix 2.



4.6 Topography and Drainage

Blackbutt Reserve consists of six spurs which run in a south-easterly direction. Steep escarpments occur in a number of locations along these spurs, with the most prominent located at the head of Rainforest Creek. The overall change in elevation is approximately 110m from the highest point on Lookout Road to the lowest points near March Street and Mahogany Drive. The ridgelines carry the tracks and roads which provide the main access routes between the top and bottom levels and through the park generally in a roughly west-east pattern. Pedestrian movement with a north-south orientation is less prevalent.

The six spurs form five catchments and hence five ephemeral creek lines:

- Rainforest Creek Catchment (27 ha)
- Black Duck Creek Catchment (36 ha)
- Coalmine Creek Catchment (50 ha)
- Echidna Creek Catchment (28 ha)
- Bower Bird Creek Catchment (including Lookout Road North) (17ha)

Refer to Figure 5 for a map of the Reserve's catchments.

These catchments are some of the few fully vegetated watercourse headwaters in Newcastle. They start in the west within steep sided gullies and broaden south-eastward into small valleys with flat alluvial floors. The steepest and most sheltered is Rainforest Catchment in the south which provides conditions for its distinct ecological community. Rainforest creek confluent with Black Duck Creek in March Street Reserve and all of the creek lines feed into Styx Creek which joins Throsby Creek and then drain into the Hunter Estuary.

Echidna Creek, Coalmine Creek, Black Duck Creek and Rainforest Creek all descend through both constructed and modified natural wetlands. All of the wetlands capture and accumulate sediment and nutrients:

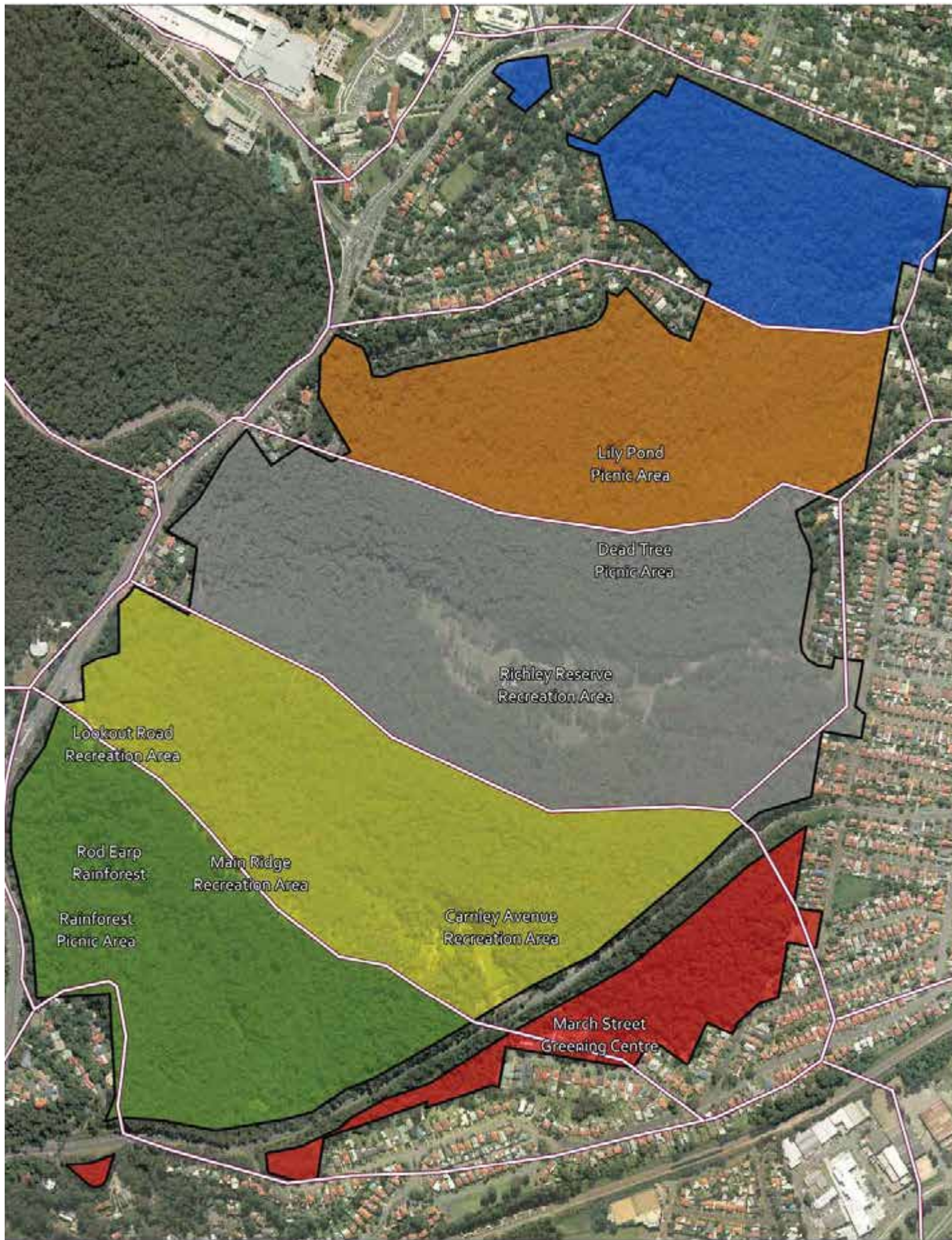
- Lily Pond on Echidna Creek at Lily Pond picnic area;

- Coalmine Ponds Upper and Lower on Coalmine Creek in Richley Reserve;
- Black Duck Pond on Black Duck Creek at Carnley Avenue; and
- Rainforest Pond on Rainforest Creek in Rainforest Valley.

The wetlands have limited capacity to function well as sediment detention basins due to their morphology. In addition, the waters of Black Duck Pond and Richley Reserve Ponds Upper and Lower are turbid due to disturbance by exotic species such as domestic ducks and carp resulting in high levels of suspended sediment. This sediment is flushed into the creek system during stormwater events.

The Blackbutt Reserve Ponds Water Pollution Management Plan 2007 found that these wetlands are currently exposed to high sediment and nutrient loads. All except those at Richley are small in relation to the size of their catchment. Combined with the presence of exotic species, these conditions result in high phosphorus levels, low oxygen levels and potentially toxic algal blooms, which reduce waterway health.

Council has invested in wetland rehabilitation activity over the past few years, based on the actions contained in the Blackbutt Reserve Ponds Water Pollution Management Plan 2007. In 2011 rehabilitation works were completed for all five wetland water bodies (as outlined above) within the Reserve.



BLACKBUTT RESERVE - PLAN OF MANAGEMENT
Figure 5 Reserve Catchments

LEGEND	Bowerbird Creek Catchment	Black Duck Creek Catchment
Study Area	Echidna Creek Catchment	Rainforest Creek Catchment
Subcatchment boundary	Coalmine Creek Catchment	Other

North point

File name: BlackbuttReserve_PoM.mxd
 Map Created: 15 July 2011
 Source: NCC Data

Messiah City Council
 (08) 440818

Although great care has been taken in the preparation of these documents, Messiah City Council makes no representation or warranty as to the accuracy or completeness of any information contained therein. Messiah City Council accepts no responsibility for any errors, omissions, confusions or inaccuracies in these documents / maps or the loss of data resulting therefrom or any other information provided.



4.7 Condition of the land, existing assets and usage

4.7.1 Built environment

Blackbutt Reserve contains a variety of existing built assets that if appropriately managed (including repairs, maintenance or upgrades as required) could continue to provide excellent assets for the residents of Newcastle for years to come. As required by the *Local Government Act 1993*, this Plan of Management includes a description of the current condition and use of assets located within Blackbutt Reserve as per the following requirements:

Clause	Requirement
36 (3A) (a) (i)	Condition of the land, and any buildings or other improvements on the land, as at the date of adoption of the plan of management.
36 (3A) (a) (ii)	The use of the land and any such buildings or improvements as at that date.

Built assets in Blackbutt Reserve include administration and storage buildings, roads, wildlife exhibits, tracks, bridges, public toilets and playgrounds. Council has developed a range of asset management plans unified by The City of Newcastle asset strategy. The purpose of the asset management plans is to establish a framework for managing the assets in a continuous improvement environment through the asset's lifecycle. This involves achieving a balance between delivering asset services to meet community needs and council's ability to manage and resource the asset portfolio accordingly.

Refer to Appendix 2 for a complete description of the current condition and use of built assets located within Blackbutt Reserve.

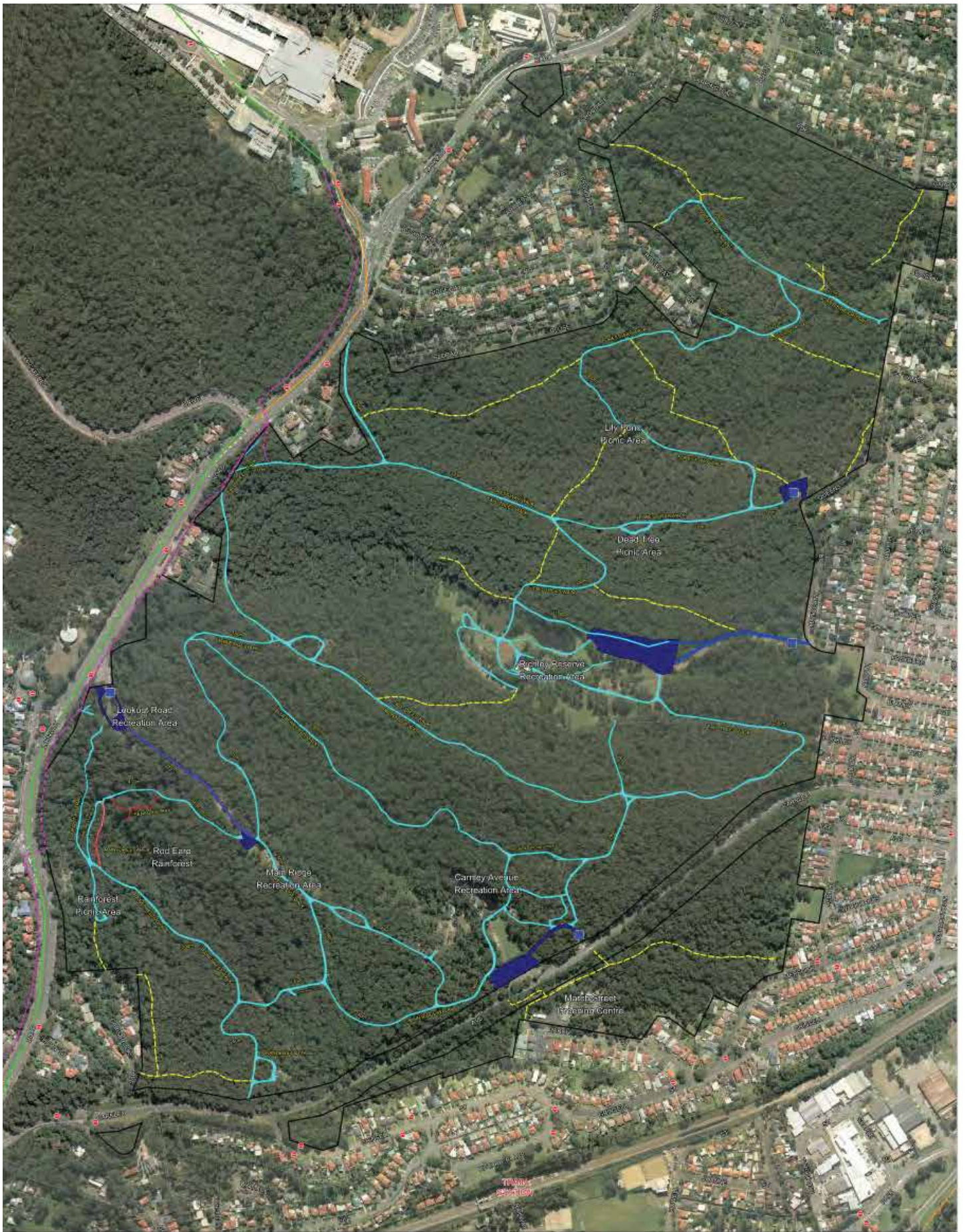
4.7.2 Tracks and Trails

Blackbutt Reserve incorporates a number of management and recreational trails of various widths and functionalities. The existing track hierarchy for the Reserve is as follows:

- Public Vehicle access and car parks
- Formal shared pedestrian and vehicular maintenance track
- Formal pedestrian paths
- Informal tracks and trails
- Off-road cycleway (peripheral to, but linking to the Reserve)
- On-road cycleway (peripheral to, but linking to the Reserve)

Refer to Figure 6 for a map of tracks and trails





BLACKBUTT PLAN OF MANAGEMENT - STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP
Figure 6 Tracks and Trails

LEGEND	
PO/M Study Area	Formal trails/tracks
Cadastrial boundary	Informal trails/tracks
Bus Stops	Future trails/tracks
Entry Points	Trails/tracks to be removed
Carparks	Proposed off road cycleways
Public Vehicle Access	Existing off road cycleways
	Proposed on road cycleways
	Existing on road cycleways



Newcastle City Council
 DISCLAIMER
 Although great care has been taken in the preparation of these documents, maps, Newcastle City Council makes no representation or warranty as to the accuracy or completeness of any information contained in them. Newcastle City Council accepts no responsibility for any misprints, errors, omissions or inaccuracies in these documents, maps or the use or damages resulting from reliance on any information provided.
 Map Created: 02 June 2013
 Source: NCC Data
 File name: WorkshopMaps_Aug2012.wor
 File location: \\server\GIS\Team\Mapping\Projects\Current\Blackbutt_PO/M\WorkshopMaps



4.7.3 Natural environment

As required by the *Local Government Act 1993*, this Plan of Management also includes a description of the current condition of natural assets located within Blackbutt Reserve. The following table contains a brief description of the natural assets by sub-catchment and management unit.

Natural assets in Blackbutt Reserve include wetland, watercourse, escarpment and bushland. Condition has been assessed using weighted attributes to produce a condition rating scale from 0 - 10 (0 = excellent to 10 = very poor).

Table 2 Condition of Natural Assets

Catchment/ Management Unit	Bushland condition	Watercourse	Wetland	Escarpment
Rainforest Creek	3	18 reaches condition 1 to 7	1	9
Black Duck Creek	3	17 reaches condition 2 to 6	1	N/A
Coalmine Creek	2	19 reaches condition 2 to 9	1	N/A
Echidna Creek	3	6 reaches condition 2 to 10	7	N/A
Bower Bird Creek	4	12 reaches condition 2 to 7	N/A	3 cliff sections Condition 4 to 6
Lookout Road	9	N/A	N/A	N/A
March Street Reserve	5	13 reaches condition 6 to 7	N/A	N/A
Grinsell St	1	N/A	N/A	N/A

Refer to Appendix 2 for a complete description of the current condition of natural assets located within Blackbutt Reserve.



5.0 Existing site usage

Blackbutt is an important natural asset that is highly valued by the local community. It is perceived as a distinctly natural environment surrounded by increasing areas of urban development. The site is visited by a range of people, predominantly from Newcastle and the Hunter Region, in addition to a small number of interstate and overseas visitors.

Newcastle Voice (survey Oct 2009 - Jan 2010) recorded that of 1339 respondents:

- 47% Live in the LGA
- 42% Live in the Hunter Region
- 2% Live in the Central Coast Region
- 4% Live elsewhere in NSW
- 5% Live interstate or overseas

Visitors currently use the site for a variety of activities, predominantly picnics and barbeques. Other activities include bushwalking, bird watching and bird feeding, public education and sports such as cross country running.

Carnley Avenue and Richley Reserve Areas

The two main activity nodes are Carnley Avenue Recreation Area and Richley Reserve. Carnley Avenue accommodates a number of general uses including wildlife exhibits, picnics and BBQs, education programs, children's playground, casual games and bird feeding. Wildlife exhibits located at Carnley Avenue provide a specific public attraction and an asset for conservation education. The exhibits currently attract approximately 100,000 visitors per year.

Richley Reserve accommodates picnics and BBQs, children's playground, casual games, functions and events, bird feeding and site administration. The open grass areas provide space for casual sports, special events, birthday parties, weddings, markets & musical performances.



Carnley Avenue



Richley Reserve



Mahogany Drive and Lily Pond Areas

A car park, toilet facilities and picnic area are provided at Mahogany Drive with direct access to walking trails including the Lily Pond area, with picnic facilities. As a consequence of poor activation of the Mahogany Drive Recreation Area some anti-social behaviour has been associated with the amenities building.

Lookout Road and Main Ridge Recreation Areas

The Lookout Road Recreation Area and Main Ridge Recreation Area have received little use following the consolidation of the bird and wildlife exhibits at the Carnley Avenue recreation area. As a consequence of poor activation of these areas, Lookout Road recreation area, in particular, has become susceptible to anti-social behaviour, resulting in the closure of the amenities building and the entrance gates to deter this activity. The stunning views of the city afforded by the Cliff Top Lookout area are rarely experienced, given the poor connectivity of this area with the rest of the Reserve and lack of parking and signage.

March Street Reserve

March Street Reserve is disconnected from the main body of the Reserve by Carnley Avenue and as such it tends to be used by local residents, with a series of informal tracks. A Council works compound, with the primary function for operational delivery of City Greening Services, including native plant propagation is located at March Street Reserve. There is also a community garden on the site, managed by a group of volunteers.



Lily Pond



Main Ridge



March Street Reserve



5.1 Existing site management

There is currently six full-time staff allocated to Blackbutt Reserve; a coordinator for the whole Reserve, one supervisor located at Richley Reserve and four field workers. Many other Council staff are involved with projects and activities relating to the planning, use and management of Blackbutt Reserve.

Blackbutt Reserve values and relies on volunteer participation to assist in its day to day operation and decision making. Staff and volunteers run a number of successful tours and education programs for young people. They include Spotlight Adventures, the Junior Ranger and Cadet Program and Koala Encounters. Volunteers also manage a small souvenir outlet at Carnley Avenue in the Pioneer Cottage with all proceeds from sales directed back into management of the Reserve. The contributions by the various volunteer groups cannot be under-estimated as it adds value to the work done by Council and it ensures that the community is actively involved in decision making and management.

Community bush care groups also contribute to the upkeep of Blackbutt Reserve perimeter. This work keeps the fringe areas of Blackbutt maintained, stopping household weeds taking a foot hold within the Reserve.





6.0 Basis for Management

6.1 Legislative and Policy Framework

In addition to the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993*, this Plan of Management must comply with all other relevant legislation and policy across all three levels of government as outlined in Section 3.1.2.

6.2 Community values

The Plan of Management takes a value-based approach to land use planning and management, enabling key values to be identified so that they may be protected and enhanced. 'Values' can be simply described as elements which make a place important.

The following values have been identified for the Reserve:

Ecological: The Reserve provides an important habitat for native plants and animals and contributes to our green corridors. It plays a vital role in conserving regional and local biodiversity.

Nature: The opportunity to experience something of the wild, as well as the picturesque characters of nature in an urban area, providing aesthetic, health and wellbeing benefits.

Recreation: The use of the Reserve for recreational pursuits in a unique natural setting.

Education: The Reserve offers significant learning opportunities through education and interaction.

Scenic: The prominent ridgelines are important features of the Reserve's topographical character. In their forested state they present a significant backdrop and skyline of natural form to a large 'viewshed' spread over Newcastle's suburban development.

Accessibility: An accessible place for all members of the community, in proximity to the

city and with good connections both within and to surrounding areas.

Historical: Blackbutt demonstrates a living example, in part, of the original nature of Newcastle and the immense time scale that is represented.

6.3 Community desired outcomes

The key outcomes from the community consultation undertaken as part of the development of this Plan of Management are as follows:

Essential characteristics the community would like retained

Blackbutt is well regarded and people appreciate the bushland setting, the current facilities and services. The essential characteristic which must be retained in view of any future developments is the natural environment (30.95%), with respondents concerned with land sales, commercial tourist activities and events which may draw large crowds. Wildlife experiences are the second highest essential characteristic (24.31%), with interest in a greater number and range of animals identified and the fact that the Reserve is free (19.41%). Other characteristics to retain are the family focus, the current services, and the green heart of the city.



Priorities for Council to focus on

The community identified the following top five priorities that Council should focus on at Blackbutt Reserve from a possible nine improvements:

1. A toilet facility in the Main Ridge recreation area (72%)
2. Signage (69%)
3. A viewing platform at the Cliff Top (Lookout Road) (64%)
4. New BBQ shelters and seating at the Main Ridge recreation area (62%)
5. Develop new bushwalking trails (57%)

The community identified the following top five highest priorities for the high-usage areas of Blackbutt Reserve, out of a possible 16 improvements:

1. Reshape pond areas, install boardwalks and improve water quality at Black Duck Pond (Carnley Ave) (51%)
2. A new kiosk and toilets at Richley Reserve (44%)
3. A new footpath and boardwalk circuit/ kids cycle trail around ponds at Richley Reserve (43%)
4. Replace the Pioneer Cottage with a new kiosk, toilet and environmental education classroom at Carnley Ave (42%)
5. Provide public access into the kangaroo and emu exhibit to allow interaction with animals (36%)

Issues and opportunities with regards to access and connectivity to and within the Reserve included:

- Mixed opinion regarding shared paths in the Reserve
- The need to maintain the integrity of natural areas
- Improving access to the Cliff Top Lookout
- The need for a hierarchy of trails to facilitate the bush experience

- Improved connectivity from the Reserve to Kotara train station

Issues and opportunities regarding usage of the Reserve included:

- Improved activation of Main Ridge and Lookout Recreation Area.
- Improved directional and interpretative signage to encourage people into areas.
- Bushwalking and bush tucker tours.
- Mixed opinion regarding a café in the Reserve, some believed it would be a welcome addition whilst others felt it was nice to go somewhere without the pressure to have to buy something.

For a full outline of community consultation outcomes refer to Appendix 3.

6.4 Objectives

6.4.1 Core Objectives under the *Local Government Act 1993*

Strategies need to be consistent with the core objectives relating to Community Land categories. The parcels of Community Land within Blackbutt Reserve are assigned to the following categories (as identified in Section 3.1.1); Natural Area - Bushland, Watercourse, Wetland and Escarpment, Park and General Community Use.

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993*, each category and sub-category are provided with a set of core objectives. In total, there are 26 Core Objectives related to Blackbutt Reserve and these are outlined in Appendix 1.

6.4.2 Key Management Objectives

In order to provide a manageable set of key objectives to work towards, the 26 Core Objectives have been consolidated to eight. In addition to reflecting the six land categories, the objectives are also consistent with and support the broader Newcastle 2030 strategic framework, community expectation and values.



These key objectives will form the basis of the actions in this Plan of Management.

- 1.0 Manage the Reserve in a manner that protects and enhances the values and quality of the Reserve.
- 2.0 Conserve biodiversity and maintain the ecosystem function of the Reserve.
- 3.0 Provide for the restoration and regeneration of natural areas within the Reserve.
- 4.0 Provide for a range of recreational opportunities that are managed to encourage public appreciation of the Reserve's values, the minimisation of conflict between recreational user groups, and quality experience for all.
- 5.0 Provide equity of access as an integral part of the long-term plan for the Reserve, ensuring affordability, strong public transport connections and connectivity within the Reserve.
- 6.0 Promote and facilitate opportunities for environmental education and research to increase understanding and appreciation of the Reserve's values throughout the community.
- 7.0 Foster public appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of the Reserve's wildlife exhibits.
- 8.0 Ensure sufficient resources to deliver this Plan of Management, enhance management capability and visitor enjoyment.

The strategies and actions in this Plan of Management have been developed to address each of the eight objectives.





7.0 Management issues and threats

The current issues for the Reserve have been identified by site analysis, previous community consultation, stakeholder consultation and a review of previous studies.

An understanding of the Reserve's issues and threats and the constraints which apply is an essential pre-requisite to the process of determining its future path. For example, to say that Blackbutt Reserve is a 'beautiful natural place' without acknowledging its deterioration over the years could become an expensive oversight. Pressing for more park facilities simply because 'people enjoy them so much', without comprehending the impact upon maintenance costs and site quality, should be unacceptable.

Similarly, understanding the patterns of deterioration can assist in changing unsuitable practices or introducing new and needed ones.

7.1 Reserve wide issues and threats

Environmental

- Erosion and sedimentation
- Poor water quality
- Uncontrolled urban stormwater impacts
- Conservation of threatened species
- Weedgrowth
- Impact of service utilities
- Expansion of grassed surfaces within the Reserve
- Edge contact zones between natural areas and urban/recreation areas
- Future impacts of climate change
- Biosecurity
- Stabilisation of escarpments
- Protection of watercourse and natural features





Education and research

- Educational opportunities are under resourced
- Lack of interpretative signage
- Lack of research and monitoring

Funding and management

- Lack of staff and insufficient funding
- Poorly marketed as a public facility
- Supporting the volunteers
- Lack of security and passive surveillance

Reserve usage

- Increasing recreational demand
- Ad-hoc development history
- Old and disused infrastructure
- Access for people with a disability

Legibility and Connectivity

- Poor signage and lack of destination points
- Poor pedestrian access to the Reserve
- Poor public transport connectivity
- Parking demand exceeds capacity at times
- Poor connectivity within the Reserve
- Proliferation of tracks and lack of a track hierarchy
- Steep paths due to topography
- Cycling – connectivity to and within the Reserve

A more detailed discussion of the issues and threats are contained in Appendix 4.



7.2 Issues and threats by catchments

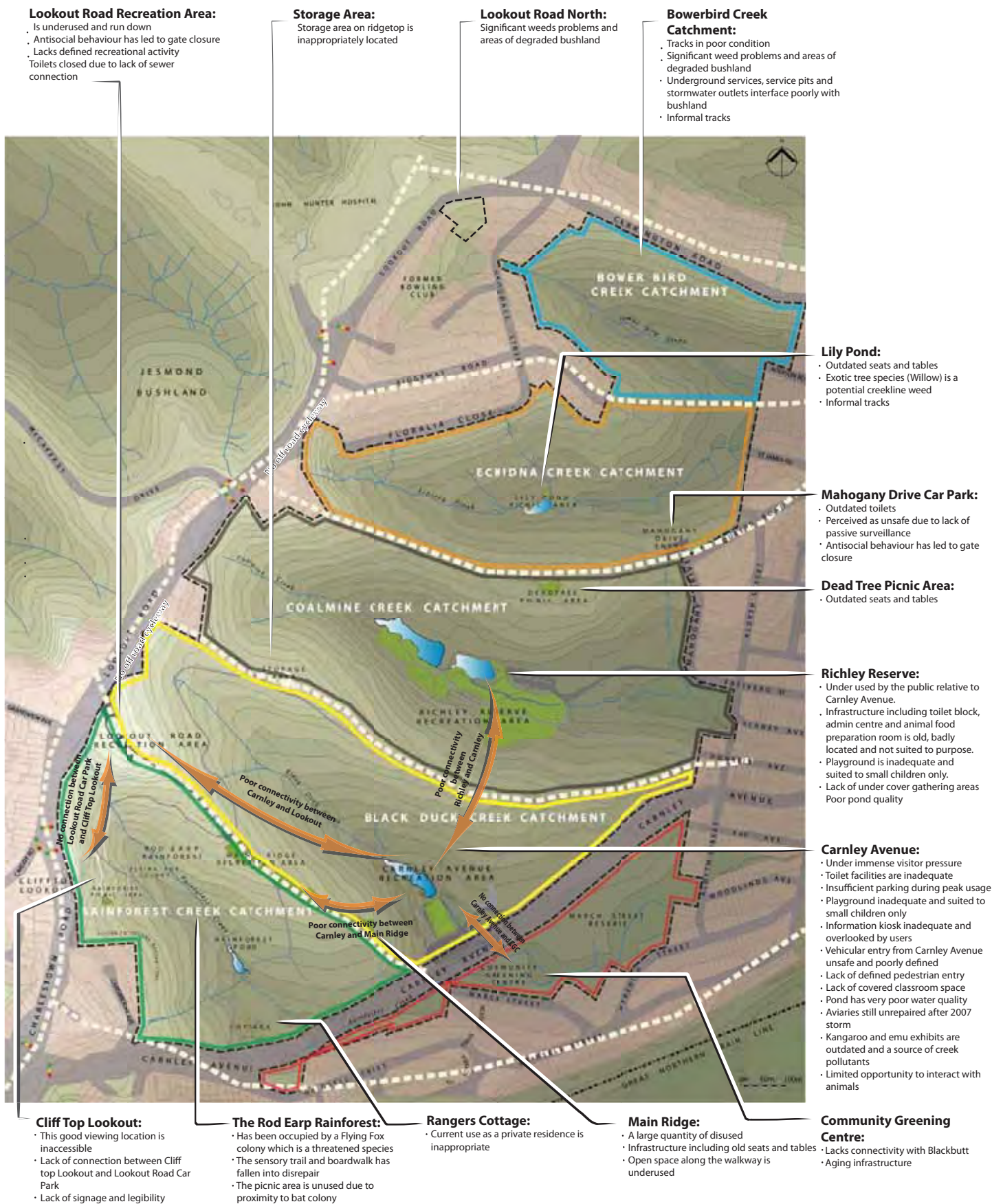


Figure 7 Site Issues





Part B

Leases, Masterplan, strategies,
means of assessment



8.0 Future use and development

The *Local Government Act 1993* requires a description of the future use and development/improvements that will be allowable in Blackbutt Reserve as per the following requirements:

Clause	Requirement
36 (3A) (b) (i)	Specify the purposes for which the land and any such buildings or improvements will be permitted to be used.
36 (3A) (b) (ii)	Specify the purposes for which any further development of the land will be permitted, whether under lease or licence or otherwise.
36 (3A) (b) (iii)	Describe the scale and intensity of any such permitted use or development.

Uses that are permitted in Blackbutt Reserve are those that are consistent with all of the following:

- The Key Objectives of this Plan of Management
- The categorisation and core objectives for the land
- Zoning of the land
- Values of the Reserve

An outline of permissible facilities and activities by land category for Blackbutt Reserve is outlined in Appendix 5.

Leases, licences and other estates

The *Local Government Act 1993* requires that any lease or licence of Community Land be authorised by a plan of management. Pursuant to the provisions of section 46 and 47 of the Act, Council may lease and licence Community Land in a plan of management consistent with the categorisation and core objectives of the particular area of Community Land.

A lease is generally provided where exclusive

use of all or part of an area is required due to the scale of investment or security measures.

Licences are short term occupation or control of all or part of an area. A number of licences can apply to the same site at the same time, provided that there is no conflict of interest.

8.1 Existing leases and licences

At present, the only lease for an area within Blackbutt Reserve is for the Rangers Cottage. This is a four bedroom house located in the Rainforest Creek Catchment that is on a one year lease that expired on 3 July 2011. Due to its historical role, this property has animal care holding pens and it is Council staff responsibility to maintain the grass surrounds. The tenant must be a Council employee, and pay rent and electricity costs.

Casual licences are provided for various recreation activities including the reservation of designated BBQ shelters, weddings, special events and scout activities.

Authorisation of future leases, licences and other estates

In authorising future leases and licences, Council supports:

- a multi-user approach to community assets;
- the use of licences that allow for a broad range of uses; and
- licences for commercial activities that are in keeping with the core objectives for the land and must not unreasonably alienate the land.

This Plan of Management expressly authorises the granting of a lease, licence or other estate for the activities in the land categories outlined in Appendix 5. Activities not listed will be considered on their individual merits.

Legislative requirements for leases and licences under the *Local Government Act 1993* are outlined in Appendix 1.



9.0 Concept Masterplan

A Masterplan is a strategic document that interprets the objectives of the governing Plan of Management into an overall concept for the future physical development of the Reserve. This Plan of Management identifies the key actions that are required within identified areas of the Reserve. The Masterplan establishes key functional, spatial and design relationships that are to be used to inform subsequent detailed design and decision making. It is intended to provide an indicative location for key developments to show the spatial relationship between these proposals and the existing facilities. It is not intended to provide the level of detail that must necessarily follow in the detailed design phases of the implementation, which may result in changes. The Masterplan sets out a range of potential environmental, public domain and recreational improvements. The implementation action tables (section 10) assigns an indicative location and priority to this range of improvements based on assessment criteria including which improvements are most likely to be of most immediate community benefit. Improvements assessed as having a lower priority should be implemented as future funding opportunities allow. *Refer to figure 8*

9.1 Reserve Management Principles

Reserve Management Principles have been developed to establish the basis for the actions in this Plan of Management. The Principles provide guiding direction for the management, design and improvement of existing and future natural and built assets.

Conservation

- Encourage natural regeneration, aided by weed removal, where indigenous vegetation exists.
- Use local provenance/indigenous species in planting projects.

Community Access

- Provide equitable access to a wide range of recreation settings and activities for the whole community including people with limited mobility and other disabilities with due regard to the limitations and constraints imposed by the physical environment
- Improve active transport access to and within the Reserve to enhance the visitor experience.

Activities

- Focus recreational facilities and activities in areas categorised as park and general community use.
- Ensure recreation activities are complimentary to the carrying capacity as well as the core objectives and values of the Reserve.

Sustainable management

- Undertake a sustainable management approach to Blackbutt Reserve that promotes and protects the Reserve and balances environmental and public recreational values.
- Adopt decision making processes which enhance resilience in terms of environmental, socio-cultural and economic outcomes for future generations.
- Support involvement of the community in planning, development and care of the Reserve.
- Ensure that the development and management of the Reserve is sustainable, minimising use of energy, water, waste and non-renewable resources.

Maintenance

- Deliver consistent high quality maintenance outcomes that reflects the regional significance of the Reserve in accordance with developed levels of service.



- Maintenance works need to consider conservation principles in terms of environmental sensitivity and sustainability and improve the resilience of natural areas.
- Assess opportunities to rationalise assets which are no longer required by the community particularly where end of asset lifecycles are evident.

Design

- Consider co-location and consolidation of existing and future built assets to reduce further fragmentation of the Reserve.
- Improve Reserve character through the development and implementation of a place specific manual of public domain design elements.
- Ensure that the design of facilities and structures in natural areas are visually and environmentally sympathetic to the site.
- Utilise Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles in the planning, location and design of new assets within the Reserve.
- Adopt Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) principles in the management of public domain spaces.
- The location and maintenance of existing and proposed facilities will aim to reduce Reserve fragmentation.

Signage

In accordance with a place specific manual of public domain design elements provide way finding and interpretative signage that:

- identifies the Reserve and activity nodes
- provides directional guidance
- interprets environmental and historical aspects of the Reserve
- incorporates sensory and multi-lingual options
- supports the Reserve's unique identity

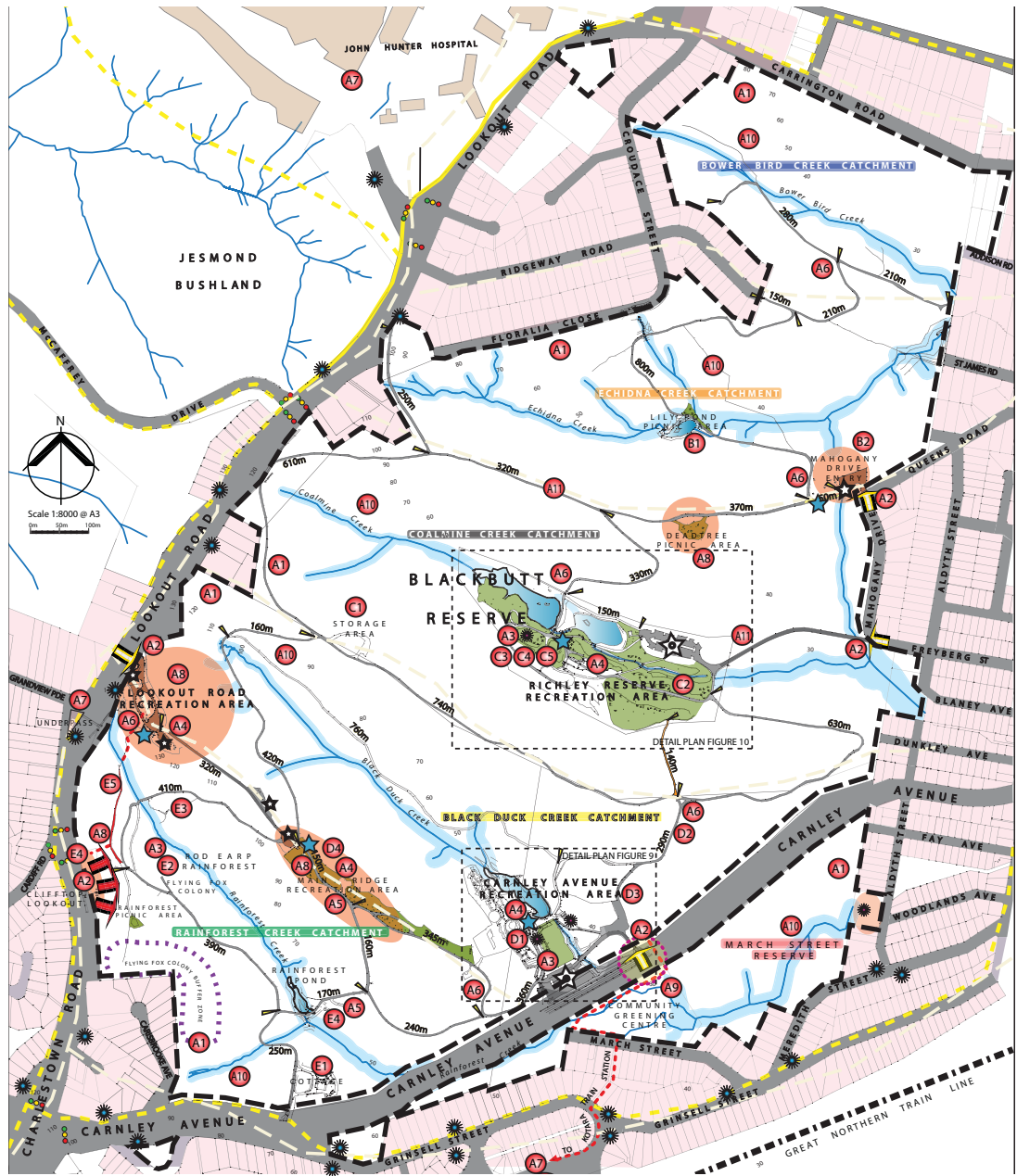


KEY

- A1 Prioritise bush regeneration through the preparation and implementation of a Vegetation Management Plan
 - A2 Implementation of entrance signage in accordance with the Signage Strategy
 - A3 Implementation of interpretive Signage in accordance with the Signage Strategy
 - A4 Install new accessible toilets
 - A5 Remove redundant buildings
 - A6 Implement way finding signage **within** the Reserve in accordance with the Signage Strategy
 - A7 Implement way finding signage **to** the Reserve in accordance with the Signage Strategy
 - A8 Improve the quality of park furniture including seats and tables
 - A9 Maintain the works compound for the propagation and growth of plant species for Council's revegetation activities
 - A10 Close and rehabilitate all tracks and trails not to be maintained in accordance with the Track Strategy
 - A11 Investigate the establishment of a local shared cycleway through the Reserve
- ECHIDNA CREEK CATCHMENT**
- LILY POND PICNIC AREA
- B1 Increase bushland picnic opportunities with a focus on a more natural setting

- MAHOGANY DRIVE RECREATION AREA
- B2 Retain existing car park and picnic area
- COALMINE CREEK CATCHMENT**
- C1 Relocate storage area closer to existing reserve management functions and revegetate the ridge top
- RICHELTY RESERVE (see detail plan sheet 2)
- C2 Redesign Richlety Reserve to reduce vehicular access to the recreation area and rationalise path systems in accordance with the track strategy
 - C3 Redesign the existing playground to appeal to children of all ages
 - C4 Explore options for relocation of the administration functions to Carnley Avenue
 - C5 Replace administration building and toilets with a new food and information kiosk and an accessible toilet facility.
- BLACK DUCK CREEK CATCHMENT**
- CARNLEY AVENUE (see detail plan sheet 3)
- D1 Explore options for a multi-purpose building including space for environmental education, a food and information kiosk and toilets. Kiosk to provide area to sit and over look the pond
 - D2 Formalise the two access trails linking Carnley Avenue Reserve with Richlety Reserve, including directional signage
 - D3 Explore the opportunity to consolidate the Reserve's administrative, animal food preparation and storage functions from Richlety Reserve to Carnley Avenue Reserve

- MAIN RIDGE RECREATION AREA
- D4 Consider a modern BBQ shelter and picnic facilities
- RAINFOREST CREEK CATCHMENT**
- E1 Explore options for adaptive reuse eg as a bushland management centre. Removal of structure recommended at end of useful life
- ROD EARP RAINFOREST
- E2 Protect and manage the flying fox colony for long term residence in this location
 - E3 Remove sensory trail and rehabilitate the area to bushland
- CLIFF TOP LOOKOUT
- E4 Install a viewing platform with associated seating and connecting paths.
- LOOKOUT ROAD RECREATION AREA
- E5 Provide a new path circuit for short stay visitors to take advantage of the views from Cliff Top Lookout and to experience the rainforest area



LEGEND

- Existing boundary of Blackbutt Reserve
- Existing contours at 5m intervals
- Existing catchment boundary (ridgeline)
- Existing ephemeral creek line
- Existing water body
- Existing park areas
- Existing road reserve
- Existing lots zoned residential
- Existing shared pedestrian and vehicular maintenance track
- Existing on-road cycleway
- Existing pedestrian only path
- Length of path between markers
- Existing traffic lights
- Existing free parking
- Existing metered parking
- Existing public vehicular access points
- Existing zone of recreational activity
- Proposed zone of recreational activity
- Existing long distance views to city & coastline
- Extent of detail plan sheet
- Existing playground
- Proposed traffic management area
- Proposed on-road cycleway
- Existing bus stop
- Proposed new toilets

BLACKBUTT RESERVE MASTER PLAN | PLAN OF MANAGEMENT 2011

Figure 8



9.2 Carnley Avenue Recreation Area and Richley Reserve Recreation Area Masterplans

The land categories that apply to Carnley Avenue Recreation Area and Richley Reserve Recreation Area include Park, General Community Use, Natural Area Wetland, Watercourse and Bushland.

Park and General Community Use

The Carnley Avenue Recreation Area and Richley Reserve Recreation Area Masterplans identify a range of asset improvements within the area categorised as Park and General Community Use. The key objectives for these areas are to:

- 4.0 Provide for a range of recreational opportunities that are managed to encourage public appreciation of the Reserve's values, the minimisation of conflict between recreational user groups, and quality experience for all.
- 5.0 Provide equity of access as an integral part of the long-term plan for the Reserve, ensuring affordability, strong public transport connections and connectivity within the Reserve.
- 6.0 Promote and facilitate opportunities for environmental education and research to increase understanding and appreciation of the Reserve's values throughout the community.
- 7.0 Foster public appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of the Reserve's wildlife exhibits.
- 8.0 Ensure sufficient resources to deliver this Plan of Management, enhance management capability and visitor enjoyment.

Staged Development of the Sites

In order to best address funding opportunities it is recommended that there be a staged implementation of the masterplans. This will enable a series of co-ordinated improvements to be delivered each adding value to the

previous outcome achieved. Completion of each stage will deliver a fully functional stand alone outcome.

9.3 Carnley Avenue Recreation Area Masterplan

Refer to Figure 9

Stage 1 Outcome - Detailed design

Stage 1 involves the detailed design for each of the five stages to further define the actions, order of works and funding. Consultation should be undertaken with key stakeholders immediately affected by any future development and/or refurbishment.

Stage 2 Outcome - Playground Management Action E.9

It is anticipated that stage 2 will comprise of the following elements:

1. Construction of an expanded playground



2. Construction of picnic/ BBQ shelters



It is the intention that the replacement of the current playground will provide for expanded play opportunities for young children in collocation with a current and proposed picnic/ BBQ shelter.

The relocation of the existing toilet block, shelters and children's play area will provide for the extension of the existing flat grassed open space.



Stage 3 Outcome - Multi-purpose Facility Management Action E7

It is anticipated that stage 3 will comprise of the following elements:

1. Construction of the toilet **3**
2. (Removal of the existing toilet facility)
3. Construction of education space and kiosk/café **3**

The proposed multi-purpose facility **3** will enhance opportunities for environmental education, provide space for a café/ kiosk, visitor information, special events and toilet facilities. There was strong community interest in environmental education and the provision of a kiosk/ café at Carnley Avenue Recreation Area.

The replacement of Pioneer Cottage with a new kiosk, toilet and environmental education classroom at Carnley Avenue was rated fourth (42%) by the community with regards to priorities for high usage areas of Blackbutt Reserve (refer to page 39).

The proposed location for the facility provides for a more functional facility (than the Pioneer Cottage) in a prominent location with good solar access and views. The proposed building will be signposted and visible from the carpark.

Co-location of multiple functions within the one building footprint will reduce the number of buildings on the site and be adaptable to provide for multi-use of the space.

Detailed design and consultation with those immediately affected by the relocation/ removal of the Pioneer Cottage including the volunteers is required prior to any work being undertaken.

Stage 4 Outcome - Refurbishment of Wildlife Exhibits Management Action A103

It is anticipated that stage 4 will comprise of the following elements:

1. Potential repair and remodelling of damaged aviaries to house new wildlife exhibits **Map A**

2. Development of Covered Outdoor Learning Area **2**
3. Provision of ramp to provide all ability access **Management Action L12**
4. Development of animal clinic **Management Action K11**
5. Implementation of signage (including interpretation of entry to former mine) **Map H**

The wildlife exhibits are a key attraction at Blackbutt Reserve and there is strong interest in having more interaction with the animals. Wildlife experiences were the second-highest essential characteristic to be retained at the Reserve (24.31%). (Refer to page 39)

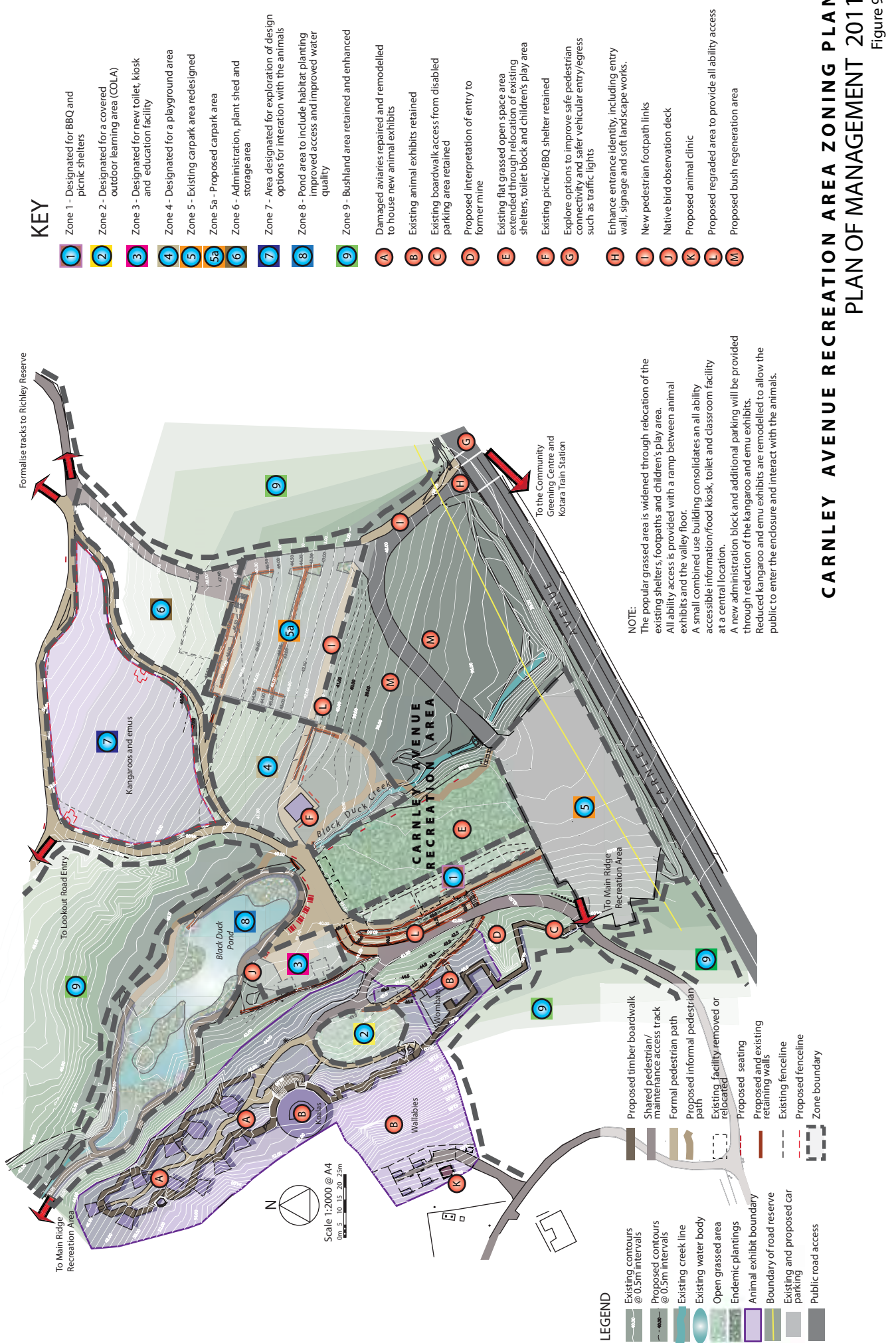
Stage 5 Outcome - Car Park and Administration and Animal Food Preparation Facility Management Action E4 and E5

It is anticipated that stage 5 will comprise of the following elements:

1. Investigate reduction and remodelling of existing kangaroo and emu exhibits to allow public access into the enclosure **7**
2. Implementation of car park improvements **5 5a**
3. New pedestrian footpath links **Map I**
4. Construction of Administration and Animal Food Preparation Facility and storage area. **6**

It is thought to be inappropriate to combine administration and café/kiosk facilities. The administrative functions for the Reserve will need to be separately located to reduce conflict with pedestrians and maintenance traffic and to minimise disturbance to staff by the public.

Provision of public access into the kangaroo and emu exhibit to allow interaction with the animals was rated fifth (36%) by the community with regards to priorities for high usage areas of Blackbutt Reserve. (Refer to page 39)



CARNLEY AVENUE RECREATION AREA ZONING PLAN
PLAN OF MANAGEMENT 2011
 Figure 9



9.4 Richley Reserve Recreation Area Masterplan

(Refer to Figure 10)

Stage 1 Outcome - Detailed design

Stage 1 involves the detailed design for each of the five stages to further define the actions, order of works and funding. Consultation should be undertaken with key stakeholders immediately affected by any future development and/or refurbishment.

Stage 2 Outcome - Multi-purpose Facility Management Action D5

It is anticipated that stage 2 will comprise of the following elements:

1. Removal of the existing toilet facility 3
2. Construction of the toilet 3
3. Construction of information and kiosk/ café components 3
4. Implement new pedestrian footpath linking the new facility with the car park Map L

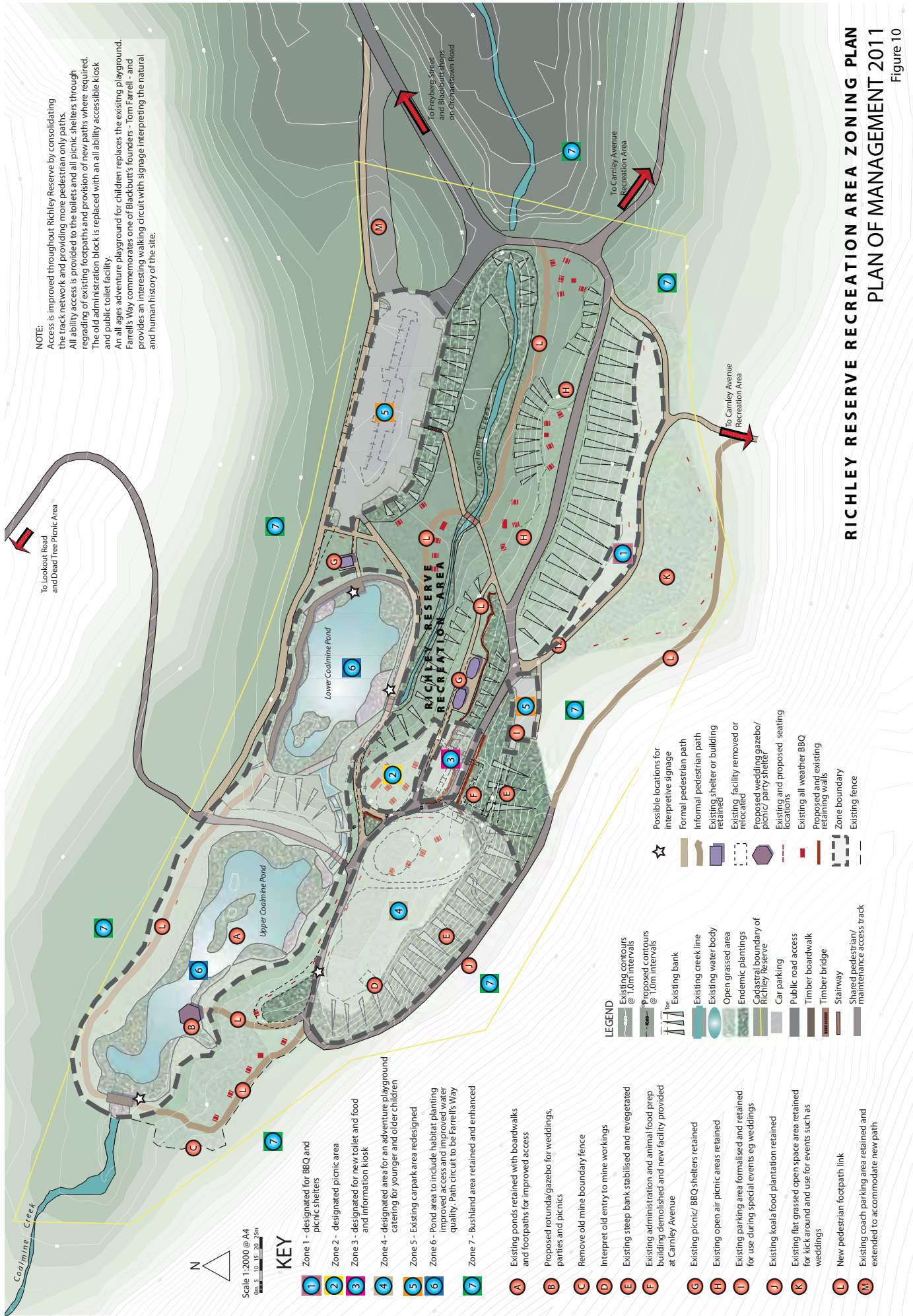
Provision of a new kiosk and toilets at Richley Reserve was rated second (44%) by the community with regards to priorities for high usage areas of Blackbutt Reserve

Stage 3 Outcome - Playground Management Action D8

It is anticipated that stage 3 will comprise of the following elements:

1. 4 Construction of an adventure playground 1
2. Development of picnic/ BBQ shelters 1
3. Removal of existing playground for small children ((Ref: map)





RICHLLEY RESERVE RECREATION AREA ZONING PLAN
PLAN OF MANAGEMENT 2011
 Figure 10



9.5 Key Strategies

The key overarching strategies for Blackbutt Reserve are:

1. Way Finding and Interpretative Signage Strategy **Management Action A89**

Development and implementation of a 'Way Finding and Interpretative Signage Strategy' to improve visitor awareness of the range of recreational opportunities and environmental, historical and cultural values of the Reserve.

The scope of the strategy will include:

- Maps
- Entry signage
- Interpretative signage
- Directional signage (including distance and time guides)

Signage will be consistent with the Reserve Management Principles.

2. Track Strategy **Management Action A91**

Preparation and implementation of a Track Strategy for the Reserve to guide the development of a network of safe, connected and unique tracks and trails integrated with key destinations, distance markers, information and signage.

A detailed condition assessment will be undertaken of all tracks and bridges within the Reserve to inform the development of the strategy.

The Strategy will consider the need to:

1. Close and rehabilitate all tracks not to be retained using locally indigenous plant material
2. Design and construct tracks to minimise erosion and soil loss and reduce maintenance
3. Provide circular routes with distance markers to encourage healthy activity within the Reserve
4. Ensure tracks are complemented by interpretive and directional signage

5. Reduce the width of trails, where appropriate, from shared pedestrian/vehicular to bushwalking/ pedestrian only track
6. Prioritise and cost the activities required to implement the Strategy

The Track Strategy will not investigate the creation of shared paths

3. Design Guidelines

Management Action A66

Develop Design Guidelines for the Reserve to ensure that structures, furniture, signage, graphic images and colour schemes are consistent and reflective of the Reserve's unique qualities.

Identify design criteria and planning processes for the Reserve to provide sustainable, appropriate landscape design and facilities.



4. Vegetation Management Plan Management Action A1

Prepare and implement a Vegetation Management Plan (VMP) for all sites within Blackbutt Reserve.

VMPs will provide specific bushland management strategies for the Reserve and will be consistent with the adopted values and objectives of this Plan. VMPs will contain an inventory of the Reserve, including an outline of the specific management issues and threats. Based on the inventory and analysis, a Delivery Plan will be developed, including prioritised schedule and costing of specific site works.

Typically, the delivery program will contain actions such as:

- Practical measures to address the causes of processes that threaten plant communities and or locally significant species, such as weed infestations, encroachments, etc.
- Stabilisation program for eroding areas
- A staged outline of bush regeneration required
- Measures to protect any heritage items and other values of the reserve
- Site specific strategies to address any management issues associated with Council assets.

The aim of the VMP is to ensure that work in the Reserve is prioritised to achieve the greatest management benefit. It will promote holistic management of the reserve and focus action on the causes rather than the effects of degradation. For example, if an area of bushland is being covered by sediment and weeds from an eroding track further uphill, the VMP will recommend addressing the track erosion and weed transport before any bush regeneration is carried out in the degraded area of bushland.

In the event of an inconsistency between a Plan of Management and a VMP, the adopted PoM will have precedence.

5. Business Plan Management Action A118

Develop a 4-year business plan for the Reserve to guide the direction of the facility as a local resource and tourist destination.

The business plan will include:

- Marketing analysis
- Marketing Plan
- Funding, sponsorships and partnerships
- Branding



10.0 Implementation

Actions contained within this Plan of Management will be assessed on an annual basis for inclusion in Council's four year Delivery Program. In addition, Council will be able to utilise the information contained within this Plan to seek external grant funding and other funding opportunities to improve the management of Blackbutt Reserve.

The environmental impact of proposed activities will be assessed at all stages in accordance with established environmental assessment procedures. Where impacts are found to be unacceptable, activities will be modified or discontinued.

Action Tables

The *Local Government Act 1993* prescribes a set of core objectives for each category and it is a requirement under the Act that the Plan of Management describes how each of the core objectives will be achieved.

The action tables are based broadly around the Reserve's catchments:

- A: Blackbutt Reserve (All catchments)
- B: Bowerbird Creek Catchment
- C: Echidna Creek Catchment
- D: Coalmine Creek Catchment
- E: Black Duck Creek Catchment
- F: Rainforest Creek Catchment
- G: March Street Reserve and surrounding parcels

The actions listed under the Blackbutt Catchment (whole Reserve) are generic to the whole of the Reserve and each of the tables address a key objective(s).

The actions outlined under the individual catchments (B to G) relate specifically to the catchment.

- (a) **Strategies:** are the means by which Council proposes to achieve the Plan's

key objectives.

- (b) **Actions:** each strategy lists a number of actions or operational activities that will be undertaken to achieve the strategies.
- (c) **Means of assessment:** the manner in which Council proposes to assess its performance with respect to the Plan's objectives.
- (d) **Lead Responsibility:** refers to the Council Service Unit that will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the target. Strategic Planning Services will monitor the overall implementation and review of the Plan of Management. However, other service units within Council, contractors or external partners will undertake implementation of the action/s as appropriate. Please refer below for a list of abbreviations:

CPS	City Presentation Services
CS	Compliance Services
CUS	Customer Service, Communication and Consultation Services
ECCS	Environment and Climate Change Services
FS	Financial Services
IMS	Infrastructure Management Services
IT	Information Management Services (includes GIS)
PRS	Parks and Recreation Services
SPFMS	Strategic Property and Fleet Management Services
SPS	Strategic Planning Services
TEDS	Tourism and Economic Development Services



- (e) Potential funding source and priority - whilst taking into account available resources and the importance level of each target in the achievement of the overall objective; this gives an indication of when Council will aim to achieve the relevant action.

Funding for the actions identified in this PoM will be subject to Council's annual budget and competing priorities. Funding may be sourced from one or more of the following:

- Section 94 (development contributions)
- Grant funding
- Staff time
- Operating Revenue (includes funding from a variety of Council sources including rates, stormwater service charge, fees and charges)
- Waste and Sustainability Improvement Payment (WaSIP) Program
- Special Rate Variation (SRV), which is linked to the LTFP
- Partnerships with other organisations (e.g. HCCREMS) or the private sector
- Volunteer resources

This Plan will assist in securing funding from one or more of these identified funding sources.

Whilst taking into account available resources and the importance level of each target in the achievement of the overall objective, the 'priority' column gives an indication of when Council will aim to achieve the relevant target.

High priority (Short Term)

The action will undertaken within 1 - 3 years (May also include ongoing actions such as surveys or consultations).

Medium priority (Medium Term)

The action will be undertaken within 3 - 5 years.

Low priority (Long Term)

Action to commence within 1 - 5 years, though completion may take longer than this time frame. All incomplete actions will be reassessed during review of the PoM.

Ongoing (as required)

The action will be carried out on a regular basis, or as required, for the duration of the PoM.

10.1 Action Tables

A: Blackbutt Reserve (All catchments)

Key objectives:

- 1.0 Manage the Reserve in a manner that protects and enhances the values and quality of the Reserve
- 2.0 Conserve biodiversity and maintain the ecosystem function of the Reserve.
- 3.0 Provide for the restoration and regeneration of natural areas within the Reserve.

Core objectives: All Natural Area Bushland, Wetland, Watercourse and Escarpment.

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan Strategies:

- Protect and rehabilitate degraded and fragmented natural areas and manage major impacts on corridors, remnant bushland, estuaries and coastal areas.
- Protect the diversity of flora, fauna and ecological communities, with particular emphasis on threatened species and endangered ecological communities.

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*	
Bush regeneration	Control the spread of weed species, focusing on the intact core of the Reserve and in areas of threatened species and endangered ecological communities.	<p>A Vegetation Management Plan (VMP) will be prepared for all of the sites contained within the Plan of Management. The VMP will identify priority bush restoration areas including weed management activities, costs, timeframes, staging and resources.</p> <p><i>Note: Involvement of volunteers in bush regeneration and weed control.</i></p>	Monitor the condition of bushland sites located within Blackbutt Reserve against baseline.	IMS/PRS/SPS	Staff time Operating revenue Grant funding Volunteers	High	
		A.1					
		A.2					Audit perimeter of Reserve to ascertain areas of encroachment, illegal dumping and illegal access. Implement a coordinated education campaign and compliance program to reduce the impact of neighbouring properties on the Reserve.
		A.3					Liaise with neighbours (adjoining land) to remove encroachments and minimise weed invasion on the urban fringe of the Reserve.
		A.4					All bush regeneration shall be undertaken to Council's standards.
Bush re Management	All fire management activities shall consider fuel loads and potential risk to property, in addition to ecological diversity and integrity.	For each hazard reduction activity, Council will prepare a Bush Fire Risk Information Management System (BRIMS) Report. This legal documentation is required to be held by the service provider undertaking hazard reduction activities on Council land.	All fuel reduction strategies undertaken at an appropriate time and in accordance with the recommended technique and location.	PRS	Staff time Operating revenue	Ongoing	

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*		
Bushfire Management and areas of cultural significance	A.6	Maintain existing fire trails and access for emergency services vehicles. No further fire trails or vehicular access or widening of existing tracks unless subject to an environmental assessment.		PRS	Operating revenue	Ongoing		
		A.7					Coordinate with the NSW Fire Brigade to prepare an annual works program and to implement actions undertaken in accordance with the Newcastle Bush Fire Risk Management Plan (BFRMP) and Committee.	
	A.8	Ensure appropriate environmental assessment is undertaken when assessing proposals for new and existing hazard reduction burns and hazard reduction activities (e.g. threatened species).		PRS	Operating revenue	As required		
	A.9	Ensure fire management techniques do not favour weed species.		PRS	Staff time	Ongoing		
	A.10	Prescription burns will be undertaken as required, subject to an assessment of vegetation type and fire threshold.		PRS	Operating revenue	As required		
	A.11	Undertake an investigation for Blackbutt Reserve to ascertain if there are any culturally significant locations that are likely to be affected by Council's fire reduction strategies.		All fuel reduction strategies undertaken in accordance with the recommended technique and location.	PRS/SPS	Staff time Operating revenue	High	
	A.12	Provide buffer zones between recreation and natural areas within the reserve using appropriate techniques such as leaf mulch and intensive planting.		Mowing operators provided with a copy of the category boundaries. Monitor the condition of natural areas within Blackbutt Reserve.	PRS	Operating revenue	Ongoing	
	Edge contact zones with recreation areas and urban areas	To implement appropriate fuel reduction strategies in proximity to culturally significant sites.						
				Delineate 'natural' areas and 'recreation' and urban areas to restrict incompatible uses and regenerate natural areas where appropriate.				

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*	
Grass areas	Surplus grassed areas may be reclaimed by planting of indigenous vegetation to increase buffer zones and promote ecological sustainability and biodiversity.	A.13	Periodic assessment of edge contact zones with recreation areas to reduce the impact between incompatible activities.				
		A.14	Ensure that mowing does not 'creep' into natural areas. Regenerate areas where mowing has encroached into natural areas where appropriate.				
		A.15	Remove grassed areas surplus to need of active and passive recreation in identified regeneration areas as appropriate.	Surplus grass areas removed and regenerated.	PRS	Staff time Operating revenue	As required
		A.16	Where grass is removed from park areas, surfaces can be reinstated using appropriate techniques, such as leaf mulch and intensive planting. If using mulch, the material needs to be locally sourced and biosecurity ensured.		PRS	Staff time Operating revenue	As required
Erosion	Manage erosion and sedimentation within the Reserve from tracks, streams and drainage lines.	A.17	Undertake stabilisation and rehabilitation of creek bed and banks on a priority basis.	Reduction in impacts from stormwater and drainage on the condition of natural areas within the Reserve.	IMS (PRS)	Operating revenue Grant funding	Ongoing
		A.18	Soft works as interface between end of the pipe and natural areas.		IMS	Operating revenue Grant funding	Ongoing
		A.19	Investigate and implement any remediation strategies that will reduce the negative impacts of stormwater on natural areas within the Reserve.		IMS (SPS)	Staff time Operating revenue Grant funding	Ongoing
		A.20	Investigate and implement measures necessary to improve water quality.		IMS/PRS	Staff time Operating revenue Grant funding	Medium

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
Stormwater		A.21 Maintain all roads, management trails and the track network so that erosion and sedimentation are minimised. Undertake erosion control works as required.		PRS	Operating revenue	Ongoing
		A.22 Where practical, explore alternative products to bitumen for track stabilisation.		IMS/PRS	Staff time Operating revenue	Ongoing
		A.23 Develop and implement formal agreements and/or other cooperative measures with Energy Australia and Hunter Water Corporation in order to address erosion and sedimentation issues associated with their facilities and maintenance requirements.		SPS	Staff time	Medium
		A.24 Maintain integrity of existing stormwater infrastructure. Prioritise and cost remediation based on the impact on natural area values in or immediately adjacent to the reserve (within the framework of Newcastle's city-wide priorities for water quality and sediment control devices.	Reduction in impacts from stormwater and drainage on the condition of natural areas within the Reserve.	IMS	Operating revenue Grant funding	High
		A.25 Install new sediment, pollution or water quality control devices at appropriate sites.		IMS	Operating revenue	Ongoing
		A.26		IMS	Operating revenue	High
		A.27 Identify and follow up any illegal connections to stormwater.		CS	Staff time	As required

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
Watercourse	Protection and enhancement of the current condition of the watercourses within Blackbutt Reserve.	A.28	Rehabilitation of creek reaches to protect and enhance highest priority NRM ranked reaches.	IMS (PRS/SPS) IMS/PRS IMS (SPS) IMS (SPS) SPS	Operating revenue Grant funding	Ongoing
		A.29	Rehabilitation and maintenance of the riparian zone to protect and enhance native vegetation assemblage.			
		A.30	Investigation and rehabilitation activity at stormwater drainage and other infrastructure interface with watercourse.			
		A.31	Address all catchment inputs to reduce erosion and sedimentation.			
		A.32	Application of appropriate planning framework to ensure pre-development flows from all development activity.			
		A.33	Application of appropriate planning framework to ensure post development flows deliver stormwater that meets environmental guidelines.			
Wetland	Protect the biodiversity and ecological values of wetlands.	A.34	Improve habitat and passage for native f sh. Identify, remove / retrofit blockages to f sh passage.	SPS	Operating revenue Grant funding	Medium
		A.35 a)	Wetland Audit (2011) for Blackbutt Reserve will be used to inform the management actions for all wetlands and the surrounding wetland buffers (refer to Appendix 6).	IMS	Staff time	Ongoing
		A.35 b)	Ensure each wetland has in place and functioning: a high flow by-pass structures/routes, water level control and aeration/circulation systems to maximise wetland performance.	IMS/PRS	Operating revenue Grant funding	Medium
		A.36	Increase aquatic plantings and use configurations that result in all water passing through them (can be floating or planted in substrate).	IMS/PRS	Operating revenue Grant funding	Medium

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
Threatened species conservation	Protect the diversity of flora, fauna and ecological communities, with particular emphasis on threatened species and endangered ecological communities.	A.37	Improve the habitat for water plants. Plant a greater diversity of species and have these located in appropriate areas.	IMS/PRS	Operating revenue Grant funding	Medium
		A.38	Periodically drain sections of the wetlands and expose the sediment and the plants and remove excessive dead material.			
		A.39	The location, design and maintenance of recreation facilities will consider the impact on wetlands.			
		A.40	Council will continue to undertake assessments to ensure that high conservation natural areas, threatened species and habitat trees within Blackbutt Reserve are identified, protected and prioritised for restoration in accordance with legislative requirements.	SPS/IMS	Staff time Operating revenue	Ongoing
		A.41	In areas supporting an endangered ecological community or threatened species, allow only activities consistent with any draft or adopted Recovery Plan or Priority Action Statement.			
		A.42	Databases for threatened species are regularly updated with all available information. This information includes threatened species identified through reports and by Council staff and will be recorded through Council's Natural Resource Atlas and reported to OEH for inclusion on the National Parks and Wildlife Atlas.			
			All threatened species within Blackbutt Reserve are protected. Regular fauna surveys/ observations	SPS/IMS/PRS	Staff time	Ongoing
				IT (SPS, IMS, PRS)	Staff time Operating revenue	High (update) Ongoing (new data)

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
Biosecurity	Minimise the spread of diseases that will impact on the conservation of the Reserve.	A.43 Council will identify, locate, document and contain/treat pests and diseases as they become known to minimise the impact on the future use and management of the Reserve.	Limit the spread of diseases that will impact on the conservation of the Reserve.	PRS	Staff time Operating revenue	As required
Environmental Impact Assessment	Ensure appropriate environmental impact assessment is undertaken for all appropriate activities.	A.44 Ensure that environmental assessments are conducted for all relevant development/activities within the Reserve in accordance with Council's Environmental Assessment Manual (the EAM in prep.). The EAM applies to all Council staff, contractors and volunteers undertaking development on behalf of Council.	All appropriate development within the Reserve is assessed in accordance with Council's EAM	PRS/IMS	Staff time	Ongoing
Habitat trees	Prioritise the management of habitat trees.	A.45 Use the habitat tree mapping and assessment to assist with planning and decision making to avoid potential damage.	Habitat tree mapping is used to inform decision making.	IMS/SPS/PRS	Staff time	Ongoing
Habitat restoration	To establish and maintain Blackbutt Reserve as a key habitat location which is well connected.	A.46 Maintain and regenerate existing bushland Reserves and reserves with remnant bushland surrounding Blackbutt Reserve. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher priority should be given to all natural areas located within 500 metres of the study area boundary. Higher priority should be given to the embellishment of all open space identified in the green corridor between Blackbutt Reserve and Glenrock State Conservation Area. 	Opportunities are identified to enhance adjoining reserves.	PRS	Staff time Operating revenue	Medium

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
		A.47 Identify neighbouring reserves and open space areas in public and private ownership that could be used for native planting. E.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> schools roadways and easements 		PRS/IMS/SPS	Staff time	Medium
		A.48 Prepare and implement guidelines for use in training of landscape and maintenance staff to reduce slashing of native vegetation, prevent unnecessary removal of dead trees, reduce fertiliser and chemical use, consider the need for biosecurity measures etc.	Guidelines produced and training delivered to all landscape and maintenance staff and repeated on a periodic basis to account for staff turnover and changes to maintenance practices.	PRS	Staff time Operating revenue	Medium
		A.49 Investigate opportunities to extend the management of natural areas through the extension of 'no mow' zones, weed management and planting works. These areas shall be trialled and monitored and will be subject to the resolution of broader management and reserve issues.	Investigation undertaken and potential areas identified.	PRS	Staff time Operating revenue	As required
	Encourage the use of local provenance.	A.50 Use local provenance native plants in Council landscape projects, including street trees, when appropriate.	Local provenance native plants are used in Council landscape projects.	PRS/IMS	Staff time Operating revenue	Ongoing
		A.51 Ensure that information on 'habitat friendly' species is readily available to potential suppliers and users (via Council's website, brochures, bushcare groups etc) and prepare educational material to promote and explain their use.	Local residents are actively encouraged to assist with improving biodiversity.	PRS	Staff time	Medium

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
		A.52 Develop a series of incentives to encourage local residents both adjoining the reserve and located within green corridors to participate in improving biodiversity. Incentives could include: free plants, awards, public acknowledgement etc.		PRS/SPS	Staff time Operating revenue	Ongoing
		A.53 Prepare and make available to the public a list of local endemic plants to provide a practical choice of suitable trees, shrubs, grasses, climbers and groundcovers for home gardeners. Include a list of fire retardant species that can be planted by residents adjoining bushfire prone land and are concerned about the fire risk.		PRS	Staff time	Medium
		A.54 As part of the Signage Strategy, develop signage to indicate that Blackbutt Reserve is a locally significant habitat locality. The Signage Strategy should also identify areas in the adjoining corridors and their connectivity to Blackbutt Reserve.		SPS (IMS/PRS)	Staff time Operating revenue	High
	Landscaping and tree planting.	A.55 All Council natural native landscaping, park planting, tree giveaways and other activities should follow the hierarchy of choice (in priority order) from local provenance native plants, other native species with high biodiversity values, and exotic species if no suitable natives are available or heritage/cultural issues should be considered. Street tree planting will be in accordance with the Draft Street Tree Master Plan 2011.	A planting guide is prepared and implemented. Incorporate revised landscape design and management approaches, to suit the needs of native plants and to increase diversity within planting, into Council's planning, design, works and maintenance regimes.	IMS/PRS	Staff time Operating revenue	Ongoing

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
Compliance	Reserve protected from activities that will degrade or reduce the viability of the site	A.56 Address rubbish dumping and illegal clearing in Council reserves through education and enforcement. Monitor dumping/clearing 'hot spots' with regular patrols by reserve staff and compliance officers. Ordinance signage will be installed and maintained where appropriate.	Regular assessment of bushland condition against baseline.	PRS/CS	Staff time Operating revenue	As required
		A.57 Identify boundaries with adjacent private lands through survey marks/boundary pegs.		PRS	Staff time Operating revenue	As required
		A.58 Liaise with utility providers regarding service and maintenance of utility infrastructure located within the Reserve to ensure all activities conducted within Blackbutt Reserve are undertaken in accordance with Council's conditions.		SPS/IMS	Staff time	Ongoing

A: Blackbutt Reserve (All catchments)

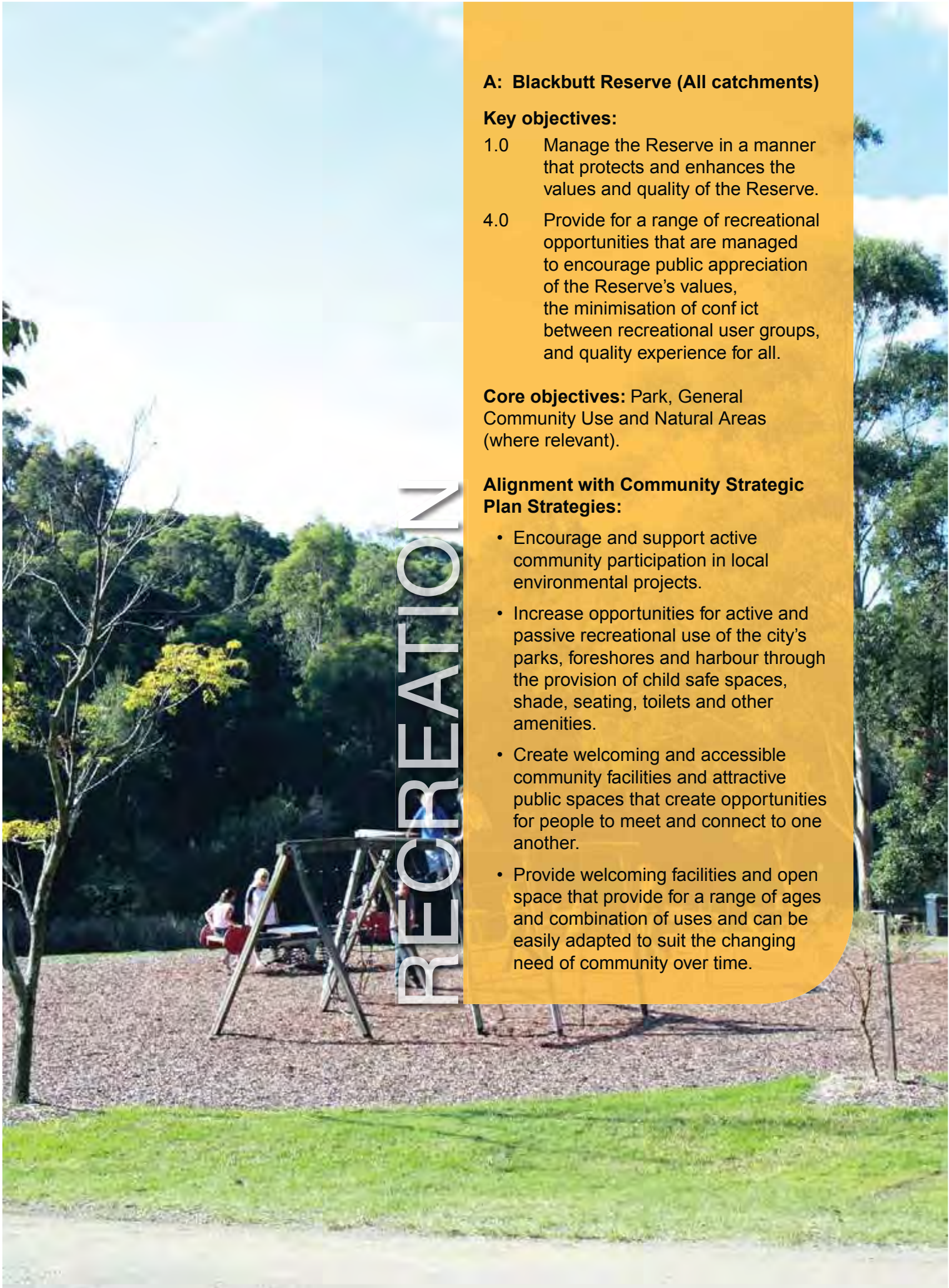
Key objectives:

- 1.0 Manage the Reserve in a manner that protects and enhances the values and quality of the Reserve.
- 4.0 Provide for a range of recreational opportunities that are managed to encourage public appreciation of the Reserve's values, the minimisation of conflict between recreational user groups, and quality experience for all.

Core objectives: Park, General Community Use and Natural Areas (where relevant).

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan Strategies:

- Encourage and support active community participation in local environmental projects.
- Increase opportunities for active and passive recreational use of the city's parks, foreshores and harbour through the provision of child safe spaces, shade, seating, toilets and other amenities.
- Create welcoming and accessible community facilities and attractive public spaces that create opportunities for people to meet and connect to one another.
- Provide welcoming facilities and open space that provide for a range of ages and combination of uses and can be easily adapted to suit the changing need of community over time.



Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
Open Space Hierarchy	All new facilities shall be provided consistent with a regional reserve.	A.59 Progressively upgrade recreational facilities such as park furniture, playground equipment, amenities and shelters to reflect the significance of the reserve.	High level visitor satisfaction with facilities.	PRS	Staff time Operating revenue Grant funding Section 94 SRV	Ongoing
		A.60 The provision or upgrade of facilities will be consistent with the guidelines for appropriate facilities in the Reserve (see Appendix).		PRS/IMS	Staff time	Ongoing
Appropriate use (including leases and licences)	Ensure that all activities including leases and licences are consistent with the values of the reserve and the core objectives for Community Land categories within the Local Government Act 1993	A.61 Monitor all group activities with respect to their cumulative impacts, safety requirements, conflict with other users and compliance with licence or consent conditions.	Activities are consistent with the core objectives and values of the reserve.	PRS	Staff time	Ongoing
		A.62				
		A.63 Limit or prohibit commercial or non-commercial activities where adverse impacts are identified.		PRS/SPFMS	Staff time	Ongoing
		A.64 This Plan of Management expressly authorises leases and licences for facilities/activities that are consistent with the schedule of permissible developments/activities (Appendix 5).	All leases and licences comply with the requirements of the Local Government Act and with Council's policies.	SPS	Staff time	As required
		A.65 Leases and licences are granted in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act and in accordance with Council's policies for leasing and licencing.		PRS/SPFMS/ SPS	Staff time	Ongoing

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
Amenities and park furniture	Ensure that the design of reserve infrastructure is representative of a single coordinated system.	A.66	Develop design guidelines for the reserve so that structures, furniture, signage, graphic images and colour schemes are consistent and reflective of the reserve's unique qualities.	Facilities comply with design guidelines and are scheduled for replacement in accordance with Council's asset management program.	Staff time	High
		A.67	Ensure that any new or upgraded amenities are consistent with the overall management principles for the reserve and design guidelines.			
	Ensure the provision of appropriate amenities and park furniture at key destinations.	A.68	Remove redundant and unsafe infrastructure from the reserve and replace where appropriate.	PRs/IMS	Staff time	Ongoing
		A.69	Design and maintain playgrounds and play equipment to comply with relevant Australian standards.	PRs/IMS	Staff time Operating revenue	As required
Diversity	Provide for a diversity of recreational opportunities within the reserve	A.70	The provision of recreational facilities within the reserve will seek to ensure that people have the opportunity to experience unique and diverse experiences.	Safety in playgrounds and for play equipment is upheld to Australian Standards.	Staff time Operating revenue	Ongoing
		A.71	The provision of recreational facilities will build on the unique qualities of Blackbutt and will not seek to replicate similar experiences in other locations within the city.			
		A.72	Recreation facilities are inspected in accordance with relevant standards in regime.	Recreation facilities are available and in a safe condition according to safety inspections.	PRs/IMS	Staff time Operating revenue
Risk management	All recreation facilities are safe and regularly inspected	Develop a customer model in partnership with stakeholders and user groups including on-site and web-based elements. Provide appropriate resources to undertake booking and customer service functions.	Council contact is available during business hours, after hours and on weekends.	CUS/PRS	Staff time Operating revenue	Ongoing

A photograph of a forest path with tall trees and a yellow text box on the right. The path is made of dirt and gravel, and the trees are mostly tall, thin trunks with green foliage. The yellow text box is on the right side of the image, containing text about the Blackbutt Reserve. The word 'CONNECTIVITY' is written vertically in large, white, sans-serif capital letters across the middle of the image, overlapping the path and the text box.

CONNECTIVITY

A: Blackbutt Reserve (All catchments)

Key objectives:

- 5.0 Provide equity of access as an integral part of the long-term plan for the Reserve, ensuring affordability, strong public transport connections and connectivity within the Reserve.

Core objectives: Natural Area Bushland, Watercourse and Wetland.

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan Strategies:

- Develop a network of safe, linked cycle and pedestrian paths integrated with key destinations and green space.
- Increase opportunities for active and passive recreational use of the city's parks, foreshores and harbour through the provision of child safe spaces, shade, seating, toilets and other amenities.
- Create welcoming and accessible community facilities and attractive public spaces that create opportunities for people to meet and connect to one another.
- Provide welcoming facilities and open space that provide for a range of ages and combination of uses and can be easily adapted to suit the changing need of community over time.

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
Signage and visitor information	Implement appropriate way finding and interpretative signage in accordance with a Signage Strategy.	A.89 Develop and implement a way finding and interpretation strategy to improve visitor awareness of the range of recreational opportunities, environmental and historical values of the Reserve.	Appropriate signage is implemented throughout the reserve in accordance with a Signage Strategy.	SPS (IMS, PRS, TEDS)	Staff time Operating revenue Grant funding	High
		A.90 Conduct a signage audit of the reserve and identify opportunities to integrate directional, safety and interpretative signage.				
Tracks	Establish and maintain an appropriate recreational track network to provide access to key destination points.	A.91 Prepare and implement a Track Strategy for the Reserve to guide the development of a network of safe, linked and unique tracks integrated with key destinations, distance markers, information and signage. <i>Note: This will not include shared paths for cycling.</i>	A Track Strategy is prepared to minimise erosion and fragmentation in natural areas whilst providing access to key destination points.	SPS (PRS/IMS)	Staff time Operating revenue Section 94 SRV	High
		A.92 Where new trails are proposed, site planning shall determine the most effective alignment to ensure appropriate grades, minimise earthworks, and are visually unobtrusive.				
Universal access	Provide access for people with a disability within the Reserve where appropriate and practical.	A.93 Provide high quality and appropriate design of pavements, facilities, structures and parking to comply with relevant Australian Standards with a particular emphasis on the key recreational nodes.	Provide a range of facilities to meet access requirements.	PRS/IMS	Staff time Operating revenue Grant funding Section 94 SRV	Ongoing

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
Connectivity to the Reserve	Improve connectivity to the Reserve.	A.94 Advocate for improved pedestrian and cycle linkages to the reserve through Council's Cycling Strategy and related plans.	Increase in the numbers of visitors accessing the Reserve by public or active transport.	SPS	Staff time	Ongoing
		A.96 Bike storage facilities will be provided at all key access points to the reserve, which coincide with vehicular access points.		PRS	Operating revenue	Medium
		A.97 Develop options to improve connectivity to the Reserve through better public and non-motorised transport.		PRS/SPS	Staff time	High
		A.98 Liaise with the RTA regarding directional signage to the reserve in accordance with the Signage Strategy. <i>Note: The key focus should be on approaches from the south and west to key reserve locations, such as Lookout Road Reserve, Carnley Reserve, and Richley Reserve.</i>		SPS	Staff time	Medium
Security	Increase the level of security at the reserve to reduce the number of incidents and anti-social behaviour.	A.99 Ensure that all facilities and upgrades to the Reserve incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design and Management Principles. <i>Note: There will be no reduction in natural asset condition in the implementation of initiatives.</i>	Number of incidents recorded by Council.	PRS/IMS	Staff time Operating revenue	Ongoing
		A.100 Encourage neighbours to notify Council of any concerns regarding vandalism, dumping etc.		PRS/CUS	Staff time	Ongoing
		A.101 Review current security and surveillance measures, particularly surrounding the wildlife exhibits. Investigate all options to improve site security.		PRS	Staff time	Medium
		A.102 Develop a Reserve Security Strategy that incorporates a mix of passive and contracted security elements to reduce anti-social behaviour, vandalism, theft and dumping.		PRS	Staff time Operating revenue	Medium



EDUCATION

A: Blackbutt Reserve (All catchments)

Key objectives:

- 6.0 Promote and facilitate opportunities for environmental education and research to increase understanding and appreciation of the Reserve's values throughout the community.

Core objectives: All.

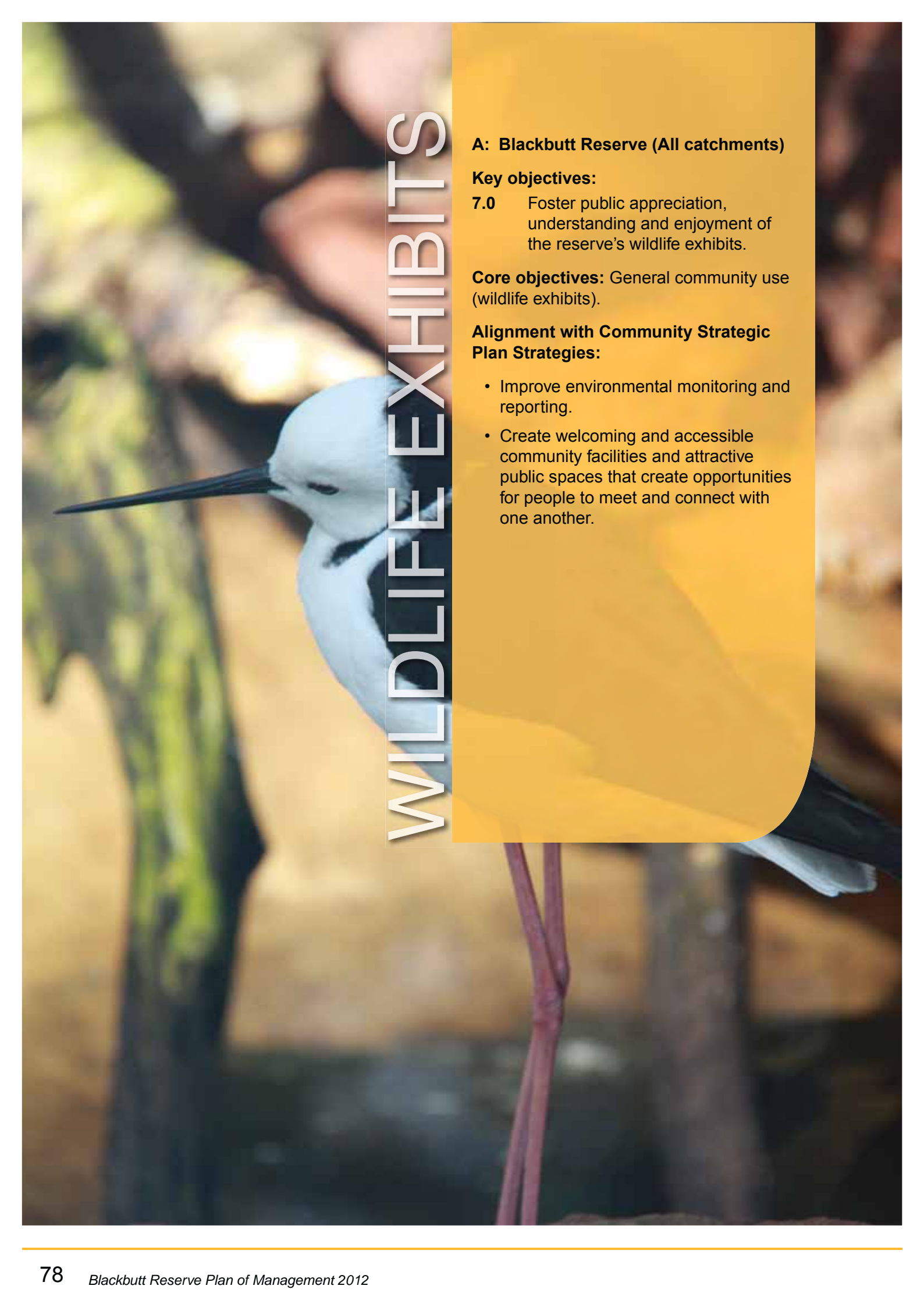
Alignment with Community Strategic Plan Strategies:

- Encourage and support active community participation in local environmental projects.
- Improve environmental monitoring and reporting.

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*	
Environmental capacity building and partnerships	Increase opportunities for environmental education.	A.74	Explore opportunities to collaborate with other organisations, such as the HCRCA, HCCREMS, adjoining Councils, University, TAFE, and non-government organisations to assist with environmental education and research.	Agencies and educational institutions are engaged in environmental research and education at the reserve.	Staff time	Ongoing	
		A.75	Allow and assist agencies and educational institutions to carry out research and educational activities related to natural resource management, with results of research available for use by Council.				
		A.76	Investigate opportunities to develop a series of self-guided walks.				
	Provide the resources and facilities to support quality environmental programs and activities.	A.77	Provide a multi-purpose facility with space for an environmental education centre. The facility will be available for use by schools, TAFE, university etc.	Blackbutt has the appropriate facilities and resources to deliver or support the delivery of environmental education programs.	PRS (IMS/SPS)	Staff time Operating revenue Grant funding Section 94 SRV	High
		A.78	Investigate the provision of a dedicated environmental education officer to provide a range of environmental programs and services.	Staff time Operating revenue	PRS	Medium	
		A.79	Engage and support volunteers (including University and TAFE students) to deliver educational tours and activities.				

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
	Encourage neighbouring residents to become involved with the conservation and management of the reserve.	A.80 Develop brochures highlighting the responsibilities of living near the reserve and how neighbours can assist in the management of the reserve.	Local residents are involved with the conservation and management of the reserve either through individual actions or volunteering programs.	PRS (IMS/ECCS)	Staff time Operating revenue	Medium
		A.81 Liaise with residents to raise awareness about damaging practices, such as using invasive garden plants, allowing domestic pets to roam free, dumping garden clippings and refuse into the reserve and stormwater runoff.				
		A.82 Develop a community education strategy highlighting the impact of weeds on native flora and fauna, focusing particularly on garden-derived species (target all adjoining and upstream landholders).	Local residents understand fire hazards and the steps they can take to reduce risk.	PRS	Staff time Operating revenue	Medium
		A.83 Actively recruit and involve adjoining residents (up to 500 metres) in Bushcare and similar activities through Council programs and attract funds to support such activities.				
		A.84 Coordinate with the NSW Fire Brigade to implement education programs in accordance with the Newcastle Bushfire Risk Management Plan (BFRMP) and Committee. Capacity building programs will encourage landholders to reduce fire hazard on residential properties.				
A.85 Public education campaign should encourage landholders to plant species that minimise fire hazard on reserve boundaries (i.e. adjacent to fire hazard reduction areas).	PRS	Staff time Operating revenue	Low			

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
Blackbutt Reserve as a leader in environmental sustainability	Position Blackbutt Reserve as a leading example of environmental sustainability.	A.86 Blackbutt Reserve should be considered as a key location for the delivery of integrated environmental sustainability programs e.g. building design, energy and water conservation, waste management, bush regeneration, threatened species management.	Blackbutt Reserve is a key location for the delivery of environmental sustainability programs.	ECCS/IMS/ PRS/ SPS	Staff time	Ongoing
		A.87 Encourage and promote recycling by providing recycling bins for glass, aluminium and plastics throughout the Reserve.	Improved recycling facilities and reduced waste to landfill.	PRS/ECCS	Staff time Operating revenue WASIP	High
		A.88 Where feasible, Council will ensure that future licencees/ leasees and event organisers will reduce the amount of waste to landfill through the development of a Sustainable Events Management Policy.	Improved recycling facilities and reduced waste to landfill.		Staff time WASIP	Ongoing

A white bird with a long black beak is perched on a branch. The background is blurred, showing green foliage and brown branches. The text 'WILDLIFE EXHIBITS' is written vertically in white capital letters over the bird's body.

WILDLIFE EXHIBITS

A: Blackbutt Reserve (All catchments)

Key objectives:

- 7.0** Foster public appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of the reserve's wildlife exhibits.

Core objectives: General community use (wildlife exhibits).

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan Strategies:

- Improve environmental monitoring and reporting.
- Create welcoming and accessible community facilities and attractive public spaces that create opportunities for people to meet and connect with one another.

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*	
Standards for exhibiting Australian animals	Provide a unique and informative experience, representative of animals that are naturally present in the Newcastle area with quality interpretation.	A.103	Each wildlife exhibit will provide a high level of information and educational value. This will include signage, brochures and information provided during guided tours.	All display information, guided tours and information is provided to a high standard.	PRS	SRV	Medium
		A.104	Environmental education relating to the animals will be linked to broader sustainability issues, such as biodiversity conservation, water and waste management.	Environmental education is linked to broader sustainability issues.	PRS/IMS	Staff time	Ongoing
	The exhibits will ensure the ongoing maintenance of psychological and physical animal welfare.	A.106	Investigate the provision of public access to the kangaroo and emu exhibit. The interaction between exhibited animals and the public will ensure public safety.	An assessment is undertaken to determine the requirements for public access to the exhibit.	PRS/IMS	Staff time Operating revenue	Medium
		A.107	All animals shall be accommodated in a manner that meets or exceeds the legislative and policy requirements for exhibited animals.	The wildlife exhibits are maintained to a high standard and the animal welfare is ensured through staff training, appropriate funding and volunteer activity.	PRS/IMS		
	A.108	Staff to maintain current captive wildlife management practices, by on and off site training, through TAFE, other institutions, attending conferences and training courses.		PRS	Staff time Operating revenue	Ongoing	
	A.109	Provide an opportunity for up-skilling of volunteers with captive wildlife management. Maintain active volunteer program.		PRS	Staff time Operating revenue	Ongoing	
	A.110	Provide a suitable site is available for sick, injured and quarantined animals from Blackbutt's captive exhibited animal population.	A suitable site is provided.	PRS	Staff time Operating revenue	High	
	A.111	Encourage and promote sponsors to participate in sponsorship agreement with Blackbutt Reserve.	Sponsorship opportunities are assessed and implemented.	PRS	Staff time	Ongoing	



RESOURCES

A: Blackbutt Reserve (All catchments)

Key objectives:

- 8.0** Ensure sufficient resources to deliver this Plan of Management, enhance management capability and visitor enjoyment.

Core objectives: All.

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan Strategies:

- Encourage and support active community participation in local environmental projects.

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
Funding	Sufficient allocation of funding for the reserve to achieve the aims and actions of the Plan of Management.	A.112	Ensure all funds raised from the use of the Reserve are directed to the future embellishment and management of the Reserve.	All funds derived from the use of the Reserve are used for the future management of the Reserve.	Staff time	Ongoing
		A.113	Actively pursue all available funding options, such as sourcing of grant funding, sponsorship, 'friends of the reserve' program etc, to assist with the implementation of the actions identified in this plan of management.	Opportunities for funding other than Council funding sources are investigated and reviewed.	Staff time	Ongoing
		A.114	Consider applications for private sector sponsorship of facilities and activities within Blackbutt Reserve on individual merits.	Applications are approved where appropriate.	Staff time	As required
Asset Management	Provide opportunities for private sector sponsorship of facilities and activities within Blackbutt Reserve	In accordance with the SAMP, develop performance measures to identify service levels to inform and prioritise future works programs.	Service levels developed and used to inform and prioritise future works programs.	PRS/IMS/SPS	Staff time	High
Efficiency/savings	Establish a framework for the management of assets within Blackbutt Reserve	A.115	Conduct an audit of the reserve's energy, waste and water use to assess potential for cost and energy savings in accordance with the Council Carbon and Water Management Action Plan.	Improve water and energy efficiency of Blackbutt Reserve.	Staff time	High
		A.116	Explore cost saving opportunities.		Staff time	High
		A.117	Implementation of recommendations arising from the audit on a priority basis.	PRS/ECCS	MAPP Delivery program Grant funding External support	Medium

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
Business planning	Develop and implement a business plan for Blackbutt Reserve.	A.118 Develop a 4-year business plan for the Reserve to guide the direction of the facility as a local resource and tourist destination. This will include marketing and promotion, funding, sponsorship, partnerships and branding.	A business plan is developed for Blackbutt Reserve.	PRS/TEDS/SPFMS	Staff time	High
		A.119 Implement promotional material, including maps/information/signage at key facilities such as the John Hunter Hospital, Orchard Town Road shops and Kotara train station in accordance with the signage strategy and business plan.	A coordinated promotion and marketing plan is developed.	PRS/IMS/SPS	Staff time Operating revenue	High
Marketing and Promotion	Promote and market Blackbutt Reserve as a key destination in Newcastle.	A.120 Further develop Council's website to include relevant program and facility information.		PRS	Staff time	Ongoing
		A.121 Investigate the opportunity to deliver conferences, team development and other special events.		PRS/TEDS	Staff time	Ongoing
		A.122 Annually review implementation of the actions contained in the PoM over the previous year and set priorities for the following year in line with the IP&R process. The priority actions determined through this process will be incorporated into the 4 year delivery program and operational plan.		SPS Will coordinate with input from relevant service units.	Staff time	High
Review and delivery	Ensure that the actions contained within this Plan of Management are implemented.	A.123 Council will prioritise management actions in accordance with priority, levels of significance, safety issues, usage levels, urgency of works, estimates of cost and available resources.		SPS/FS	Staff time	Ongoing

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
		A. 124 Annually report on delivery of the actions contained in this Plan of Management through the annual report on the delivery program. Ensure that the monitoring and review of completed actions align with Community indicators.	Community indicators.	SPS	Staff time	High
		A. 125 Every 4 years, the actions contained in the PoM shall be assessed and reported through the State of the City report. Aligned with the Community Indicators.		SPS	Staff time	Medium
Volunteers	Encourage and support community and groups (e.g. bushcare) involvement in a variety of programs.	A. 126 Continue to support and encourage Council's volunteer program and activities within Blackbutt Reserve. This will include actively recruiting volunteers from a range of backgrounds to ensure continuity and succession of volunteer involvement with the Reserve.	Council shall maintain a register of all volunteer involvement.	PRS	Staff time Volunteer resources	Ongoing
Administrative facilities	Ensure the provision of appropriate amenities and park furniture at key destinations.	A. 127 Investigate the relocation and consolidation of the reserve's animal food preparation, storage and administration functions.	Investigation complete and options developed.	PRS/IMS/SPS	Staff time (investigation) Special rate variation MAPP Delivery program Grant funding	High
Fees	Set appropriate fees for the use of the Reserve.	A. 128 Determine an appropriate level of hire fees annually, and present to Council as part of the fees and charges.	Level of fees is determined and adopted by Council annually.	PRS/FS	Staff time	Ongoing
		A. 129 Fees will be set based on the following criteria: - financial sustainability - appropriate service levels - partial cost recovery	Council's fees and charges are reviewed to provide Council perceived value for money.	PRS	Staff time	Ongoing
Cultural significance	Identify and appropriately conserve and manage items of cultural significance.	A. 130 Undertake an investigation to determine the cultural significance of Blackbutt Reserve. Implement actions as appropriate.	All known items of cultural significance are managed in accordance with the legislative requirements.	PRS/SPS/IMS	Staff time (investigation) Delivery program MAPP Grant funding	High



BOWERBIRD

**B: Bowerbird Creek Catchment
(includes Lookout Road North)**

Management Focus:

- **Minimise externalities and reduce weed invasion.**
- **Retain the character of the catchment as an intact, natural area.**
- **Restoration.**

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
Tracks (general community use)	Maintain an appropriate recreational track network to provide access to key destination points.	B.1 Close and rehabilitate all tracks and trails not to be retained in accordance with the Track Strategy.	A Track Strategy is prepared to minimise erosion and fragmentation in natural areas whilst providing access to key destination points.	PRS/IMS/SPS	Staff time Operating revenue	Based on results of Track Strategy
		B.2 Where required, resurface tracks and explore innovative and appropriate materials.		PRS/IMS	Staff time Operating revenue	Based on results of Track Strategy
		B.3 Remove illegal bike jumps promptly to deter rebuilding.		PRS	Staff time Operating revenue	As required
Weed control (natural areas)	Control the spread of weed species, focusing on the intact core of the Reserve and in areas of threatened species and endangered ecological communities.	B.4 Prepare a Vegetation Management Plan for this catchment. Undertake a program of weed removal and ongoing control, and repair and reinstatement of damaged areas, in accordance with the VMP prepared for the catchment.	A VMP is prepared for this catchment.	IMS/PRS/SPS	Staff time Operating revenue Grant funding Volunteers	High
Capacity building	Encourage neighbouring residents to become involved with the conservation and management of the Reserve.	B.5 As a pilot for the other catchments, prepare and implement a neighbourhood relations (education) program to improve environmental behaviour within this catchment that is likely to impact on the Reserve (e.g. good bushland neighbours).	Local residents are involved with the conservation and management of the reserve either through individual actions or volunteering programs.	PRS/ECCS	Staff time Operating revenue	Medium

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
Stormwater	Management of stormwater impacts on Reserve.	B.6	Targeted stormwater works to address nutrient enriched runoff from upslope residential land.	Stormwater impacts on the Reserve are minimised.	Staff time Operating revenue	Ongoing
		B.7	Targeted stormwater works to address changed flow from upslope residential land.			Ongoing
		B.8	Prepare a Vegetation Management Plan for this site. Undertake a program of weed removal and ongoing control, and repair and reinstatement of damaged areas, in accordance with the VMP.	A VMP is prepared for this site.	Staff time Operating revenue Grant funding Volunteers	Medium
Lookout Road North (bushland)	Control the spread of weed species, focusing on the intact core of the Reserve and in areas of threatened species and endangered ecological communities.					



ECHIDNA

C: Echidna Creek Catchment

Management Focus:

- **Maintain informal, nature based trails.**
- **Retain the character of the catchment, with a focus on water, nature observation.**
- **Protect and enhance the area.**

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
Lilypond picnic area	Provide a range of unique nature-based experiences within the Reserve.	<p>C.1</p> <p>Maintenance of this area will progressively enable the transition from a formal picnic area to a more natural setting.</p> <p>Reinstated areas can continue to function as picnic rest areas but BBQs should be removed along with unessential furniture.</p> <p>Increase bushland picnic opportunities with the removal of outdated furniture and grass surfaces and return to a more natural state.</p>	Nature-based experiences are provided within the Reserve.	PRS/IMS	Staff time Operating revenue Volunteers	Low
Tracks	Close and rehabilitate all tracks and trails not to be retained in the management or recreational track network.	<p>C.2</p> <p>Further investigate the current 6 informal tracks in the context of the Track Strategy.</p>	A Track Strategy is prepared to minimise erosion and fragmentation in natural areas whilst providing access to key destination points.	PRS/IMS/SPS	Staff time Operating revenue	Medium
Bushland	Control the spread of weed species, focusing on the intact core of the Reserve and in areas of threatened species and endangered ecological communities.	<p>C.3</p> <p>Prepare a Vegetation Management Plan for the Echidna Creek Catchment. Undertake a program of weed removal and ongoing control, and repair and reinstatement of damaged areas, in accordance with the VMP prepared for the catchment.</p>	A VMP is prepared for this catchment.	IMS/PRS/SPS	Staff time Operating revenue Grant funding Volunteers	High

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*			
Mahogany Drive Recreation Area (park and general community use)	Provide and maintain high standards of recreational facilities.	C.4	Retain existing car park and park area. Establish firm boundary edgelines to park area with treatments such as planting and/or fencing.	Recreation facilities are maintained to an appropriate	PRS/IMS	Staff time Operating revenue	Low		
		C.5	Maintain car parking and promote Mahogany Drive and Lily Pond as key nature-based destinations.	Car parking area is maintained and operated to ensure safety.	PRS	Staff time Operating revenue	Medium		
		C.6	Close car park at sunset.	Community feedback in relation to anti-social behaviour	PRS	Staff time	Ongoing		
		C.7	Existing toilet block shall be maintained to an appropriate standard. Once the toilet has reached its useful life expectancy, replace in accordance with the reserve management principles and design guidelines.	Recreation facilities are maintained to an appropriate standard.	PRS/IMS	Staff time Operating revenue	Low		
	Wetland	Implement appropriate interpretive, directional and destination signage in accordance with the Signage Strategy.	C.8	Develop and implement entrance signage for Mahogany Drive Recreation Area in accordance with the Signage Strategy.	Signage improved in accordance with the Signage Strategy.	SPS/IMS/PRS	Staff time Operating revenue	Based on results of Signage Strategy	
				Wetland Audit (2011) to inform the management actions (refer to Appendix 6 for wetland extents and management buffers).	Monitor the change in condition through condition assessment for all wetland rehabilitation sites	IMS	Staff time	Ongoing	



COALMINE

D: Coalmine Creek Catchment

Management Focus:

- Focus for Richley Reserve on providing high quality open space to offset demand on Carnley Avenue.
- Key hub for low key events.
- Installations reflect the unique character of Richley Reserve relative to the rest of the Reserve and surrounding areas (point of difference).
- Historical interpretation focus (mines).

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*	
Dead tree picnic area (park)	Provide and maintain high standards of recreational facilities.	D.1	Maintain quality, functionality and safety of seats and tables in accordance with the reserve management principles and Council's asset management plans and policy.	Recreation facilities are maintained to an appropriate standard.	Staff time Operating revenue Grant funding Section 94 SRV	Ongoing	
		D.2	Investigate replacing the current storage area with a smaller, more suitably located facility, closer to existing reserve management functions.	Investigation complete and alternate storage locations identified.	Staff time Operating revenue Section 94 SRV	Medium	
		D.3	Revegetate the ridgetop storage area once removed.	Subject to relocation of storage, area is revegetated.	Staff time Operating revenue Volunteers	Low	
	Richley Reserve (park and general community use)	Implement appropriate interpretive, directional and destination signage in accordance with the signage strategy.	D.4	Develop and implement entrance signage for Richley Reserve in accordance with the Signage Strategy. This will address the need to: - improve directional signage from Carnley Avenue Reserve to Richley Reserve. - Interpret the old entry to mine workings in addition to the environmental values.	Signage improved in accordance with the Signage Strategy.	Staff time Operating revenue	Subject to Signage Strategy
			D.5	Replace the toilets with a new accessible toilet block combined with information and food café/kiosk. Note: subject to detailed design.	Toilets implemented in accordance with the staged approach as outlined in Richley Reserve masterplan.	Staff time Operating revenue Grant funding Section 94 SRV	Medium

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
	D.6	Explore the opportunity to consolidate the Reserve's administrative and animal food preparation functions at Carnley Avenue. Retain the existing koala food plantation. Note: subject to detailed design.	Investigation complete and options developed in accordance with the staged approach as outlined in Richley Reserve masterplan.	PRS/IMS/SPS	Staff time Operating revenue Section 94 SRV Grant funding	Medium
		D.7	Investigate the opportunity to increase the number of under cover gathering areas including new shade shelters, BBQs and a rotunda. Note: subject to detailed design.	Improved under cover gathering areas provided in accordance with the staged approach as outlined in Richley Reserve masterplan.	PRS/IMS	Staff time Operating revenue Section 94 SRV Grant funding
	D.8	Improve the playground facilities at Richley Reserve. Note: subject to detailed design.	Improved playground facilities provided in accordance with the staged approach as outlined in Richley Reserve masterplan.	PRS/IMS/SPS	Staff time Operating revenue Section 94 Grant funding SRV	Medium
		D.9	Redesign Richley Reserve to reduce vehicle access to the Park area and rationalise path systems in accordance with the Track Strategy. Note: subject to detailed design.	A Track Strategy is prepared to minimise erosion and fragmentation in natural areas whilst providing access to key destination points.	PRS/IMS/SPS	Staff time Operating revenue Section 94 SRV Grant funding
Bushland	D.10	A VMP will be prepared for the Coalmine Creek Catchment. Undertake a program of weed removal and ongoing control, and repair and reinstatement of damaged areas, in accordance with the VMP prepared for the catchment.	A VMP is prepared for the Coalmine Creek Catchment.	IMS/PRS/SPS	Staff time Operating revenue Grant funding Volunteers	High
Wetland		Wetland Audit (2011) to inform the management actions (refer to Appendix 6 for wetland extents and management buffers).	Monitor the change in condition through condition assessment for all wetland rehabilitation sites..	IMS	Staff time	Ongoing



BLACK DUCK

E: Black Duck Creek Catchment

Management Focus:

- **Carnley Avenue to be managed and developed to provide high quality observation and interaction with the animals, complimented by appropriate/ low key passive recreational embellishments sympathetic to the setting.**
- **Installations reflect the unique character of Carnley Reserve relative to the rest of the Reserve and surrounding areas (point of difference).**
- **Environmental educational interpretation focus.**
- **Focus on improving current facilities in lieu of expanding the developed footprint.**

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
Carnley Avenue (Park and general community use)	Explore opportunities to manage and redistribute visitor pressure in Carnley Avenue.	E.1	Formalise and signpost the two access tracks linking Carnley Reserve with Richley Reserve in accordance with the Signage Strategy.	Signage installed in accordance with the Signage Strategy.	To be determined by Signage Strategy	Subject to Signage Strategy
		E.2	Explore options to improve safe pedestrian connectivity between Carnley Avenue and March Street Reserve.	Options to improve pedestrian connectivity investigated and implemented.	Staff time Operating revenue	Medium
Connectivity and parking	Improve the connectivity to the reserve by public and active transport.	E.3	Improve connectivity from Kotara train station through the provision of signage, information and way finding in accordance with the Signage Strategy.	Connection between the train station and Blackbutt Reserve improved in accordance with Signage Strategy.	To be determined by Signage Strategy	Subject to Signage Strategy
		E.4	Explore the opportunity to consolidate the Reserve's administrative, animal food preparation and storage functions from Richley Recreation Area to Carnley Reserve. Note: subject to detailed design.	Investigation complete and options developed in accordance with the staged approach outlined in Carnley Recreation Area masterplan.	SRV Operating revenue Grant funding Section 94	Low
Amenities (Park and general community use)	Ensure the appropriate planning for and provision of parking, amenities and park furniture at key destinations.	E.5	Car park improvements to improve the efficiency and safety of the current parking. Note: Subject to detailed design and parking improvements will not cater for peak demand.	The existing footprint does not encroach on adjoining natural areas.	SRV Operating revenue Section 94	High
		E.6	Ensure the existing developed footprint of Carnley Avenue (i.e area categorised as Park and GCU) does not encroach upon the adjoining natural areas.	The existing footprint does not encroach on adjoining natural areas.	Staff time	Ongoing

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
		E.7 Develop a multipurpose facility including space for environmental education, special events, visitor information, café/kiosk, and accessible toilet. Note: subject to detailed design.	A multi purpose facility is provided in accordance with the staged approach outlined in Carnley Recreation Area masterplan.	PRS/IMS/SPS	SRV Section 94 Grant funding Operating revenue	High
		E.8 Replace and consolidate existing BBQ shelters. Note: subject to detailed design.	Improved shelters provided in accordance with the staged approach outlined in Carnley Recreation Area masterplan.	PRS/IMS	SRV Section 94 Grant funding Operating revenue	High
Recreation	Provide and maintain high standards of recreational facilities.	E.9 New play equipment will be provided at Carnley Avenue. Note: subject to detailed design.	Improved playground facilities provided in accordance with the staged approach outlined in Carnley Recreation Area masterplan.	PRS	Staff time Operating revenue Grant funding	High
Animal enclosures	Provide a unique and informative experience, representative of animals that are naturally present in the Newcastle area with quality interpretation.	E.10 Explore options for people to interact with emus and kangaroos in a shared open space area. Note: subject to detailed design.	Options for interaction explored and costed.	PRS	Staff time Operating revenue	Medium

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
Environmental	Undertake a program of weed removal and ongoing control, and repair and reinstatement of damaged areas.	E.11 A VMP will be prepared for the Coalmine Creek Catchment. Undertake a program of weed removal and ongoing control, and repair and reinstatement of damaged areas, in accordance with the VMP prepared for the catchment. Note: The VMP will consider the need to remove willow trees and replace with native paperbark trees and associated stream related species. The VMP will also consider the need to remove lantana and other woody weeds in the southwest slope of the valley.	A VMP is prepared for the Black Duck Creek Catchment.	IMS/PRS/SPS	Staff time Operating revenue Grant funding Volunteers	High
Main Ridge Recreation Area	Ensure the provision of appropriate amenities and park furniture at key destinations.	E.12 Improve the quality of park furniture to encourage use of the open spaces on the ridge.	Improved quality of park furniture provided at Main Ridge.	PRS/IMS	Staff time Operating revenue Grant funding Section 94 SRV	Ongoing
	Provide and maintain high standards of recreational facilities to activate the area.	E.13 Prepare a landscape concept plan for Main Ridge, Lookout Road and Cliff Top lookout.	A landscape concept plan is prepared for Main Ridge in conjunction with key stakeholders.	IMS (PRS/SPS)	Staff time	High
Wetland	Protect the biodiversity and ecological value of wetlands.	Wetland Audit (2011) to inform the management actions (refer to Appendix 6 for wetland extents and management buffers).	Monitor the change in condition through condition assessment for all wetland rehabilitation sites.	IMS	Staff time	Ongoing



RAINFOREST

F: Rainforest Creek Catchment


Management Focus:

- **Lower formal recreational focus within Rod Earp Rainforest, improving it's interpretation – as a nature-based unique experience (rainforest).**
- **Higher recreational focus on Lookout Road Recreation Area coupled with the improved development, use and access to Cliff Top lookout.**

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
Ranger Cottage (general community use)	Adaptive reuse of the Rangers Cottage to a use that is aligned with the management of the reserve.	F.1 Investigate use of the ranger cottage to assist with the management of the reserve, such as onsite Ranger, administration or storage. If this is not achievable, alternate uses of the building should be explored, which are aligned with the reserve values, objectives and appropriate uses.	Alternate options for the use of the building considered.	PRS/SPFMS	Staff time	High
Rod Earp Rainforest (bushland)	Prioritise the management of threatened species, critical habitats and endangered populations within the Reserve.	F.2 Protect and manage the bat colony for long term residence in this location. Actions relating to the f ying fox colony will be undertaken in accordance with the best practice guidelines.	Management of the bat colony in accordance with best practice guidelines.	PRS/IMS/SPS	Staff time Operating revenue Grant funding Volunteers	High
Amenities	Ensure the provision of appropriate amenities and park furniture at key destinations.	F.3 Manage, buffer and introduce signage to improve the value of the bat colony.		PRS/IMS/SPS	Staff time Operating revenue	High
		F.4 Removal of obsolete furniture, paths and grass surfaces surrounding the bat colony and return to a more natural state.	Obsolete assets removed and surrounding areas reinstated.	PRS/IMS	Staff time Operating revenue	High
		F.5 Remove toilets in the lower Rainforest Creek Catchment and rehabilitate area.		PRS/IMS	Staff time Operating revenue	Medium
Tracks	Close and rehabilitate all tracks and trails not to be retained in the management or recreational track network.	F.6 Removal of the sensory trail and rehabilitation of the area to bushland.	A Track Strategy is prepared to minimise erosion and fragmentation in natural areas whilst providing access to key destination points.	PRS/IMS	Staff time Operating revenue Volunteers	Medium

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*	
Cliff Top Lookout (park)	Develop options for providing access to the cliff top lookout to allow views over Newcastle and the Flying Fox colony.	F.7	Prepare a landscape concept plan for Cliff Top lookout, Main Ridge and Lookout Road.	PRS/IMS/SPS	Staff time	High	
		F.8	Install way finding signage from Lookout Recreation Area and pedestrian underpass and from within the reserve.	PRS/IMS/SPS	Subject to Signage Strategy	Subject to Signage Strategy	
Signage	Implement appropriate interpretive, directional and destination signage in accordance with the Signage Strategy.	F.9	Install way finding signage to capture passing vehicles.				
		F.10	Install interpretative signage at the lookout.				
		F.11	Investigate connecting Lookout Reserve with the existing walking track to the north in accordance with the Track Strategy.	Increased visitor numbers and reduction in reports of anti-social behaviour. A Track Strategy is prepared to minimise erosion and fragmentation in natural areas whilst providing access to key destination points.	PRS/IMS/SPS	Staff time Operating revenue	Subject to Track Strategy and landscape concept plan (F13)
		F.12	Build a new path circuit for short-stay visitors and park users generally to make better use of the spectacular view of Newcastle to be obtained at Cliff Top Lookout and to experience the rainforest area.		PRS/IMS/SPS	Staff time Operating revenue	Low

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*
		F.13 Prepare a landscape concept plan for Lookout Road Recreation Area, Cliff Top and Main Ride recreation areas.	A landscape concept plan is prepared for Lookout Road in conjunction with key stakeholders.	PRS/IMS/SPS	Staff time	High
	Provide and maintain high standards of recreational facilities.	F.14 Facility provision should focus on short stops with information directing visitors to the key destinations within the reserve, distances and facilities provided.		PRS/IMS/SPS	Staff time	Low
	Ensure the provision of appropriate amenities at key destinations.	F.15 Remove toilets due to non-compliance with environmental standards. Replace toilets in accordance with the reserve management principles and design guidelines.	Toilets removed and replaced with a new facility.	PRS/IMS	Staff time Operating revenue	Remove - high Replace -Medium
	Implement appropriate interpretive, directional and destination signage in accordance with the signage strategy.	F.16 In accordance with the signage strategy install signage from other key locales within the reserve highlighting Lookout Road as a key destination and install way finding signage to the Lookout Road entrance.	Signage installed in accordance with the Signage Strategy.	PRS/IMS	To be determined by Signage Strategy	Subject to Signage Strategy
Wetland	Protect the biodiversity and ecological value of wetlands	Wetland Audit (2011) to inform the management actions (refer to Appendix 6 for wetland extents and management buffers).	Monitor the change in condition through condition assessment for all wetland rehabilitation sites.	IMS	Staff time	Ongoing



MARCH STREET

G: March Street Reserve and surrounding land parcels

Management Focus:

- **Tree propagation.**
- **Low key recreational use and connectivity.**
- **Buffer to core integral area of the Reserve/ habitat– part of corridor between Blackbutt and Glenrock.**
- **No further recreation infrastructure.**

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*	
March Street Reserve	Provide and maintain high standards of recreational facilities.	G.1	Explore options for consolidation of administration buildings and volunteer functions at March Street Reserve.	Recreation facilities and connections are maintained to an appropriate standard. A Track Strategy is prepared to minimise erosion and fragmentation in natural areas whilst providing access to key destination points.	PRS	Staff time	High
		G.2	Review and upgrade, where necessary, the existing informal tracks as low key bushwalking tracks in accordance with the Track Strategy. Implement directional signage as required.		PRS/IMS	To be determined by Track Strategy	Subject to Track Strategy
		G.3	Enhance the pedestrian connection through March Street Reserve between Kotara train station and Carnley Avenue Recreation Area.		SPS	Staff time	Medium
		G.4	Retain a local playground at Aldyth Street.		PRS	Operating revenue	Ongoing
		G.5	Retain the March Street Community Garden, which offers the community a place to meet and grow a range of vegetables, herbs and to learn more about sustainable living from each other.		PRS	Staff time	Ongoing

Topic	Performance Target (Strategies)	Means of Achievement (Management Actions)	Means of Assessment	Lead Responsibility	Potential funding source	Priority*	
City Greening Services (general community use)	Provision of quality plant species and greening services for The City of Newcastle	G.6	Continue the propagation and growth of indigenous coastal, bushland, and riparian plant species for Council's revegetation activities.	Indigenous plant propagation services are provided for The City of Newcastle and community.	PRS	Staff time	Ongoing
		G.7	Continue undertaking seed collection of indigenous coastal, bushland and riparian plant species from the local area, including Blackbutt Reserve, to maintain genetic diversity of the species.				
		G.8	Continue to co-ordinate and support volunteers who participate in propagation and growth, and seed collection activities.				
		G.9	Coordinate external organisations to propagate plants for projects such as Kooragang Wetlands Rehabilitation Project				
		G.10	Sale of indigenous plant stock to Council, Council contractors and organisations for on ground environmental projects within the Newcastle LGA.				
		G.11	The hours of operation for City Greening Services will primarily be from Monday to Friday 7am - 4pm, with limited activities on weekends.				



11 Reference list

- Anne Clements and Associates 2010. Newcastle Public Bushland Asset Inventory Report. North Sydney, NSW.
- BMT WBM 2007 Blackbutt Reserve Ponds Water Pollution Management Plan. Broadmeadow, NSW.
- Forest Fauna Surveys 2007 Jesmond Bushland/Blackbutt Reserve Habitat Tree Mapping. Adamstown Heights, NSW.
- Forest Fauna Surveys 1997. Blackbutt Nature Reserve – Jesmond Bushland Squirrel Glider Survey. Adamstown, NSW.
- Mackenzie and Associates 1989. Blackbutt Reserve Plan of Management. Manly, NSW.
- Dragonfy Environmental 2011. Wetland Condition Audit for Blackbutt Reserve. Avalon, NSW



Appendix 1

Local Government Act 1993

The Local Government Act 1993 (Section 36), herein referred to as the Act, requires that Council prepare and adopt plans of management for all Community Land. Community Land is required to be used and managed in accordance with the plan of management applying to the land

Categorisation and Core Objectives

The Act (Section 36) requires that all Community Land be categorised. A category describes the land and has a set of core objectives. All current and future uses of the land must comply with the core objectives.

The core objectives for management of community land categorised as a **natural area** are:

1. to conserve biodiversity and maintain ecosystem function in respect of the land, or the feature or habitat in respect of which the land is categorised as a natural area, and
2. to maintain the land, or that feature or habitat, in its natural state and setting, and
3. to provide for the restoration and regeneration of the land, and
4. to provide for community use of and access to the land in such a manner as will minimise and mitigate any disturbance caused by human intrusion, and
5. to assist in and facilitate the implementation of any provisions restricting the use and management of the land that are set out in a recovery plan or threat abatement plan prepared under the **Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995** or the **Fisheries Management Act 1994**.

The core objectives for management of community land sub-categorised as **bushland** are:

1. to ensure the ongoing ecological viability of the land by protecting the ecological biodiversity and habitat values of the land, the flora and fauna (including invertebrates, fungi and micro-organisms) of the land and other ecological values of the land, and
2. to protect the aesthetic, heritage, recreational, educational and scientific values of the land, and
3. to promote the management of the land in a manner that protects and enhances the values and quality of the land and facilitates public enjoyment of the land, and to implement measures directed to minimising or mitigating any disturbance caused by human intrusion, and
4. to restore degraded bushland, and
5. to protect existing landforms such as natural drainage lines, watercourses and foreshores, and

The core objectives for management of community land sub-categorised as a **watercourse** are:

1. to manage watercourses so as to protect the biodiversity and ecological values of the instream environment, particularly in relation to water quality and water flows, and
2. to manage watercourses so as to protect the riparian environment, particularly in relation to riparian vegetation and habitats and bank stability, and
3. to restore degraded watercourses, and
4. to promote community education, and community access to and use of the watercourse, without compromising the other core objectives of the category.



The core objectives for management of community land sub-categorised as **wetland** are:

1. *to protect the biodiversity and ecological values of wetlands, with particular reference to their hydrological environment (including water quality and water flow), and to the flora, fauna and habitat values of the wetlands, and*
2. *to restore and regenerate degraded wetlands, and*
3. *to facilitate community education in relation to wetlands, and the community use of wetlands, without compromising the ecological values of wetlands.*

The core objectives for management of community land sub-categorised as an **escarpment** are:

1. *to protect any important geological, geomorphological or scenic features of the escarpment, and*
2. *to facilitate safe community use and enjoyment of the escarpment*

The core objectives for management of community land sub-categorised as a **park** are:

1. *to encourage, promote and facilitate recreational, cultural, social and educational pastimes and activities, and*
2. *to provide for passive recreational activities or pastimes and for the casual playing of games, and*
3. *to improve the land in such a way as to promote and facilitate its use to achieve the other core objectives for its management.*
4. *to retain bushland in parcels of a size and configuration that will enable the existing plant and animal communities to survive in the long term, and*
5. *to protect bushland as a natural stabiliser of the soil surface.*

The core objectives for management of community land sub-categorised as **general community** use are:

To promote, encourage and provide for the use of the land, and to provide facilities on the land, to meet the current and future needs of the local community and of the wider public:

1. *in relation to public recreation and the physical, cultural, social and intellectual welfare or development of individual members of the public, and*
2. *in relation to purposes for which a lease, licence or other estate may be granted in respect of the land (other than the provision of public utilities and works associated with or ancillary to public utilities).*



Leases, licences and other estates

The Local Government Act 1993 requires that any lease or licence of Community Land be authorised by a Plan of Management.

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 46 of the Act, Council may lease and licence Community Land in a Plan of Management for purposes consistent with the categorisation and zoning of the land.

The maximum period for leases and licences on Community Land allowable under the Local Government Act is 21 years for purposes consistent with the categorisation and core objectives of the particular area of Community Land.

Community Land must not be leased or licensed for more than 21 years and may only be leased or licensed for more than 5 years if public notice of the proposed lease or licence is given and, in the event that an objection is made to the proposed lease or licence, the Minister's consent is obtained.

Lease or licence of natural areas

In accordance with 47B of the Local Government Act in respect to lease or licence of natural areas:

1. A lease, licence or other estate must not be granted, in respect of community land categorised as a natural area:
 - (a) to authorise the erection or use of a building or structure that is not a building or structure of a kind prescribed by this section or the regulations, or
 - (b) to authorise the erection or use of a building or structure that is not for a purpose prescribed by this section or the regulations.
2. A lease, licence or instrument granting any other estate is void to the extent that its provisions are inconsistent with this section.
3. In this section, "erection" of a building or structure includes rebuilding or replacement of a building or structure.
4. The following buildings and structures are prescribed for the purposes of subsection

(1) (a):

- (a) walkways,
- (b) pathways,
- (c) bridges,
- (d) causeways,
- (e) observation platforms,
- (f) signs.

5. The following purposes are prescribed for the purposes of subsection (1) (b):
 - (a) information kiosks,
 - (b) refreshment kiosks (but not restaurants),
 - (c) work sheds or storage sheds required in connection with the maintenance of the land,
 - (d) toilets or rest rooms.
6. Despite subsection (1), a lease, licence or other estate may be granted, in respect of community land categorised as a natural area, to authorise the erection or use of any building or structure necessary to enable a filming project to be carried out, subject to the conditions prescribed by subsection (7) and the regulations.
7. It is a condition of any lease, licence or other estate referred to in subsection (6):
 - (a) that any building or structure so erected must be temporary in nature, and
 - (b) that as soon as practicable after the termination of the lease, licence or other estate:
 - (i) any building or structure erected must be removed, and
 - (ii) any damage to the land caused by the erection or use of a building or structure must be made good, and
 - (iii) the land must be restored as nearly as possible to the condition that it was in at the time the lease, licence or other estate was granted, at the expense of the person to whom the lease, licence or other estate was granted.



Appendix 2

Condition and use of existing built, recreation and natural assets

The aim of Council's Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) is to establish the necessary framework to enable sustainable and incremental alignment of Council's asset base with the community's service provision needs, as identified in the Community Strategic Plan.

Asset management plans have been prepared for all asset types, including buildings, parks and recreation, natural areas, stormwater and bridges.

As part of this asset management planning, Council has assessed the condition profile of assets within Blackbutt Reserve. A summary of the condition information contained within these asset management plans has been provided to address the requirements of the Local Government Act, which are as follows:

In accordance with S36 (3a) - A plan of management that applies to just one area of community land:

- (a) must include a description of:
- (i) the condition of the land, and of any buildings or other improvements on the land, as at the date of adoption of the plan of management, and
 - (ii) the use of the land and any such buildings or improvements as at that date.

10	An asset that has failed is no longer serviceable and should not remain in service. There would be an extreme risk in leaving the asset in service.
9	An asset in extremely poor condition with severe serviceability problems and needing rehabilitation immediately. Could also be a risk to remain in service
8	An asset in very poor overall condition with serviceability now being heavily impacted upon by the poor condition. Maintenance cost would be very high and the asset would be at a point where it needed to be rehabilitated.
7	An asset in poor overall condition deterioration would be quite severe and would be starting to limit the serviceability of the asset. Maintenance cost would be high
6	An asset in Fair to poor overall condition. The condition deterioration would be quite obvious. Asset serviceability would now be affected and maintenance cost would be rising.
5	An asset in fair overall condition deterioration in condition would be obvious and there would be some serviceability loss.
4	An asset in good overall condition but with some obvious deterioration evident, serviceability would be impaired very slightly.
3	An asset in very good overall condition but with some early stages of deterioration evident, but the deterioration still minor in nature and causing no serviceability problems.
2	An asset in excellent overall condition. There would be only very slight condition decline but it would be obvious that the asset was no longer in new condition.
1	A near new asset with no visible signs of deterioration often moved to condition 1 based upon the time since construction rather than observed condition decline.
0	A new asset or an asset recently rehabilitated back to new condition.

Existing Condition and use – Built infrastructure

Catchment/ Management Unit	Asset No	Description	Status	Component Type	Condition	Notes/Usage
Black Duck Creek	BU000314	Carnley Avenue - Main Toilet & Shelter	Active	Overall	4	
Black Duck Creek	BU000479	Carnley Avenue - Wildlife Enclosure (main)	Active	Overall	4	
Black Duck Creek	BU000480	Carnley Avenue - Pioneers Cottage	Active	Overall	5	
Black Duck Creek	BU000657	Carnley Avenue - Wombat Enclosure	Active	Overall	2	
Black Duck Creek	BU000792	Carnley Avenue - Shade Structure and Barbeque Facility (north of Cottage)	Active	Overall	2	
Black Duck Creek	BU000809	Carnley Avenue - Shade Shelter and Barbeque	Active	Overall	2	
Black Duck Creek	BU000838	Carnley Avenue - Shade Shelter	Active	Overall	1	
Black Duck Creek	BU000839	Carnley Avenue - Shade Shelter and Barbeque 1	Active	Overall	2	
Black Duck Creek	BU000840	Carnley Avenue - Bird Aviary 1	Active	Overall	4	
Black Duck Creek	BU000841	Carnley Avenue - Bird Aviary 2	Active	Overall	4	
Black Duck Creek	BU000842	Carnley Avenue - Bird Aviary 3	Active	Overall	6	
Black Duck Creek	BU000843	Carnley Avenue - Bird Aviary 4	Active	Overall	3	
Black Duck Creek	BU000844	Carnley Avenue - Bird Aviary 5	Active	Overall	4	
Black Duck Creek	BU000845	Carnley Avenue - Bird Aviary 6	Active	Overall	3	
Black Duck Creek	BU000846	Carnley Avenue - Bird Aviary 7	Active	Overall	3	
Black Duck Creek	BU000847	Carnley Avenue - Bird Aviary 8	Active	Overall	6	
Black Duck Creek	BU000848	Carnley Avenue - Bird Aviary 9	Active	Overall	9	
Black Duck Creek	BU000849	Carnley Avenue - Bird Aviary 10	Active	Overall	3	
Black Duck Creek	BU000853	Carnley Avenue - Shade Structure and Barbeque 2	Active	Overall	0	
Black Duck Creek	TBC	Carnley Avenue - Playground	Active	Playground	TBC	TBC - Parks and Recreation Services
Black Duck Creek	TBC	Carnley Avenue - Playground	Active	Playground	TBC	TBC - Parks and Recreation Services

Coalmine Creek	BU000306	Richley Reserve - Amenities	Active	Overall	5	Public toilets (male and female); Staff amenities (toilets and lunchroom); Machinery shed and storage; and office for 3 staff
Coalmine Creek	BU000621	Richley Reserve - Shade Structure	Active	Overall	2	
Coalmine Creek	BU000779	Richley Reserve - Shade Structure 2	Active	Overall	2	
Coalmine Creek	BU000780	Richley Reserve - Shade Structure (near carpark)	Active	Overall	2	
Coalmine Creek	BU000811	Richley Reserve - Office and Storage	Active	Overall	5	
Coalmine Creek	TBC	Richley Reserve - Playground	Active	Playground	TBC	TBC - Parks and Recreation Services
Echidna Creek	BU000798	Mahogany Drive - Toilet Block	Active	Overall	4	
March Street	BU000596	March Street Reserve - NCC Nursery - Hot House	Active	Overall	4	These assets are used by City Greening Staff for the propagation of plants.
March Street	BU000597	NCC Nursery - Storeroom & Toilets	Inactive	Overall	5	
March Street	BU000703	NCC Nursery - Igloo	Active	Overall	4	
March Street	BU000704	NCC Nursery - Shed	Active	Overall	2	
March Street	BU000807	NCC Nursery - Potting Shed	Active	Overall	3	
March Street	TBC	Aldyth Street - Playground	Active	Playground	TBC	TBC - Parks and Recreation Services
Rainforest Creek	BU000304	Blackbutt Reserve - Caretakers/Rangers Cottage	Active	Overall	3	
Rainforest Creek	BU000312	Rainforest Creek Catchment - Toilet Block	Active	Overall	5	Decommissioned and locked toilet block. Does not meet environmental standards. Scheduled for demolition.
Rainforest Creek	BU000598	Lookout Road - Wishing Well & Shelter	Active	Overall	4	
Rainforest Creek	BU000743	Lookout Road - 2 Way Radio Relay Station	Active	Overall	TBC	
Rainforest Creek	BU000762	Lookout Road - Public Toilet	Active	Overall	5	Decommissioned and locked toilet block. Does not meet environmental standards. Scheduled for demolition.
Rainforest Creek	BU000890	Blackbutt - Animal Enclosure Clinic	Active	Overall	8	



Natural asset condition has been assessed for each of the following natural area sub categories:

Bushland

The bushland asset inventory assessed condition using 7 weighted attributes (Intactness of native canopy; Tree age class; Presence of mature trees; Dead standing and fallen timber; Projective cover of native foliage; percentage natives & projective foliage cover of exotics).

A condition rating using a 0-10 scale has been applied to all bushland parcels (0 = excellent to 10 = very poor)

Escarpment

Assessed condition uses 3 weighted attributes: soil type, steepness of slope and vegetation cover. These produce a stability score which is then translated to a 0 - 10 condition rating.

Watercourse

The creek asset management system provides a health score across the range from Excellent to Very Poor. In preparing the Natural Asset Strategic Management Plan (SAMP) this data was used to produce a 0 - 10 condition rating score for all watercourse assets.

Works are prioritised according to those watercourse reaches in the best condition but at the greatest risk of degradation e.g. from active erosion, pipe drainage interface etc. This prioritisation process is documented in the Natural Assets SAMP 2011.

Wetland

Wetland condition assessment uses 4 weighted attributes: water quality; connectivity; disturbance and vegetation. These produce an aggregate score which was translated to a 0 - 10 condition rating.

Existing Condition – Natural Assets

Existing Natural Assets	Brief description	Condition* * Based on weighted &/ or aggregated field based assessment of specific criteria	Known significant species
Rainforest Creek Catchment			
Bushland BL0000050	<p>The bushland within this catchment comprises approximately 28 hectares. This is the steepest of the Blackbutt catchments and contains most actively eroding sections of the reserve. This south-western catchment includes Blackbutt's most mesic forest areas, in parts with quite a diverse array of rainforest trees, shrubs, climbers and ferns, though nearly everywhere with a taller overstorey of Eucalyptis (Anne Clements, 2010). * Lack of fire in the long term will result in the replacement of Eucalypt dominated tall forest by rainforest.</p> <p>Rank: 5th</p> <p>The Newcastle Public bushland asset inventory ranked the bushland within this catchment as the 5th most significant within the Newcastle LGA.</p>	Condition : 3	<p>The NPWS Atlas identifies that threatened species have been recorded in and adjacent to this sub-catchment.</p> <p>Fauna (NPWS Atlas 2010):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Powerful Owl (insert species name)(Ninox strenua) - Koala (Phascolarctos cinereus) - Grey-headed Flying-fox (Pteropus) - Wompoo Fruit-Dove (Ptilinopus regina) - Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove (Ptilinopus regina) - Superb Fruit-Dove (Ptilinopus superbus) - Barking Owl (Ninox connivens) - Varied Sittella (Daphoenositta chrysoptera) - Eastern Bentwing-bat (Miniopterus schreibersii oceanensis) - Little Bentwing-bat (Miniopterus australis) - Gang-gang Cockatoo (Callocephalon fimbriatum)
Rainforest Creek - Watercourse (The creek comprises 18 individual reaches with unique Asset ID numbers & associated attributes).	<p>Rainforest creek is approximately 1.2 km long and drains from west to east. The creek forms part of the Throsby Creek Catchment, which drains into the Hunter Estuary. The creek contains 8 reaches that have been identified as high priority for natural resource management from a total of 850 reaches. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UC0032303 = ranked 11th UC0032302 = ranked 15th UC0025804 = ranked 32nd UC0025809 = ranked 33rd UC0025805 = ranked 34th UC0025806 = ranked 35th UC0025806 = ranked 41st UC0025802 = ranked 46th 	<p>Condition summary for creek reaches within this catchment is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condition 1: 6% • Condition 2: 71% • Condition 3: 11% • Condition 4: 6% • Condition 7: 6% 	
Escarpment CL0000022 CL0000023	<p>There are two inland cliff sections located below Cliff Top lookout including a large 146 m length (CL0000023) and a smaller section of 38 m (CL0000022).</p>	Both escarpments located within this sub-catchment are condition 9.	
Rainforest Pond - Wetland WD0000065	<p>The Rainforest pond area categorised as wetland is 5m from the edge of the rock and/ or top of bank and covers approximately 600m².</p> <p>The wetland is in-line and provides some water quality treatment to water coming from the forested area upstream which contains a colony of flying foxes resulting in elevated phosphorous in the water downstream. The wetland also collects sediment and is habitat for locally native species.</p> <p>Generally linear in shape the widest section is ~12m. The wetland has a sediment bay, open water area and fringing aquatic vegetation. The fringing vegetation is currently sparse being less than 2% of the open water area. The sediment basin is currently being rehabilitation to provide function.</p>	<p>One wetland has been identified within this sub-catchment.</p> <p>After rehabilitation the pond is currently in condition 1.</p>	

Existing Natural Assets	Brief description	Condition* * Based on weighted &/ or aggregated field based assessment of specific criteria	Known significant species
Black Duck Creek Catchment			
Bushland BL0000051	<p>The bushland of this catchment shows little disturbance and weed invasion on the sides and crests of the ridgelines, but major weed infestation in the central creekline and around the head of the gully close to Lookout Road. In addition, in this catchment there is a strong edge effect from the roadway and picnic areas down its south-western ridgeline, resulting in a dense belt of Lantana of varying width downslope of the clearings. In the valley close to Carnley Avenue in the south is located the Black Duck Picnic Area, also the former aviary and zoo. The highest quality bushland is on the northern slope and ridgeline, in the area more or less north of the Black Duck Picnic Area (Anne Clements, 2010).</p> <p>Rank: 6th The Newcastle public bushland asset inventory ranked the bushland within this catchment as the 6th most significant within the Newcastle LGA.</p>	Condition: 3	<p>The NPWS Atlas identifies that threatened species have been recorded in and adjacent to this sub-catchment. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fauna (NPWS Atlas 2010) - Powerful Owl - Koala - Grey-headed Flying-fox - Wompoo Fruit-Dove - Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove - Superb Fruit-Dove - Barking Owl - Varied Sittella - Eastern Bentwing-bat - Little Bentwing-bat - Gang-gang Cockatoo <p>Previous studies indicate potential <i>Tetratheca juncea</i> present (2000); plus threatened large forest owl nest tree (2007).</p>
Black Duck Creek - Watercourse (The creek comprises 17 individual reaches with unique Asset ID numbers & associated attributes).	<p>Black Duck creek is approximately 1.3 km long and drains from west to east. The creek forms part of the Throsby Creek Catchment, which drains into the Hunter Estuary. Black Duck creek has an approximate catchment area of 36 ha.</p> <p>The creek contains 2 reaches that have been identified as high priority for natural resource management from a total of 850 reaches. These are: UC0025706 = ranked 43rd UC0025707 = ranked 44th</p>	<p>Condition summary for creek reaches within this catchment is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condition 2: 58% • Condition 3: 18% • Condition 5: 12% • Condition 6: 12% 	
Carnley Avenue Wetland WD0000060	<p>The Black Duck Creek Pond area categorised as wetland is 5m from the edge of the rock and/ or top of bank and covers approximately 3700m².</p> <p>The wetland is an in-line freshwater constructed wetland, generally linear in shape with an island present in the upper half of the wetland.</p> <p>The wetland has a sediment bay, open water area and fringing aquatic vegetation. The fringing vegetation is currently sparse being less than 5% of the open water area.</p> <p>The Black Duck wetland provides some water quality treatment to water coming from the forested area upstream. It provides habitat for locally native species particularly water fowl and a low number of swans.</p>	<p>The wetland was rehabilitated in 2009-2010. After rehabilitation the pond is currently in condition 1.</p>	

Existing Natural Assets	Brief description	Condition* * Based on weighted &/ or aggregated field based assessment of specific criteria	Known significant species
Coalmine Creek Catchment			
Bushland BL0000052	<p>The largest of the Blackbutt catchments, this is a broad, relatively shallow valley except in its western third, where the gully heads rise steeply to the New Lambton ridge. Although much of the valley floor has been cleared for picnic areas, the bushland on either side is in quite good condition, better on the northern slope than on the southern, where Lantana is frequent.</p> <p>As well as the grassed areas, there is a works depot among trees near the east end of the valley. Paved access roads run up the ridge crests on both north and south sides; these do not appear to have been a source of weeds, and offer an experience of almost pristine bushland to walkers and cyclists. Coalmine Creek has been dammed to form two large ponds in the centre of the catchment. As with the other Blackbutt catchments, the worst weed infestations are expected immediately downslope of Lookout Road and the two enclaves of houses occupying the western corners of the catchment (Anne Clements, 2010).</p> <p>Rank: 4th</p> <p>The Newcastle Public bushland asset inventory ranked the bushland within this catchment as the 4th most significant within the Newcastle LGA.</p>	Condition: 2	<p>The NPWS Atlas identifies that threatened species have been recorded in and adjacent to this sub-catchment. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fauna (NPWS Atlas 2010) - Powerful Owl - Koala - Grey-headed Flying-fox - Wompoo Fruit-Dove - Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove - Superb Fruit-Dove - Barking Owl - Varied Sittella - Eastern Bentwing-bat - Little Bentwing-bat - Gang-gang Cockatoo
Coalmine Creek (The creek comprises 19 individual reaches with unique Asset ID numbers & associated attributes).	<p>Coalmine creek is approximately 1.8 km long and drains from west to east. The creek forms part of the Throsby Creek Catchment, which drains into the Hunter Estuary. Coalmine creek has an approximate catchment area of xx ha.</p> <p>The creek contains a reach that has been identified as high priority for natural resource management from a total of 850 reaches.</p> <p>i.e. UC0014602 = ranked 25th</p>	<p>Condition summary for creek reaches within this catchment is as follows:</p> <p>Condition 2: 16% Condition 3: 11% Condition 4: 16% Condition 5: 16% Condition 6: 20% Condition 7: 5% Condition 8: 11% Condition 9: 5%</p> <p>Recent works in 2011 in the lower reach of Coalmine Creek in Richley Reserve will shift this distribution.</p>	<p>Flora (NPWS Atlas 2010)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Black-eyed Susan – (Tetradlea juncea) <p>Threatened large forest owl nest tree present (2007).</p>

Existing Natural Assets	Brief description	Condition* * Based on weighted &/ or aggregated field based assessment of specific criteria	Known significant species
Coalmine Creek Catchment			
Wetland WD0000059 WD0000061	<p>Coalmine Creek catchment has a complex of wetlands with two main water bodies connected by a cascading channel.</p> <p>The area categorised as natural area wetland is that 5m from the edge of the rock or top of bank (where no rock) and covers approximately 7000m² for the upper wetland and 3000m² for the lower.</p> <p>Generally linear in shape the widest section is ~50m. The wetland has no formal sediment bay. Open water areas dominate the design and aquatic vegetation is a thick (~2-5m) fringing band. Both upper and lower water bodies have a vegetated island. The channel connecting the water bodies is a constructed 'naturalistic' rock-lined channel with a coppers log retaining wall along its length, resulting in habitat similar to a chain of pools.</p> <p>The in-line freshwater constructed wetlands provide some water quality treatment to water coming from the upstream catchment and the overland flow that runs over the remnants of the coal mining area. The dust from the coal is high in phosphorus. The wetland also has a role in collecting sediment. Locally native species of waterfowl are abundant in the wetlands.</p> <p>In 2008 water and sediment quality sampling indicated the Coalmine Creek lower wetland had the best water quality of all the ponds within Blackbutt Reserve. Like the upstream pond, this pond supports a number of mature fish. The upper and lower Coalmine Creek ponds have the highest ratio of pond volume to catchment area and have no urban drainage systems discharging into the catchment.</p> <p>The wetlands were rehabilitated in 2008-09. Fringe revegetation is an ongoing maintenance activity.</p>	<p>One wetland (comprising 2 waterbodies) has been identified within this sub-catchment.</p> <p>After rehabilitation the pond is currently in condition 1.</p>	
Coalmine Creek Catchment			
Bushland BL0000053	<p>The Echidna Creek Catchment has a relatively shallow valley in the east, rising steeply at its western gully head to frontages on Lookout Road and Floralia Close. Minimal clearing has occurred in catchment. The quality of most of the bushland is high, though, as with the other catchments, areas immediately downslope of roads and housing on its north and west edges are weed-infested. In particular the embankment below Floralia Close is very disturbed (Anne Clements, 2010).</p>	<p>Condition: 3</p>	<p>The NPWS Atlas identifies that threatened species have been recorded in and adjacent to this sub-catchment. These include: Fauna (NPWS Atlas 2010) - Powerful Owl - Koala</p>

Existing Natural Assets	Brief description	Condition* * Based on weighted &/ or aggregated field based assessment of specific criteria	Known significant species
Coalmine Creek Catchment			
Echidna Creek (The creek comprises 31 individual reaches with unique Asset ID numbers & associated attributes).	<p>Rank: 7th</p> <p>The Newcastle Public bushland asset inventory ranked the bushland within this catchment as the 7th most significant within the Newcastle LGA.</p> <p>Echidna creek is approximately 1.8 km long and drains from west to east. The creek forms part of the Throsby Creek Catchment, which drains into the Hunter Estuary.</p> <p>The creek contains 6 reaches that have been identified as high priority for natural resource management from a total of 850 reaches. These are:</p> <p>UC0013806 = ranked 1st UC0013804 = ranked 9th UC0013905 = ranked 23rd UC0013907 = ranked 24th UC0014203 = ranked 29th UC0013908 = ranked 38th</p>	<p>Condition summary for creek reaches within this catchment is as follows:</p> <p>Condition 2: 19% Condition 3: 13% Condition 4: 24% Condition 5: 19% Condition 6: 16% Condition 7: 3% Condition 8: 3% Condition 10: 3%</p> <p>Rehabilitation of the lowest reach within Blackbutt Reserve off St James Rd will prevent the migration of active bed and bank erosion upstream that will impact on excellent condition reaches. Work scheduled for 2011/2012.</p>	<p>Grey-headed Flying-fox</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wompo Fruit-Dove - Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove - Superb Fruit-Dove - Barking Owl - Varied Sittella - Eastern Bentwing-bat - Little Bentwing-bat - Gang-gang Cockatoo <p>Flora (NPWS Atlas 2010)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Black-eyed Susan (Tetratheca juncea) <p>Threatened large forest owl nest tree present (2007).</p>
Wetland 'The lily pond' WD0000016	<p>The Lily pond wetland is a small wetland within a sheltered section of the reserve.</p> <p>The area categorised as wetland is that 5m from the edge of the rock or top of bank (where no rock) and covers approximately 1170m².</p> <p>The lily pond is an oval inline freshwater constructed wetland with no formal sediment bay with densely vegetated areas dominating the wetland. A low island of vegetation fills around 80% of the centre of the wetland, open water around this island is vegetated with water lilies.</p> <p>This pond is distinctly different to the other ponds with a bed substrate consisting of a thick organic layer. Water quality sampling in 2008 identified this pond as more typical of an acidic wetland with low pH, dissolved oxygen and high organic nutrient concentrations common.</p> <p>This wetland provides a place of quiet reflection where people can enjoy the aesthetics of the water lilies & the bushland setting. The wetland also provides habitat for aquatic plants and animals including frogs and dragonflies and a water source for other animals.</p>	<p>The pond is currently in condition 7.</p>	

Existing Natural Assets	Brief description	Condition* * Based on weighted &/ or aggregated field based assessment of specific criteria	Known significant species
Bower Bird Creek Catchment			
Bushland BL0000054	<p>The northernmost and smallest of the Blackbutt catchments, it is also the most weedy and polluted, due to having approximately two-thirds of its periphery backing onto houses or roads upslope of the bushland. Towards the western end the gully head is very rocky with extensive sandstone outcrops and giant boulders, and much of it has become choked with weeds such as Lantana, Morning-glory and Privet.</p> <p>The backyards of houses fronting onto Croudace Street and Ridgeway Road drop steeply into the reserve and have contributed enriched runoff, garden rubbish and weeds. The eastern end of the valley bottom is very weedy, with dense Privet in parts. There are some pockets of better quality bushland on drier slopes away from the creekline and gullies (Clements, 2010).</p> <p>Rank: 17th</p> <p>The Newcastle Public bushland asset inventory ranked the bushland within this catchment as the 17th most significant within the Newcastle LGA.</p>	Condition: 4	<p>The NPWS Atlas identifies that threatened species have been recorded in and adjacent to this sub-catchment. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fauna (NPWS Atlas 2010) - Powerful Owl - Koala - Grey-headed Flying-fox - Wompoo Fruit-Dove - Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove - Superb Fruit-Dove - Barking Owl - Varied Sittella - Eastern Bentwing-bat - Little Bentwing-bat - Gang-gang Cockatoo
Coalmine Creek Catchment			
Bushland BL0000053	<p>The Echidna Creek Catchment has a relatively shallow valley in the east, rising steeply at its western gully head to frontages on Lookout Road and Floralia Close. Minimal clearing has occurred in catchment. The quality of most of the bushland is high, though, as with the other catchments, areas immediately downslope of roads and housing on its north and west edges are weed-infested. In particular the embankment below Floralia Close is very disturbed (Anne Clements, 2010).</p>	Condition: 3	<p>The NPWS Atlas identifies that threatened species have been recorded in and adjacent to this sub-catchment. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fauna (NPWS Atlas 2010) - Powerful Owl - Koala
Bower Bird Creek – watercourse (The creek comprises 12 individual reaches with unique Asset ID numbers & associated attributes).	Bower Bird creek is approximately 740 m long and drains from west to east. The creek forms part of the Throsby Creek Catchment, which drains into the Hunter Estuary.	Condition summary for creek reaches within this catchment is as follows: Condition 2: 8% Condition 3: 25% Condition 4: 17% Condition 5: 25% Condition 6: 17% Condition 7: 8%	

Existing Natural Assets	Brief description	Condition* * Based on weighted &/ or aggregated field based assessment of specific criteria	Known significant species
Escarpment CL0000020 CL0000021 CL0000034	There are three inland cliff sections located within the Bowerbird Creek catchment. One section is located near Croudace Street and is 29m in length (CL0000020). Another cliff section is located towards the centre of the catchment and is 48 m in length (CL0000034). The third cliff section is 67 m long and is located near Addison Rd.	CL0000020 = 4 CL0000021 = 6 CL0000034 = 5	
Lookout Road North			
Bushland BL0000016	A fairly small reserve dropping away from the south-east edge of Lookout Road. Although it has a remnant of the original eucalypt canopy, its understorey is almost completely replaced by weeds, predominantly Lantana and some very tall Privet and its margins are intruded by various forms of disturbance including rubble from the main road construction, rubbish dumping and garden encroachment. Many of the native trees are in very poor condition and there are some dead standing and fallen trees. Two large Angophoras are potential habitat trees. Access is extremely difficult as its only street frontage is Lookout Road, with a steep and overgrown embankment (Clements, 2010). Rank: 82nd The Newcastle Public bushland asset inventory ranked the bushland within this catchment as one of the least significant within the Newcastle LGA.	Condition: 9	The NPWS Atlas identifies that threatened species have been recorded adjacent to this parcel. These include: - Grey-headed Flying-fox - Powerful Owl - Koala - Wompoo Fruit-Dove - Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove - Superb Fruit-Dove - Barking Owl - Varied Sittella
March Street Reserve			
Bushland BL0000080	This reserve slopes down to one of the major heads of Styx Creek, though the ultimate gully heads arise in the southern part of Blackbutt Reserve. The bushland on the well drained slope in the north-east is in good condition, with very few weeds except around the margins. On the creek flat there is heavy infestation of weeds such as Lantana and Privet below tall eucalypt overstorey. To the south-east of the creek much of the reserve has been cleared and mown, beside and at the rear of houses fronting Meredith Street and Aldyth Street. Entry to the bushland from its south edge is difficult on account of dense Lantana and the creekline. On the flat on the north side of the creek there has been an old clearing in which was established a plantation of koala food-trees. The plantation has a very weedy understorey and fallen trees. There are several well used tracks though the bushland north of the creek (Clements, 2010). Rank: 47th The Newcastle Public bushland asset inventory ranked the bushland within this catchment as the 47th most significant within the Newcastle LGA.	Condition: 5	The NPWS Atlas identifies that threatened species have been recorded adjacent to this sub-catchment. These include: - Grey-headed Flying-fox - Powerful Owl - Koala - Wompoo Fruit-Dove - Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove - Superb Fruit-Dove - Barking Owl - Varied Sittella

Existing Natural Assets	Brief description	Condition*	Known significant species
Creek/ Watercourse (The creek comprises 7 individual reaches with unique Asset ID numbers & associated attributes).	Approximately 1.3 km long.	Condition* * Based on weighted &/ or aggregated field based assessment of specific criteria Condition 6: 92% Condition 7: 8%	
Grinsell Street Reserve (West)			
Bushland BL0000049	A very small patch of bushland separated by roads from larger patches of bushland nearby, in particular the major part of Blackbutt Reserve, from which it is separated by Carnley Avenue. It sits on a small knoll and receives little or no runoff. The bushland is in good condition considering its size, with weeds present on the edges and beginning to invade towards centre but not too advanced yet. The bushland is a fairly moist forest type with mesophyllous understorey and abundance of climbers such as <i>Smilax australis</i> (Clements, 2010). Rank: 20th The Newcastle Public bushland asset inventory ranked the bushland within this catchment as the 20th most significant within the Newcastle LGA.	Condition: 1	The NPWS Atlas identifies that a number of threatened species have been recorded within or adjacent to this parcel. These include: - Grey-headed Flying-fox - Powerful Owl - Koala - Wompoo Fruit-Dove - Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove - Superb Fruit-Dove - Barking Owl - Varied Sittella



Appendix 3

Community Consultation

The following is a summary of consultation undertaken primarily by Newcastle Voice for the Blackbutt Reserve Plan of Management and Masterplan.

Community consultation included:

- Newcastle Voice Survey (935 Newcastle Voice members surveyed, November 2009)
- Intercept Survey (404 visitors to Blackbutt Reserve surveyed, 15 October 2009 to 15 January 2010)
- Two community workshops (19 participants, December 2009)
- Newcastle Voice Survey (955 Newcastle Voice members surveyed, November to December 2010)
- Two community workshops (48 participants, October 2010)
- Public Exhibition of the Draft Masterplan (15 November 2010 to 13 December 2010)
- Stakeholder Workshop (25 participants, June 2011)

1. Combined Results Newcastle Voice Survey and Intercept Study (Nov 2009 – Jan 2010)

Visitation Patterns

- The majority of people visiting Blackbutt Reserve are families with young children
- Most respondents (29%) have visited the reserve within the past six months

Transport

- The vast majority of respondents (92%) travel to the reserve by car
- 4% of respondents walk to the reserve

Information Sources

- The majority of visitors (59%) to the reserve rely on word of mouth from family and friends to gather information
- Mass media information i.e. newspapers, Council's website and the Visitor Information Centre account for only 15%.

Activities

- Blackbutt attracts people for a range of reasons from passive enjoyment of the natural environment to active sporting pursuits or work functions. Family outings and picnics and barbeques are the major form of activity for respondents during their current visit (26% and 23% respectively) and also their previous visit (75% and 77%).

Current Image of the Reserve

- 'Feeling safe' and the 'overall attractiveness' gained the highest satisfaction rating. Over 67% of respondents rated safety at Blackbutt as 'excellent' or 'great' and 63% said the overall attractiveness of Blackbutt Reserve was 'excellent' or 'great'.
- Respondents were less satisfied with the comfort and number of places to sit, and shade. Over 14% of respondents rate the comfort of places to sit as 'fair' or 'poor' and another 25.43% of respondents rate the number of places to sit as 'fair' or 'poor'. More than 16% of respondents rated the adequacy of shade as being 'fair' or 'poor'.



Current Services and Facilities

- Over 53% of respondents rated the wildlife exhibits as 'excellent' or 'great' with another 51% stating that the koala and reptile encounter were 'excellent' or 'great'. These services were followed by the picnic areas at Carnley Avenue and Richley Avenue.
- The two services/facilities with the lowest overall rating are the toilets at Carnley Avenue and Richley Avenue.

Future Services and Facilities

Future services or facilities respondents would like to see introduced at Blackbutt Reserve (from a pre-determined list)

There was a strong preference for extensions to the reserve which are in keeping with the bushland setting and nature reserve status. Activities which increase traffic, generate large crowds or pose a threat to wildlife, are not highly regarded.

- 86% in support of café, 6% not in support
- 82% in support of interactive educational facility, 6% not in support
- 79% in support of eco-friendly activities, 9% not in support
- 78% in support of recreational activities, 9% not in support
- 74% in support of larger playground for all ages, 12% not in support
- 74% in support of cycleway, 15% not in support
- 71% in support of Tourist Information Centre, 14% not in support
- 71% in support of organised events, 15% not in support
- 66% in support of outdoor cinema, 20% not in support
- 61% in support of gift shop, 23% not in support
- 57% in support of function centre, 23% not in support
- 52% in support for larger open space, 28% not in support

- 49% in support of tractor train ride, 34% not in support
- 46% in support of wedding gazebo, 33% not in support
- 42% in support of camping facilities, 41% not in support
- 41% in support of monthly markets, 41% not in support
- The opportunity to purchase food and beverages is highly attractive to many respondents. Some suggest a coffee cart as a short-term f x while others identify one integrated building for a café/ educational facility/administration clock with improved toilet facility as a long-term f x.
- Many respondents would like more activities when they come to Blackbutt i.e. eco-friendly adventures, educational facilities, recreational activities such as guided walks or cycle tours and extended playgrounds – notably for older children.
- A number of respondents highlighted hands-on access to animal as attractive in the future. Respondents also mentioned that they would enjoy viewing a greater variety of animals. A small proportion of respondents would like to see the animal enclosures removed altogether

What do you like about Blackbutt Reserve that you don't want changed?

Blackbutt is well regarded and people appreciate the bushland setting, the current facilities and services. The essential characteristic which must be retained in view of any future developments is the natural environment (30.95%), with respondents concerned with land sales, commercial tourist activities and events which may draw large crowds. Wildlife experiences are the second-highest essential characteristic (24.31%), with interest in a greater number and range of animals identified, and the fact that the reserve is free (19.41%). Other characteristics to retain are the family focus, the current services, and the green heart of the city.



Subject		Typical response
Natural environment	31%	Beautiful bushland, natural area, do not overdevelop, ponds, wildlife, do not want to see it overcommercialised, should be kept as natural as possible, peaceful and relaxing, not want a tacky touristy attraction.
Wildlife experiences	24 %	Animal exhibits, duck ponds, free range peacocks & fruit bats
Free of charge	19%	Free family friendly area
Current services/facilities	14%	Bushwalking, picnic areas, accessibility, low key, relaxed, uncommercialised, non-touristy, natural area, leave it as it is.
Family Focus	9%	A great resource for all ages, child friendly environment. A range of activities within a safe, natural environment, with access to BBQs, picnics, walks and playgrounds in one location
Green Heart	8%	Ease of access, green space in the city, principally undeveloped bushland in the city, should not be overcommercialised or turned into a theme park, a natural reserve, relaxed setting, feeling of being in the bush and yet only 10 mins from the city

Short and Long Term Improvements

The top priority (short and long term) is a café. There is also widespread support for a multi-use centre, strictly in keeping with the bushland setting

Subject		Typical response
Animal enclosures	19%	Repairs to enclosures, more animals
Toilets	12%	Improved toilets, new toilets
Information	11%	Additional signage indicating wildlife areas, better and accurate signage of trails, marketing and promotion, entry signage, interpretive signage, more interaction with rangers
Picnic facilities	10%	Improved, more BBQ areas, more picnic tables, covered areas, more shade areas
Maintenance	9%	Clean ponds, maintained in short term as is, weed control
Coffee	7%	Cafe
Playgrounds	7%	Better playgrounds, shade over playgrounds
Parking	7%	Charge parking fee, no parking fee, more parking
Activities	5%	Education, children/school activities, cafe
Commercial activity	4%	Cafe
Funding	3%	More corporate sponsors, sufficient funding
Access	3%	Better public transport, cycleways



2. Community workshops (Dec 2009)

Current image of the Reserve

Comments included:

- Safety concerns
- Poor signage of tracks
- Directional signage to the reserve
- Poor toilets
- Insufficient seating for disability access
- Seating as at Merewether Beach, dotted around Blackbutt (and map referenced on signage at car park)
- More shade for picnic and playground areas
- Poor toilets
- Poor entrance marking
- Lookout road – unsociable activities

Current services and facilities

Comments included:

- Promote junior rangers program
- Education centre – move towards the Hunter Wetlands Centre model
- Maintenance and repair of aviaries required
- Picnic areas need reception area for information
- Lookout Road – opportunities to encourage passing traffic
- Car parks – large information board outlining location of enclosures, walks etc
- Dedicated building, combined with admin space and café to provide information about flora and fauna
- Better promotion of spotlight tours

Future services and facilities

Comments included:

Carnley Avenue

- Flying fox climbing structure
- Café overlooking pond
- All ages playground
- Café, education centre

Richley Reserve

- Small kiosk, monthly markets
- Carols, outdoor cinema
- Wedding gazebo
- Adventure playground
- Function centre – useable for wedding receptions
- Gift shop
- Cycleway for families
- Wedding gazebo

Lookout Road Reserve

- Tourist info for passing travellers
- Camping site below Lookout Road
- Education Centre
- Adventure playground
- Restaurant/cafe

Link Routes

- Tractor train was supported on road from Lookout Road to Carnley Avenue
- A cycleway connected to commuter cycleways was supported from Freyberg Street through Richley Reserve, up the hill to Lookout Road and beyond into Charlestown
- Cycleway, connected to commuter cycleways from Queens Road, off the Mahogany car park and through the park to Lookout Road, following ridge lines where possible
- Tractor train ride in the hour along the roads in Blackbutt



3. Survey - as part of the Public Exhibition of Draft Masterplan (Nov – Dec 2010)

Top 5 priorities

Respondents were asked to identify the top five priorities that Council should focus on at Blackbutt Reserve from a possible nine improvements (commercial activity such as a tree top assault course, commuter cycle path, toilet facility at Main Ridge, viewing platform at Clifftop, create formal entries at Blackbutt's main gateways, develop new bushwalking trails, new artwork and sculpture, new BBQ shelter at the Main Ridge, Signage (directional and interpretative)

1. A toilet facility in the Main Ridge recreation area (72%)
2. Signage (69%)
3. A viewing platform at the Clifftop (Lookout Road) (64%)
4. New BBQ shelters and seating at the Main Ridge recreation area (62%)
5. Develop new bushwalking trails (57%)

Top 5 priorities for high usage areas

Respondents were asked to identify their five highest priorities for the high-usage areas of Blackbutt Reserve, out of a possible 16 improvements

1. Reshape pond areas, install boardwalks and improve water quality at Black Duck Pond (Carnley Ave) (51%)
2. A new kiosk and toilets at Richley Reserve (44%)
3. A new footpath and boardwalk circuit/ kids cycle trail around ponds at Richley Reserve (43%)
4. Replace the Pioneer Cottage with a new kiosk, toilet and environmental education classroom at Carnley Ave (42%)
5. Provide public access into the kangaroo and emu exhibit to allow interaction with animals (36%)

The three improvement options which received the lowest ranked scores for the combined results are all proposed improvements in the

Carnley Ave rec area:

1. Traffic lights at the Carnley Ave entry (19%)
2. A new larger playground at the Carnley Avenue recreation area (18%)
3. Expand the grassed open space at the Carnley Avenue rec area (14%)

4. Community information session - as part of the Public Exhibition of Draft Masterplan (Oct 2010)

Comments on overall Draft Masterplan

- Areas need to be left inaccessible in the bush to preserve wildlife & bushland
- All ideas are great
- Lookout Road developments – good idea
- Support cycleway – although may be too steep
- See conflict between cyclists and pedestrians
- Resist pressure for more and more tracks
- Support idea of tractor rides – all people can access all areas
- Education – huge demand for hands-on school excursions
- Love the kiosk
- Could the buildings be multi-functional for weddings/ functions etc. – not simply a kiosk i.e. Centennial Park
- Benefit from an environmental impact expert briefing
- Circuitous tracks

Richley Reserve

- Are you filling up too much of the grassed area?
- Without animals, still nothing to draw children to Richley
- Pedestrian safety on shared paths
- Signposting to areas such as dead tree and Lily pond for people seeking fewer crowds



Carnley Reserve

- Great things proposed for here
- Allocation of maintenance budget to new items
- Water quality needs to be attended to sooner rather than later
- Signage required

Immediate priorities

- Toilets
- Fix the aviaries
- Improve water quality, preserve natural habitats
- Proposed developments for Lookout Road
- Commercial operator i.e. ropes course
- Toilets
- Signage
- Educational facilities
- Limit the uses for Blackbutt Reserve

5. Stakeholder Workshop (June 2011)

Council outlined the Reserve's path system as a key issue/opportunity where input was being sought.

Each table of participants was provided with a map of existing formal and informal tracks, bus stops and access points into the Reserve. Participants were asked to discuss the issues and opportunities regarding access and connectivity to and within the Reserve.

Comments:

- No cycleways.
- See a need for a cycle track through the park (Lookout Road to Queens Road) but only one. It would need to be wider for safety.
- Properly marked and managed cycleways would be appropriate.
- There does not need to be cycleways in Blackbutt.
- Not support cycleways due to speed, conflict of use, geography and gradient.
- Keep the integrity of the bush.

- Keep it as natural as possible.
- Maintenance from underpass on Lookout Road needs a lot of attention.
- Fix up Cliff-top track linking Lookout Road Recreation Areas with Cliff top Lookout.
- Maintain sensitive areas clear of trails.
- Hierarchy of trails to facilitate the bush experience.
- Keep narrow tracks.
- Investigate the need of paths that 'go nowhere'.
- Upgrade of Rainforest Track – remove fallen trees.
- Better parking access to the Lookout Cliff Top view over the city.
- Better connection between Richley Reserve and Carnley Avenue Reserve.
- Tourist track from Kotara Railway Station with signposts down to Carnley Avenue. Safe crossing to Blackbutt.
- Clear directional signs.
- Non sealed tracks should better formed and maintained (but not sealed).
- Please provide 'circular' track access from Addison/ Bowerbird track, St James Road.
- Better path to business facilities between Carnley Avenue picnic area and Orchard Town Road.
- Visitor Centre/ shop adjacent to car park in Carnley Avenue picnic area.
- Better access between the reserve and the railway station.
- Retain the track between Richley and Carnley Reserve. Track is too steep, so will need to look at opportunities to improve.
- More connectivity of paths – shorter paths between reserves.
- Free bus extension loop via Blackbutt Reserve from the hospital.



Reserve Usage

Council outlined Reserve usage as a key issue/opportunity where input was being sought.

Each table of participants was provided with a map of the Reserve identifying the key usage areas.

Participants were asked to discuss the issues and opportunities regarding usage of the Reserve.

Comments:

- Signage at entry point at Carnley Avenue picnic area.
- More attraction at Main Ridge to encourage usage.
- Look at previous master plan for Richley Reserve regarding the Kiosk and bridge.
- Tractor rides to introduce people to other sites and facilities within the reserve.
- Spread the uses in the reserve with a small electronic train.
- Aged care bus trips visit Richley Reserve as a peaceful area. Please retain good access.
- Promote each area – more information about each special area on display.
- Small tree-top adventure park area could be constructed to bring more visitors and families.
- Sculptures – art trail in more serene (less trafficked areas) e.g. University student displays.
- Rainforest Picnic area – signage and information regarding flying foxes with opportunities to picnic.
- Lookout Recreation area - provide a variety of experiences for example; tree top adventures.
- Abseiling on the escarpment (Lookout Road).
- A coffee shop incorporated into a new facility at Carnley Avenue picnic area would attract more people during the week.

- Lily Pond is untouched and should remain that way.
- It is nice to go places without a commercial kiosk.
- Signage to encourage people into areas.
- Lovely walk through March Street Reserve from Aldyth Street.
- Traffic lights on Carnley Avenue to allow people to walk from March Street Reserve.
- How much operational activities can be undertaken on a Community Land site?
- Bush tucker tours.
- Exhibits, markets, school groups.
- Facilities at Lookout Road.
- Bushwalking tours, nature walks.

Other issues/ opportunities

Finally participants were provided with the opportunity to select further issues and opportunities from a spreadsheet or add their own.

Each table was provided with a spreadsheet highlighting issues and potential opportunities for two areas of the Reserve. Participants were asked to identify:

1. What actions could we undertake to address the issue?
2. Where specifically in the Reserve these actions should occur?
3. Who might be involved in delivery?



Summary Comments

- The Plan needs to be finalised and then appropriately funded
- An ambitious Plan is required to try to satisfy as many interest groups as possible
- Get the detailed designs drawn up as soon as practical to ensure that plans are 'shovel ready' when funding becomes available.
- There should be no car access to Dead Tree Picnic Area
- An adventure playground at Richley Reserve was viewed as inappropriate
- Cycling should be exempted from the entire reserve
- Council should check the masterplan that was prepared for the site 20 years ago
- Animal enclosures should be provided off Lookout Road to activate the area
- Council needs to raise the profile of the bat colony through information and signage to help locate the colony.
- Technology should be used, where appropriate, to generate interest in the site from a younger and more technologically savvy demographic

Appendix 4 Management Issues and threats

Environmental	
Edge Contact zones	The reserve has acquired an extensive edge contact problem between external margins, park functions (picnic area, wildlife displays, tracks, roads and carparks) and the natural areas (bushland, wetland, watercourse and escarpment). Urban edges of roads and developed properties generate a number of harmful and incompatible aspects. One of the most important of these is the downslope and downstream passage of stormwater. It carries with it pollutants from roads, buildings and gardens.
Stormwater, erosion and sedimentation	Stormwater drainage from surrounding roads and residential areas discharging concentrated flows and potential to cause erosion at discharge locations and convey road pollutants. Presence of highly erodible soils means that all earth works and track maintenance must be managed to achieve zero run off. Existing erosion and sedimentation from tracks, streams and drainage in the upper part of the catchment.
Water quality/ wetland	Poor water quality due to high sediment and nutrient loads. Community feeding of the aquatic birds and associated high biochemical oxygen demand. Wetland birds also damage and remove aquatic vegetation. Heavy metals remaining in the wetland ponds following earlier mining activities within the Reserve. Potential for algal blooms. Management is required to minimise stagnation of water in low flow areas.
Conservation of threatened species	Blackbutt Reserve is an important reserve for protected and threatened fauna species. The Reserve contains threatened species listed under Federal and State legislation.
Weed invasion	Weed growth in the reserve has its origins in the urban environment around it. This situation is not subject to change and therefore the reserve and all the bushland areas associated with urban environments will always be affected by weed growth.
Service utilities	Sewer lines, overhead power, water and stormwater services, usually leave a trail of permanent damage where they cross the reserve. Without adequate measures being taken to properly reinstate broken surfaces and lost foliage, weeds and erosion proceed to take their toll. The damage to the affected area will not repair itself.
Grassed surfaces	Picnic areas and parkland activity naturally lead to surfaces being grassed for obvious reasons. Separation of grass and bushland by natural means is virtually impossible and ultimately the needs of tidiness encourage the spread of mowing, the further retreat of the bush edge and ultimately the increased potential for weeds to colonise and invade.
Climate change	The types of climate change impacts particularly relevant to Blackbutt Reserve include increased damage to council assets due to storm damage and increased frequency and intensity of bushfires. There is an increased likelihood of stormwater and drainage systems being overwhelmed or damaged and increased damage to roads and footpaths. Increased incidence of pests and weeds due to altered climate regime, loss of remnant vegetation as a result of water and heat stress and increased erosion and silting of waterways due to increased rainfall intensity.
Habitat trees	Habitat tree is the term used to describe mature to over-mature trees that contain hollows or cavities. The hollows provide micro and macro habitats for a range of vertebrate and invertebrate fauna species for use as sheltering, nesting and breeding sites. The formation of hollows in trees is influenced by the species of tree, age of the tree and interval between disturbance events such as wildfire. Events such as the June 2007 storm resulted in the destruction of many standing habitat trees within Blackbutt Reserve. Whilst there has been a loss of habitat trees following this event, many trees had significant damage to their limbs and main trunks. The tree damage will in time result in formation and recruitment of new hollows through natural decay, termite activity, fire and physical means such as birds.

Environmental	<p>For Blackbutt Reserve, Council is responsible for the management of fuel loads in proximity to urban and recreation infrastructure such as roads, residential areas and the animal enclosures. Management of fire fuel loads is required under the <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> to ensure no loss or damage to human life and infrastructure.</p> <p>The management of fuel loads will require careful management to avoid potential issues with threatened species. Many threatened species occur within Blackbutt Reserve. The Bushfire Management Plan for Blackbutt Reserve must accommodate the impact of fire and fuel reduction strategies on each threatened species and their habitat, and may require multiple strategies to ensure threatened species population persistence.</p> <p>Blackbutt Reserve is a key habitat location. The Reserve is connected to a number of adjoining reserves through a number of corridors. The potential loss of Jesmond Bushland extent due to the state highway extension will provide additional challenges in managing Blackbutt Reserve for effective conservation outcomes.</p>
Education and research	<p>There is a lack of Staff time to fully explore the educational opportunities afforded by the reserve. The reserve also lacks a suitable facility in which educational programs and activities could be conducted.</p> <p>The reserve has very limited way finding and interpretative signage with regards to the environmental, historic and cultural values. The signage that does exist is focused primarily on the animal exhibits.</p> <p>There is minimal environmental research and monitoring undertaken in the reserve.</p>
Education and research	<p>There is currently no coordinated marketing strategy for the reserve.</p> <p>Blackbutt Reserve values and relies on volunteer participation to assist in its day to day operation. Poor facilities for volunteers.</p> <p>There are areas in the reserve such as Lookout Reserve Recreation Area and Mahogany Drive that as a result of a lack of human activity and passive surveillance fall prey to anti-social behaviour. As a result the public amenities and entrance gates have been closed.</p> <p>There is no security or ranger presence at the reserve out-of-hours, leaving the site and in particular the animal exhibits vulnerable to vandalism.</p>
Education and research	<p>The reserve is a popular destination for passive recreational pursuits such as picnics, BBQs and casual games. The capacity of the park to accept a continuing growth of recreational demand is a constraint and must have its limits.</p>

Reserve usage	
Development	<p>Throughout the reserve are structures such as toilets, shelters, picnic tables, benches and signage that have been progressively acquired over the years. These items have grown on an ad-hoc basis in an assortment of styles, and therefore there is a considerable degree of inconsistency.</p>
Infrastructure	<p>There are old and poor functioning public amenities, disused buildings and redundant park furniture throughout the site that impacts negatively on the overall quality of the reserve.</p>
Access for people with a disability	<p>The reserve caters poorly for people with a disability, with the only accessible facilities located at Carnley Avenue recreation area and these are poorly integrated. This includes an accessible boardwalk which provides equitable access to the animal exhibits.</p> <p>The steep terrain is a constraint for the provision of equitable access to all of Blackbutt Reserve. To date, efforts have been made to upgrade key recreational facilities to meet standards for disability access, however financial constraints have limited the upgrades.</p>
Legibility and connectivity	
Signage and destination points	<p>Inadequate directional signage makes navigation difficult for new visitors. A lack of familiarity with the trails, poor signage and site orientation points makes it unattractive for most new visitors to venture beyond Carnley Avenue and Richley Reserve. The lack of 'trail descriptions' make it difficult to assess their length and difficulty. The poor legibility is a barrier to visitors enjoying the full extent of the reserve.</p>
Pedestrian access	<p>Pedestrian access to Blackbutt Reserve is limited by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - proximity of major arterial roads with inadequate provision of footpaths; - inadequate pedestrian crossings; - inadequate defined pedestrian entries; and - inadequate signage <p>The reserve's south-eastern and north-western perimeters are edged by the busy arterial roads Carnley Avenue and Lookout Road. These roads are physical barriers with inadequate safe pedestrian access as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - one pedestrian crossing on Lookout Road at the McCaffrey Drive traffic signals; - a heavily vandalised underpass off Grandview Parade provides access to the Lookout recreation area; - no safe pedestrian crossings exist on Carnley Avenue which separates the reserve from the adjacent residential area; and - all main gates are defined as vehicular entries and lack pedestrian footpaths.
Public transport connectivity	<p>Public transport access to Blackbutt Reserve is poor. Newcastle Voice (survey Oct 2009 - Jan 2010) recorded that over 90% of visitors travel to Blackbutt Reserve by car and less than 2% arrive by public or private bus. Five bus routes run in close proximity to the site, however they do not service the two main attractions, Carnley Avenue and Richley Reserve recreation areas within a comfortable walking distance. The closest bus stop is approximately 900m walk to the Richley Reserve recreation area.</p> <p>Kotara Railway Station is located 700m from the Carnley Avenue main entry. However this is currently not a viable alternative as the pedestrian connection between the station and the reserve is inadequate.</p>

Legibility and connectivity	
Traffic & Parking	Current parking allocation is inadequate for demand; however increasing parking to meet this demand would create additional management issues in relation to bushland amenity and long term sustainability. Parking is currently available at the following four locations; Carnley Avenue recreation area; Richley Reserve, Mahogany Drive entry; and Lookout Rd recreation area. On busy days parking reaches capacity at both the Carnley Avenue and Richley Reserve recreation areas. Overflow parking into residential streets occurs at Richley Reserve and additional parking was recently provided at the Carnley Avenue recreation area. This additional parking was a low cost solution and does not meet design standards for a public car park.
Connectivity within the reserve	There is poor pedestrian connectivity within Blackbutt Reserve, in particular between the main attractions at Carnley Avenue recreation areas and Richley Reserve.
Proliferation of tracks	Unnecessary and duplicated track routes add to the edge contact zones mentioned above and tend to confuse the sense of quiet escape where they are encountered too frequently.
Track hierarchy	The present trail network lacks definition or any hierarchical logic which diminishes the bushwalking experience when walkers share fire trails with reserve management vehicles. The system of paths is confusing to the unfamiliar visitor hierarchy and does not easily address the different needs of walkers.
Steep paths due to topography	A number of trails within the reserve are steep, which limits access for some walking abilities. This issue is compounded by the lack of signage, denoting the level of difficulty associated with tracks.
Cycling	A cycleway through the reserve was highlighted during community consultation as a potential opportunity with 74% of respondents in favour of such a proposal. Cycling is currently not permissible in the reserve, with signs posted at each entry point stating this. Those in favour of a cycleway believe it to be a key link in the city's overall cycle network. Those opposed to cycling within the reserve are primarily concerned with potential conflict with other users.

Sub-catchments

Bowerbird Creek Catchment	
Tracks	Tracks are in poor condition creating issues with erosion and sedimentation
Informal track	There is an informal track through bushland adjacent to Croudace Road and the lower reach of the creek.
Weeds	Significant weed problems and areas of degraded bushland
Services	Underground services, service pits and stormwater outlets interface poorly with bushland
Echidna Creek Catchment	
Mahogany Drive Car Park	
Safety	The closure of the public amenities at Lookout Road Recreation Reserve has resulted in anti-social behaviour moving to this area. As a result, the gates of the car park have been closed on a periodic basis, further exemplifying the issue of safety through a lack of activation and passive surveillance.
Toilets	The toilets at Mahogany Drive are outdated.
Infrastructure	The park furniture including seats and tables at Lily Pond is old and outdated.
Exotic tree species	There are exotic tree species including Willow in the Lily Pond area.
Informal track	There is an informal track through bushland adjacent to St James Street.
Coalmine Creek Catchment	
Dead Tree Picnic Area	
Infrastructure	The park furniture including seats and tables at Dead Tree Picnic Area is old and outdated.
Storage Area	The storage area on the ridgetop is inappropriately located
Richley Reserve	
Utilisation	Richley Reserve is underutilised in comparison with Carnley Avenue
Playground	The playground is perceived by some to be inadequate and suited to small children only.
Infrastructure	Food preparation for the captive animals as well as site administration currently takes place at the Richley Reserve recreation area while the animal exhibits and most organised activities take place at Carnley Avenue recreation area. This current separation of services is not efficient. The infrastructure including toilet block, administration centre and animal food preparation room is old and not suited to purpose.
Pond quality	The quality of the ponds is poor, a problem which is made worse by bird feeding activities.

Black Duck Creek Catchment	
Carnley Avenue	
Visitor numbers	Carnley Reserve is the area that receives the greatest visitation and as a result suffers from immense visitor pressure especially with regard to amenities and parking.
Access	Vehicular entry from Carnley Avenue is unsafe and poorly defined with a lack of defined pedestrian entry. There is insufficient parking during peak times.
Animal enclosures	The animal enclosures, damaged during the 2007 storm remain un-repaired. The kangaroo and emu exhibits are outdated and a source of creek pollutants.
Playground	The playground at Carnley Avenue is inadequate and only suitable for small children.
Facilities	The current information kiosk at Carnley Reserve is located in the Pioneers Cottage. This is considered to be inadequate and is overlooked by users. There is a lack of covered classroom space for environmental purposes and the toilet facilities are inadequate.
Pond	Poor water quality
Main Ridge	
Utilisation	Despite being a great location, the open space along the walkway is underutilised.
Infrastructure	There is a large quantity of disused infrastructure located along the ridge top walkway. The tables and chairs are uninviting and the open space along the walkway is largely underutilised.

Rainforest Creek Catchment	
The Rod Earp Rainforest	
Flying Fox colony	The Rod Earp Rainforest contains a colony of Grey-headed Flying-foxes, a threatened species that requires suitable management and interpretation.
Sensory trail	The sensory trail and boardwalk have fallen into disrepair.
Picnic area	The picnic area is unused due to proximity to the Flying Fox colony. The area is overgrown and the infrastructure old and unused.
Rangers Cottage	
Current utilisation	The current use of the cottage as a private residence is inappropriate.
Cliff Top Lookout	
Accessibility	The Cliff Top Lookout is a good viewing location but is inaccessible. There is a lack of connection between the lookout and Lookout Road Recreation Area. Visitors wishing to access the lookout are forced to walk some distance along Lookout Road.
Lookout Road Recreation Area	
Utilisation	The Lookout Road Recreation Area is underutilised and rundown, which has led to antisocial behaviour. The issues which contribute to this outcome are a lack of defined recreational activity, poor signage (directional and entry) and old and redundant infrastructure. The toilets are also closed due to a lack of sewer connection. The presence of ongoing antisocial behaviour has resulted in the gates to this part of the reserve being closed on a number of occasions.
March Street Reserve and surrounding parcels	
March Street Reserve (works compound and community garden)	
Public access and operation of a works compound	
Pedestrian connectivity	Lacks connectivity with Blackbutt
Infrastructure	Ageing infrastructure
Lookout Road North	
Weeds	Weed invasion

Appendix 5

Facilities and activities permissible within Blackbutt Reserve

The following tables outline facilities and activities that may be approved at Blackbutt Reserve, with and without approval from Council.

☺ Denotes suitable activity or facility for the land category.

Facilities that may be approved on Community Land	Natural Area Bushland	Natural Area Wetland	Natural Area Watercourse	Natural Area Escarpment	Park	General community use
Amenity buildings (toilets, shelters, meeting and store rooms, change rooms)					☺	☺
Camping					☺	☺
Car parking areas and access roads (associated with the use of the site)					☺	☺
Community facilities (education centre, information, community centres)					☺	☺
Community gardens					☺	☺
Drainage structures (water quality and stormwater management devices)	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺
Fencing, bollards and gates	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺
Floodlighting for security					☺	☺
Grassed open area for informal activities					☺	☺
Kiosks, cafes and outdoor dining					☺	☺
Landscaping, pergolas, raised gardens beds					☺	☺
Park entrance features, monuments, sculptures	☺		☺		☺	☺
Pathways, trails, boardwalks, bridges, steps, handrails, viewing platforms, lookouts	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺
Picnic and barbecue facilities, seats, tables, shade structures, garbage and recycling bins, lighting, drinking fountains	☺				☺	☺
Playgrounds, adventure playgrounds, exercise stations					☺	☺
Public art					☺	☺
Public toilets					☺	☺

Activities - permitted on Community Land - not requiring approval	Natural Area Bushland	Natural Area Wetland	Natural Area Watercourse	Natural Area Escarpment	Park	General community use
Activities arranged under the auspice of bodies appointed by Council to manage designated areas or community facilities in accordance with this Plan of Management	☺		☺		☺	☺
Barbecues within constructed barbecue structures					☺	☺
Bushwalking on designated tracks	☺		☺		☺	☺
Casual games, provided that the activity is not contrary to a reserve sign					☺	☺
Children's play					☺	☺
Fire hazard reduction works by an authorised body, or by Council	☺					
Helicopter landing by emergency services					☺	☺
Kite fying					☺	☺
Removal of vegetation at boundaries with adjoining land to satisfy APZ requirements	☺		☺		☺	☺
Picnics by small groups – site not booked	☺				☺	☺
Registered vehicles, under supervision of officials in association with special events					☺	☺



Rainforest Wetland - Management Buffer



Lily Pond Wetland - Management Buffer



Black Duck Wetland - Management Buffer



Coal Mine Creek Wetland - Management Buffer



BLACKBUTT RESERVE - PLAN OF MANAGEMENT
Appendix 6 - Wetland Extent

 Wetland Extent

 Wetland Buffer (10m)



Newcastle City Council
 DISCLAIMER

Although great care has been taken in the preparation of these documents / maps, Newcastle City Council makes no representation or warranty as to the accuracy or completeness of any information contained in them. Newcastle City Council accepts no responsibility for any misprints, errors, omissions or inaccuracies in these documents / maps or for loss or damages resulting from reliance on any information provided.



File name: BlackbuttReserve_PoM_300112.wor
 Map Created: 1 February 2012
 Source: NCC Data

