

Wickham National Park, Wickham Forest Reserve and Plunkett Conservation Park Management Statement 2013

Park size:	
Wickham National Park	141ha
Wickham Forest Reserve	4ha
Plunkett Conservation Park	432ha
Bioregion:	South Eastern Queensland
QPWS region:	South East
Local government estate/area:	Logan City
State electorate:	Albert Beaudesert

Legislative framework

✓	<i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i>
✓	<i>Environment Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwth)</i>
✓	<i>Forestry Act 1958</i>
✓	<i>Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002</i>
✓	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>
✓	<i>Queensland Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990</i>

Plans and agreements

✓	Border Ranges Rainforest Biodiversity Management Plan NSW & Queensland
✓	Conservation Advice for Swamp tea-tree (<i>Melaleuca irybana</i>) forest of south-east Queensland
✓	Japan—Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
✓	South East Queensland Horse Riding Trail Network Management Plan 2011

Thematic strategies

✓	Level 2 Fire Management Strategy Plunkett Conservation Park, Wickham Forest Reserve
✓	Level 2 Pest Management Strategy

Vision

Wickham National Park, Wickham Forest Reserve and Plunkett Conservation Park are managed for their high biodiversity values, scenic and natural features and diverse visitor opportunities. The parks will continue to cater for a variety of recreation activities including, bushwalking, horse riding and mountain bike riding in a natural environment. The protected areas continue to provide protection and connect wildlife corridors in an area that is rapidly being cleared for residential purposes.

Conservation purpose

Plunkett Conservation Park was one of the historic Corbould blocks donated by the late Harold Edward (Ted) Corbould. It was set aside for conservation in 1983 and named Plunkett Reserve. It was transferred to the Queensland Government in 1994 and gazetted as a conservation park. Additions to the block have since been added in 2000 and then in 2010 with the most recent addition separate from the main section of the park.

Wickham National Park was originally set aside as State Forest (TR766) and has a history of native timber harvesting. In 2001, it was gazetted temporarily as forest reserve as part of the South East Queensland Forests Agreement process. It was finally gazetted as national park tenure in 2009.

Wickham Forest Reserve is a network of trails throughout the Wickham National Park that have been retained as forest reserve tenure to cater for the South East Queensland Horse Riding Trail Network.

View from Plunkett Conservation Park. Photo: NPRSR



Protecting and presenting park values

Landscape

Wickham National Park adjoins Plunkett Conservation Park along the southern boundary and Wickham Forest Reserve runs throughout the national park.

Surrounding land on the north, east and southern boundaries of Plunkett Conservation Park and Wickham National Park is residential. Wickham Timber Reserve is located on the north-western side of Plunkett Conservation Park. On the western side adjacent to Plunkett Conservation Park, Yarrabilba residential estate is being developed on land previously used for plantation and is expected to house more than 45,000 people. This will have implications for fire, pest, and visitor management, vegetation connectivity and local hydrology.

Plunkett Conservation Park is part of the catchment for the Albert River, and has a creek line running directly into the Albert River.

Regional ecosystems

These protected areas conserve four regional ecosystems and are classified as of no concern at present (12.11.3, 12.11.5, 12.9-10.17 and 12.9-10.19). The main vegetation communities are open forest complex dominated by spotted gum *Corymbia citriodora*, large leafed spotted gum *C. henryi*, brush box *Lophostemon confertus* along with other eucalypt species such as *Eucalyptus siderophloia* and small-fruited grey gum *E. propinqua*, *E. fibrosa*, Queensland white stringybark *E. tindaliae* and *E. carnea*.

Native plants and animals

There is limited information about the number and significance of native species on Wickham National Park and Wickham Forest Reserve. The endangered *Leucopogon recurvisepalus* is found on both Wickham National Park and Plunkett Conservation Park. A perennial shrub, it is thought to be threatened by inappropriate fire regimes. In Plunkett Conservation Park, the unauthorised use of motor vehicles away from approved trails is suspected to threaten its survival. Plunkett Conservation Park has a number of other threatened species including the endangered swamp tea-tree *Melaleuca irbyana* and orchid *Pterostylis chaetophora* of which very little is known. Also found there is the near threatened Plunkett mallee *Eucalyptus curtisii* and *Kunzea flavescens* (Table 1). The introduced myrtle rust has been found on the Plunkett mallee.

The swamp tea-tree *Melaleuca irbyana* is listed nationally as critically endangered and only occurs in South East Queensland. It's threatened by inappropriate fire regimes, clearing and grazing, invasion of pest plants, particularly introduced grasses and lack of genetic diversity due to small populations.

Surveys are currently being completed on the vulnerable koala *Phascolarctos cinereus* (South East Queensland bioregion), population within parts of Plunkett Conservation Park (Table 1). There are incidental sightings of the vulnerable brush-tailed rock wallaby *Petrogale penicillata* in the management area with Plunkett Conservation Park providing potential rocky outcrop habitat. There is also evidence of glider populations on the park with observed landing platform marks on trees and presence of good hollows.

Aboriginal culture

There is little known about the indigenous culture of the parks. The area that is now protected would have provided the local people with plant and animal food resources and other items of their material culture. There are caves on the parks with the possible presence of indigenous artefacts.

There is a Native Title Claim over the area encompassing Plunkett Conservation Park and Wickham National Park and forest reserve by the Gold Coast Native Title Group (QUD346/06, QC06/10).

Shared-history culture

There are no shared-history culture sites recorded within the management area. The parks have been previously used for cattle grazing and an old dam still exists in Plunkett Conservation Park.

Tourism and visitor opportunities

There are 13 kilometres of the South East Queensland horse riding trail network that extends through the management area which is managed under the South East Queensland Horse Riding Trail Network Management Plan. There is a horse trail in the northern section of Plunkett Conservation Park not recorded on the horse trail map.

All three protected areas provide opportunities for horse riding and mountain bike riding on designated trails, bushwalking, bird watching and enjoying the view from scenic lookouts.

Partnerships

Partnerships with other State and local government agencies and the local community assist in the protection of park values.

Cooperation between Logan City Council, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service and the Queensland Police Service is continuing to help manage illegal activities in and around the parks.

Local recreational groups will be consulted as growing pressures for additional recreational opportunities will increase as Yarrabilba is established and the South East Queensland population continues to grow.

Other key issues and responses

Wickham National Park, Wickham Forest Reserve and Plunkett Conservation Park are adjacent to a privately-owned disused forest plantation which is being redeveloped as the Yarrabilba Urban Land Development Authority affordable housing estate. The entire area has been subject to illegal activities and misuse, leading to adverse impacts from illegal dumping of hard and green waste, erosion caused by off-road vehicles and alleged illegal shooting. Patrols are undertaken with police assistance to target illegal activities.

Pest management

An existing plant list for Plunkett Conservation Park includes 20 recorded weed species. Pest animal species recorded include wild dogs *Canis lupus familiaris*, brown hare *Lepus europaeus* and cane toads *Rhinella marina*. There are incidental sightings of deer and evidence of feral pigs *Sus scrofa* on the neighbouring disused timber plantation. There are no pest records for Wickham National Park and Wickham Forest Reserve.

A focus for management is monitoring and controlling of pest plants as changes to environmental conditions are expected to promote the spread of pest plants and change the structure of native vegetation.

A Level 2 pest strategy was completed in 2010 for Plunkett Conservation Park.

Fire management

A Level 2 fire management strategy for Plunkett Conservation Park, Wickham Forest Reserve and Wickham Timber Reserve was completed in 2003. Prescribed burning is conducted as per the fire management strategy. Arson is a problem and uncontrolled frequent fire causes erosion, promotes pest plant growth, and decreases biodiversity.

The impact of increased urbanisation on the incidence of arson will need to be monitored and considered in future fire management planning. A good working relationship exists with Queensland Fire and Rescue Service and will continue for joint fire mitigation activities and wildfire management in the area.

Adjustments to appropriate fire regimes should be made to ensure protection of significant species such as *Leucopogon recurvisepalus* and *Melaleuca irbyana*.

Management directions

Desired outcomes	Actions and guidelines
<p>Native plants and animals</p> <p>Biodiversity values are understood and protected.</p>	<p>A1. Conduct plant and animal surveys for all three protected areas, particularly Wickham National Park and Wickham Forest Reserve to provide baseline information for guiding management programs.</p> <p>A2. Work with the Queensland Herbarium to examine regional ecosystem mapping and record unmapped ecosystems.</p> <p>A3. Implement actions from recovery plans or Approved Conservation Advice (as under the <i>Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>) for species of conservation significance, where feasible.</p> <p>A4. Monitor populations and record sightings of species of conservation significance in particular <i>Pterostylis chaetophora</i>.</p> <p>A5. Conduct a survey for the brush-tailed rock wallaby <i>Petrogale penicillata</i>.</p>
<p>Tourism and visitor opportunities</p> <p>Visitor recreation is maintained and has minimal impact on the natural values of the parks.</p>	<p>A6. Develop a visitor management plan</p>
<p>Partnerships</p> <p>Cooperation with neighbours contributes to improved management outcomes.</p>	<p>A7. Establish and maintain communication and supportive relationships with park neighbours, recreation groups, Logan City Council and other State agencies such as Queensland Police Service and Queensland Fire and Rescue Service to enhance cooperative management.</p>
<p>Pest management</p> <p>The impact of pest plants and animals on conservation values is minimised.</p>	<p>A8. Update the Level 2 pest management strategy.</p>
<p>Fire management</p> <p>Plunkett Conservation Park, Wickham National Park and Wickham Forest Reserve are managed in accordance with the level 2 fire management strategy.</p>	<p>A9. Review and update the level 2 fire management strategy.</p>

Tables – Conservation values management

Table 1: Species of conservation significance

Scientific name	Common name	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i> status	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> status	Back on Track status
Plants				
<i>Eucalyptus curtisii</i>	Plunkett mallee	Near threatened	-	Low
<i>Kunzea flavescens</i>	-	Near threatened	-	Low

Scientific name	Common name	Nature Conservation Act 1992 status	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 status	Back on Track status
<i>Leucopogon recurvisepalus</i>	-	Endangered	-	Low
<i>Melaleuca irbyana</i>	swamp tea-tree/weeping paperbark	Endangered		Medium
<i>Pterostylis chaetophora</i>	-	Endangered	-	Data deficient
Animals				
<i>Calyptorhynchus lathami lathami</i>	glossy black cockatoo	Vulnerable	-	High
<i>Phascolarctos cinereus (southeast Queensland bioregion)</i>	koala (southeast Queensland bioregion)	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	-

Table 2: Species listed in international agreements

Family	Scientific name	Common name	BONN	CAMBA	JAMBA	ROKAMBA
Campephagidae	<i>Coracina tenuirostris</i>	cicadabird	-	-	✓	-

BONN: Bonn Convention

JAMBA: Japan–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement

CAMBA: China–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement

ROKAMBA: Republic of Korea–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement