

Homevale Resources Reserve

Management Statement 2016

Introduction

The *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (Qld) requires a management statement or plan for all Queensland parks—to set high level strategies and priorities for managing each park. Management statements or plans are succinct, management oriented documents, which focus on maintaining or improving the condition of key park values and outlining how we will meet management standards (or ‘levels of service’) for the park.

This plan may be read alongside the park’s resource information document. Resource information documents provides more detailed background on Queensland’s parks — providing an understanding of each park’s purpose, values, resources, issues, management considerations, and legal and administrative framework. Resource information may be used for a quick overview of the park or to gain a more in-depth understanding of the park’s management issues and background.

Homevale Resources Reserve will also be managed consistent with the management principles for the tenure as defined in the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (Qld) and supporting regulations; other appropriate legislation including the *Mineral Resources Act 1989* (Qld), *Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999* (Qld), *Native Title Act 1993* (Cwlth), *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003* (Qld), government policies, procedures, and protocols, ILUA, government policies, procedures, and protocols.

Homevale Resources Reserve

Homevale Resources Reserve was gazetted as a Resources Reserve on 19 May 1995. It was selected for addition to the estate as it lies across the transition between the Central Queensland Coast and Northern Brigalow Belt bioregions and therefore contains and protects a significant environmental gradient. The park overlies part of four natural provinces, including the Clarke-Connors Range, Bogie River Hills, and Northern Bowen Basin. It has high scenic values with spectacular examples of the regions geology. Homevale Resources Reserve is positioned between two sections of Homevale National Park. Homevale Conservation Park is around 600m to the parks west and Crediton State Forest is along the parks north-east boundary (Map 1).

The park has high scenic and landscape values with large areas of undeveloped bushland, panoramic views, and forests. This is epitomised in the varied eucalyptus forests of the park. The eucalyptus forests of conservation concern constitute a key value for Homevale Resources Reserve as does it semi-evergreen vine thickets and Brigalow / Belah forests. This mosaic of habitats, across a significant environmental gradient, makes the park a valuable component of the protected area estate. The potential for minerals (and their extraction) is a key management consideration generating a challenge in the management of environmental values in concert with potential economic value.

The park lies within the lands currently under claim by the Widi People (Widi People of the Nebo Estate – QUD372/2006).

Key management considerations

In the management of Homevale Resources Reserve two key matters must be considered. These are the provision of access to the mineral resources contained within the park and the co-management of the property by the Joint Trustees, the Department of Natural Resources and Mines (DNRM) and the Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing (NPSR).

Resource use

Resources reserves are managed under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (as a Resources Use Area) to recognise, and if appropriate, protect the area’s natural and cultural resources. To provide for the controlled use of the area’s cultural and natural resources while ensuring the area is maintained predominantly in its natural condition.

This designation is due to the potential mineralisation of economic gold resources within the park. Payable alluvial and shallow reef gold was discovered, in what is now the resources reserve, in 1881.

Key park values

While all parks are important, and all values help make parks worthwhile, management needs to focus on protecting and presenting the most important values – the key values. These are the values that will form the basis of ongoing evaluation of management effectiveness. Protecting these key values will help frame the purpose of management for each park. The table below shows how each key value’s condition is represented, how the condition is trending and the confidence in the information used to make the ratings. Details of key values are listed in Table 1 and illustrated in Map 1.

Condition	Good	Good with some concern	Significant concern	Critical
Description	<i>The value is in good condition and is likely to be maintained for the foreseeable future, provided that current conservation measures are maintained.</i>	<i>The value is likely to be essentially maintained over the long-term with minor additional conservation measures to address existing concerns.</i>	<i>The value is threatened by a number of current and/or potential threats. Significant additional conservation measures are required to preserve the value over the medium to long-term.</i>	<i>The value is severely threatened. Urgent additional large-scale conservation measures are required or the value may be lost.</i>
Trend rating	Improving	Stable	Deteriorating	No consistent trend
Confidence	Inferred	Limited	Adequate	

Figure 1 Key to condition, trend and confidence icons

1. Open eucalyptus forests of conservation concern

Description	Condition		Trend	Confidence	
	2016:	Desired:		Condition	Trend
Open eucalyptus forests of conservation concern Eucalyptus forests in the uplands, along stream lines and on fine grained sedimentary rocks and clay plains.					

This is a natural value that includes the six Eucalyptus dominated regional ecosystems (RE 8.12.23; 8.12.9; 11.3.2; 11.3.25; 11.9.13; 11.4.2) that represent the connection of the park between the Brigalow Belt North and Central Queensland Coast bioregion. All of these regional ecosystems are considered to be of concern, support conservation significant species and provide scenic amenity to the park.

Threats:

- ❖ Primary– Modification of this ecosystem with the scale and intensity of fires across the landscape causing the loss of habitat trees and an undesirable forest age structure – threat rating high.
- ❖ Secondary– Loss or damage to this value incurred during the exploring for, or the exploiting of, the parks mineral resources – threat rating medium.

Desired outcomes: Improve and maintain condition of open eucalyptus forests of conservation concern to good by managing impacts of fire, mining and mineral exploitation.

2. Semi-evergreen vine thicket

Description	Condition		Trend	Confidence	
				Condition	Trend
Semi-evergreen vine thicket RE 8.12.16 & RE 11.8.3	2016: 	Desired: 	↓	●	●

This fragile and regionally uncommon habitat type is important within a bioregional context. This forest occurs across 932ha in the parks south east.

Threats:

- ❖ Primary–Incursion into this forest type by fire – threat rating high.
- ❖ Secondary– Loss or damage of this habitat incurred during exploration and extraction of the parks mineral resources – threat rating medium.

Desired outcome: Improve and maintain the condition of the parks semi-evergreen vine thickets to good by managing fire in surrounding ecosystems and managing impacts of mining and mineral exploitation.

To protect this value from the potential impacts of mineral exploration and extraction it is necessary to actively manage and administer the park in accordance with the DNRM-NPSR MoU.

3. Brigalow and Belah forests

Description	Condition		Trend	Confidence	
				Condition	Trend
Brigalow and Belah forests <i>Acacia harpophylla</i> and/or <i>Casuarina cristata</i> open forest on fine grained sedimentary rocks	2016: 	Desired: 	↓	●	●

The endangered Brigalow /Belah forests (RE 11.9.5) on Homevale Resources Reserve are a significant value and represent some of the eastern and northern most representations of this species within the protected estate. This forest type is listed as endangered under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cwlth). The park contains 17ha of this forest which is in a discrete area and naturally self-protecting from fire.

Threats:

- ❖ Primary– Modification of this ecosystem by fire – threat rating medium.
- ❖ Secondary– Loss or damage of this habitat incurred during the exploring for, or the exploiting of, the parks mineral resources – threat rating medium.

Desired outcome: Improve and maintain the Brigalow and Belah forests ecosystems through fire management and managing impacts of mining and mineral exploitation.

To protect this value from the potential impacts of mineral exploration and extraction it is necessary to actively manage and administer the park in accordance with the DNRM-NPSR MoU.

Table 1. Homevale Resources Reserve — Strategic management directions for key values

Condition	Trend	Threatening processes	Strategic management directions	Priority (1-5)
1. Open eucalyptus forests of conservation concern				
2015: 	↓	Fire	Implement planned burning to maintain healthy eucalyptus communities and encourage understorey biodiversity.	3
Desired: 		Disturbance by mineral extraction and associated works	Actively manage and administer mining and exploration activities and tenures in accordance with the DNRM-NPSR MoU.	2
5. Semi-evergreen vine thicket				
2015: 	↓	Fire	Support the sustainability of the semi-evergreen vine thickets by limiting fires encroachment including by the management of adjacent areas of high biomass invasive grasses.	3
Desired: 		Disturbance by mineral extraction and associated works	Actively manage, and administer mining and exploration activities and tenures in accordance with the DNRM-NPSR MoU.	2
6. Brigalow and Belah forests				
2015: 	↓	Fire	Support the sustainability of the Brigalow / Belah forests by limiting fires and reducing fire intensity including by the management of adjacent areas of high biomass invasive grasses.	3
Desired: 		Disturbance by mineral extraction and associated works	Actively manage, and administer mining and exploration activities and tenures in accordance with the DNRM-NPSR MoU.	2

Levels of Service

Levels of Service (LoS) standards have been developed to describe the spectrum of protected area management standards used by the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service to ensure the right parks get the right management. The LoS provides a framework to identify the current and desired future standards for a range of critical management elements and associated performance measures. By setting explicit management standards, QPWS can deliver more consistent, accountable, effective and measurable management.

The LoS recognises five levels of service ranging from base to exceptional. Homevale Resources Reserve has been assessed as requiring a very high level of service for most aspects of management based on an evaluation of its natural, cultural and social values.

The desired LoS standards for nine management elements have been identified to guide the level of management effort required for Homevale Resources Reserve within a state-wide context, and are summarised below. These nine elements reflect the most common management activities undertaken by QPWS across all protected lands and waters.

Homevale Resources Reserve currently meets all its LoS except for Historic cultural values which requires an increased focus in documentation and management.

On Homevale Resources Reserve the most actively managed aspect is fire. This is managed in concert with the surrounding Homevale National Park and Crediton State Forest Areas. It is managed to a very high level of service.

For further detail on the levels of service standards for Homevale Resources Reserve, refer to Table 2.

Table 2. Homevale Resources Reserve – Strategic management directions for Levels of Service

Management element	Current Level of Service	Desired Level of Service (target state)	Strategic Management Directions (bridging the gap)	Priority
1. Fire	Very High	Very High	Continue to work to understand the land systems and their relationship to fire. Continue to increase pre and post-fire monitoring.	1
			Continue to work with Queensland Rural Fires, Mount Britton community, park neighbours, mining leases, Department of Natural Resources and mines (Unallocated State Lands Management Unit). Maintain and enhance relationships including involvement in planned burns with Queensland Rural Fires.	1
			Raise the level of priority of fire management by protecting life and property and all key values. Increase operational capacity to complete fire management program.	1
2. Pest	Medium	Medium	Maintain and improve strategic pest management planning.	4
			Maintain current level of stakeholder engagement over pest management activities.	4
			Increase operational capacity to respond to pest incursions on the park. Control parthenium and giant rats-tail grass on tracks within the park.	3
3. Natural values	High	High	Currently meets LoS Standard – maintain.	N/A
4. Indigenous cultural heritage and engagement	Base	Base	Continue to record indigenous material culture when noted as incidental finds.	2
			Continue ad-hoc consultation on an issue by issue basis. Note an expanded communication/engagement strategy may need consideration pending the outcomes of ongoing Native Title determinations and ILUAs.	2
5. Historic cultural values	Base	Medium	Continue to record historic cultural values when noted as incidental finds.	4
			Continue liaison with Isaac Shire Council over the maintenance and presentation of the Mount	4

Homevale Resources Reserve Management Statement 2016

Management element	Current Level of Service	Desired Level of Service (target state)	Strategic Management Directions (bridging the gap)	Priority
			Britton Cemetery and other cultural features.	
			Document heritage artefacts and include in management documents such as fire management strategies.	4
6. Third party interests	High	High	Establish clear policy framework around the mechanism for the granting of leasing and compensation agreement creation.	2
			Engage with Mines Department annually to discuss the management of Homevale Resources Reserve.	2
			Investigate the acquisition of un-leased Unallocated State Land into the park once rehabilitated under EHP Bond.	3
7. Visitor	Medium	Medium	Continue to plan for Homevale Resources Reserve as a component of the Mackay Highlands visitor precinct.	3
			Continue to manage the existing low key infrastructure on the park in a manner consistent with the overall planning for the Mackay Highlands.	3
8. Field management capability	High	High	Currently meets LoS Standard – maintain.	3
9. Operational planning and management	High	High	Currently meets LoS Standard – maintain.	3

Thematic strategies

Each protected area will require one or more thematic strategies depending on the complexity of the values and service issues. The Levels of Service prescriptions provide guidance for each individual element to indicate the requirement for a thematic strategy and its appropriate level.

Thematic strategies cover key park management detail, values and significant service issues. They provide a linkage between the strategic approach and operational services. Thematic strategies present detailed objectives which are specific to the protected area developed from the strategic management directions – levels of service.

Thematic strategies required for Homevale Resources Reserve

- fire strategy
- pest strategy
- assessment and monitoring strategy
- third party interests management strategy.

Evaluation and reporting

Every five years we will evaluate and report on how effectively the Homevale Resources Reserve is being managed. An adaptive management approach helps us to set clear benchmarks for management, ensure the condition of key values is within acceptable thresholds, deliver transparent and accountable reporting and inform future management. Management effectiveness will evaluate the following.

- ❖ Are we maintaining or improving the condition and trend of the park's key values?
- ❖ Are we achieving the desired Levels of Service standards for the park?
- ❖ Are we implementing thematic strategy objectives and are the objectives effective?
- ❖ Are strategic management directions delivering the desired outcomes?

Map 1: Homevale Resources Reserve - key values

