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email: bellbirdparkpreservationgroup@outlook.com

28th January 2020

Attn: Mr. Steve Greenwood (Interim Administrator)
Ipswich City Council
PO Box 191
Ipswich, QLD 4305

cc: Mr. Darryl Porche – Senior Planning Officer (Strategic Conservation Planning)

Dear Sir,

**Subject : Request for Acquisition of 12-26 Eugene Street, Bellbird Park
(Lot No's 901 & 902 RP 909175)**

Bellbird Park Preservation Group (BPPG) has written to Ipswich City Council (ICC) a number of times regarding the proposed development (DA 4432/2017) of the above site.

As representatives of our community, we are gravely concerned about the potential outcome of the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) process associated with the current appeal in the Planning and Environment Court between CB Developments Australia Pty Ltd and Ipswich City Council.

We understand that ICC is unable to engage or participate in any discussions with us regarding proceedings.

Therefore we feel it is imperative and essential that we officially submit the following request in writing to ICC.

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Bellbird Park Preservation Group respectfully requests that Ipswich City Council:

1. Reviews / Re-Assesses the Eugene Street Site for acquisition.

This will involve -

- *Obtaining an independent valuation of the site.*
 - *The site is burdened by a number of overlays and easements, and true land valuation should reflect and be based upon these constraints.*
- *Reviewing relevant documents, including:-*
 - *ICC Assessment Manager's Reasons for Refusal which states that certain relevant assessment benchmarks cannot be overcome through the imposition of development conditions.*
 - *Further Ecological Assessments and Joint Expert Reports (Referred to in Court Order 1727 of 2018, dated 14th August, 2018).*
- *Considering viable acquisition options including:-*
 - *Not necessarily full acquisition funded solely through Enviroplan.*
 - *The Recreational Zone Area could be funded via OSDC (Open Space Developer Contributions) and transformed into a multi-functional Community Space.*
- *Recapturing the "Spirit, Intent & Vision" projected as part of ICC's Strategic Documents such as Sustainable Ipswich, Ipswich 2020 & Beyond and the Advance Ipswich Plan.*
 - *These documents place emphasis on managing the growth of our city by working with the community to protect and enhance our natural environment and urban ecology.*

2. Initiate and undertake necessary processes to formalize acquisition negotiations between parties.

BPPG believes that acquisition of the Eugene Street site is an achievable and realistic offer for Council's representatives to "bring to the negotiation table" with CB Developments Australia Pty Ltd.

To support our request to Council, we would also like to submit the attached document titled "Criteria for Acquisition of 12-26 Eugene Street, Bellbird Park".

This document is based upon the purpose, principles and procedures as outlined within the latest Ipswich Enviroplan Program & Levy Policy and Levy Procedure Documents. It addresses how the Enviroplan Assessment Criteria aligns with the environmental and ecological significance of the Eugene Street site.

Bellbird Park Preservation Group hopes and trusts that all factors and elements will be carefully considered as part of ICC's decision-making process in regards to acquisition, and this in turn will be presented and included as part of the negotiation process with CB Developments Australia Pty Ltd.

We thank you for the opportunity to convey our request to ICC, and would greatly appreciate acknowledgement of our request and a response via return email.

Kind Regards,

On behalf of Bellbird Park Preservation Group

Attached: Criteria for Acquisition of 12-26 Eugene Street, Bellbird Park

Criteria for Acquisition of 12-26 Eugene Street, Bellbird Park

Site

The proposed properties are situated 12-26 Eugene St, Bellbird Park and are described as Lots 901 and 902 on RP909175 (subject property). The subject property is 323,600m². Of that, 67.12% is contained within the Residential Low density Zone (RL02) and 32.88% is in the Recreation Zone (REC) of the 2006 Planning Scheme for Ipswich City Council (Figure 1).

It is currently Freehold tenure, vacant other than a pump station, a rising main and a 27 space carpark. Several easements exist on the site, one occupies an oil pipeline.

Several planning scheme overlays exist on the site, which include:

- OV4 Difficult Topography;
- OV5 Adopted Flood Regulation Line;
- OV5 Urban Catchment Flow Path; and
- OV11 Oil Pipeline Buffer Area.

The difficult topography includes slopes of 15-20%, 20-25% and slope greater than 25% which significantly constrain the subject property bound to the east by Woogaroo Creek (Figure 2).

The subject property is located to the South East of Ric Natrass Environmental Park and is adjacent to Eugene St Reserve. This area is known to support a population of Koalas and a pair of Powerful Owls. The subject property is not included in the Ipswich City Council EnviroPlan Acquisition Schedule. The property owners have lodged a development application to develop the subject property from two lots into 333 residential lots (4432/2017/RAL) commencing 27 June 2017.

Assessment

Ipswich City Council (Council) undertook an assessment of the environmental values of the site as part of the initial development assessment process. A subsequent assessment was undertaken mid 2018, including in the context of possible acquisition under the EnviroPlan levy. The Ecological Assessment Report (28 South Environmental 2017) acknowledges the subject property provides habitat and foraging locations for a number of threatened species including but not limited to the Koala, Powerful Owl, Grey-headed Flying Fox, Tusked Frog and Green Thighed Frog.

The decision notice (Ipswich City Council 2018) refused application 4432/2017/RAL, and identifies a number of factors upon which the proposed development was deemed to be not compatible with the Ipswich Planning Scheme. Many of these factors relate to substantially important issues such as conflict with the character of the surrounding area, excessive earthworks, significant retaining walls and heights, residential development in the REC zone and clearing all vegetation including mature trees (with the exception of some of the linear open space along Woogaroo Creek). In terms of impact to the surrounding character, the proposed development is set to create a precedent for development in the eastern section of Bellbird Park for significantly small lot sizes that conflicts with the Planning Scheme and surrounding lot sizes, essentially altering the density, character and amenity of the immediate area. The subject property is an irreplaceable wildlife sanctuary and bird watching

paradise. The subject property is more aligned with a conservation and recreation use as it is more sympathetic to the existing natural features, the character of the surrounding area and enhances the sustainable use of the natural environment within an urban area.

Proposal

A comprehensive long-term plan is required that incorporates this subject property into a recreational trail network from the Brisbane River to White Rock Conservation Park and Springfield. Prior to negotiations with the owners, we ask Council to commission an independent valuer to provide an opinion of current market value of the subject property. Negotiations between Ipswich City Council and the owner are subject to a current court case, which we ask to be settled with the purchase of the subject property by Council. Council's offer could be based on the minimum aggregate sum which would be payable as compensation if Council resumed the properties by compulsory means under its powers available within the *Acquisition of Land Act 1967*. It is in the interests of Ipswich ratepayers that the court case is finalised without ongoing delay and costs. Ratepayers are best aligned to benefit from the use of funding from the EnviroPlan levy for the acquisition of land that enhances recreational opportunities while also allowing the natural environment to thrive. The acquisition of the subject property builds on previous investments made by Council (Ric Natrass Environmental Park and Eugene St Reserve) that improves habitat connectivity, waterway stability and water quality that also ties to a strategic corridor.

Acquisition criteria for subject property as per the Ipswich EnviroPlan Program & Levy Procedure document.

1. Enhancement of the overall protection and sustainable use of the natural environment within the City:

Overall protection of wildlife corridors within the urban footprint is vital for the sustainability of wildlife as well as the enhancement of mental health, liveability and overall human well-being. Woogaroo Creek connects to existing urban nodes such as Ric Natrass Environmental Park and Eugene St Reserve. The protection of the subject property could form part of a strategic 'Woogaroo and Opossum Creek' corridor that connects from the headwaters at White Rock/Spring Mountain through to the Brisbane River (Figure 3). This corridor plan would enhance the overall protection of recreation, water quality, biodiversity and cultural values within close proximity to people. Preserving these values within close proximity to people has the greatest benefit to the overall sustainability of the city environment. It will also provide an alternative transport option for car dependent areas (such as Bellbird Park) to access shopping and transport precincts like Springfield and Goodna. The increase in recreational opportunities will bring economic opportunities to residents, as well as tourism and retail operators. Creating new spaces for recreation and activation supports and enhances the local economy.

Even in its current state, the site's natural bushland and associated vegetation make a significant contribution to the Carbon Sequestration process, by acting as the green lungs of the city, and supplementing Council's existing three (3) Carbon Planting sites within the local government area.

2. Environmental significance and biodiversity values (including level of threat):

SARA mapping supports most of the site as Least Concern Regional Ecosystems (RE) 12.9-10.2. However, a survey conducted by Grimshaw and Gillman (2018) described two RE's 12.9-10.17d and 12.9-10.2 listed under the Vegetation Management Act class as 'Least concern'. While 28 South Environmental (2017) found no threatened plant species, Grimshaw and Gillman (2018) indicate the potential for Lloyd's Mock Olive (*Notelaea Lloydii*) to occur in RE 12.9-10.2. It is listed under the Queensland *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (NCA Act) as 'Vulnerable'. Lloyd's Mock Olive has been recorded 17 times within the Ipswich City area in similar habitat to that found in the Bellbird Park area. There is a strong possibility it could occur in the subject property (Grimshaw & Gillman 2018).

28 South Environmental (2017) documented evidence of Koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*) scats and scratches, with local resident sightings supporting this evidence. Under the Federal *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and NCA Act the Koala is listed as 'Vulnerable'. It is also listed as a priority focus for conservation planning in the Ipswich Nature Conservation Strategy 2015. Nine species of preferred koala habitat trees were found on the subject property, therefore considered to be a very important habitat for the Koala (Grimshaw & Gillman 2018). The area along Woogaroo Creek has both a breeding pair of Powerful Owls (*Ninox strenua*) and suitable large trees with hollows. The Powerful Owl is listed as 'Vulnerable' under the NCA Act. It is highly likely that the subject property is a significant component of its foraging resources, reliant on large areas of habitat for food. The Tusked Frog (*Adelotus Brevis*) is documented by residents to occur along Woogaroo Creek. The Tusked frog is listed as 'Vulnerable' under the NCA Act. Temporary pools along Woogaroo Creek provide suitable breeding sites for the Tusked Frog and the delisted Green Thighed Frog (*Litoria brevipalmata*), subject to seasonal conditions. Nearby colonies of Grey-headed Flying Foxes (*Pteropus poliocephalus*) are likely to use this habitat for foraging. Under the EPBC Act the Grey-headed Flying Fox is listed as 'Vulnerable'. Recently, the Regent Honeyeater (*Anthochaera phrygia*) and Swift Parrot (*Lathamus discolor*) were recorded incidentally in the Springfield area, also likely to use the subject property for foraging. The Regent Honeyeater is listed as 'Critically Endangered' under the EPBC Act and 'Endangered' under the NCA Act. The Swift Parrot is listed as 'Critically Endangered' under the EPBC Act. The Glossy Black-Cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus lathami*) has been sighted by local records and could use mature and juvenile specimens of Black She-oak (*Allocasuarina littoralis*) growing on slopes on abutting private properties and on the subject site (Grimshaw & Gillman 2018). The Glossy Black Cockatoo is listed as 'Endangered' under the EPBC Act and 'Vulnerable' under the NCA Act. One Migratory species, the Black-faced Monarch (*Monarcha melanopsis*) listed under the EPBC Act was observed by 28 South Environmental (2017) during their survey of the subject site.

The Platypus (*Ornithorhynchus anatinus*) is a local fauna species that is a priority species in the Ipswich Nature Conservation Strategy 2015. Platypus monitoring along Woogaroo Creek and Opossum Creek have been positive using eDNA for the last three years below the subject property. Recently in 2019, an adult male Platypus was captured and recorded at Opossum Creek by University of Queensland PhD researcher Tamielle Brunt. It is therefore important that Woogaroo Creek and Opossum Creek is protected as part of a Strategic Corridor Plan, for their continued viability within a rapidly developing urban area.

While not listed as a threatened species, the Echidna (*Tachyglossus aculeatus*) is an iconic Australian species (special least concern). Local sightings have confirmed the presence of Echidnas on the subject property as recently as August and October 2019.

The subject property is of ecological importance to insects, raptors and microbats. A species of damselfly (*Austrolestes aridus*) was found by ecologist Damian White and Narelle Power on the 4 October 2019 outside its range at the subject property. This was a significant find for the area, as the closest record exists near Mt Barney and on the other side of the Toowoomba Range. A Giant Prickly Stick Insect- lichen form (*Extatosoma tiaratum*) was also discovered on the same day in the lower eastern riparian habitat of the subject property. An incidental bird survey on the 4 October 2019 found the site to be an important habitat for raptors with a nesting pair of Square-tailed Kites (*Lophoictinia isura*), very few records exist of known pairs in South-east Queensland. Local residents have also sighted Grey Goshawks (*Accipiter novaehollandiae*), Collared Sparrowhawks (*Accipiter cirrocephalus*), Brown Falcons (*Falco berigora*) and Pacific Bazas (*Aviceda subcristatus*) using the subject property as foraging habitat.

From 17 August 2018, one week of anabat recording by Grimshaw and Gillman (2018) on an adjacent property detected six species of bats. The White-striped Free-tailed Bat (*Austronomus australis*), Ride's Free-tailed Bat (*Ozimops ridei*), Eastern Coastal Free-tailed Bat (*Micronomus norfolkensis*), Gould's Wattled Bat (*Chalinolobus gouldii*), Little Bent-winged Bat (*Miniopterus australis*) and Eastern Bent-winged Bat (*Miniopterus orianae oceanensis*). These bats are not often restricted to caves and may also use tree hollows to roost.

In response to the level of threat, this would be dependent upon the current appeal being undertaken in Planning & Environment Court, and subsequent decision / outcome. It is therefore considered that the threat assessment would be imminent and severe, especially in reference to the Riparian Corridor along Woogaroo Creek. Ownership of the site by Ipswich City Council will ensure ultimate protection of the site's Biodiversity values.

3. Level of priority within the Ipswich Nature Conservation Strategy:

The subject property is not shown as a priority area in the Ipswich Nature Conservation Strategy 2015, when it should be included. Woogaroo Creek is mapped as an Urban Linkage Waterways Investigation Area (28 South Environmental 2017). It is assigned a connectivity status of 'well-connected' (28 South Environmental 2017). However, the Ipswich Nature Conservation Strategy 2015 does not seem to prioritise the protection of connected habitat within the urban footprint, despite having an important role to play in the health and wellbeing of citizens and connectivity between larger habitat areas. It is particularly important that a strategic corridor plan is created for Woogaroo Creek, as it is an area of significance that provides ecosystem services and intact biodiversity. All of which are facing elevated threats from development and fragmentation.

4. Proximity to the current or future Natural Area Estate:

The subject property is within 100m of Ric Natrass Environmental Park and 10km from White Rock Conservation Estate. Ric Natrass Environmental Park is a 37.23 hectare Natural Area Estate incorporated within the Enviroplan Acquisition Portfolio. The park provides an urban refuge for mobile species with the urban footprint, and is in close proximity to the Eugene Street site. White Rock Conservation Estate forms part of the larger strategic Flinders-Karawatha Corridor.

5. Creation of strategic and new habitat areas that build connectivity:

The ongoing drive to protect the area, which began in 2018, has rallied the community and helped to raise awareness of the biodiversity which exists at the subject property. If the land was to be preserved for all time, there would be great interest in the local community in maintaining the space (particularly along the creek line) and undertaking activities to enhance it, such as weed clearance and revegetation, both of which would lead to the creation of new habitats and further improve connectivity. An example of an exemplar for an urban corridor is the Oxley Creek Corridor which under the Oxley Creek Transformation Master Plan, guides the creation of a 20km recreational trail from the Brisbane River to Tennyson that progressively improves habitats, building its reputation as a world-renowned birding destination.

6. Protection of water quality and catchment value:

The subject property is bound on the entire eastern side by Woogaroo Creek. Woogaroo Creek is a State significant biodiversity corridor. The subject property has three gullies which drain into Woogaroo creek. Retention of the existing vegetation ensures the creek and catchment quality is maintained. Biodiversity values are maintained with the use of the land as conservation rather than residential. Residential development will compromise the water catchment quality and degrade catchment values through extensive soil profiling, loss of vegetation cover, increase in hard surfaces and contamination from extensive stormwater run-off.

7. Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and Aboriginal Cultural Landscape features:

No Cultural Heritage Assessment appears to have been undertaken in consultation with Traditional Owners Yuggera Ugarapul. The Goodna-Redbank area was an important centre for Aboriginal occupation up until the 1800s (Ipswich City Council 2019). Multiple stone artefact concentrations and sub-surface Cultural Heritage items were identified during works on the Woogaroo Trunk Sewer Line (Turnstone Archaeology 2017). In nearby Camira, two Bora Rings (Earth Circle Site) and a path was

recorded (Satterthwait & Heather 1987). An archaeological expedition in 1991, discovered three Aboriginal sites and stone artefacts scattered along Woogaroo Creek (Ipswich City Council 2019). It is clearly a significant area and acquisition would honour this area as a feature of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage within the cultural landscape of Woogaroo Creek.

8. European cultural heritage values:

The Josey family of Eden Station occupied a lot of the land surrounding Woogaroo and Opossum Creek, known as one of the largest landholders in the Redbank Plains district (Ipswich City Council 2019). The former homestead was located on Opossum Creek (Ipswich City Council 2019). European cultural values are not featured on the subject property.

9. Landscape and aesthetic values:

The subject property is considered a tranquil place for local residents. Difficult topography and gully lines within the site provide a “sanctuary-type” experience. Woogaroo Creek is a shady, cool retreat on a hot day. The serenity of forested bushland and the sounds of birds within the area provide an escape from the hustle and bustle of the city.

The trails through the subject property are undulating, suitable for both walking and mountain bike trails. On the upper slopes, Koalas and Echidnas can be spotted. While the grassy open fields alongside Woogaroo Creek, provide outstanding bird watching experiences. Ebird has 95 bird Species recorded. The grassy plains adjacent to Woogaroo Creek are a haven for butterflies and dragonflies, Eastern Grey Kangaroos, Red-necked Wallabies and the occasional Swamp Wallaby. On dusk, you can hear the calls of the Powerful Owl and see the Short-eared Brushtail Possum emerge from its hollow to go down to Woogaroo Creek for a drink.

The aesthetic values of the property could be further enhanced with greater community ownership, where neglect from private ownership has allowed illegal dumping, omitted any fire management and enabled pest weed species to establish. Bollards to prevent vehicle access, formalised pathways for all abilities and interpretive signage are needed to enhance community awareness, providing education on the corridor’s natural ecology and cultural heritage.

10. Nature-based recreation opportunities:

The subject property is a biodiversity hotspot, located just 2 kms from Goodna train station and a major urban centre, St Ives Shopping Centre. There are significant opportunities to promote the area as a bird-watching destination. The subject property is ideally located to connect people with water and nature. Woogaroo Creek stretches from the Brisbane River to White Rock, which could provide active transport connections between adjoining suburbs, providing an alternative transport means, improving the safety of walkers, cyclists and joggers. An example of a connected pathway is the walking and cycling network that connects Hemmant to Altandi and provides a safe passage and multiple recreational opportunities.

11. Benefit to the community:

The preservation of the subject property offers many benefits to the community. Importantly, it helps to retain the peaceful, natural character of Bellbird Park, which is the attraction for many people to move to the suburbs. The site has significant potential for a number of recreational activities including walking, cycling, bird-watching and nature-based photography. Nature-based recreation opportunities support wellbeing and create community.

The site would benefit from weeding and tree planting activities that would also help communities combat the effects of 'nature deficit disorder' by providing learning opportunities for the community to safely explore and understand their natural environment. In keeping with Council's Active Parks promotion, the area could allow individual or group exercise classes which cater to a variety of life-styles eg mature-age, tai-chi and general fitness.

12. Ultimate cost of purchase (capital and recurrent costs):

This is dependent on evaluation and to be negotiated with the owner. However consideration should be given to constraints (overlays and burdens of easements) and nearly 33% of zoning classed as Recreational. The estimated land value is \$7,000,000. Acquisition can be through Enviroplan Levy & Open Space Developer Contributions Fund.

13. Economic opportunities:

The subject property offers a significant opportunity for Council to promote Ipswich's natural values and support for activating recreational spaces. The incredible biodiversity that exists within this area could become a major drawcard for residents not only of Ipswich but also surrounding cities such as Brisbane. The subject property is the central spine along a much larger Woogaroo Creek Corridor. A connected trail network could link the subject property to Goodna train station and the Centenary bikeway offering an alternative and safe method of transport for residents to travel to Brisbane, therefore relieving congestion from the roads. Its position adjacent to Ric Natrass Environmental Park and Eugene St Reserve further expands the economic opportunities, as the two spaces combined offer a range of walking and nature observation options, catering to different interests and fitness levels. Preserving the subject property would demonstrate Council's capacity to create economic activities which are sustainable and promote Ipswich as a city with impressive natural beauty.

Conclusion

The subject property is a valuable addition to the city's habitat network. While the cost is subject to evaluation, it has outstanding ecological values and opportunities to become one of Ipswich's most popular walking and recreational cycling trails. Despite not currently prioritised within the Nature Conservation Strategy, there is a strong argument to support its inclusion, given it is situated within the Woogaroo Corridor as part of a strategic corridor that facilitates the movement of biodiversity and people across the landscape.

References

28 South Environmental 2017, *Ecological Assessment Report Proposed Residential Sub-Division Lot 901 & 902 Eugene Street, Bellbird Park*, Report to Land Partners Pty Ltd, WC5721000 Final Planning report 20170626, Brisbane.

Grimshaw, P & Gillman, S 2018, *Report for the Proposed Development at Eugene Street, Bellbird Park*, Brisbane

Ipswich City Council 2018, *Sustainable Planning Act 2009 Development Application Decision Notice*, Ipswich.

Ipswich City Council 2019, *Six Mile Woogaroo and Goodna Creek*, viewed 25 January 2020, <https://www.ipswich.qld.gov.au/about_ipswich/environment/waterways/Six-Mile-Woogaroo-and-Goodna-Creek>.

Satterthwait, L & Heather, A 1987, 'Determinants of Earth Circle Site Location in the Moreton Region, Southeast Queensland', *Queensland Archaeological Research*, vol. 4, pp. 5-53.

Turnstone Archaeology 2017, *Keynote Projects - Jagera Daran P/L for Queensland Urban Utilities* viewed 25 January 2020, <www.turnstone.com.au>.

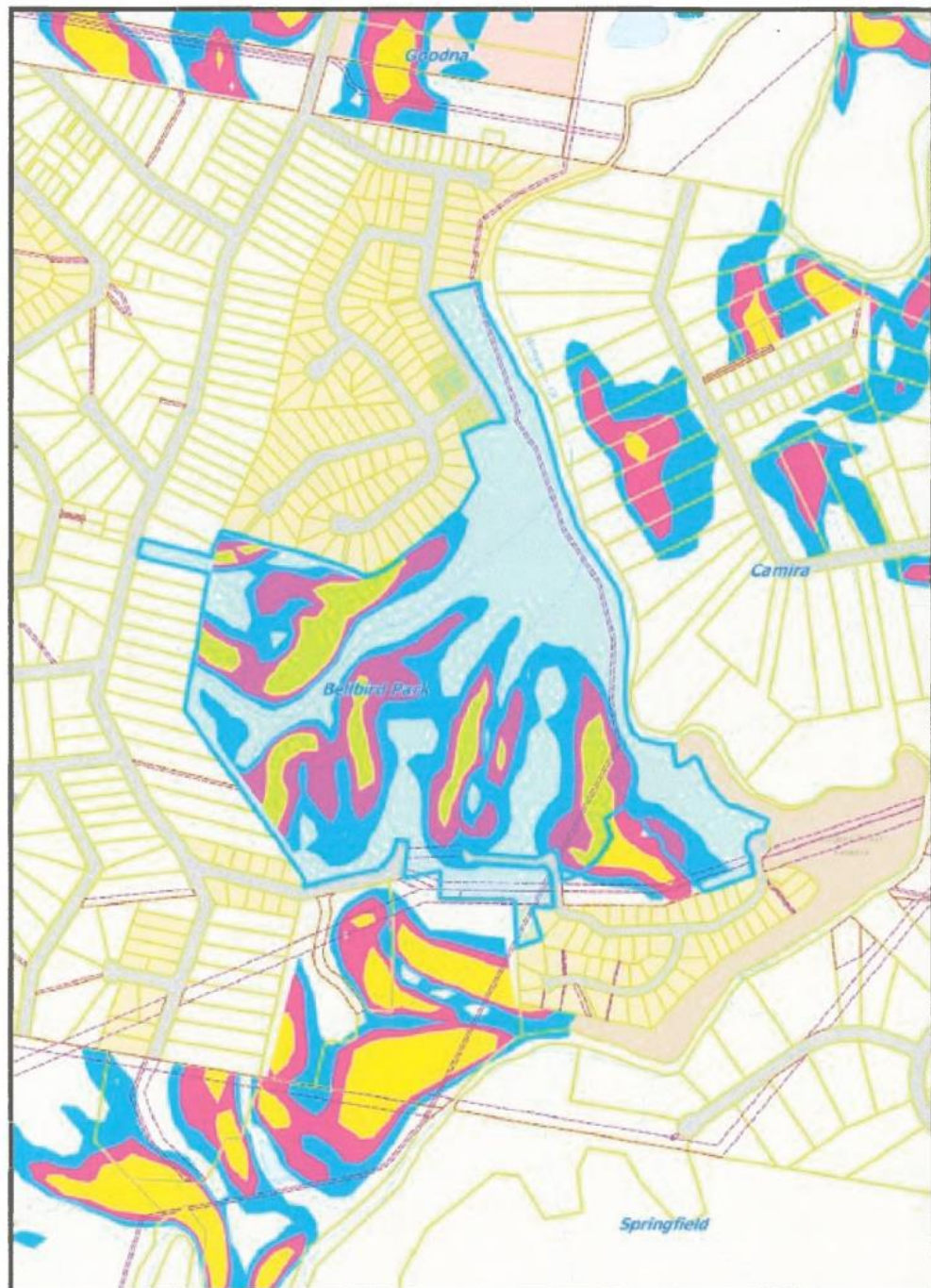
Figure 1. Subject property (outlined in light blue) with planning scheme zones for REC (light green) and RL02 (Pink).



12-26 Eugene St, Bellbird Park

Scale 1:12,641
Printed Date: 11 Jan 2020

Figure 2. Difficult Topography layer illustrated across most of the subject property. Slope 15-20% (Turquoise), 20-25% (Magenta) and slope greater than 25% (Yellow). The site is bound by Woogaroo Creek to the East and adjacent to Eugene St Reserve in the South East.



12-26 Eugene St, Bellbird Park

Scale 1:7,500
Printed Date: 11 Jan 2020

Figure 3. Example of what a Woogaroo and Opossum Creek Corridor Plan could look like.



5 January 2021

MEMORANDUM

TO: MANAGER (ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY)
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND LAND MANAGER

FROM: SENIOR PLANNING OFFICER (STRATEGIC CONSERVATION PLANNING)

RE: INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF 12 – 26 EUGENE STREET, BELLBIRD PARK LOTS (901 & 902 RP909175) AGAINST THE CRITERIA FOR ACQUISITION THROUGH THE IPSWICH ENVIROPLAN PROGRAM & LEVY

INTRODUCTION:

Assessment Request

This memorandum is in response to a request from [REDACTED] on behalf of the Bellbird Park Preservation Group for Council to investigate voluntarily acquiring 12-26 Eugene Street, Bellbird Park (Lots 901 & 902 RP909175) through the Ipswich Enviroplan Program. The subject property parcels are owned by CB Developments Australia Pty Ltd - refer Map 1 and Attachment A for context.



Map 1: Subject parcels.

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Written correspondence was received from the group at the Mayoral Office dated 28th January, 2020 (refer Objective ID A6034506). The correspondence is addressed to Mr. Steve Greenwood (Interim Administrator) and included a copy addressed to the Senior Planning Officer (Strategic Conservation).

The correspondence requested that Council:

- "1. Reviews / Re-Assesses the Eugene Street Site for acquisition.*
- 2. Initiate and undertake necessary processes to formalize acquisition negotiations between parties."*

The group's correspondence includes their assessment of the property against the criteria outlined in the *Ipswich Enviroplan Program & Levy Procedure*.

Council position is to voluntarily negotiate with landowners in any attempt to purchase land for environmental purposes through Enviroplan. Offers are made to purchase where the land owner is willing to sell on the open market. With this in mind, it should be noted that no interaction with the owner occurred during the initial assessment phase to understand any 'willingness to sell'.

Development Application and Court Case

At the time of receiving the request in January, the property was subject to a development application (RAL4432/2017) to reconfigure the 2 lots into 340 lots lodged by CB Developments Australia Pty Ltd and subsequent court case appealing the decision to refuse the application.

The court case (1727/2018) appealing the decision was in the Planning and Environment Court. Due to the land being subject of a development application and ongoing court case this assessment was placed 'on-hold'.

In late July, notification was received from council's Deputy General Council that a 'Notice of Discontinuance' had been filed by the appellant. As such the appeal was at an end. In serving the notice, the appellant indicated that they intended to lodge a new development application.

During the period the assessment was on-hold, there was intermittent communications between representatives from the group and various council representatives via email and telephone. At the time of producing this assessment report, the most recent engagement was on 3rd September regarding a meeting the previous day between the group, Cr Tully, Cr Jonic and council officers.

After careful consideration that the court action had ended and the development application was inactive (though a new application is likely to be submitted) it was decided that initial assessment could recommence.

Being that documentation pertaining to the application and case (i.e. ecological reports) were for a separate purpose altogether, they were not to be considered as part of this initial assessment process.

Process Overview

The Ipswich Enviroplan Program is funded through an annual community levy collected from Ipswich ratepayers. Funds are collected and accounted for, invested and managed separate to general revenue. Recognising limited funds availability, investment is undertaken through a structured, transparent and financially prudent framework.

The *Ipswich Enviroplan Program & Levy Policy* (Objective ID A5667330) outlines Council's position with respect to the use of levy funds to acquire land. When considering acquisition the purpose must be to 'protect and enhance the environmental values and ecological processes'. Key consideration are council's strategic citywide priorities and outcomes.

The supporting *Ipswich Enviroplan Program & Levy Procedure* (Objective ID A5667334) explains the broad use of levy funds to carry out acquisition. The procedure states that funding can be used towards the purchase of 'strategic land that contains environmental values that are consistent with the *Ipswich Enviroplan Land Acquisition Forward Plan/Portfolio* and which provide a range of other corporate and strategic outcomes'.

At the time of this assessment, the portfolio is in a state of review and redevelopment. With this in mind, the priority locations identified in *The Enviroplan Capital Investment Strategy 2017-2022* provided key direction. These locations are identified for there:

- Protection of large intact areas;
- Protection of sites with exceptional biodiversity values;
- Contribution to improving regional connectivity; and
- Buffering of current natural areas.

As a general rule funds are used to purchase property which is either of **key or core environmental value** or under threat of destruction where no other controlling mechanisms are available for protection. It is recognised that other properties of significant conservation or environmental value not under threat may also present opportunities for placement into public ownership.

The procedure outlines 13 standard evaluation criteria to which a property is assessed against. These criteria provides input into determining the strategic environmental values and the level of threat. The criteria are:

Principal Criteria

1. Enhancement of the overall protection and sustainable use of the natural environment within the City
2. Environmental significance & biodiversity values (including level of threat)
3. Level of priority within the Nature Conservation Strategy
4. Proximity to the current or future Natural Area Estate

Supplementary Criteria

5. Creation of strategic and new habitat areas that build connectivity
6. Protection of water quality and catchment values
7. Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and Aboriginal Cultural Landscape features
8. European cultural heritage values
9. Landscape and aesthetic values
10. Nature-based recreation opportunities
11. Benefit to the community
12. Ultimate cost of purchase (capital & recurrent costs)
13. Economic opportunities

As a guide, land purchased must meet at least one of the four Principal Criteria and one or more of the nine Supplementary Criteria.

Requests for acquisition are assessed against the criteria. The initial assessment is part of broader process for acquisition that includes:

- Undertake initial investigation to determine suitability
- Carry-out detailed assessments (subject to suitability)
- Enter into voluntary negotiations with property owner (subject to assessment)
- Seek approval to voluntary acquire (subject to negotiations)

Information contained in this memorandum is for the explicit purpose of acquisition assessment only, through the Enviroplan Program & levy (separate). It does not represent an acquisition assessment through any other council program or funding stream (e.g. general revenue).

Previous Acquisition Assessment

It should be noted that an assessment was undertaken by the Planning Officer (Biodiversity) in June 2018 (refer Objective ID A5678645). The assessment was carried out under the now superseded *Ipswich Enviroplan Acquisition Policy* (refer Objective A5681876). The policy was replaced by the current *Ipswich Enviroplan Program & Levy Policy and Procedure*.

BACKGROUND:

Lots 901 (32.3ha) & 902 (1.4ha) are privately owned parcels totalling 33.7ha. Both parcels are located in the suburb of Bellbird Park and are owned by CB Developments Australia.

The parcels are predominately zoned Residential Low Density. There is an area zoned Recreation in the proximity of a watercourse - refer Attachment B.

Pipelines (and easements) for oil/gas and water are located along the southern boundary of the properties. Sewerage mains (and easements) run through the property in a north south direction, predominately parallel with the creek - refer Attachment C.

The property is mapped as containing mainly (3) three types of woodland:

- Mixed eucalypt species on the slope - refer Image 1
- Mixed eucalypt species with softwood understorey species in the dry gullies
- Mixed riparian species (along alluvial flat and watercourse) - refer Image 2



Image 2: Indicative of vegetation on slope.



Image 2: Indicative of vegetation on alluvial flat and along watercourse.

The property has evidence of illegal dumping and multiple vehicle access tracks. The alluvial flats and watercourse shows widespread disturbance from pest plants, in particular Chinese elm, Camphor laurel and Green panic. Vegetation in gullies appears to be impacted by pest plants such as Cat's Claw Creeper.

Topographically, the property is mostly undulating with an alluvial flat containing Woogaroo Creek. The creek forms the eastern boundary.

Surrounding land use is medium density residential to the north and west. Council's Eugene Street Reserve (Local Bushland Reserve) is located adjacent to the property and to the south. Large lot residential land is located to the east. High proportion of surrounding properties have retained tree coverage.

INITIAL ASSESSMENT:

The following initial assessment uses available information from Council officers, corporate and State Government databases, datasets, maps and reference resources.

A brief observation was undertaken by the Planning Officer (Biodiversity) and Senior Planning Officer (Strategic Conservation Planning) for the discrete purpose of general familiarisation with the area and property.

Photographic records of the site visit were taken for background purposes only (Objective ID A6038097). The visit should not be considered a detailed ecological study or site analysis, rather a 'snapshot' observation.

Ipswich Enviroplan Program – Land Acquisition Assessment Criteria

Principal Criteria

(1) Enhancement of the overall protection and sustainable use of the natural environment within the City:

- Vegetation appears variable in size and consequently age. Larger trees are broadly distributed, showing characteristics of past disturbance i.e. potentially historical selective logging practices which was common in the area.
- There is evidence of disturbances such as pest plants, vehicle tracks and illegal rubbish dumping typical of bushland within close proximity of built-up areas. The vegetation observed showed limited evidence of recent fire activity.
- Property is linked by a vegetated waterway corridor along Woogaroo Creek. The corridor extends and connects to the Brisbane River (3km to the north) and White Rock – Spring Mountain Conservation Estate (6km to the south).
- Woogaroo Creek is located in a mostly developed urban residential area. Notably, extensive lengths of the creek corridor are within council parks and reserves network.
- Approximately 23ha (or two thirds) of the property is zoned residential low density, which includes the slopes and gullies. Generally, residential zoned land affords limited environmental protection through the planning scheme.

- Approximately 10ha (or one third) is zoned recreation and mainly includes the alluvial flat and waterway corridor. The recreation zone provides some level of protection through the planning scheme, predominately associated with vegetation. Typically, land zoned recreation is used for:
 - Active and passive recreation;
 - Linear/riparian corridors as open space links; and
 - Private and public sporting/recreation facilities.
- The 880m length of recreation zoned waterway corridor along the eastern boundary of the property varies in width from 60m at its narrowest point to slightly wider than 160m.
- Usually where a property is mix zoned residential low density and recreation, the recreation zone is contributed to council through a development assessment processes. In most circumstances the zoned land would be contributed as Public Park in accordance with the Local Government Infrastructure Plan (LGIP).

(2) *Environmental significance & biodiversity values (including level of threat):*

(2.1) Regional Ecosystems Vegetation:

- The regional ecosystem community on the property is mapped as 12.9-10.2 'Corymbia citriodora subsp. variegata +/- Eucalyptus crebra open forest on sedimentary rocks' (refer Attachment D). State legislation classifies the vegetation as 'least concern' under the *Vegetation Management Act (VMA) 1999* (Qld). A community is listed as 'least concern' under the Act if remnant vegetation is over 30% of its pre-clearing extent across the bioregion, and the remnant area is greater than 10,000ha.
- Commonly referred to as 'Spotted gum/Iron bark', this community is the most common type in the Ipswich LGA. Over 16,000ha is mapped (2017).
- Spotted gum/Iron bark is extensively protected within Councils Natural Area Estate with over 5000ha mapped (2017). Spotted gum/Iron bark is the most extensive vegetation represented within White Rock-Spring Mountain Conservation Estate, Mt Grandchester Conservation Estate and Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate.
- Spotted gum/Iron bark is granted minimal protection in the Ipswich Planning Scheme and is considered poorly represented within State protected areas.
- A relatively small area observed during the site visit appeared to contain stands of *Eucalyptus moluccana*, commonly known as Gum-topped Box, than typical for 12.9-10.2 regional ecosystem community. This indicates the vegetation could either be:
 - 12.9-10.3 '*Eucalyptus moluccana* open forest on sedimentary rocks' regional ecosystem community; or
 - An 'ecotone/transition'¹ area – a mix of both communities.

¹ An ecotone is a transition area between two communities, where they meet and integrate. It has some of the characteristics of each bordering community and often contains species not found in the overlapping communities.

- Gum-topped Box community is classified as 'Of concern' under the VMA. A regional ecosystem is listed as 'of concern' under the Act if:
 - remnant vegetation is 10–30% of its pre-clearing extent across the bioregion; or
 - more than 30% of its pre-clearing extent remains and the remnant extent is less than 10,000ha
- Stands of Gum-topped Box community is known to occur within neighbouring suburbs and is mapped accordingly in locations such as Eric Street, Goodna and Stanicki Circuit, Bellbird Park.
- Gum-topped Box community has minimal representation in Council's Natural Area Estate. 13 hectares is present within the estate at sites such as Mount Grandchester Conservation Estate. There are several known small patches that would potentially be mapped within the Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate and Hillview Drive Reserve.
- A small number of local level bushland reserves have Gum-topped Box mapped within, notably Jones Road Reserve (13 hectares), Collingwood Drive Transmission Easement (15 hectares) and Pine Mountain Bush Reserve (25 hectares).
- Gum-topped Box community is granted minimal protection in the Ipswich Planning Scheme and low representation within State protected areas.
- No threatened Federal/Commonwealth listed communities under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* are known to occur on the property.
- To be certain a site ecological assessment and mapping by a suitably qualified professional is required.

(2.2) Endangered, Vulnerable & Near Threatened (EVNT) Flora:

- A search of State Government Database 'Wildnet' yielded no EVNT flora records associated with the property.
- A query of the database for EVNT flora records within a 5km radius of the property yields:
 - 2 records of *Plectranthus harbrophyllus* (Commonwealth – Endangered, Queensland – Endangered). It is unlikely to occur on the property as it is mainly restricted to rocky ledges and outcrops on western facing slopes.
 - 3 records of *Marsdenia coronata* (Commonwealth – not listed, Queensland – Vulnerable). It is likely to occur on site as its habitat is fairly common in Ipswich. Over 100 specimen records are found within the Natural Area Estate, most notably in White Rock-Spring Mountain and Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estates. It is council's understanding that this species will potentially be removed from the threatened species lists in the near future.
 - 6 records of *Eucalyptus curtisii* (Commonwealth – not listed, Queensland – Near threatened). *Eucalyptus curtisii* has some potential to occur on site. Its wild habitat requirements are not well understood within Ipswich.
- A search of Council's corporate records indicate that several *Gossia gonoclada* (Commonwealth – Endangered, Queensland – Endangered) have been historically planted in

the vicinity of Woogaroo Creek. The exact location of the planting is not known. However, there are no records of the species either naturally occurring or planted on the property. The gully areas of the property present some favourable habitat for the species, however historic disturbance and competition with weed trees and extreme susceptibility to myrtle rust means that its presence is unlikely. It is likely that the species is extinct in the wild within the Ipswich LGA aside from 'planted' specimens in a few select locations. The species is not represented in the estate.

- Council's database identifies no records of *Notelaea lloydii* (Commonwealth – *Vulnerable*, Queensland – *Vulnerable*) and *Sophora fraseri* (Commonwealth – *Vulnerable*, Queensland – *Vulnerable*) within 5km of the property. However, gullies similar to those mapped on the property, present favourable habitat for their occurrence. *N.lloydii* is uncommon in the estate with fewer than 10 records in Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate and Cameron's Scrub (Kholo Enviroplan Reserve). Although there is significant areas of habitat for *S.fraseri* in the estate, there are no recorded specimens.
- Council's database has no records of *Callitris baileyi* (Commonwealth – not listed, Queensland – *Near threatened*) nearby and is unlikely to occur on the property as it does not occur this far-east in the city.
- Although not classified as EVNT flora, a number of Matters of Local Environment Significance (MLES) flora have potential to occur on site and would need confirmation:
 - *Flemingia parviflora*
 - *Boronia rosmarinifolia*
 - *Diospyros australis*
 - *Melaleuca linariifolia*
 - *Melaleuca quinquenervia*
 - *Corymbia henryi*
 - *Ficus rubiginosa*
 - *Indigofera baileyi*
 - *Stephania renifolia*

- A site ecological assessment is required to survey for presence of flora EVNT and MLES.

(2.3) Endangered, Vulnerable & Near Threatened (EVNT) Fauna:

- A search of Council and State databases indicates a number of EVNT fauna have been recorded either on the property or in close proximity. The following fauna species are of note:
 - **Powerful Owl:** A breeding pair of Powerful owls *Ninox strenua* (Commonwealth – not listed, Queensland – *Vulnerable*) have been recorded on the property and within 1km - refer Objective ID A6056913.

Council has around 100 records of Powerful owls for the city, including 20 as part of a study in 2019-2020. The records are widespread on a mix of private and public lands. This suggests Powerful owls are relatively widely dispersed across Ipswich.

Records and populations are known to exist in the estate at locations including Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate, White Rock-Spring Mountain Conservation Estate, Mt Grandchester Conservation Estate, Redbank Rifle Range Reserve and Cameron's Scrub (Kholo Enviroplan Reserve). All of these reserves can be considered Powerful owl habitat given they have large home ranges and prey on relatively common species such as Brush-tailed possums and Flying-foxes.

Bushland in Redbank Rifle Range Reserve and Austin Street and Eugene Street are known populations in the east of the city's urban areas. Several other bushland areas are likely to contain Powerful owl habitat, however need further investigation.

Studies of Powerful owls from greater Sydney indicate that in urban areas they keep small home ranges relative to rural areas. This is likely due to the urban prevalence of prey species such as Common brushtail possums and Flying-foxes. A breeding range of a Powerful owl can be as small as 100 hectares and even smaller where there are wetter and intact gullies.

Topographically the property seems to contain three gullies totalling approximately 1300m in length. The extent of intactness and suitability for Powerful owls is not known.

A site ecological assessment is required to survey for presence of Powerful owl habitat suitability.

○ **Various Frog Species of Significance:**

- **Tusked frog:** Relatively common in greater Bellbird Park, the Tusked frog *Adelotus brevis* (Commonwealth – not listed, Queensland – Vulnerable) has been recorded 1km from the property. The frog has 6 records across the city, but it is likely that this is under recorded given how common its habitat is within the city. There is suitable habitat within much of the estate, however presence has not been recorded. This is due to insufficient survey activity.

Typically the Tusked frog prefers any wet areas with thick vegetation cover and temporary inundation. This species can also be found in more unsuspecting habitat such as small drainage lines with thick exotic grass. Such potential habitat appeared to be common along the riparian areas of the property.

- **Green-thighed frog:** Although no longer a vulnerable species in Queensland, the Green-thighed frog *Litoria brevipalmata* is considered by council a Matter of Local Environmental Significance. There is record of Green-thighed frog on the property from the 1990s. To council's knowledge the frog has not been recorded at the property since.

Moodai Reserve (560m west of the property) has records as recent as 2017. There are approximately 20 records across the city. Majority of records are on private land with a small number in other local level bushland reserves including the neighbouring Eugene Street Reserve and Pine Mountain Bush Reserve

located in the north of the city. The Natural Area Estate contains no known records of the frog.

- Typically Green-thighed frog prefer ephemeral pools adjacent to bushland with leaf litter cover.
- A number of ephemeral pools were observed on the property including some that were inundated at the time and others that remained dry.
- Potential exists for the property to contain frog habitat that can support a diverse range of species. High quality frog habitat is not common within Ipswich. For a map of frog species in proximity of the subject property refer Objective ID A6056814.
- A site ecological assessment is required to survey for presence of significant frog species habitat suitability and determine significance.
- **Koala:** Sightings of Koala *Phascolarctos cinereus* (Commonwealth – Vulnerable, Queensland – Vulnerable) are common in greater Bellbird Park - refer Objective ID A6056848 for map. The suburb contains a number of medium (around 15ha) to large remnants (around 30ha) on a mix of public and private land tenures.
 - The primary vegetation type mapped on the property (12.9-10.2) is typically lower value for koalas. However given the larger than expected proportion of *Eucalyptus moluccana* observed, the value of the koala habitat² on site is moderately higher compared to most areas of similar vegetation types.
 - Records from the State Government, typically sourced from Ipswich Koala Protection Society data, indicate impacts associated with road kill appear to be relatively low for Bellbird Park and surrounding suburbs. This is due to the absence of high speed multilane roads (e.g. highways and arterial roads) that greatly increase risk.
 - There is reasonable vegetation connectivity links between the property and urban remnant populations on the “Cherish Enterprises Development Site” (383m to the south), Ric Natrass Environmental Reserve (275m to the north) and Redbank Rifle Range (1.6km to the northwest).

These links are provided by remnant vegetation containing habitat trees within private properties on both sides of Woogaroo Creek, south along Opossum Creek and west to Moodai Reserve. Being that these links are through private property, it should be noted that they are afforded limited protection (e.g. tree removal) and management (e.g. dog attack).

The property’s koala values are likely to be greatly diminished if localised urban development of larger remnants occurs in the future e.g. Cherish Enterprises Development Site.

² Preferred Koala habitat can be defined by the proportion of primary food trees within a patch of bushland. Within Ipswich these trees include *Eucalyptus tereticornis*, *Eucalyptus major*, *Eucalyptus propinqua*, *Eucalyptus microcorys* and *Eucalyptus moluccana*.

- Koala habitat has been extensively protected in the Natural Area Estate, particularly White Rock-Spring Mountain Conservation, Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate and Mount Grandchester Conservation Estate.
- Consistent with Council's *Koala Conservation and Habitat Management Plan*, this property presents an opportunity to secure a further urban node that would contribute to maintaining an urban koala population.
- **Glossy Black-Cockatoo:** Bellbird Park Preservation Society has recorded Glossy black-cockatoo *Calyptorhynchus lathami* (Commonwealth – not listed, Queensland – *Vulnerable*) on the property – unverified. Being that this species can be misidentified with other more common black cockatoo species (e.g. Yellow tailed black cockatoo), preference is for photographic evidence to validate the observation. Glossy black-cockatoo is not often found in disturbed urban areas and the closest known population records occur in the relatively large and intact White Rock-Spring Mountain Conservation Estate. Glossy black cockatoo habitat is scattered throughout the estate and Natural Area Network more broadly.

High quality habitat patches, meaning bushland containing high volumes of mature *Allocasuarina littoralis* and *Allocasuarina torulosa*, have been recorded in White Rock – Spring Mountain Conservation Estate (385 hectares) and Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate (200 hectares). There is also large patches of habitat and records in Mt Grandchester Conservation Estate, although these have not been mapped in detail as yet.

- A major food source for Glossy black-cockatoo, *Allocasuarina littoralis* is known to be associated with vegetation communities mapped on the property. A number of individual specimens of the plant species were observed on the property, although the level of abundance and extent is unclear.
- Glossy black-cockatoos are dependent on large hollow-bearing eucalypts for nest sites. Due to the age of vegetation on the property, the likelihood of hollow-bearing eucalypts being present is low.
- A site ecological assessment is required to survey for presence habitat suitable for Glossy black-cockatoo.
- **Grey-Headed Flying Fox:** Due to the species composition of the vegetation on the property, notably *Corymbia citriodora*, it is likely to provide winter foraging habitat for Grey-headed flying-fox *Pteropus poliocephalus* (Commonwealth – *Vulnerable*, Queensland – not listed). Grey-headed flying-foxes undergo a winter food resource bottleneck during the June-July period. Research used to list the species under the EPBC Act identifies the areas in South-east Queensland, including Ipswich, Logan and Brisbane as some of the most important areas for the species during this period. A vast majority of the vegetation types within the estate are suitable winter foraging habitat - in excess of 5,000 hectares.
- Remnant vegetation patches of *Corymbia citriodora* in urban areas such as likely to be found on this property, can support Grey-headed flying-foxes in their ecological role as important pollinators.

- **Platypus:** Environmental DNA assessments conducted as part of a joint project between the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland and council have confirmed the presence of the locally significant Platypus *Ornithorhynchus anatinus* in neighbouring Eugene Street Reserve. Visual sightings have been recorded 2.7 km upstream in council's Opossum Creek Parklands and 1.4 km downstream – refer Objective ID A6056880 for map.
 - This section of Woogaroo Creek bordering the property is generally good platypus habitat, scoring 41/56 points in Council's *Platypus Habitat Assessment Matrix*.
 - The vast majority of riparian habitat across the city is potentially suitable for Platypus. Most known habitat occurs on public land and is of moderate quality. Extremely high quality patches of platypus habitat are quite rare and mainly restricted to the mid-Brisbane River. This section of river contains several protected areas including Sapling Pocket, Cameron's Scrub (Kholo Enviroplan Reserve) and Kholo Gardens parkland.
 - Insufficient large woody debris and the presence of an extremely sandy substrate limit the platypus food resources.
 - The water in Woogaroo creek can be very turbid and high in sediment at times. While this does not directly impact platypus, it can result in decreased prey and subsequently lead to less reliable conditions and lower population density.

(2.4) Koala Habitat Values:

- The property is mapped as 'Koala Bushland Habitat' under the recently released *SEQ Koala Conservation Strategy 2020-2025*.
- It is not mapped as a 'Koala Priority Area' – which would prohibit clearing all together.

(2.5) Other Valuable Habitat Features Considerations and Matters of Local Environment Significance Fauna:

- The age of vegetation observed on the property, particularly in the upper slopes away from Woogaroo Creek appears relatively young. There appears to be limited trees of a sufficient age to establish large hollows to support larger glider species such as Greater Glider *Petauroides volans* (Commonwealth – *Vulnerable*, Queensland – not listed). Moodai Reserve, 560m west of the property, is the nearest recorded sighting of Greater Glider. Large hollow bearing trees are known to occur within the reserve.
- There is potential the vegetation on the property provides habitat for smaller hollow dependent mammals such as the locally significant Squirrel glider *Petaurus norfolcensis*.
- The following locally significant fauna are **likely** to occur on the property:
 - Rakali (Native Water Rat) *Hydromys chrysogaster*
 - Squirrel glider *Petaurus norfolcensis*
 - Brush tailed phascogale *Phascogale tapoatafa*

- Grey crowned babbler *Pomatostomus temporalis*
- Black chinned honeyeater *Melithreptus gularis*
- Green thighed frog *Litoria brevipalmata*
- The following locally significant fauna **may** occur on the property:
 - Rufous bettong *Aepyprymnus rufescens* – subject to the extent of blady grass shelter and abundance of foxes
 - Tyler’s tree frog *Litoria tyleri* – not very common locally
 - Ornate rainbow fish *Rhadinocentrus ornatus* – population declines across most of its range. Although unlikely to occur, this section of Woogaroo creek hasn’t been surveyed for fish.

(2.6) Threats to Values:

- Potential values associated with the property are possibly at threat should the property be subject of residential development in the future. However, this is only speculating given it is not known what extent a development would take. It is recognised that maintaining potential values in residential low density zoned areas can be challenging. The area zoned recreation potentially provides opportunity to protect and enhance any potential values.
- Potential immediate threats to the property’s environmental values include:
 - Habitat loss, fragmentation and reduced quality of vegetation in the immediate vicinity
 - Reduction in the extent and quality of vegetation connecting the property to core habitat areas
 - Increased edge effects associated with uncontrolled and unmanaged vehicle tracks
 - Pest plant competing with native vegetation
 - Unsuitable fire regime reducing diversity and habitat elements
 - Domestic dog activity
 - Illegal rubbish dumping – harbouring pest plants & home for pest animals

(3) Level of priority within the Nature Conservation Strategy (NCS) 2015:

- From a citywide conservation planning context, the property is not located in a mapped *Priority Conservation or Rehabilitation Area*³ in the strategy.
- The NCS identifies the corresponding Recreation Zoned area as ‘Urban Corridor’ within the ‘Ipswich Environment Network’⁴. Urban Corridors generally provide local connectivity and a focal point for rehabilitation activities e.g. community pest plant removal and tree planting.

³ Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs) are areas of significance that provide high ecosystem services and contain biodiversity which face elevated threats whilst Priority Rehabilitation Areas (PRAs) are areas that currently lack high levels of environmental values, but provide important linkages within the habitat network.

⁴ **Ipswich Environment Network** - Comprising of a system of core habitat areas connected through the landscape by corridors.

- The balance of the property is not mapped in the network. There is a potential opportunity to broaden the corridor and create a protected vegetated 'stepping stone'. This stepping stone possibly will support Urban Nodes located through the developed landscape in the eastern part of the city. Existing protected smaller Urban Nodes in eastern parts that supplement the larger Core Habitat Areas include:
 - Ric Natrass Environmental Park (13ha), located 0.3km to the north of the property
 - Redbank Rifle Range (142ha), planned to be a future Conservation Estate, located 1.6km to the north-west of the property
 - Jones Road Reserve (14ha), located 2km to the south west of the property
 - Bridgewater Park (2ha), Opossum Creek Reserve (10ha) & Clancy's Reserve (11ha), located 3km to the south of the property
 - Greenbank Military Base Buffer Area (134ha), Commonwealth managed, located 2.4km to the south east of the property
- The property contains areas mapped with 'Climate Change Refugia⁵' aspects, scoring between two and five (refer Attachment E). Six is the maximum score. The higher the score the more criteria have been identified to be potentially found on the property. The highest mapped area is associated with vegetation along one of the gullies. Areas of high climate change refugia value are considered to be of important local environmental significance. To assist Ipswich's natural environment and biodiversity gain a level of resilience to the impacts caused by a changing climate, council is working towards catering for areas providing local refuge to biodiversity from extremes.
- The property has patches mapped as providing higher 'Ecosystem Functions and Services⁶'. The greater the number of functions and services, the higher an areas potential ecosystem service score.

(4) Proximity to the current or future Natural Area Estate (NAE):

- The property is located in a precinct containing several protected natural areas (refer Attachment F).
- If purchased using Enviroplan levy funds, the property would be incorporated into council's Natural Area Estate (NAE). Due to the properties size, it would be categorised as a 'District Level Conservation Reserve' by application under Council's *Open Space and Recreation Strategy (OSRS)* classification system. Typically, District Conservation Reserves have medium to high conservation values, and as such are somewhat more appropriate for low-impact recreational use.

⁵ **Climate Change Refugia** – defined as an area which will face the least change to its climate in the future. It is an area which is stable, accessible and large enough to sustain viable populations of the species residing within it.

⁶ **Ecosystem Functions and Services** - Can be divided up into four categories: provisioning (e.g. fresh water), regulating (e.g. climate), cultural (e.g. recreation) and supporting service (e.g. nutrient cycling).

(4.1) Proximity to Current Natural Area Estate:

- The property is not located adjacent to a current Natural Area Estate property.
- Ric Natrass Environmental Park (13ha) is located 0.3km to the north. Partially vegetated private properties separate the property and the park.
- Redbank Rifle Range (142ha), planned to be a future Conservation Estate, is located 1.6km to the north-west. It also is separated by private property.
- White Rock – Spring Mountain Conservation Estate (2,626ha) is located 4.7km to the south. The property is linked by land along the water courses and typically zoned recreation

(4.2) Proximity to Current Local Reserve Network:

- Eugene Street Reserve (5ha) is located adjacent to the property. The reserve is managed as a Local Bushland Reserve.
- A further eight Council reserves of various size and habitat quality are scattered within 1.5km radius of the property, many located along the creek network.

(4.3) Future Natural Area Estate:

- The property is not identified in a priority location⁷ for future Natural Area Estate or acquisition priority area in Council's adopted *Enviroplan Capital Investment Strategy 2017-2022*.
- The property is not ranked in Council's acquisition plan - *Securing Ipswich City's Open Space (2006)*. A review and update of the plan is underway.
- Purchase of this property would represent a significant investment in a location outside current council strategic priorities and corporate direction.

Supplementary Criteria*(5) Creation of strategic and new habitat areas that build connectivity:*

- The property presents an opportunity to secure and actively manage an 880m section of Woogaroo Creek and increase the existing environmental values within Eugene Street Reserve. Securing and actively managing the Recreation Zoned portion of the property may also be realised through dedication of the portion to Council as part of a development process under the Planning Scheme.

⁷ **Priority locations are:** Grandchester, Ripley Valley, Pine Mountain, 10 Mile and 7 Mile Swamps.

- The property, along with Eugene Street Reserve has potential to form a protected node. This node would connect to Council owned land along Opossum Creek (adjacent to Cherish Enterprises Land) to the south and Ric Natrass Environment Park to the north.
- The property is bordered by five Conservation Agreement properties. These agreements do not offer long-term protection of environmental values in perpetuity. Landholders are active within the program in undertaking project works including pest plant management, bank restoration works and feral animal management.

(6) Protection of water quality and catchment values:

- An 880 meter section of Woogaroo creek runs adjacent to the property. The creek is classified as a stream order five.
- The riparian vegetation along creek is dominated by pest plants – particularly large woody weed trees. Riparian vegetation is similar to that both up-stream and downstream of the property.
- The alluvial areas and parts of the gullies are mapped as being flood affected (refer Attachment G).
- The property is mapped as containing three low order streams (gullies) which flow through it into Woogaroo Creek.
- Intrinsic waterway values would be present but at this point are not qualified.

(7) Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and Aboriginal Cultural Landscape features:

- The State Government's Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnership's Cultural Heritage Database search of the property indicates there is no 'Aboriginal Cultural Heritage' registered at the property. The search did identify a large number of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage sites registered on the database in close proximity.
- Furthermore, Turnstone Archaeology (on behalf of Jagera Daran P/L) had uncovered hundreds of artefacts in close proximity as part of the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage investigations for a Queensland Urban Utilities project.
- Council received an enquiry back in 2018 pertaining to a possible 'scar tree' that is located within Lot 901 RP909175, but at this stage remains non-validated.

Trees are scarred as a result of the removal of bark for the manufacture of material cultural items such as shields, water containers, canoes and shelter. Scarred trees are common in riverine areas (i.e. in this case Woogaroo Creek). Within Lot 901 scarred trees may not be a common site due to previous logging and clearing activities – making any potential 'scar tree' worthy of further investigation and subsequent protection.

- For the following reasons, further Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Investigations to establish the full extent of the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and Cultural Landscape Values is recommended due to:
 - Possible scar tree (# Aboriginal Cultural Heritage)
 - Access to fresh water/waterways (Woogaroo Creek) are crucial in understanding where sites of Aboriginal occupation would have been (# Cultural Landscape Values)
 - Registered Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in close proximity
 - Previous Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Surveys (i.e. Turnstone Archaeology) revealing Aboriginal Occupation in the area (stone artefacts)
 - Cultural Landscape within the area – i.e. Camira Bora Grounds, White Rock
- To date no Aboriginal Cultural Heritage investigations/surveys have been undertaken with the registered Native Title Party for Ipswich.
- For further background information on Aboriginal Cultural Heritage matters refer Objective ID A6056934.

(8) European cultural heritage values:

- Woogaroo Creek is known for historical experimental logging plots, remnants of which still exist in locations along the creek. Trials included the use of Flooded gum species. A large specimen of one such gum was noted on the creek bank adjacent to the property.
- The property is not identified as a Character Place under Schedule 2 of the Ipswich Planning Scheme.
- A council officer has noted a historical marker tree on Eugene Street Reserve. Being in close proximity to the property there is potential for similar European cultural values. Further investigation of values is suggested.

(9) Landscape and aesthetic values:

- There are no known notable landmark features or viewing locations.
- Being framed within an urbanised landscape, the importance of the property for its aesthetic values to the community would likely be greatest for local residents in comparison to the wider community.
- Being that the maximum contour line mapped on the property is 60 meters and the broader area is undulating, the potential landscape and aesthetic values would predominantly be on a local scale.
- The property's location presents an opportunity to protect and enhance a section of vegetated green corridor along Woogaroo creek and the accompanying slope. Protecting and enhancing the Recreation Zoned portion of the property may also be realised through

dedication of the portion to Council as part of a development process under the Planning Scheme.

(10) *Nature-based recreation opportunities:*

- Due to the proximity of current and future urban areas, the property has potential to provide:
 - Local community conservation education and restoration/regeneration programs
 - Nature walks and experiences for the local community
 - Local community sense of ownership with on-site activities
- The presence of a waterway provides potential for walking trails to be located along a comparatively green scenic setting.
- Pending demand and detailed on-ground investigation, there is potential for further visitor management and environmental education infrastructure on the property – particularly linking to the values of the area and the broader green network.

(11) *Benefit to the community:*

- Securing, managing, providing accessibility and activating the property may contribute to improving the general social well-being of the local community.
- A local community group have a keen interest in the property's protection and ongoing management. Securing the property provides a potential site for them and other community groups with environmental interest to focus efforts on.

(12) *Ultimate cost of purchase (capital & recurrent costs):*

(12.1) *Assessment investigation cost:*

- The gathering of more comprehensive information (i.e. ecological) on the property as part of the assessment will require an estimated budget of between \$30,000 and \$50,000.

(12.2) *Purchase cost:*

- Historically, Enviroplan acquisitions have been undertaken to secure larger intact areas with exceptional values, characteristically located in rural landscapes.
- Typically, the cost per hectare of land within urban landscapes is significantly higher in comparison to rural landscapes.
- A kerbside (restricted) property valuation assessment indicates a market value of [REDACTED] for both parcels – a rate of [REDACTED] per hectare. In comparison, a recent independent purchase price through Enviroplan for a 65ha property in rural Grandchester was [REDACTED] a rate of [REDACTED] per hectare.

- Purchasing the property would surpass the largest single land acquisition investment by [REDACTED]. The current highest the purchase in 2012 was of three (3) parcels totalling 186ha of the regionally significant Little Liverpool Range for [REDACTED] (included into the Mount Grandchester Conservation Estate).
- Based on the Enviroplan reserve balance at the end of June 2020 of [REDACTED] an investment in purchasing the property represents a considerable draw-down of reserve funds. This would substantially reduce the ability for Enviroplan to fund future acquisitions within identified strategic priority areas i.e. securing a link between White Rock - Spring Mountain and Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estates.
- As the 10ha Recreation Zoned area of the property would likely be transferred to council through future development processes, purchasing would represent [REDACTED] investment in land council is likely to receive. Purchase of the balance 23ha of residential zoned area would signify an investment of [REDACTED].
- The property purchase will require Council resolution under the *Local Government Regulation 2012* and Council policies.

(12.3) Initial capital costs:

- Although a more detailed site visit is required, conceptual estimate of initial capital investment is estimated at [REDACTED] including:
 - Extensive fencing to secure the site – approximately [REDACTED] (allowing for 1000 meters)
 - Fuel break works – approximately [REDACTED] (allowing for 35,000 square meters)
 - Service track rationalisation – approximately [REDACTED] (allowing for 2000 meters)
 - Slip rail access gates – approximately [REDACTED] (allowing for 4)
 - Clean-up of illegal rubbish dumping is estimated at [REDACTED] (allowing for 5 cubic meters)

(12.3) Ongoing capital and maintenance costs:

- Recurrent capital and maintenance costs is likely to include (but not limited to):
 - Staged pest plant removal and subsequent revegetation works
 - Ongoing pest plant management and illegal dumping management
 - Recreation trail establishment and maintenance
 - Ongoing manual vegetated fuel reduction
- Typically urban bushland reserves require greater levels of maintenance investment to maintain ecological values than those located in rural landscapes. With over 60 parcels backing on to the property, it will require relatively more investment to maintain reduced fuel risks and spread of pest plants.

(13) *Economic opportunities:*

- Is unlikely to contain values or experiences considered to be of a scale, significance or interest to attract citywide visitation or tourists and subsequent spending in the local area.
- The economic opportunities primarily relate to the potential benefits to the local community associated with the contribution should recreational trail/s eventually be developed.
- Increased local active space can have a flow-on economic benefit i.e. health.

INITIAL ASSESSMENT SUMMARY:

Criteria	Matters of Note:
Principal Criteria -	
1. Enhancement of the overall protection and sustainable use of the natural environment within the City	Would protect 23ha from development. The balance 10ha being zoned recreation affords a level of protection and would likely be transferred to council.
2. Environmental significance & biodiversity values (including level of threat)	<p>Contains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record of Powerful owls (vulnerable), habitat for which is extensively represented in the Estate. Grey-headed flying fox (vulnerable) winter foraging habitat, which is extensively represented in the Estate. Contains a record of Green thighed frog (locally significant). No records of frog within the Estate. <p>Mostly contains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spotted gum/Iron Bark community, the most common vegetation mapped in the city. Also well protected in the Estate. Lower quality habitat for Koalas (vulnerable). May provide a secured movement corridor. Values would be greatly diminished by localised development. <p>Potentially contains (and would require validation):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small area of Gum-topped Box (of-concern) which has low representation in the Estate. <i>Gossia gonoclada</i> (endangered), and <i>Notelaea lloydii</i> (vulnerable) and <i>Sophora fraseri</i> (vulnerable). All with have low representation in the Estate. <i>Marsdenia coronata</i> (vulnerable). Well represented in the Estate. Tusked frog (vulnerable) habitat, which is extensively represented in the Estate. Glossy black-cockatoo (vulnerable) habitat, which is

Criteria	Matters of Note:
	<p>extensively represented in the Estate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Platypus (locally significant) habitat which has low representation in the Estate and extensive representation in the broader local bushland reserve network.
3. Level of priority within the Nature Conservation Strategy	Not located in a strategic priority area.
4. Proximity to the current or future Natural Area Estate	<p>Not identified in a strategic investment area.</p> <p>300m from the nearest Estate location - Ric Nattrass Environmental Park.</p>
Supplementary Criteria -	
5. Creation of strategic and new habitat areas that build connectivity	<p>Does not improve connectivity within a strategic regional corridor.</p> <p>Opportunity to create a protected local node and secure an 880m corridor along Woogaroo Creek.</p> <p>Corridor values could be protected through the Recreation Zone.</p>
6. Protection of water quality and catchment values	Opportunity to undertake riparian restoration works e.g. reducing pest plants and revegetation works.
7. Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and Aboriginal Cultural Landscape features	Potential for features and presence of items of cultural heritage – unverified.
8. European cultural heritage values	Potential for presence of items associated with past logging activities - unverified.
9. Landscape and aesthetic values	<p>Does not contain values of regional or citywide scale and significance e.g. landmark.</p> <p>Values are mostly of 'local' scale and community connection, and are likely to be predominately associated with the waterway. Corridor values could be protected through Recreation zoning.</p>
10. Nature-based recreation	Waterway corridor provides potential for passive walking activity, which could be protected through Recreation

Criteria	Matters of Note:
opportunities	zoning.
11. Benefit to the community	Bearing in mind the property's size and condition the benefits the property may provide are mainly for improving social well-being primarily at a 'local' scale.
12. Ultimate cost of purchase (capital & recurrent costs)	<p>With a capital purchase investment estimated at [REDACTED] to secure 33ha, this would signify the largest single investment by Enviroplan. This investment would substantially impact future acquisitions.</p> <p>Purchase of the area zoned recreation represents investment in land that would likely be transferred to Council through a future development of the property.</p> <p>Additionally, an immediate [REDACTED] in capital investment is required to protect the site.</p>
13. Economic opportunities	<p>Is unlikely to contain values or experiences considered to be of a scale, significance or interest to attract citywide visitation or tourists and subsequent spending in the local area.</p> <p>Potential benefits are mainly limited to the local community participation in passive walking activities associated the short section of trail.</p>

CONCLUSION:

Recognising funding limitations associated with Enviroplan Program & Levy, council takes a strategic, priority based and financially prudent approach when it comes to securing land through this program.

A review of councils adopted environmental strategic documentation indicates the land is not located in a citywide conservation priority area for protection or in an important investment area for acquisition. Furthermore, securing the land does not improve connectivity within a strategic regional corridor.

It can be seen from research of council and state mapping, records and resources a number of potential natural values are associated with the land. Many of the values are comprehensively represented in councils existing Natural Area Estate and wider protected network. Likewise, the dominant vegetation is one of the most common in the city and is well represented within the Natural Area Estate.

Independent market value undertaken by a registered professional indicates a cost far exceeding any past Enviroplan purchases. At [REDACTED] per hectare, it dwarfs a recent purchase of land in Grandchester being [REDACTED] per hectare. The investment would require a significant draw-down of funds from reserve, and notably risk any future strategically aligned acquisitions – i.e. protecting large intact areas or sites with exceptional values, poorly represented in the Natural Area Estate.

Importantly, one third of the property is afforded a level of protection due its recreation zone designation. A number of the natural values, for example koala movement corridor, could be protected through the zone during the development process. It does not embody good investment to purchase this portion of land as it would most likely be transferred to council through the development process.

On-balance purchasing 12-26 Eugene Street, Bellbird Park through the Ipswich Enviroplan Program & Levy does not represent strategic investment of community funds and as such, council should not pursue further assessment to secure the property through this mechanism.

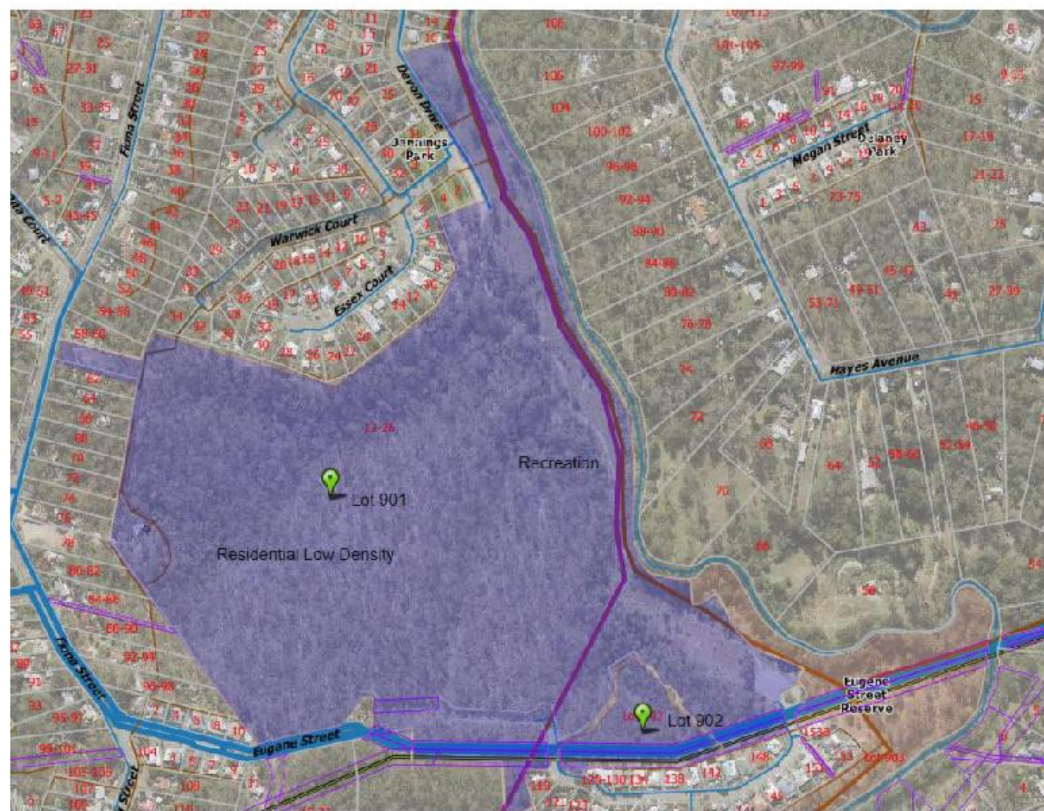
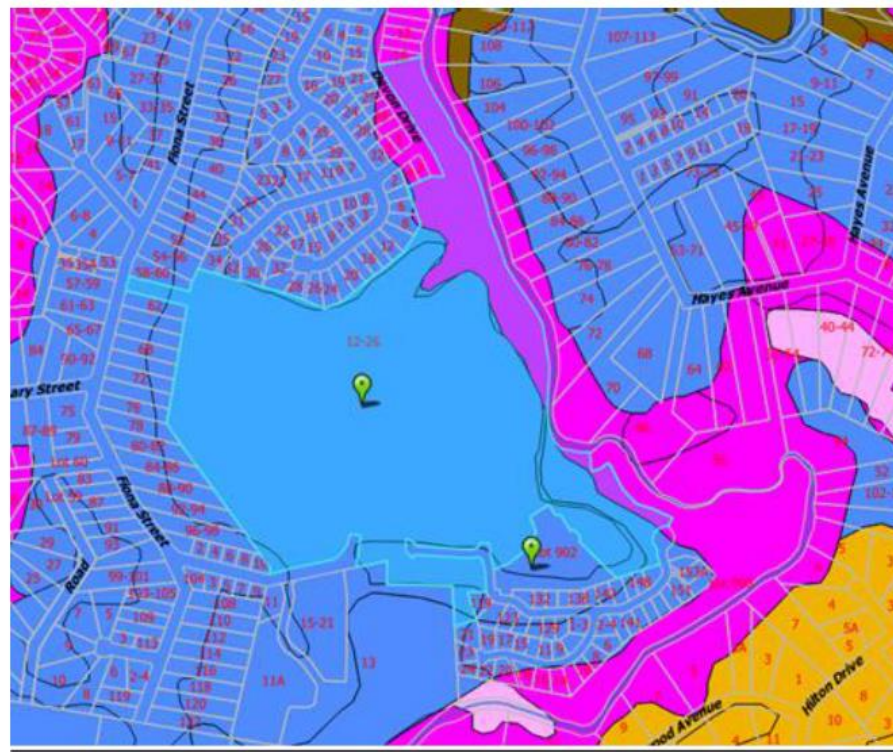
RECOMMENDATION:

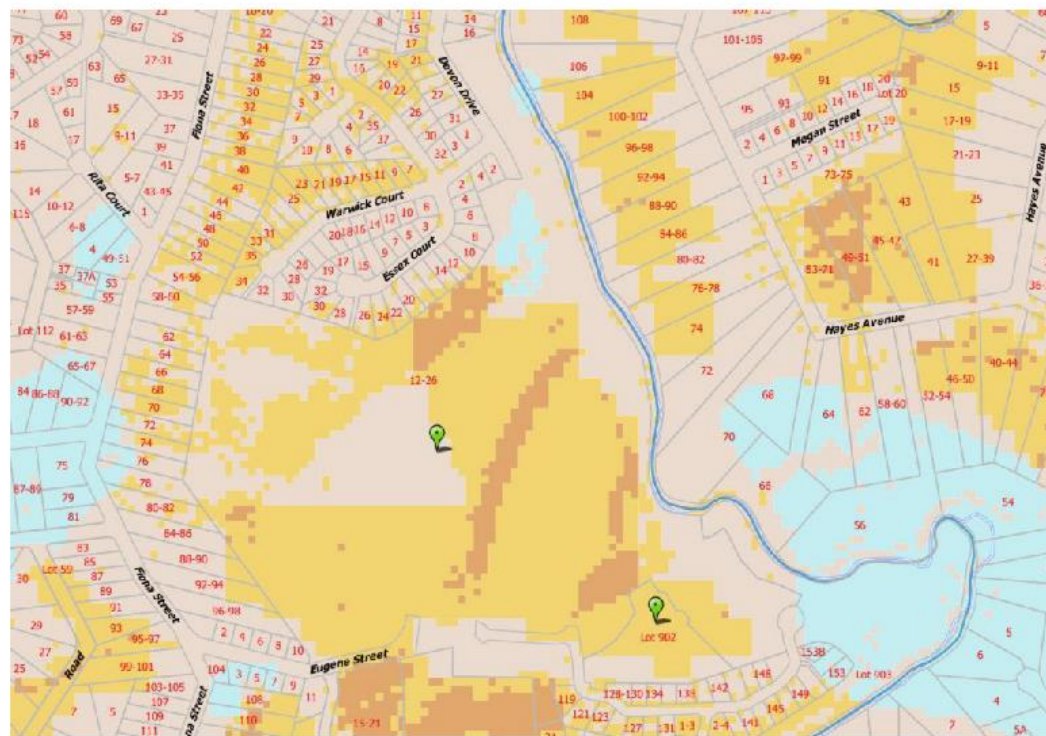
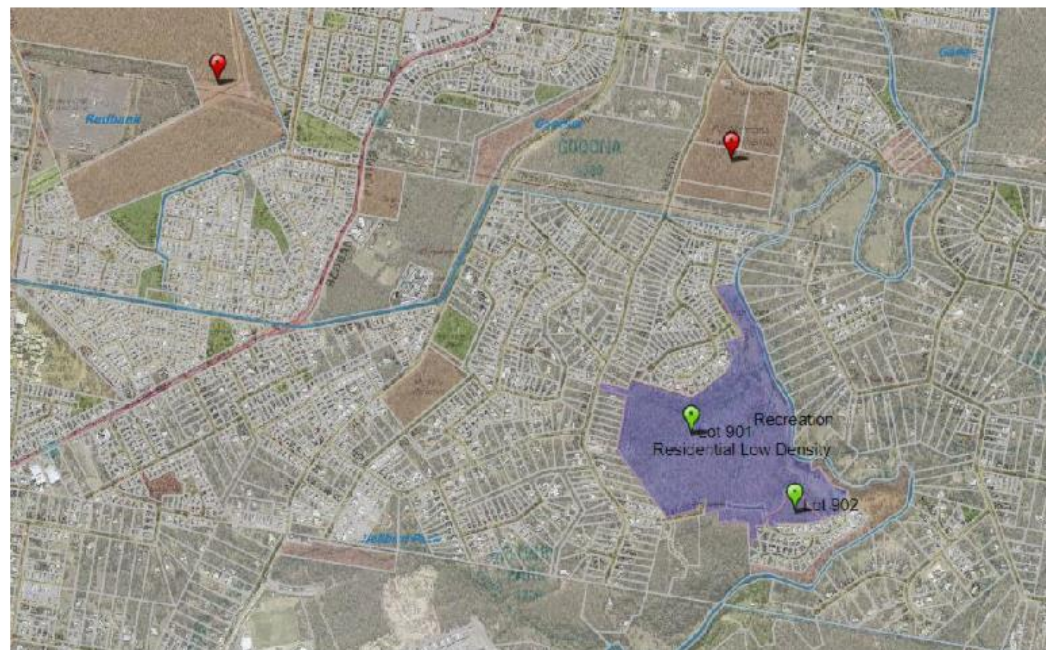
- A. Based on an initial assessment of 12-26 Eugene Street, Bellbird Park, council not pursue further detailed assessment to secure the property through Ipswich Enviroplan Program & Levy.
- B. That the Natural Environment & Land Manager provide a copy of assessment report to the Development Planning Manager for further consideration.

Darryl Porche

SENIOR PLANNING OFFICER (STRATEGIC CONSERVATION PLANNING)

ATTACHMENTS:**A: Context****B: Ipswich Planning Scheme Zones**

C: Infrastructure and Easements**D: Regional Ecosystem Mapping**

E: Climate Change Refugia**F: Proximity to Natural Area Estate Properties**

G: Extent of Flood effects.

Blue – 1974

Red - 2011

