



City of
Ipswich

**IPSWICH
CITY
COUNCIL**

AGENDA

of the

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

**Held in the Council Chambers
8th floor – 1 Nicholas Street
IPSWICH QLD 4305**

On Thursday, 7 April 2022
**At 10 minutes after the conclusion of the Economic and Industry Development
Committee**

<u>MEMBERS OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE</u>	
Councillor Russell Milligan (Chairperson) Councillor Andrew Fechner (Deputy Chairperson)	Mayor Teresa Harding Councillor Jacob Madsen Councillor Kate Kunzelmann

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE AGENDA

*10 minutes after the conclusion of the Economic and Industry
Development Committee on **Thursday, 7 April 2022**
in the Council Chambers, 8th Floor, 1 Nicholas Street, Ipswich*

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** Item includes confidential papers

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE NO. 3

7 APRIL 2022

AGENDA

WELCOME TO COUNTRY OR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS ON THE AGENDA

BUSINESS OUTSTANDING

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

1. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE NO. 2022(02) OF 10 MARCH 2022**

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 March 2022 be confirmed.

OFFICERS' REPORTS

2. **ENVIROPLAN PROGRAM AND LEVY PROGRESS REPORT 2021 2022**

This is a report concerning the Enviroplan Program and Levy Progress Report for the 2020-2021 financial year (Attachment 1). Contained within the report is an overview of project delivery, a financial summary including expenditure and revenue and a number of highlights from the past year which include:

- Enviroplan 25-year campaign,
- acquisition details concerning the expansion of the Mount Grandchester Conservation Estate
- program summaries for the review and implementation of the voluntary conservation and partnerships programs
- conservation planning programs
- investment into the existing and new Enviroplan reserves.

This annual report follows on from the first report for the 2019-2020 fiscal period.

The 2020-2021 fiscal year saw a significant increase in the overall investment of \$4.9m, up from the previous years of \$2.6m.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Enviroplan Program and Levy Progress Report 2020-2021 be received and noted.

NOTICES OF MOTION

MATTERS ARISING

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE NO. 2022(02)

10 MARCH 2022

MINUTES

COUNCILLORS' ATTENDANCE: Councillor Russell Milligan (Chairperson); Councillors Andrew Fechner (Deputy Chairperson), Mayor Teresa Harding, Jacob Madsen and Kate Kunzelmann

COUNCILLOR'S APOLOGIES: Nil

OFFICERS' ATTENDANCE: Acting Chief Executive Officer (Peter Tabulo), Acting General Manager Planning and Regulatory Services (Brett Davey), General Manager Infrastructure and Environment (Sean Madigan), Acting General Manager Corporate Services (Jeff Keech), Executive Services Manager (Wade Wilson), Chair - Retail Sub-Project Sub Committee (James Hepburn), Senior Policy and Communications Officer (David Shaw), Senior Digital Media and Content Officer (Jodie Richter) and Theatre Technician (Harrison Cate)

WELCOME TO COUNTRY/ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Councillor Russell Milligan (Chairperson) delivered the Acknowledgement of Country.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS ON THE AGENDA

Nil

BUSINESS OUTSTANDING

Nil

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

1. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE NO. 2022(01) OF 10 FEBRUARY 2022**

RECOMMENDATION

Moved by Councillor Jacob Madsen:
Seconded by Councillor Andrew Fechner:

**That the minutes of the Environment and Sustainability Committee held on
10 February 2022 be confirmed.**

AFFIRMATIVE

Councillors:

Milligan

Fechner

Harding

Madsen

Kunzelmann

NEGATIVE

Councillors:

Nil

The motion was put and carried.

OFFICERS' REPORTS

Nil

NOTICES OF MOTION

Nil

MATTERS ARISING

Nil

PROCEDURAL MOTIONS AND FORMAL MATTERS

The meeting commenced at 12.13 pm.

The meeting closed at 12.14 pm.

Doc ID No: A7953990

ITEM: 2

SUBJECT: ENVIROPLAN PROGRAM AND LEVY PROGRESS REPORT 2021 2022

AUTHOR: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND LAND MANAGER

DATE: 21 MARCH 2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is a report concerning the Enviroplan Program and Levy Progress Report for the 2020-2021 financial year (Attachment 1). Contained within the report is an overview of project delivery, a financial summary including expenditure and revenue and a number of highlights from the past year which include:

- Enviroplan 25-year campaign,
- acquisition details concerning the expansion of the Mount Grandchester Conservation Estate
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This annual report follows on from the first report for the 2019-2020 fiscal period.

The 2020-2021 fiscal year saw a significant increase in the overall investment of \$4.9m, up from the previous years of \$2.6m.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Enviroplan Program and Levy Progress Report 2020-2021 be received and noted.

RELATED PARTIES

There is no declaration of conflicts of interest in relation to this report.

IFUTURE THEME

Natural and Sustainable

PURPOSE OF REPORT/BACKGROUND

Over the 2021 calendar year council and the community celebrated 25 years of the Enviroplan levy investing in conservation initiatives. At its inception, Ipswich was one of only a handful of local governments to introduce a levy focused on protecting and enhancing the environment. Since then the community and council have worked together implementing the Enviroplan Program and the many initiatives within it.

In line with best practice and council's commitment to transparency and integrity, as of last year Council committed to the annual publication of the Enviroplan Annual Report. As well as this the financial data is provided for publication on the Transparency and Integrity Hub.

Given the need to examine the cost and investment of the Enviroplan Levy regarding the strategic needs into the future, this report allows the community to better understand what the Levy is used for. Building this understanding should aid in better dialogue and engagement when it comes to City wide directional decisions around the Environment including the development of the new Natural Environment Strategy currently underway.

As council has grown and matured over the 25 years, the strategic focus, priority and needs of the city have changed and the Enviroplan spending has changed with that. Like many other Southeast Queensland Local Governments who followed in the footsteps of the Enviroplan Levy; initial investment focussed on acquisitions of strategically important, high value conservation land parcels. As the portfolio grew it was identified that the need to manage and maintain this land grew with it as did the resourcing required. As such spending shifted to consolidation and connectivity. Presently, as we await the development of the new Strategy, expenditure is balanced between opportunistic expansion of the protected areas (council and private) and the embellishment and management of the land Council has responsibility for.

LEGAL/POLICY BASIS

This report and its recommendations are consistent with the following legislative provisions:
Local Government Act 2009

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There is no risk associated with the adoption and publication of the annual report.

HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACTS
RECEIVE AND NOTE REPORT
The recommendation states that the report be received and noted. The decision to receive and note the report does not limit human rights. Therefore, the decision is compatible with human rights.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no forward financial or budget implications from the presentation or endorsement of this report.



COMMUNITY AND OTHER CONSULTATION

It is proposed that the annual report be published publicly on the Council web site and the integrity hub in order to inform the community of where and how the money is invested. This in turn will help guide future engagement regarding future strategy and direction in Ipswich's natural environment.

CONCLUSION

This report presents the annual Enviroplan Program and Levy Progress Report 2020-2021 to council to be received and adopted. As well as a summary of the financial details it includes summaries of key programs and projects for the 2020/21 financial year. If adopted this report will be made publicly available.

ATTACHMENTS AND CONFIDENTIAL BACKGROUND PAPERS

1.	DRAFT Enviroplan Program and Levy Progress Report 2020 2021  
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Phil A. Smith

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND LAND MANAGER

I concur with the recommendations contained in this report.

Kaye Cavanagh

MANAGER, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

I concur with the recommendations contained in this report.

Sean Madigan

GENERAL MANAGER - INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

"Together, we proudly enhance the quality of life for our community"

City of Ipswich

Enviroplan Program and Levy Progress Report

2020-2021



ipswich.qld.gov.au



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DISCLAIMER

Information contained in this document is based on available information at the time of writing. All figures and diagrams are indicative only and should be referred to as such. While the Ipswich City Council has exercised reasonable care in preparing this document it does not warrant or represent that it is accurate or complete. Council or its officers accept no responsibility for any loss occasioned to any person acting or refraining from acting in reliance upon any material contained in this document.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Ipswich City Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners as custodians of the land and waters with which we share. We pay our respects to elders past, present and emerging, as the keepers of their traditions, customs, cultures and stories of proud peoples.

ENVIROPLAN SNAPSHOT

Over the 2021 calendar year council and the community celebrated 25 years of the Enviroplan levy investing in conservation initiatives. At the time, Ipswich was one of only a handful of local governments to introduce a levy focused on protecting and enhancing the environment. Since then the community and council have worked together implementing the Enviroplan Program.

Building on the history and efforts of the past, the 2020-2021 fiscal year saw a significant increase in the overall investment of \$4.9m, up from the previous years of \$2.6m.

This annual report follows on from the first undertaken for the 2019-2020 fiscal period. The purpose being to provide insight into investment, deliverables and outcomes.

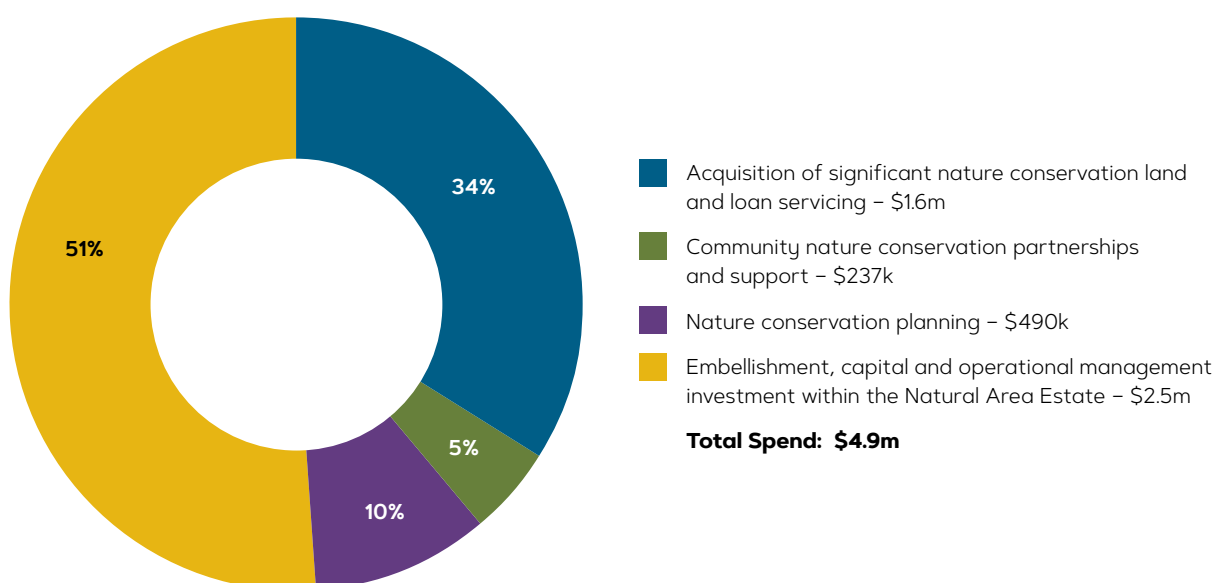
The amount of special charge for the Ipswich Enviroplan Program on all rateable land for the 2020-2021 financial year increased by \$1.00 to \$46.00. Revenue during this period increased by 6% from the previous year and totalled \$3,991,768.

Additional revenue of \$443,956 was received through external grants. These funds were invested primarily in constructing a community hut in Hardings Paddock (Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate).

A drawdown from the reserve of \$526,680 was needed to fund the program in addition to the revenue for the year, leaving a balance at the end of 2020-21 of \$4,571,320.

The levy is a key funding source in the delivery of the Ipswich Nature Conservation Strategy. This strategy outlines council's strategic approach, objectives and long-term vision for Ipswich's natural environment. It also provides direction for decision-making, prioritisation and implementation.

Where did the funds go in 2019-2020?



INVESTMENT TREND COMPARED TO PREVIOUS YEAR



A substantial increase in investment in acquisition saw council expand the Mount Grandchester Conservation Estate through the purchase of land.







Implementation of the new Conservation Partnerships model saw the Nature Conservation Grants Program on hold.



Though there was an overall reduction in investment in some areas of nature conservation planning, investment was made into bio-condition assessment within the Natural Area Estate.



A significant increase of investment in the Natural Area Estate occurred with capital investment or visitor management and nature-based recreation infrastructure.

TREND	THEME	CHANGE FROM 2019-2020
	Acquisition of significant nature conservation land and loan servicing	(+) \$839,000
	Community nature conservation partnerships and support	(-) \$32,000
	Nature conservation planning	(-) \$30,000
	Embellishment, capital & operational management investment within the Natural Area Estate	(+) \$815,000

ENVIROPLAN 25 YEARS

In 2021 Enviroplan reached the significant milestone of 25 years of conservation achievements.

A multi-faceted campaign was developed to increase awareness of Enviroplan in the community, and participation in environment-related initiatives.

A number of events, activities and promotions were held throughout 2021, funded through Enviroplan and general revenue streams.

Enviroplan-funded activities included Landholder Conservation Partnerships Program workshops and Experience Nature bushwalks.

The first public event for the campaign was a Habitat Gardens workshop. Sessions were held for Landholder Conservation Partnerships Program members and the public on 19 June as a way of promoting Enviroplan and encouraging participation in the program.

Approximately 30 people attended each session at the Queens Park Environmental Education Centre and learned about xeriscaping and worm farms. About half of the attendees at the public session signed up to the Enviroplan-funded Habitat Gardens program on the day.



ACQUISITION OF SIGNIFICANT CONSERVATION LAND AND LOAN SERVICING

- Council invested \$831k to acquire and secure a 63ha property adjacent to Mount Grandchester Conservation Estate.
- \$861k went towards servicing the loan.

LAND ACQUIRED FOR SIGNIFICANT SPECIES

A 65ha property adjoining Mount Grandchester Conservation Estate has been added to the Natural Area Estate. The property increases the width of the conservation estates' north-south wildlife movement corridor at its narrowest 'pinch' point from 400m wide to over a kilometre. The property contains unique patches of rocky-outcrops and habitat areas for significant species including the vulnerable Koala and Glossy-black cockatoo.

When open to the public in the future, the property increases the capacity for nature-based recreation activities such as walking trails. It also contains elevated areas to take in views across the valley.



COMMUNITY NATURE CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIPS AND SUPPORT

- \$97k in Land Management Payments to 70 landholders that support activities such as pest plant control and tree planting.
- 18 landholders received grants totalling \$63k to undertake targeted habitat restoration projects.
- \$20k of grants provided to the community.
- \$12k was spent on incentive activities.
- \$4k went towards education activities.

RENEWED REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Council renewed its commitment to Land for Wildlife South East Queensland with a \$21k
- \$7k was invested in the SEQ Fire and Biodiversity Partnership
- Little Liverpool Range Initiative partnership

NATURE CONSERVATION GRANT HIGHLIGHT

WEED CONTROL USING GOATS

A landholder partner is using goats as a weed management tool to target weed life cycle progressively and systematically.

Preferential grazing is an ecological control method based on an animal's tendency to graze one plant species in preference to another. Goats tend to preferentially graze many weeds rather than pasture and native species. The weed is thus placed at a competitive disadvantage. Goats tend to preferentially graze many plants considered unpalatable to other grazing animals and thus classified as weeds.

The goats are placed in 50m x 50m electric fenced area with any nature species protected within the 250m² area. Electric fencing allows for a flexible fencing of goats to restrict their access to vulnerable native species.

Goats also are used in conjunction with conventional weed control methods. They are efficient browsers and grazers of weeds that may have been missed during spraying and effectively control residual weeds in rocky outcrops, corners, around trees, along fence lines and hard to access areas. Goats eat any weeds that germinated too early or too late to be affected by herbicides.



SUPPORTING IPSWICH'S LANDHOLDERS IN ACHIEVING CONSERVATION OUTCOMES

Simon and Kassie purchased their 16.5ha property out at Goolman in 2020. Their property contains a narrow-leafed ironbark (*Eucalyptus crebra*) and spotted gum (*Corymbia citriodora*) open forest ecosystem, which provides great habitat for various species of animal including the koala. Their property is adjacent to other large properties which have significant ecological values and together they form part of the Flinders Karawatha Corridor, which is a significant corridor that is recognised by the State government for its conservation values. Wildlife corridors such as the Flinders Karawatha Corridor provide habitat for species of conservation significance and are refugia for native fauna to various threats and pressures such as fire, weeds, habitat fragmentation, climate change, and pest animals.

With a keen interest in learning more about the property's ecological values and how to best manage the property for conservation, Simon and Kassie approached council with an interest in joining the Land for Wildlife program in May 2021. In the short few months prior to engaging with council, Simon and Kassie had shown their passion and willingness to achieve conservation outcomes on their property with the removal of various weeds including lantana (*Lantana Camara*) and climbing asparagus fern (*Asparagus africanus*).

During the site visit, council's Conservation Partnerships Officers helped to identify all of the species on their property and to provide expert

assistance and advice. We also shared excitement of all of the opportunities that the property presents, with significant environmental values and opportunities to bolster the ecological value of the property. A range of resources were shared with Simon and Kassie, which provided them with guidance on how to best manage their property and identify flora and fauna. The LCPP also offered Simon and Kassie use of the program's wildlife monitoring cameras, which they readily accepted. Within the first couple of weeks of installing the wildlife cameras, a koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*), whiptail wallaby (*Macropus parryi*), eastern grey kangaroo (*Macropus giganteus*) and black striped wallaby (*Macropus dorsalis*) were all captured on the camera. This gave Simon and Kassie a snapshot of the diversity of fauna species that call their property home.

This gave them the motivation boost to ensure their property is a welcoming home for critters big and small. In collaboration with their Conservation Partnerships Officer, a Property Management Plan was developed for their property, which helps to prioritise management actions, such as weed management, fire management, and the installation of wildlife habitat such as a native beehive. In the coming months, Simon and Kassie plan to do some targeted clearing of weeds and burns and to strategically plant koala trees in cleared areas.

We look forward to continuing to work with Simon and Kassie, and to see the progress in the years to come.



LITTLE LIVERPOOL RANGE INITIATIVE SUPPORTS SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Funds provided by the Ipswich Enviroplan continues to support the Little Liverpool Range Initiative (LLRI). The LLRI aims to promote landscape scale conservation across an important wildlife refugia by partnering with neighbouring local government areas (Lockyer Valley, Somerset and Scenic Rim) and other conservation groups including the Turner Family Foundation, Queensland Trust for Nature and Healthy Land & Water. The Ipswich Council is one of three major partners who have continued to fund the employment of a Project Officer (0.2 FTE), allowing for the ongoing assistance to landholders within the Little Liverpool Range.

Enviroplan funds have allowed for the planning of educational workshops which provide landholders with the skills to achieve their conservation goals for their properties and offer on ground wildlife monitoring to landholders. This year we have deployed 22 wildlife cameras and 18 audiomoths (acoustic recording devices) on private landholder properties. From these deployments we have had success in recording vulnerable species such as the koala and powerful owl. The cameras and audiomoths have also let us understand more about the distribution of pest animals (e.g., European fox) who present a major threat to our native wildlife.



Enviro FORUM

ONLINE SERIES

July – September
Program

ENVIROFORUM 2020 – CHANGING LANDSCAPES

2020 had already seen a changing landscape for all. How do we, wildlife and the land adapt and become resilient to what the future may bring?

The annual EnviroForum became a special, free digital event in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. A series of live and pre-recorded webinars were released with experts in various fields between August and November 2020. The presentations were made available on Council's YouTube channel and via ipswich.qld.gov.au/enviroforum after being released.

This included live presentations from Gardening expert Kate Wall who spoke on creating resilient gardens and Professor Martine Maron who examined how changing landscapes impact birds, as well as a panel of council experts presenting on managing future floods.

Pre-recorded presentations included the expert team at Hidden Vale Wildlife Centre talking on important koala research and microchip automated devices for wildlife, as well as West Moreton Landcare's Bob Hampson showcasing a land restoration project.

Approximately \$3K was invested for the online EnviroForum webinar series in 2020.

There was a total of 133 attendees for the live webinars and release of the pre-recorded showcases. The videos on Council's YouTube channel have more than 300 views total.

The social media campaign to promote the EnviroForum video series also reached 63,566 people on Facebook and had 880 responses.

EXPERIENCE NATURE EVENTS

With the goal of providing opportunities for the community to experience and genuinely connect with the natural world around us, Experience Nature facilitated 22 events comprising of a total of 376 participants. Events included:

- Nature at Night for Kids
- Moonrise Nightwalks
- Excursions for Schools, Kindies and Scouts
- Community group tours
- Tourism collaboration events.

Participants said:

- *"It seems Ipswich has so much more to offer and it is activities like this that expose us to the history and the native beauty of our city."*
- *"It was such an informative and enjoyable evening for (Scout) joeys, leaders and parents."*
- *"Would love to see more of these guided walks put on at other locations. Guided walks certainly enhance the experience - you learn and see so much more than you would on your own!"*
- *"There is something unique about being out in the bush at night! My favourite part was when we stopped and in the stillness and listened to the owl."*



NATURE CONSERVATION PLANNING

- \$373k funded operational expenses such as staff wages, vehicles and equipment necessary to deliver the Enviroplan program.
- \$115k was invested in undertaking bio-condition assessments within the natural area estate.

BIOCONDITION ASSESSMENT ARTICLE

Council conducted its second ever BioCondition assessment of the natural area estate in the 2020-2021 financial year. Council conducted its original assessments in 2015 in an effort to create an objective, replicable and quantitative way of determining the conservation value and ecological condition of its natural area estate. For more on how the BioCondition assessments work please visit: Wetlandinfo.des.qld.gov.au/wetlands/resources/tools/assessment-search-tool/biocondition-assessment-framework/

In the original study 15 of 30 sites were assessed to be in 'very good condition' with only two of 30 sites considered in 'poor condition'. The original study was a landmark study for Ipswich with clear evidence of the significant role council's natural area estate plays in the region for protection of flora and fauna.

The 2020/2021 surveys revaluated all the previous sites done in 2015. While the results were still strong, there was a definite downward trend at many sites while a select few improved. However the results are not necessarily cause for major concern as the results largely reflect the significant drought period that persisted between 2015 and 2021. Of note, many of the sites showed a decrease in grass cover and shrub cover, while showing an increase in leaf litter cover. These are signs of drought and overall lack of regeneration in a dry eucalypt ecosystem.

An important finding was that in all but one site, the weed cover either stayed the same or decreased. This could be due to drought conditions reducing biomass and the increased council investment in weed management.

Also of note is that three out of four sites in the Mt Grandchester Conservation Estate increased in overall BioCondition score despite the drought. This is fantastic news for the estate and signs of continued rejuvenation of that site after cattle were removed following Council acquisition.

Of particular concern were the scores for Cameron's Scrub which were all down from 2015 to 2021.



EMBELLISHMENT, CAPITAL AND OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT INVESTMENT WITHIN THE NATURAL AREA ESTATE

- \$1.3m was spent on capital projects across the Natural Area Estate. Highlights include:
 - \$611k constructing a community hut in Hardings Paddock (Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate). \$444k of investment was sourced through a Unite and Recover Community Stimulus Program Grant.
 - \$353k planning, design and partial construction of a pedestrian bridge and installing lighting and playground in Denmark Hill Conservation Reserve.
 - \$25k spent on addressing gully erosion.
- \$434k was spent on implementing fuel reduced areas in several locations across the estate. Implementation involves manual removal of shrub and sapling vegetation that forms a ladder for fire to move into the canopy.
- \$350k was invested in undertaking inspections and carrying out maintenance within the Natural Area Estate. Activities included vegetation management, pest plant control, service track grading and litter management.
- \$300k was allocated to undertake conservation works projects including habitat restoration and pest plant management.
- \$108K was invested in pest animal monitoring and management.



INCREASING INVESTING IN WHITE ROCK – SPRING MOUNTAIN CONSERVATION ESTATES FUTURE

The White Rock - Spring Mountain Conservation Estate or "White Rock" as it's known locally, is one of Ipswich's premier nature-based recreation destinations featuring rare and threatened flora and fauna, unique geological formations and an extensive track and trail network, it is known and loved by visitors near and far.

With extensive residential development on its doorstep council faces the management challenge of it being "loved to death". To face this challenge there has been increasing investment into management activities. As a response in 2020/2021 council developed a master plan which sets out its strategic management direction and aims to balance the recreational demands of the community with the ongoing sustainability of its conservation values.

Given these challenges and guided by the Master Plan the 2020/2021 financial year saw a significant focus on White Rock with increased investment in conservation works, fire management and visitor infrastructure.

ICC invested in trail bike deterrent fencing focusing on known "hot spots" at Wild Iris Terrace and around the Springfield-Greenbank Arterial.

Renewed Compliance Patrols and joint operations with Queensland Police were undertaken to prevent illegal and anti-social behaviours.

White Rock itself holds immense cultural significance to the local aboriginal community. Unfortunately, this important landscape is showing increasing signs of physical deterioration associated with illegal track making, vandalism, unauthorised climbing and increasing visitation. Enviroplan funds were invested in developing and installing Indigenous Cultural signage around the base of the feature. The new signage explains the features cultural significance and directs visitors not to climb the rock.

To further relieve this visitor pressure, funds were invested in constructing a new trail with the installation of interpretation and wayfinding signage. Accessible from the Paperbark Flats Picnic Area, the Gun Pit Ridge Trail was formalised and provides a stunning additional trail to White Rock. The 2.8km trail is a shared use trail, catering for both walkers and mountain bike riders.

The area's rich military history is paid tribute along the trail which when combined with a newly opened section of service track known as the Western Trail, adds an additional 4.5kms to the current trail network.

\$110k was spent through the Conservation Works Program on projects in White Rock including:

- Koala habitat restoration
- Lantana control
- Erosion stabilisation and revegetation in the Six Mile Creek headwaters
- Management of the highly invasive groundsel and giant rats tail grass along the Yaddamun Trail
- Restoration of known sites containing the rare and threatened plant *Plectranthus habrophylla* (*Coleus habrophylla*) along the Gun Pit Ridge Trail.

The estate is a vital link in the Flinders-Karawatha Regional Corridor which extends from Brisbane to Boonah. A key climate change refugia site, the estate can sustain viable populations of endemic species in a changing climate. These factors combined with the proximity of neighbouring large residential developments means that effective fire and fuel load management is a critical element in the management of the estate.

Fuel reduced areas in strategically located sites across the estate were constructed and maintained. These sites are designed to protect critical infrastructure, neighbouring properties and ecological values.

\$36k was spent on preparation for hazard reduction burns on the interface between the estate and residences. This includes pre-burn activities such as identification, protection and retention of significant trees within the burn blocks.

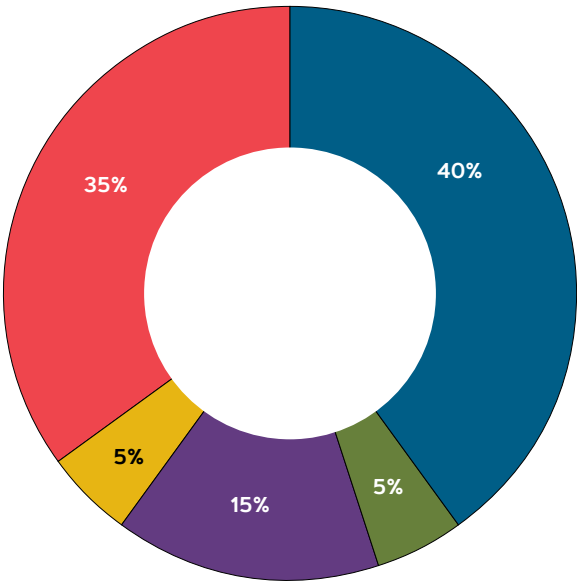
A pilot maintenance program commenced to significantly increase the focus, visitation frequencies and condition of the assets. The pilot involves increased asset identification, more detailed service standards, improved mapping, mobile scheduling and reporting. The results to date of this trial and from the increased management input have been outstanding. This has not gone unnoticed by the public who are often complimenting staff on site about the visible improvements happening before their eyes.

**HABITAT PROTECTION
THROUGH PEST PROGRAM**

Over 18,048hrs was spent undertaking pest management in priority habitat areas across the Natural Area Estate. Management involved activities such as:

- Deploying, monitoring and retrieving traps and cameras
- Reviewing camera data
- Monitoring trails and tracking pest animal activity
- Maintaining equipment
- Active hunting
- Humane destruction and carcass removal
- Opportunistic pest plant control
- Reporting.

As a result of implementing the program, 50 pest animals were removed along with several areas of pest plants control (see chart right).



Per cent of total controlled pest animals

- Vulpes vulpes* (fox)
- Pavo cristatus* (peacock)
- Sus scrofa* (pig)
- Cervus elaphus* (red deer)
- Canis familiaris* (wild dog)



FINDING YOUR WAY IN THE NATURAL AREA ESTATE

In the 2020/2021 financial year council continued to invest through Enviroplan into wayfinding, information and interpretation signage in the Natural Area Estate. In recent years there has been a rapid increase in visitors using the track and trail network ranging from experienced hikers to families exploring the area for the first time. With this increase, council has identified the need to review and update its signage and messaging to ensure all users have an enjoyable, safe and informative experience.

The year also saw council undertake a review of its display maps and information bays with further upgrades planned in the coming financial years. Some of the 2020-2021 financial year highlights include:

- New trail markers and wayfinding signs installed along the Gamlen Circuit in Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate (FGCE) and new Gun Pit Ridge Trail in White Rock-Spring Mountain Conservation Estate (WRSMCE)
- New interchangeable display boards designed to provide visitors with up-to-date information on park closures, planned burns and upcoming events, installed at entry gates to Paperbark Flats (WRSMCE), Hardings Paddock and Flinders Plum picnic grounds (FGCE)
- Cultural heritage signage in the vicinity of White Rock (WRSMCE).

These installations are part of a series of upgrades planned over the coming years with the goal to provide consistent, easy to read and informative signage that caters to a broad user group.



NATURAL AREA VISITATION

Ipswich natural areas continue to play a vital role in supporting the physical and mental wellbeing of the community in these uncertain times when many people are unable to pursue their usual recreation activities. Visitor numbers were slightly lower than last year due to stricter Covid – 19 travel and exercise restrictions. The four Conservation Estates and Reserves which are monitored for visitor numbers recorded a total of 132,329 visitors in the 20/21 financial year. The numbers below however represent only four natural area tracks of the hundreds available to the community, and it is likely that many urban bushland reserves increased in local use during travel restrictions.

Monitored Natural Area visitor number totals:

All counts combined:

- 19/20 - 146,802
- 20/21 - 132,329

20/21 FY breakdown:

- White Rock – Spring Mountain Conservation Estate (Paperbark Flats only): 81,258
- Flinders Goolman Conservation Estate (Flinders Peak Track only): 14,272
- Blackstone Castle Hill Reserve: 32,236
- Hillview Bushland Reserve: 4,563



ESTATE ENFORCEMENT

In response to increasing visitor numbers and public concerns regarding local law offences occurring within Conservation Estates, the Estate Enforcement Program was launched in February 2021. A collaboration between ICC Environment, ICC Compliance and Queensland Police Service, the Estate Enforcement Program focusses on supporting positive visitor culture through engagement and education, whilst enforcing local laws when offences are detected. The initial phase of the program saw visitors report a reduction in trail bike riding and dogs being brought into the estate as the program became established.

Estate Enforcement Activities:

One operation:

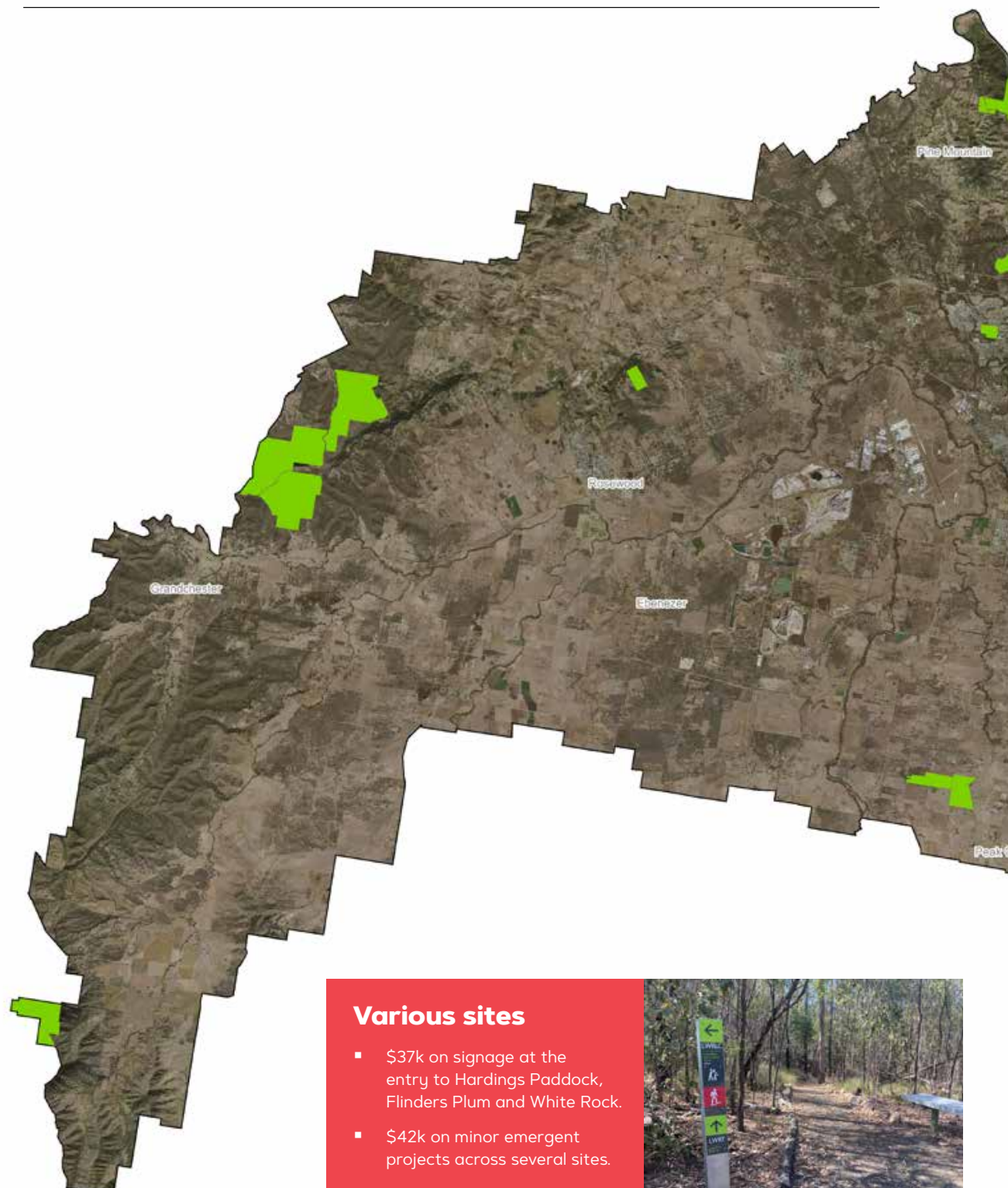
- Two trail bike riders intercepted and infringements issued
- Five trail bikes sighted but unable to be intercepted
- Two dog owners warned
- Graffiti, vandalism, firepits and unauthorized trail building offences identified and reported
- 80+ public interactions, overwhelmingly positive about official presence.

Five estate enforcement patrols:

- Approx 250 instances of public engagement and education
- Five warnings to dog owners
- Noted decrease in trail bike activity in WRSME between March to end of financial year.



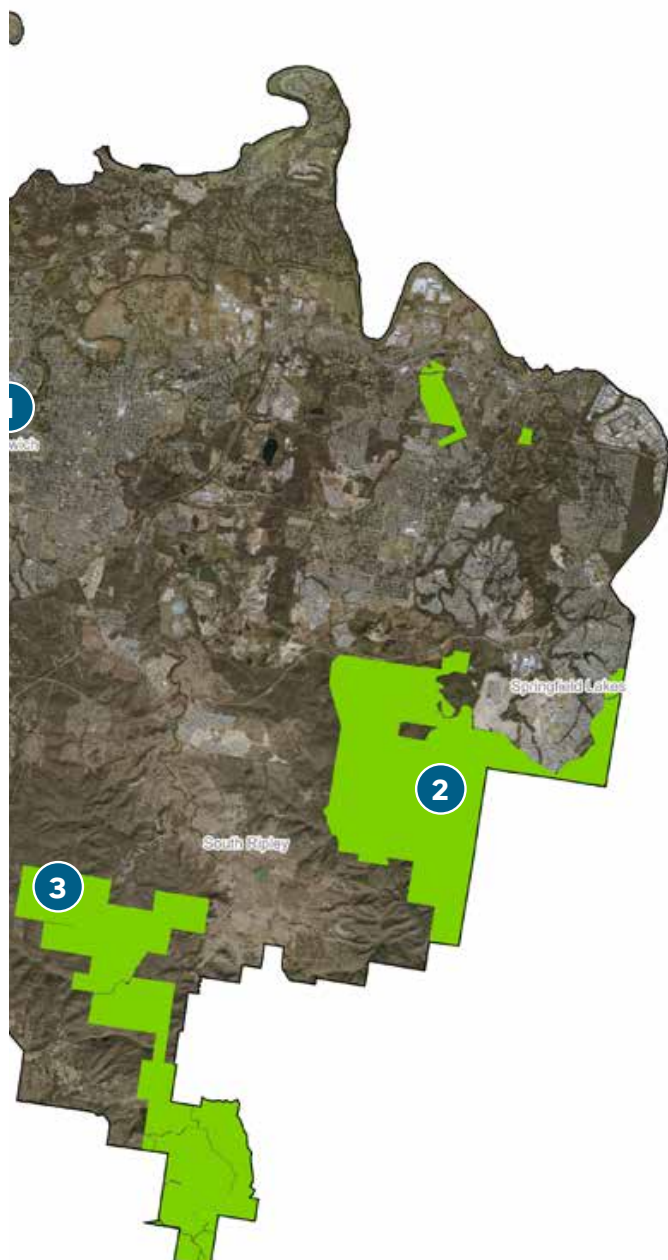
EMBELLISHMENT, CAPITAL AND OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT INVESTMENT HIGHLIGHTS WITHIN THE NATURAL AREA ESTATE



Various sites

- \$37k on signage at the entry to Hardings Paddock, Flinders Plum and White Rock.
- \$42k on minor emergent projects across several sites.

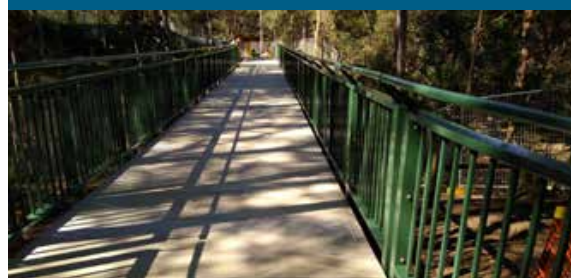




Note: Some of these projects are in design stage and were not completely constructed.

1 Denmark Hill Conservation Reserve - \$378k

- \$353k invested on constructing a pedestrian bridge and installing lighting and playground.
- \$25k spent on spent on addressing gully erosion.



2 White Rock - Spring Mountain Conservation Estate - \$276k

- \$144k on constructing walking trails.
- \$91k on barrier fence installation along the interface with Greenbank Arterial and Wild Iris Terrace.
- \$40k on erosion control and track work.



3 Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate - \$612k

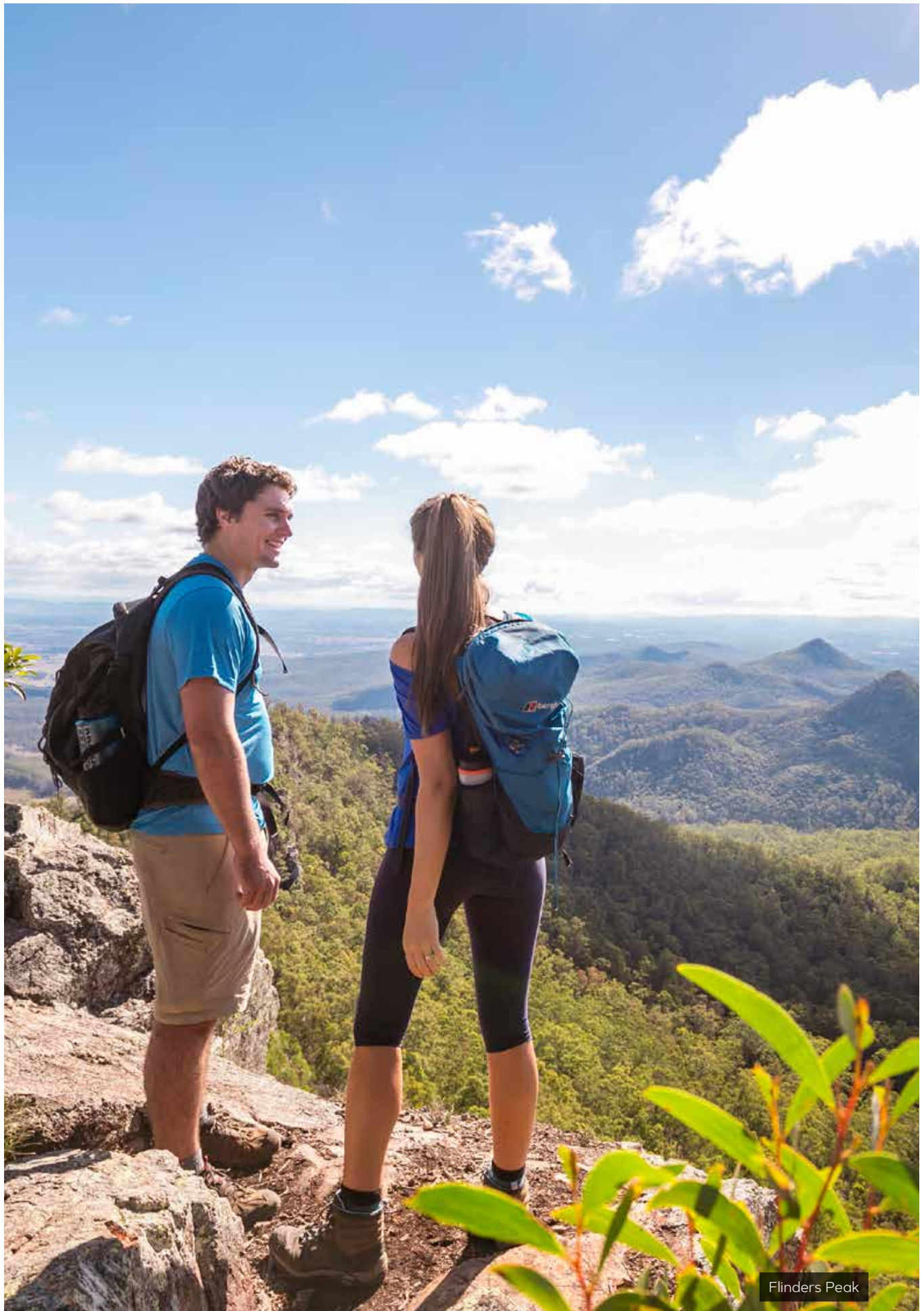
- \$612k spent on constructing the environmental community hut within Hardings Paddock.

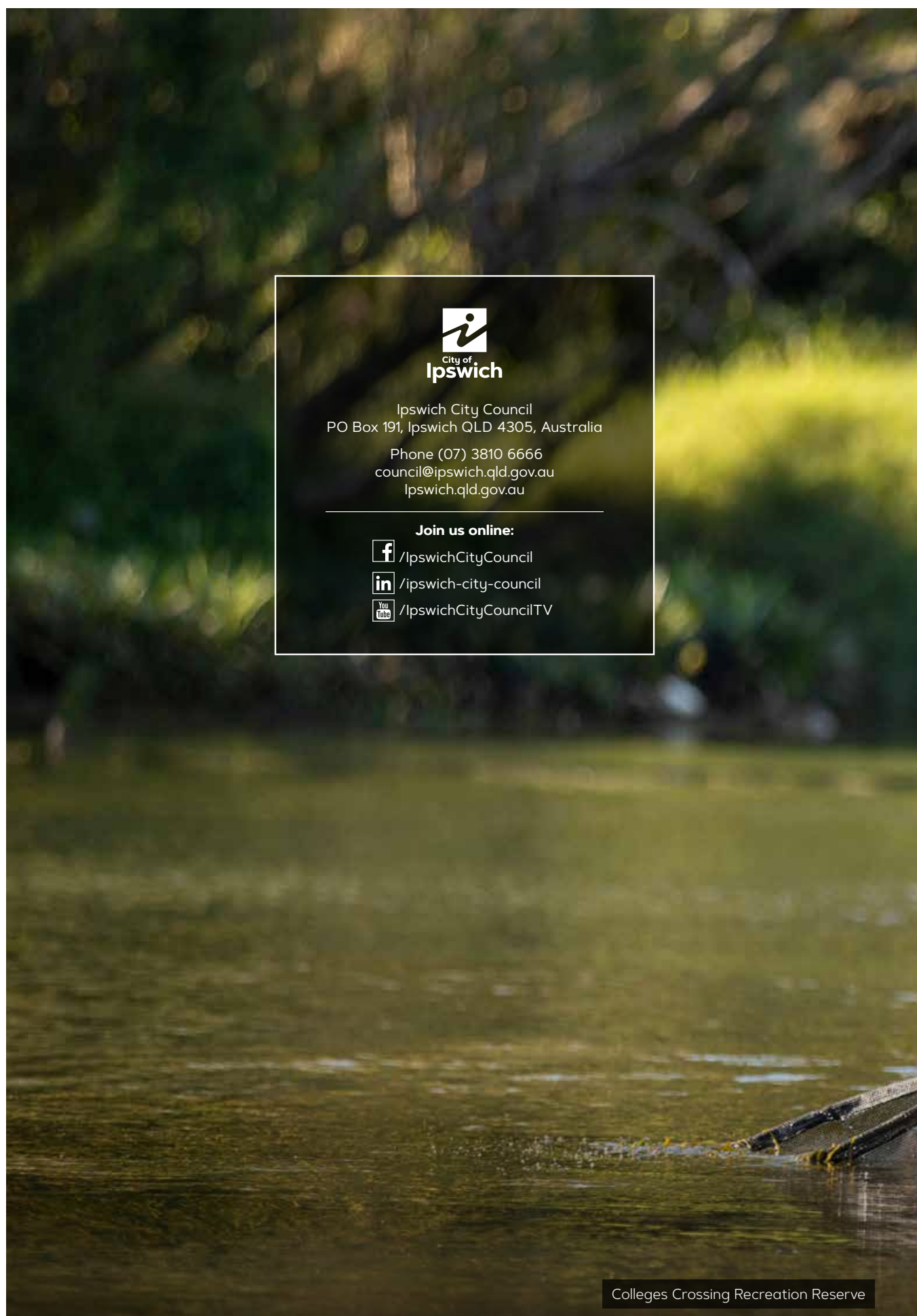


2020-2021 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE STATEMENT

This statement is certified by the Chief Financial Officer (Mr Jeffrey Keech) on the 9 November 2021 – refer Objective Reference A7739460.

PROJECT/ACTIVITY	ACTUALS
STRATEGIC THEME: ACQUISITION OF SIGNIFICANT NATURE CONSERVATION LAND	
Land Acquisition Program	
Land Acquisition Program Implementation: Assessments and Purchases	\$831,775
Loan Service for Land Acquisition	\$861,028
Sub-program total	\$1,692,803
Theme total	\$1,692,803
STRATEGIC THEME: COMMUNITY NATURE CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIPS AND SUPPORT	
Landholder Conservation Partnerships Program	
Landholder Conservation Partnerships Program Management: Operational expenses	-\$1
Voluntary Conservation Agreements Payments: Annual landholder land management payments	\$97,194
Landholder Nature Conservation Grants: On-ground landholder support projects	\$63,651
Voluntary Conservation Agreement Incentives: Education and capacity building activities	\$12,744
Landholder Partnerships Workshops: Education and capacity building activities	\$4,472
Sub-program total	\$178,059
Community Partnerships Program	
Community Partnerships Program Management: Operational expenses	\$371
Community Awareness and Engagement Events: Annual city-wide events	\$3,303
Community Support Grants: On-ground community projects	\$19,918
Community Education Resources: Digital and printed material	\$2,666
Strategic Community Partnerships: Building community capacity	\$4,210
SEQ Land For Wildlife Program Partnership: Regional partnership contribution	\$21,055
SEQ Fire and Biodiversity Consortium Partnership: Regional partnership contribution	\$7,874
Sub-program total	\$59,397
Theme total	\$237,455
STRATEGIC THEME: NATURE CONSERVATION PLANNING	
City-wide Nature Conservation Planning Program	
Nature Conservation Planning: Operational expenses	\$373,439
Nature Conservation Planning, Management and Research: Continual improvement projects	\$114,935
Sub-program total	\$488,374
Threatened and Key Species Recovery Program	
Koala Conservation and Habitat Management: On-ground action implementation projects	\$2,355
Sub-program total	\$2,355
Theme total	\$490,729
Strategic Theme: Embellishment, Capital & Operational Management Investment within Natural Area Estate	
Natural Area Maintenance Program	
Natural Area Maintenance: Operational expenses	\$349,500
Sub-program total	\$349,500
Natural Area Management Program	
Conservation Works Program: On-ground operational projects	\$300,600
Fire Management Program: On-ground operational projects	\$433,990
Natural Area Capital Investment Program: On-ground capital projects	\$1,348,526
Pest Animal Management Program: Operational expenses	\$108,801
Sub-program total	\$2,191,917
Theme total	\$2,541,417
PROGRAM TOTAL	\$1,093,024
Revenue	\$3,991,768
External Grant Funding for Enviroplan Projects	\$443,956
Adjustment to Reserve (Drawdown)	-\$526,680
Reserve Balance	\$4,571,320





Colleges Crossing Recreation Reserve