



E1

Natural
Environment



Natural systems provide clean air and water, support biological diversity whilst serving human needs. Livability is enhanced through integration of the built and natural environment.

1.1 Theme - Natural Environment

Ipswich is incredibly rich in terms of natural assets with an attractive and diverse expanse of protected greenspace. Ipswich contains one of the most diverse ranges of natural vegetation types in South East Queensland, including rainforest, dry vine forest, open forests, woodlands, heathlands, wetlands and grasslands.

There are in excess of 100 known rare or threatened flora and fauna species or otherwise significant species including Koala, Brush-

tailed Rock Wallaby, Glossy Black Cockatoo, Powerful Owl and Richmond Birdwing Butterfly.

The two major river systems that flow through Ipswich are the Brisbane and Bremer Rivers. There are numerous tributaries and smaller waterways that flow through to these rivers. There is a legacy that has resulted in reduced water quality within these systems.

In Ipswich there is in excess of 4 600 hectares of conservation areas owned, managed or controlled by Council and 392 hectares of Conservation Park under Council sole trusteeship. In excess of 17 089 hectares of significant natural conservation

“In 20-25 years I would like to see Ipswich with a public recreation area with a number of facilities to accommodate all ages & interests”

Emma Lowry,
Lead On Participant

remnants are under private ownership. Over the past decade, Ipswich City Council has continued to add to the network of conservation areas through acquisitions funded by Enviroplan, the largest of which being White Rock / Spring Mountain Conservation Estate and Flinders Peak / Goolman Conservation Estate.

The conservation of significant natural assets in the City has been assisted by the dedication and enthusiasm of local residents. Numerous residents protect

natural assets on their property through Voluntary Conservation Agreements, Land for Wildlife and other private support programs.

There is also a legacy of environmental impact caused by urbanisation, clearing for agricultural uses and mining activities. It is in these areas where opportunities for rehabilitation and revegetation present themselves.

Some rural areas have been put under stress through poor land management and mining activity.

Some land management practices, both past and current, have resulted in a decline in the health of soils compared to their natural state.

The pressures on the natural environment extend also to air quality. Based on the air monitoring data available, the western catchments region is known to have relatively low air pollution levels when compared with air quality standards. However, in both summer and winter, pollutants emitted from within the major industrial and trafficked areas centred on the mouth of the Brisbane River can be transported westward to Ipswich. This is a regional issue which long term could give rise to a decreased air quality within the City.

“Ipswich is a clean place with its gardens and parks greener, instead of the concrete look that other cities have”

Shaynne Watson,
Lead On Participant

1.2 Summary of Goals and Strategies - Natural Environment

NE Goal 1 - Protection of Biodiversity

Ipswich has a rich, biologically diverse and attractive natural environment sustaining a broad range of fauna and flora and ecological systems across its many and varied landscapes.

Strategy NE 1.1

Identification, Protection and Enhancement of Environmental Assets: Identify and protect habitats and species that are important to the function of ecosystems in Ipswich.

- Implement Enviroplan for the acquisition of greenspace.
- Compile an Environmental Atlas.
- Identify and implement opportunities for rehabilitation and revegetation.
- Establish a process of regular State of the Environment reporting.
- Conduct regular audits of environmental assets.
- Enhance the flora and fauna database program.
- Identify measures to protect and manage urban biodiversity.

Strategy NE 1.2

Environmental Values the Basis of Land Use Planning: Utilise land use planning instruments for the maintenance and enhancement of the environmental values of Ipswich.

- Identify and utilise other planning scheme measures for environmental protection.
- Adopt a suitable methodology for the identification and management of environmental assets in development proposals.

Strategy NE 1.3

Integrated Management: Promote, enhance, review and adopt new integrated management measures to protect habitat and bushland under both public and private ownership.

- Enhance programs such as Voluntary Conservation Agreements and Land for Wildlife.
- Investigate potential for market-based incentives for environmental protection.
- Continue to establish new non-statutory measures for environmental protection.
- Expand the Bushland and Parkland Care Programs.
- Identify opportunities for land management payments for rural landowners protecting environmental values.
- Provide private landholders with knowledge and skills to protect environmental assets.

- Undertake environmental impact assessment processes in determining the capacity of greenspaces to serve as recreation venues.
- Investigate potential for rural greenspace sponsorship program.

Strategy NE 1.4

Rehabilitation of Degraded Environments: Identify and develop opportunities to rehabilitate degraded post-mining and rural lands.

- Establish Post Mining Lands Rehabilitation Centre of Excellence.
- Implement Environmental Overview Management Strategies for rehabilitation of mine sites.
- Ensure mining lease bonds are based on future costs of rehabilitation.
- Rehabilitate existing mines for broad community benefit e.g. Recreation.
- Provide technical advice to rural landholders regarding rehabilitation.
- Support partnerships between community groups and private sector for rehabilitation activities.
- Investigate opportunities to remove mullock heaps from throughout the City.

Strategy NE 1.5

Local Knowledge of Environmental Assets: Enhance and harness the knowledge of the local community of the environmental assets in Ipswich and acknowledge the efforts of the local community in protecting environmental assets.

- Promote Awards for Environmental Excellence.
- Create a web-based database of local environmental groups.
- Identify initiatives to capture cumulative knowledge of the community on environmental assets.
- Create further opportunities for local environmental experts and groups to participate in decision-making processes.
- Encourage local environmental groups to assist in State of Environment reporting and audits of environmental assets.
- Incorporate indigenous land management functions in environmental protection programs and policies.
- Improve the exchange of knowledge and experience regarding environmental protection by groups and individuals.
- Participate in local, national and international activities such as World Environment Day.

NE Goal 2 - Open Space and Recreation

The City of Ipswich has an integrated network of open spaces that contribute to the attractiveness of the City, protects core habitat and environmental assets and caters for the recreational needs of the community.

Strategy NE 2.1

A Network of Open Space: The open space values of Ipswich are managed through a comprehensive and integrated planning approach and management of spatial needs.

- Review Open Space and Recreation Strategy.
- Protect Regionally Significant Open Space.

Strategy NE 2.2

Recreation in Open Spaces: Ensure that the recreational settings and opportunities in the City protect and promote a range of recreational activities and options.

- Identify recreational preferences of Ipswich residents.
- Consider regional requirements when undertaking recreational planning.
- Identify opportunities for motorised vehicle based recreation.
- Improve access to water-based recreation.

NE Goal 3 - Clean and Healthy Waterways

The Bremer River, Brisbane River, and other major waterways that flow through Ipswich have improved water quality and increased biodiversity value and are appreciated by the community for their amenity values and through appropriate recreational use.

Strategy NE 3.1

Integrated Catchment Management: An integrated catchment approach is applied to the management, use and protection of waterways.

- Implement 'Healthy Land - Our Future'.
- Implement and review Local Catchment Management Plans.
- Implement a catchment signage program.
- Implement suitable programs devised by Moreton Bay Waterways and Catchments Partnerships.
- Implement and review Landcare Programs.
- Implement natural resource management projects.
- Continue to implement Ipswich Planning Scheme to minimise risk due to flooding.

Strategy NE 3.2

Pollution Prevention in Waterways and Groundwater: Minimise point-source and diffuse pollution sources in the catchment.

- Devise best practice guidelines for groundwater protection.
- Prepare and implement a Waste Water Strategy.
- Implement strategies and plans to reduce impact of urban development of water quality.
- Undertake water quality monitoring activities.
- Develop and implement pollution prevention strategies in the operation of industry.
- Identify water quality objectives and priorities for the Bremer River.

NE Goal 4 - Environmental Respect

The incidence of any form of pollution - noise, air, soil contamination is minimised and does not pose risks to the health of residents or the natural environment.

Strategy NE 4.1

Community Awareness of Polluting Activities: Improve community awareness of sources of pollution, the degradation this can cause to environmental assets and measures which can be adopted to reduce pollution.

- Conduct community information sessions on pollution prevention.
- Conduct 'cleaner production' workshops for local businesses and industrial operators.
- Promote the National Pollutant Inventory.

Strategy NE 4.2

Air Quality: Ensure air quality in Ipswich is of a high standard which does not pose any significant health risk or nuisance to residents.

- Identify and control primary odour sources.
- Implement 'SEQ Regional Air Quality Strategy'.
- Prepare and implement a Cities for Climate Protection Program.

Strategy NE 4.3

Noise Pollution: Ensure noise levels in Ipswich do not pose any significant health risk or nuisance to residents.

- Maintain and protect buffers around Amberley and major industrial areas.
- Implement planning scheme measures and design guidelines to prevent land use conflicts between industrial and residential uses.

NE Goal 5 - Appreciation of Ecosystem Services

The residents of Ipswich understand and appreciate the full value of services provided by environmental assets and appreciate the importance of managing and enhancing these systems and processes.

Strategy NE 5.1

Community Awareness: Inform the community of the full breadth of benefits environmental assets such as bushland, waterways and biodiversity have on the quality of life in the City.

- Increase awareness of indigenous cultural values in the natural environment.
- Promote the economic and social wellbeing impacts of environmental assets.
- Demonstrate the environmental, cultural historical, social and economic values of conservation, parks management and environment strategies.

NE Goal 6 - Ecosystem Infrastructure

The ecosystem services and open space values provided by the City's natural environmental assets are recognised as a fundamental component of the City's infrastructure network.

Strategy NE 6.1

Accounting for Environmental Costs: Ensure development proposals determine the full extent of environmental costs and benefits of the proposed activity.

- Research methods to measure total cost of development proposals including loss of ecosystem services.

Strategy NE 6.2

Recognise Ecosystem Services: Identify and acknowledge the variety of services provided by the natural environment and ecosystems.

- Implement Rural Futures Program.
- Investigate the economic value of services provided by environmental assets.
- Identify opportunities to enhance ecosystem services provided by environmental assets.

Strategy NE 6.6

Equitable Distribution of Costs: Ensure that the costs associated with environmental protection are distributed equitably across the community.