

City of Ipswich

Enviroplan Program and Levy Progress Report

2023–2024

📍 Purga Nature Reserve





MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Ipswich is home to a diverse range of flora and fauna, including rare and threatened species.

Since 1996, Ipswich City Council has protected and maintained our city's vital ecosystems, natural environmental assets and cultural heritage values through the Ipswich Enviroplan initiative.

Enviroplan conservation estates and reserves range from popular areas for nature-based recreation attracting thousands of visitors each month, such as White Rock-Spring Mountain Conservation Estate, to remote hidden gems closed to public access such as Mount Beau Brummel Conservation Park.

These estates and reserves are not only a refuge for native flora and fauna but also foster important connections with broader nature corridors across the South-East Queensland region.

With no national parks in Ipswich, it is even more important that Enviroplan exists so council and the community can ensure the long-term preservation of conservation areas.

Mayor Teresa Harding
City of Ipswich



CHAIR'S MESSAGE

As our city grows, so too does the need to preserve and maintain our natural areas.

Through Enviroplan, council has acquired close to 6,000 hectares of land for conservation, including the Purga Nature Reserve and Mount Grandchester Conservation Estate. That figure continues to increase, with another 93 hectares of koala habitat added in 2024.

The work to maintain and improve the environmental and cultural heritage values of these estates and reserves also requires continual investment, from weed management to hazard reduction burns, walking trails to flora and fauna surveys.

Enviroplan also has a focus on growing community partnerships to support citywide conservation, with landholders across rural and urban areas creating positive change on their properties.

Through Enviroplan's multi-faceted approach we can ensure Ipswich's natural environment is preserved for future generations.

Councillor Jim Madden
Environment and Sustainability
Committee Chairperson

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DISCLAIMER

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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.

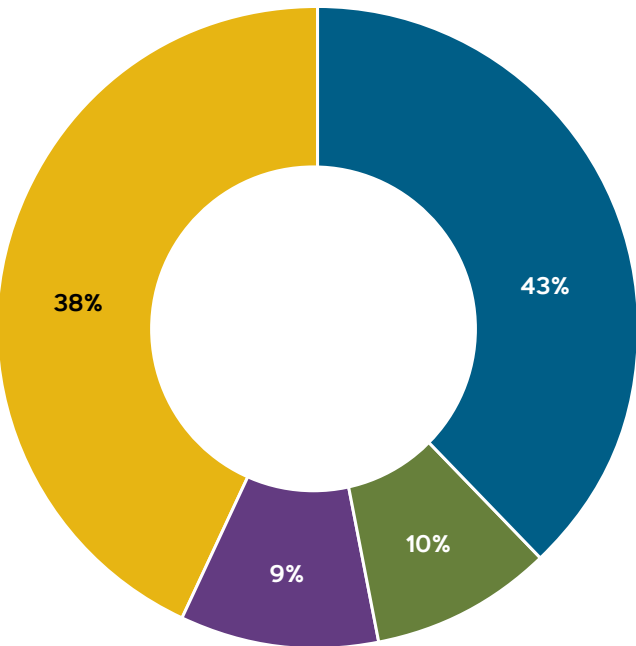
ENVIROPLAN SNAPSHOT

The initiative is funded through a levy paid through household rates. By committing to Ipswich Enviroplan, council is able to deliver citywide conservation outcomes in four key areas; land acquisition, estate management, conservation planning and community partnerships.

Currently, the Ipswich Enviroplan portfolio includes more than 6,700 hectares of conservation land and broader community activities. It includes:

- Maintenance such as weed removal, hazard reduction burns, pest management
- Research and planning, including flora and fauna surveys, masterplans
- Recreational facilities such as walking tracks, amenities, signage
- Community-facing initiatives such as the Landholder Conservation Partnerships Program to inspire community action.

Where did the funds go in 2023–2024?



- Acquisition of significant nature conservation land and loan servicing – \$1,742,537
- Community nature conservation partnerships and support – \$420,450
- Nature conservation planning – \$467,917
- Embellishment, capital and operational management within the Natural Area Estate – \$1,971,481

Total Spend: \$4,602,384



INVESTMENT TREND COMPARED TO PREVIOUS YEAR

TREND	THEME	CHANGE FROM 2022-2023
↑	Acquisition of significant nature conservation land and loan servicing	(+) \$881,509
↓	Community nature conservation partnerships and support	(-) \$64,463
↑	Nature conservation planning	(+) \$238,380
↓	Embellishment, capital and operational management within the Natural Area Estate	(-) \$382,036



ACQUISITION OF SIGNIFICANT NATURE CONSERVATION LAND AND LOAN SERVICING

- There was a land acquisition in April 2024 of 93 hectares at Mt. Flinders Road, Peak Crossing
- \$861,028 went towards servicing the loan
- Council continues to investigate voluntary acquisition opportunities as they arise, assessing properties against a set of criteria including ecological values.



COUNCIL PROTECTS VALUABLE KOALA HABITAT THROUGH ENVIROPLAN

Council's largest conservation land acquisition in more than 10 years will protect a substantial koala priority habitat area for future generations.

Two blocks of land at Peak Crossing, totalling 93 hectares, were voluntarily acquired through Enviroplan.

The blocks of land border Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate and will increase the environmental and habitat value of this estate for a variety of rare and threatened species.

The majority of the site is mapped as priority koala habitat and recognised as being high value to this endangered species.

The acquired land contains important environmental values that have largely been preserved over the long term, including intact ecosystems and diverse landscape.

While there has been some historical logging, there are good areas of dense vegetation and trees approaching the size where hollows begin to form, which is essential for native bird and mammal species.

The site also scored highly as being a large area of stable habitat that will be resilient to the changes in our climate. Areas such as this are becoming increasingly important to preserve as they can sustain viable populations of native plants and animals and help ensure long-term survival of species.



COMMUNITY NATURE CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIPS AND SUPPORT

- \$164,778 was provided in Nature Conservation Grants
- \$15,711 funded landholder education and incentive activities
- More than 1,000 members registered with the Habitat Gardens program
- Close to 200 properties registered with a Voluntary Conservation Agreement
- Renewed regional partnerships
- \$16,363 Land for Wildlife South East Queensland
- \$17,277 SEQ Fire and Biodiversity Consortium



OVERCOMING BARRIERS AND CREATING CHANGE

With much of Ipswich's environmentally significant land held as private property, landholders' conservation efforts are vital to citywide conservation efforts. However, landholders can face barriers to improving the environmental values of their property, such as physical capability for the work required, financial capacity for the cost of works or technical expertise and knowledge.

Through Enviroplan, council supports landholders to overcome these barriers. One mechanism is the Enviroplan-funded Nature Conservation Grants.

Members of the Landholder Conservation Partnerships Program who have created a property management plan with council are eligible to apply, with the grants able to fund a wide range of on-ground actions.

At a 20-hectare property in Calvert, the grants have supported a Biodiversity Conservation Agreement landholder with a range of improvements that would not have been possible otherwise.

A number of nest boxes have been installed around the property, suitable for parrots, possums and gliders.

The project included two large black cockatoo nest boxes. One of Australia's rarest birds, the Glossy-black cockatoos visit the property to drink from the dam and feed from the Casuarina trees. The hope is that the nest boxes will entice these wary birds to breed on the property.

The grants have also allowed the landholder to engage a specialised contractor to progressively remove lantana, which had formed an impenetrable thicket in the gully.

It is hoped that once the lantana is under control, more species such as koalas will be able to access the property. Continued weed management will also allow native plant species to regenerate.



NATURE CONSERVATION PLANNING

- Conservation works with a focus on Brush-tailed rock wallaby foraging areas, including:
 - \$34,715 for weed management and restoration works at Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate
 - \$27,000 for ecological specialist services
 - \$7,715 for new monitoring cameras

EMBELLISHMENT, CAPITAL AND OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

- \$466,681 for maintenance work including weed control, service trails, labour and equipment
- \$339,742 for 111 hectares of habitat restoration works
- \$34,121 for upgrades to the Kupmurri at Hardings Paddock, including walking tracks and gardens, solar lighting, gates and fencing
- \$12,895 for Purga Nature Reserve wayfinding signage installation for all tracks
- \$99,877 for the installation of new fire management areas in Redbank Rifle Range
- \$351,324 towards 156 hectares of ongoing fuel reduced area maintenance for the control of wildfire in Natural Area Estates and protection of life and property
- 96 hectares of hazard reduction burn completed at Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate in July 2023
- 30 hectares of hazard reduction burn completed at Hillview Drive Reserve in June 2024
- 591 hours of pest animal management activities



PROTECTING PRIORITY SPECIES

Our Enviroplan conservation estates and reserves are refuges for many threatened, locally significant priority species. Conservation works undertaken in these protected areas, such as weed and pest management, and bushfire mitigation, improve habitat and reduce threats to these important species.

Key species supported by Enviroplan include koalas, Glossy-black cockatoos, Black-breasted button quails, Rufous bettongs, Brush-tailed phascogale, Grey-crowned babbler and the Plunkett mallee.

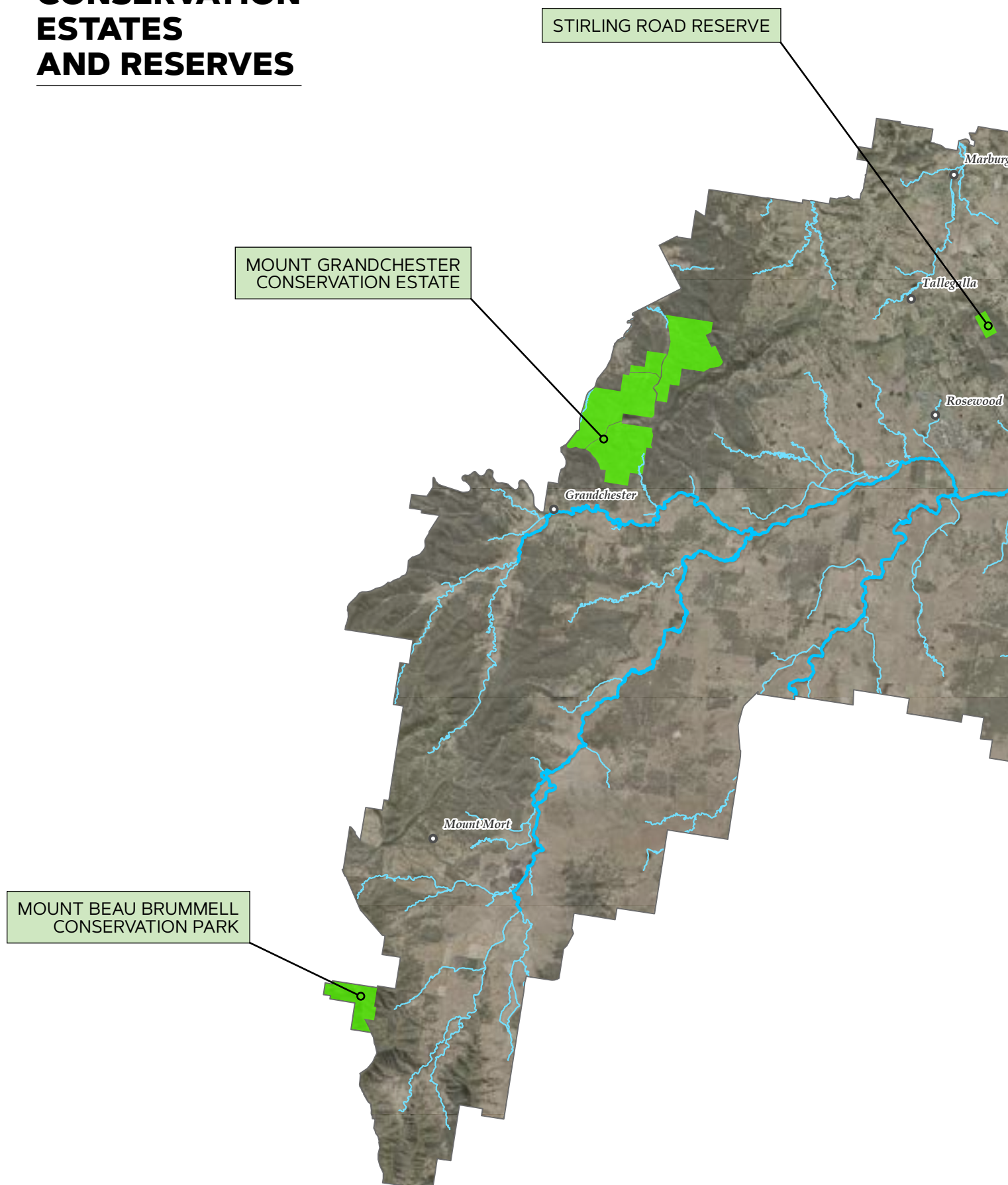
In the 2023/2024 Financial Year, there was 111 hectares of habitat restoration works that targeted the improvement of endangered Yellow Box vegetation community, Brush-tailed rock wallaby habitat and the removal of declared weeds such as Cat's claw creeper and Lantana.

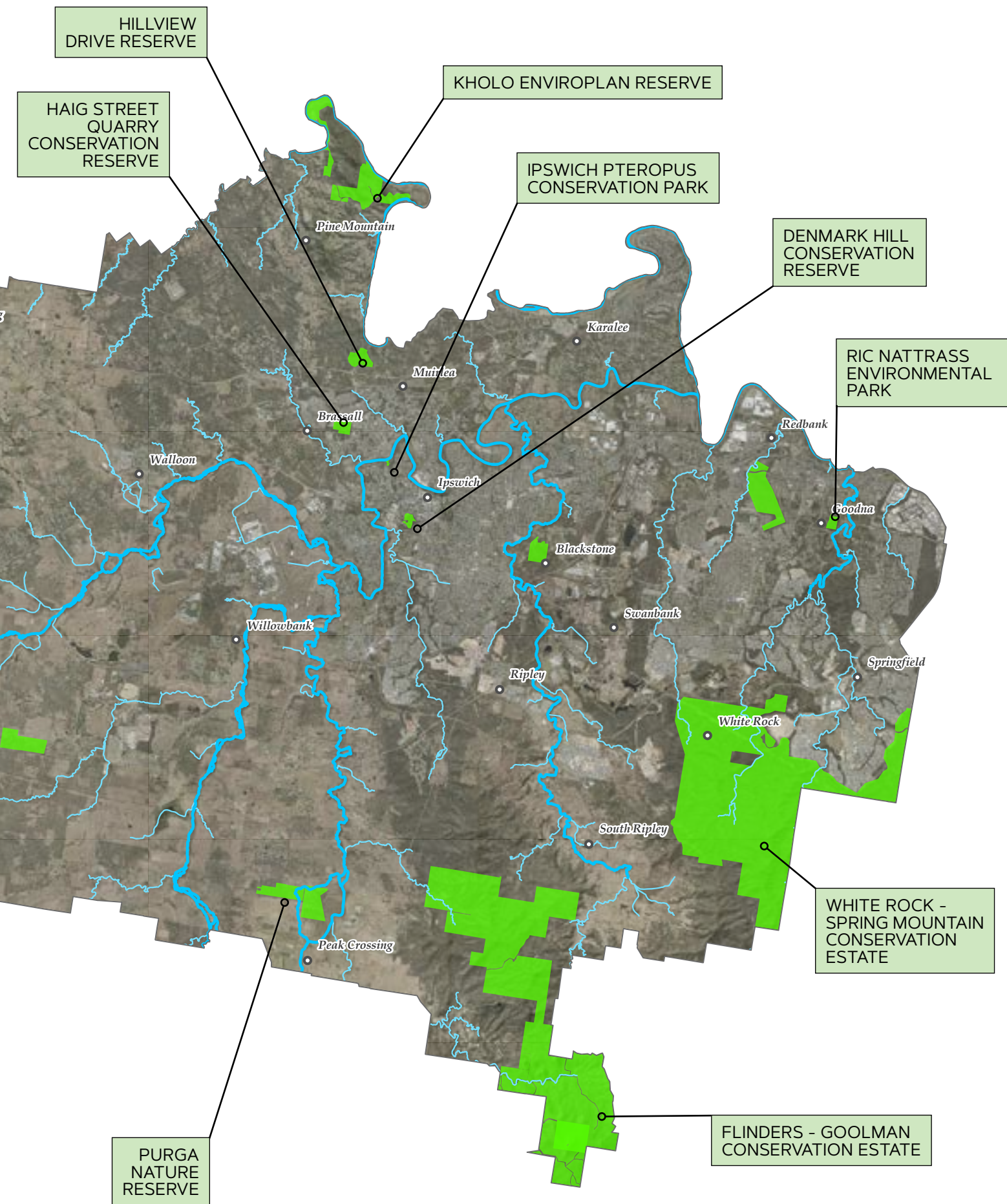
2023–2024 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE STATEMENT

This statement is certified by the Chief Financial Officer on the 4 November 2024.

PROJECT/ACTIVITY	ACTUALS
STRATEGIC THEME: ACQUISITION OF SIGNIFICANT CONSERVATION LAND	
Land Acquisition Program	
Assessments and purchases	\$881,509
Loan service	\$861,028
Sub-program total	\$1,742,537
Theme total	\$1,742,537
STRATEGIC THEME: COMMUNITY NATURE CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIPS AND SUPPORT	
Landholder Conservation Partnerships Program	
Program management operational expenses	\$148,077
On-ground landholder support projects	\$164,778
Voluntary Conservation Agreement incentives: Education and capacity building	\$15,711
Sub-program total	\$328,566
Community Partnerships Program	
Annual city-wide events	\$12,952
On-ground community projects	\$16,857
Digital and printed material	\$23,540
Citizen science program	\$4,895
SEQ Land For Wildlife Program Partnership	\$16,363
SEQ Fire and Biodiversity Consortium Partnership	\$17,277
Sub-program total	\$91,884
Theme total	\$420,450
STRATEGIC THEME: NATURE CONSERVATION PLANNING	
City-wide Nature Conservation Planning Program	
Nature Conservation Planning: Operational expenses	\$346,136
Continual improvement projects	\$50
Sub-program total	\$346,185
Threatened and Key Species Recovery Program	
Biodiversity planning: operational expenses	\$86,340
Koala conservation and habitat management	\$677
Brush-tailed rock wallaby recovery	\$34,715
Sub-program total	\$121,731
Theme total	\$467,917
Strategic Theme: Embellishment, Capital and Operational Management Investment	
Natural Area Maintenance Program	
Natural Area Maintenance: Operational expenses	\$606,480
Sub-program total	\$606,480
Natural Area Management Program	
Natural area management operational expenses	\$93,012
Conservation Works Program on-ground operational projects	\$335,484
Fire Management Program on-ground operational projects	\$421,099
Natural area capital investment program	\$401,947
Pest animal management program	\$18,789
Natural area estate visitor management operational expenses	\$46,248
Natural area estate activation program	\$7,702
Natural area estate enforcement program	\$40,720
Sub-program total	\$1,365,001
Theme total	\$1,971,481
PROGRAM TOTAL	\$4,602,384
Revenue	\$4,973,167
External Grant Funding for Enviroplan Projects	-
Adjustment to Reserve (Drawdown)	\$370,783
Reserve Balance	\$5,682,891

ENVIROPLAN CONSERVATION ESTATES AND RESERVES









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