

Natural Environment Policy

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Head of Power

This policy supports the Redland City Council Corporate Plan *Our Future Redlands – A Corporate Plan to 2026 and Beyond*.

Policy Objective

Our corporate decisions protect, enhance and restore the health and viability of the City's natural terrestrial and aquatic values both on public and private lands and aquatic environments, for their inherent value and the benefit, use and lifestyle of current and future generations of our community.

Policy Statement

Redland City Council, through its Corporate Plan, is committed to providing services that deliver our community's shared vision and collective aspirations; *Naturally wonderful lifestyle. Connected communities. Embracing opportunities*. We are a values led organisation and our organisational values encapsulate what we care about, influence how we operate and support our mission: Make a difference, make it count.

Council is committed to:

- Protecting, enhancing and restoring the natural terrestrial and aquatic values of the City that include:
 - Koalas and other native animal and plant populations and habitats.
 - Core habitat areas as sanctuaries for wildlife.
 - Safe wildlife movement corridors across the landscape.
 - Maintaining no net loss of native vegetation as defined in the *Vegetation Management Act 1999*.
 - Terrestrial and aquatic biological diversity and ecosystem services.
 - Significant vegetation that contributes to visual amenity, historic and cultural values that benefit the community.
 - Aquatic values and management of infrastructure affecting aquatic environments.
 - Visitor appreciation through sustainable recreation practices that avoid degradation of natural values.
- Enhancing and restoring Council's protected areas and strengthening the connections between core habitats through:
 - Public spaces and appropriate street tree planting programs, in accordance with SEQ Natural Resource Management targets.
 - Pest, bushfire and reserve management actions.
 - Aquatic, in-stream and riparian habitat rehabilitation, fish passage improvement.
 - Stormwater asset maintenance and erosion and sediment control.

Natural Environment Policy

- A conservation land acquisition program that prioritises acquisition of land to expand and connect core wildlife habitat and through rehabilitation works; and/or offsets plantings; and long term protection, achieve cost effective environmental outcomes that contribute to facilitating effective biodiversity conservation (e.g. sustaining koala populations; buffering sensitive environmental areas) and provides wider community benefit.
- Managing protected areas and sensitive environmental areas from the impacts of a changing climate and where possible replace protected areas lost to climate change.
- Maintaining and protecting the values and health of the network of trees and other vegetation that exist in urban areas on both public and private properties, through proactive tree maintenance programs, education and regulatory measures.
- Working in partnership with the community through action-oriented collaboration, partnerships, and extension programs that empower landholders and the broader community as environmental stewards and citizen scientists.
- Creating and implementing a framework of regulatory and non-regulatory (commitments under memoranda, partnerships and agreements) tools that enforce and support conservation of natural terrestrial and aquatic values on public and private lands which enables the implementation of this policy.
- Integrating the importance of environmental values and legislative obligations and duties into Council's general business, planning and staff training to ensure innovation, effective communication and collaboration between officers.
- Improving knowledge of natural terrestrial and aquatic values and environmental performance through prioritised monitoring, research and reporting programs to inform Council's decision making.
- Fostering research partnerships with universities, local, state and commonwealth government agencies and non-government organisations.
- Complying with relevant State and Federal legislation (and all subsequent changes) to pursue best practice and prevent pollution and contamination of land, water and air by managing relevant Council activities and implementing Council's Environmental Management System.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Aquatic values	Includes aquatic ecosystems and associated plant and animal populations of freshwaters, estuaries, foreshores, wetlands, coasts and Moreton Bay.
Core habitat areas	Areas with conservation values and features that support and maintain breeding, feeding, sheltering and roosting for a large diversity of species or a number of native species, with manageable external impacts. This may include non-woody vegetation, intertidal areas, in-stream habitats, flight paths for bird species, identified migratory species feeding and nesting areas, roosting sites, tree hollows and some man-made structures utilised as habitat.
Ecosystem services	The benefits people obtain from ecosystems. These include provisioning services such as food and water; regulating services such as flood and disease control; cultural services such as spiritual, recreational, and cultural benefits; and supporting services such as nutrient cycling that maintains the conditions for life on Earth.
Natural values	Terrestrial and aquatic elements of nature, which have special qualities like uniqueness, rarity, typicality, representiveness, scientific or educational importance, or have useful features or recreational value
Protected areas	Council managed natural areas of the City, including conservation lands, parks, reserves, aquatic environments, and foreshores, over which Council has management control.

Natural Environment Policy

Associated Documents

Koala Conservation Plan 2022-2027 and Action Plan 2022-2027
 Wildlife Connections Plan 2018-2028 and Action Plan 2018-2023
 Redland Coast Biosecurity Plan 2018-2023
 Redland City Council's Conservation Land Management Strategy 2010 – a plan for the next ten years

ENV-001-001-G Redlands 24 Hour Wildlife Rescue ([A3176291](#))
 ENV-001-002-G Land Assessment Guidelines for Proposed Acquisitions ([A3176293](#))
 ENV-001-003-G Administering and Delivering Environmental Offsets ([A3428961](#))
 ENV-001-004-G Environmental Partnerships Program ([A3449896](#))
 ENV-001-005-G Community Bushcare Program ([A3176292](#))
 ENV-001-006-G Management of Trees on Council Owned or Controlled Land ([A3175518](#))
 ENV-001-007-G Environmental Education Unit – Schools Program ([A3450823](#))

Document Control

Only Council can approve amendments to this document by resolution of a Council Meeting, with the exception of administrative amendments which can be approved by the relevant ELT member. Refer to *Policy Instrument Development Manual* for an explanation on administrative amendments ([A4063988](#)).

Any requests to change the content of this document must be forwarded to relevant Service Manager(s). Approved documents must be submitted to the Corporate Meetings and Registers Team for registration.

Version Control

Version number	Date	Key Changes
1	05 May 2015	New policy
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rewording of some statements to improve clarity and readability. Clear inclusion of aquatic values to expand its application particular to the coast and Moreton Bay. Updating to reflect language, linkages and learning's from the Koala Conservation Strategy and Action Plan 2016 and Wildlife Connections Plan 2018
3	November 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updates in accordance with Policy Review Project 2019
4	March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative update to include reference to the new Corporate Plan. Change to version number but no approval required, therefore review and approval dates remain the same.
5	March 2024	Administrative update to include reference to updated Koala Conservation Plan