



CITY OF CLARENCE

Pilchers Hill Bushland Reserve

Management Plan



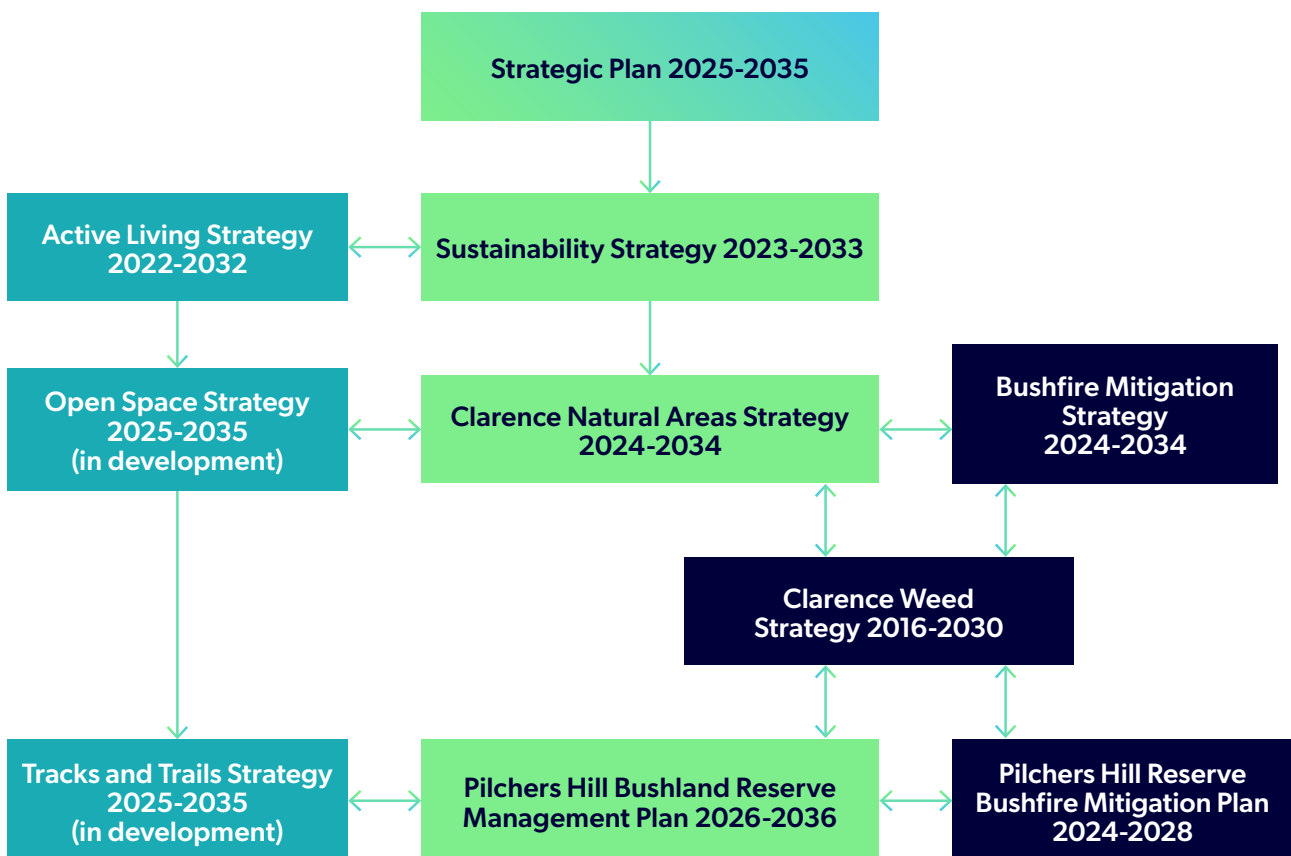
Executive summary

Overview

Pilchers Hill Bushland Reserve, Thoona and Lindhill Bushland Reserves are highly valued natural assets that deliver both significant ecological benefits and essential community recreation opportunities. Located on the eastern shore in Hobart, these reserves form part of a broader landscape corridor linking to the Meehan Range, playing a critical role in biodiversity conservation within an increasingly urbanised environment.

The Pilchers Hill Bushland Reserve Management Plan (RMP) establishes a practical, action-oriented framework to guide the long-term management of these reserves. It responds directly to previous planning gaps by prioritising achievable actions, aligning them with available resources, and embedding monitoring and accountability mechanisms to ensure delivery.

Where does the Pilchers Hill Bushland Reserve Management Plan fit into our strategic framework?



Key Values

The reserves support regionally significant dry eucalypt forest ecosystems, including several threatened vegetation communities. Of particular importance is the presence of *Eucalyptus risdonii* forest, which is highly restricted to our eastern shore. These habitats provide critical refuge for a range of native fauna, including threatened species such as the Tasmanian devil, eastern barred bandicoot, and swift parrot.

Beyond ecological value, the reserves are heavily used by the local community for walking, cycling, dog exercise, and nature appreciation. Their accessibility and scenic character contribute significantly to public health, wellbeing, and local identity.

Key Challenges

Despite their importance, the reserves are under increasing pressure from urban proximity and high visitation. The most significant threats identified include:

- **illegal firewood harvesting**, removing essential habitat features such as mature trees and coarse woody debris
- **weed invasion**, particularly along urban edges and track corridors
- **proliferation of informal tracks**, leading to erosion, habitat fragmentation, and vegetation decline
- **dumping and garden waste encroachment**
- **impacts from domestic animals**, particularly off-lead dogs and roaming cats
- **unmanaged access**, enabling illegal vehicle entry and ongoing disturbance.

If left unmanaged, these pressures will continue to degrade ecological condition and reduce the reserves' long-term resilience.

Strategic Approach

To address these challenges, the RMP introduces a management zoning framework, dividing the reserve into three functional areas:

- **urban interface zone** – focuses on managing edge effects, weeds, dumping, and access control
- **nature-based amenity zone** – supports recreation while minimising environmental impacts
- **conservation zone** – prioritises protection of high-value habitat and threatened species.

This zoning approach ensures that management actions are spatially targeted, resource-conscious, and aligned with both conservation and recreation objectives. It also integrates with existing bushfire management requirements, improving coordination across multiple planning frameworks.

Priority Actions

Priority actions are designed to protect our core conservation values while also improving visitor experience and managing costs. Our key priority actions include:



preventing illegal firewood harvesting through compliance, access control, and education



restricting unauthorised vehicle access



implementing a structured weed management program



establishing a formal track hierarchy and closing informal tracks



improving entrances, signage, and visitor infrastructure



managing domestic animal impacts



delivering a biennial ecological monitoring program.

Monitoring and Adaptive Management

A key strength of the RMP is the inclusion of a robust monitoring framework, ensuring that management actions are measurable and outcomes are tracked over time. This includes:

- vegetation condition assessments and photopoint monitoring
- fauna monitoring using camera traps and acoustic recorders
- threatened species verification
- citizen science contributions.

This approach enables adaptive management to allow the strategies to be refined based on evidence and ensuring continuous improvement.

Community Engagement

The RMP recognises that long-term success depends on strong community involvement. A structured engagement program, including surveys, workshops, and stakeholder interviews, will ensure that management priorities reflect community values while building local stewardship.

Conclusion

The RMP provides a clear and achievable pathway to protect and enhance the natural values of Pilchers Hill, Thoona, and Lindhill Bushland Reserves, while maintaining its role as a highly valued community space. The RMP's priorities, monitoring program, and clearly assigned actions will guide coordinated management over the next ten years.

