

# Bulga Stock Reserve Plan of Management



**Prepared for Singleton Council  
by Gondwana Consulting Pty Ltd**

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# Bulga Stock Reserve Plan of Management

## for Singleton Council

CONTROLLED DOCUMENT  
“Bulga Stock Reserve Plan of Management”

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# 1. INTRODUCTION – SETTING THE SCENE

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## 1.1 BULGA STOCK RESERVE - OVERVIEW

Bulga Stock Reserve is located in the Hunter Valley region of New South Wales, in the Singleton Local Government Area approximately 24 kilometres south-west of the Singleton township.

It is a 5.3 hectare Crown Reserve (No. 170159) located on the south-eastern edge of the village of Bulga, off the north-east side of the Putty Road. Singleton Council is the Reserve's Council-manager (under the *Crown Land Management Act 2016*).

The site and surrounds was originally a location for resting, holding and watering stock – and was possibly part of the historic main thoroughfare for travelling stock from the northern districts of NSW to Sydney, dating from the early 1800s. The site was formally gazetted as a “water reserve” in 1884 and as a “travelling stock reserve” in 1888.

In 1988, with the use of travelling stock routes largely ended and only occasional use of the site for temporary local grazing, the area's status as a travelling stock reserve was revoked. Five years later, in 1993, the area was reserved for the purpose of “public recreation” as Reserve No. 170159.

Today Bulga Stock Reserve is largely an open paddock, extending from Putty Road in the south-west to the irregular levee and sandy slope down to Wollombi Brook in the north. It is mostly exotic grassland with scattered patches of Forest Redgum and other native vegetation regrowth – especially in and around the ephemeral wetland areas that are a feature of the site's south. Weeds are very common across the entire area – mostly grassland and pasture weeds, but also a large stand of Black Locust (which is toxic to humans) in the south-west. The site has considerable potential for the regeneration of native vegetation communities – to deliver biodiversity and fauna habitat benefits as well as to enhance the area's scenic appeal.

The Reserve is the larger of the two areas of public open space managed by Singleton Council in Bulga village. However it is, at present, undeveloped and not actively promoted for community access and leisure or recreational uses. The only items of infrastructure are two reserve name/information signs and fencing along Putty Road and two other boundaries. The site receives very limited, if any, visitor use at present. Council's current management of the area is, chiefly, occasional weed control efforts.

However the Reserve is strategically located within Bulga village, and is the main area of public land connecting and providing access to the Wollombi Brook corridor. The Reserve's potential was recognised by the *Bulga Village Masterplan* recently prepared for Council, which envisioned the site becoming a low-



key “environmental park” and proposed a number of minor developments for the enjoyment of visitors and residents.

Planning for the Reserve, and any development and use, must address the area's challenges or constraints – as well as acknowledging Council's management and maintenance capabilities. The Reserve is significantly impacted by flooding of Wollombi Brook – with a 20% chance of much of site being flooded to 1 to 2 metres depth in any year. There is a 1% chance the entire site will be flooded, some areas to over 3 or 4 metres deep, in any year. Safe access, for walkers or vehicles, off Putty Road is also restricted.

This Plan of Management will guide the management, development and use Bulga Stock Reserve. It will provide direction for management of the Reserve's landscape and vegetation as well as practical, manageable and sustainable opportunities for recreational or visitor access and enjoyment.

## 1.2 WHAT IS A PLAN OF MANAGEMENT ?

A plan of management is developed to determine and guide the future management of a public open space asset under Council management – such as a park, sportsground or bushland reserve. It sets out management objectives and performance targets for such “community land” as well as providing directions and actions for an area's management and use.

Plans of management are important documents, prepared in consultation with the community, and act as an “agreement” between a Council and the community as to how a place is to be managed and its values protected. Current uses and activities are identified and future uses and activities, including leases and licences, are approved by a plan of management.

Both the *Crown Land Management Act 2016* and the *Local Government Act 1993* include provisions regarding the preparation of plans of management for lands under a Council's management, how a plan of management is to be prepared (including community engagement activities), and what must be included in a plan. From 1 July 2018 the *Crown Land Management Act 2016* requires local councils that are appointed to manage a dedicated or reserved area of Crown land (as is the case for Bulga Stock Reserve), to manage that land as if it were public land under the *Local Government Act 1993* – including applying the plan of management requirements of this Act.

## 1.3 WHY COUNCIL HAS PREPARED THIS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

There is, at present, no separate plan of management for Bulga Stock Reserve. The Reserve is included, as one of a number of reserves managed by Singleton Council, in the *Plan of Management for Village Parks* (un-dated). Once adopted, this Plan of Management will replace this former, wider, plan in providing directions and actions for the Reserve's future management, development and use.

The *Crown Land Management Act 2016* requires local councils that are the appointed “Council Manager” for a Crown Reserve – as Singleton Council is for Bulga Stock Reserve – to prepare a plan of management for these areas by 30 June 2021. This is required even where there is a previous plan of management already in place. Council must comply with this legislative requirement.

As a first step in this planning process, the *Crown Land Management Act 2016* requires a “Council Manager” to seek the approval of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (Crown Lands) for the “initial categorisation” of a Crown Reserve. The “categorisation” of community land is an important tool in the planning and management of these lands (see Section 4.6 for further discussion). The Department approved Singleton Council’s initial categorisation of Bulga Stock Reserve as “Park”, and for the purposes of “public recreation”, in February 2019. The subsequent preparation of a plan of management allows a council and the community the opportunity to review, and potentially alter, this initial categorisation.

Preparing a plan of management also helps ensure that an area’s future management considers the community’s and Council’s long term vision for the Singleton local government area and its community as set out in the *Singleton Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027* and its five pillars of people, places, environment, economy and leadership. Management of Bulga Stock Reserve must align with the relevant directions and strategic objectives of the Community Strategic Plan and ensure that the area’s use and management remains consistent with the community’s expressed values and preferences.

Finally preparing a plan of management allows an area’s users and neighbours, and other stakeholders or community members, to participate in the planning process – to express their views, provide comments and input, and review evolving management directions – through both informal engagement and input opportunities, and via the legislatively required exhibition of a draft plan for formal comment.

## 1.4 LAND TO WHICH THIS PLAN APPLIES

This plan of management relates to the area described as Bulga Stock Reserve, Crown Reserve R170159, in the Village of Bulga. The Reserve comprises the whole of Lot 7001 DP 93633 (in the Parish of Whybrow, County of Hunter) as shown on Figure 1. It covers an area of 5.254 hectares (or 52,537.58 square metres).

Crown Reserve R170159 was gazetted, and reserved for the “public purpose of public recreation”, on 23 July 1993 (in NSW Government Gazette No. 82, although a later notice in Government Gazette No. 135 adjusted the previously incorrectly mapped reserve area). The Bulga Public Recreation (R.170159) Reserve Trust – managed by Council – was established and appointed as trustee for the Reserve on 20 August 1993 (in NSW Government Gazette No. 91). The Reserve’s full gazettal history is outlined in Appendix A.

The Reserve extends from Putty Road in the south/south-east to the “cadastral corridor” of Wollombi Brook in the north/north-east (although the actual Wollombi Brook channel is located further north outside of this corridor) – up to 200 metres across and 330 metres deep.

The Reserve is abutted by a private landholding to the west, as well as by two privately owned blocks to the east and north-east (both owned by the same coal mining company). The lot encompassing the old school house (former Scout Hall) abutting the Reserve’s south-east is owned by the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (reserve R91290) with, at present, the Bulga Milbrodale Progress Association the appointed Crown land manager.

There are no current Native Title Claims affecting the subject lands. However an Aboriginal Land Claim, lodged by the Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983* (NSW), applies to the Reserve. (See Management Action RMA2 regarding assisting in the determination of this Aboriginal Land Claim.)





Figure 1 Bulga Stock Reserve (Crown Reserve No. R170159)

Base source: Google Earth

## 1.5 PREPARING THIS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

The following process has been followed – to the current Draft Plan of Management exhibition stage – to prepare the Bulga Stock Reserve Plan of Management. Figure 2 broadly outlines the overall plan preparation process.

- Discussions with Council staff to draw on available in-house expertise and knowledge of the site.
- Collation, review and analysis of background and “directions” documents. Review of the current *Plan of Management for Village Parks* (un-dated) as applying to the Reserve, and other available data from Council. Sourcing and review of other background information regarding the Reserve and its legislative and planning context.



- Detailed on-ground assessments of the Reserve, undertaken over the course of three site visits – including the identification of values, “use and condition” assessments, constraints/opportunities analysis and the Reserve’s context within Bulga village.
- Community engagement process and meeting of key local stakeholder, and analysis of feedback/outcomes (see Section 4.2 and Appendix E).
- Liaison and site inspection with Local Land Services (Hunter).
- Preparation of a preliminary Draft Plan of Management, with Council review and feedback.
- Preparation of this Draft Plan of Management, including a Draft Masterplan, for Council approval for public exhibition. Amendments following Council consideration and feedback.
- Separate briefings on the Draft Plan of Management were provided for Councillors and members of the Mount Thorley Warkworth Voluntary Planning Agreement Committee.
- Exhibition of the Draft Plan of Management for community comment and feedback (as required by the *Local Government Act 1993*), and conduct of a Public Recategorisation Hearing.
- Council review of community comments, and preparation of Public Hearing Report (by Independent Chairperson). Council determination of required amendments to Plan of Management.
- Preparation of final Plan of Management for Bulga Stock Reserve, and adoption by Council.



Figure 2 The Plan of Management preparation process

## 1.6 STRUCTURE OF THIS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

This Plan of Management has been divided into seven sections as outlined below.

**Introduction and Background – Setting the Scene.** Describes plans of management; why and how they are prepared; and what land is included in this plan of management.

**Description of Bulga Stock Reserve.** Provides an introduction to Bulga Stock Reserve – its assets and facilities, usage and condition.

**Planning and Management Context.** Describes the legislative requirements of a plan of management and linkages to, or alignment with, other key planning documents.

**Basis for Management of Bulga Stock Reserve.** Identifies and evaluates the role of the Reserve, its values, issues and opportunities. This section also identifies the appropriate community land categories to apply to the area, and also the broad objectives and directions for the Reserve's future management.

**Permitted Reserve Purposes, Intensity of Use and Development, and Landscape Concept Plan.** Describes the purposes and uses to be permitted within the Reserve, the intensity of such uses, guidance in considering future possibly unforeseen uses or activities, and the scale and intensity of development within the Reserve. The Masterplan provides an overview of this Plan's broad directions and major on-ground actions for the Reserve.

**Management Actions.** Identifies a management framework, founded on specific management actions and guidelines or policies, to protect and enhance the Reserve's values, enjoyment and efficient management. Priorities or timing, the level of resources required (where relevant), performance targets, and means of assessing achievement are included for each management action/guideline. This section also authorises leases, licences, permits, and other interests in the Reserve in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993*.

**Implementation Plan.** Identifies an indicative programme for the implementation of key management actions, as well as a review schedule for the plan of management.

## 1.7 COMPLIANCE WITH LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

The *Local Government Act 1993* sets out a number of requirements or factors that must be included in, or addressed by, a plan of management for community land. This Plan of Management has been prepared in accordance and compliance with these requirements – as shown in Table 1. This Plan of Management has also been prepared in recognition of, and to realise, the "principles of Crown land management" as set out in the *Crown Lands Management Act 2016*.

**Table 1 Compliance with *Local Government Act 1993* Requirements**

<b><i>Local Government Act 1993</i> Requirement</b>	<b>Relevant Section(s) of this Plan</b>
Description of the condition and uses of the land, and (any) buildings or improvements, as at the Plan of Management's date of adoption	Section 2 and Table 2
Categorisation of community land	Section 4
Core objectives for management for the community land	Section 4
Purpose(s) for which the land, and any buildings or improvements, will be permitted to be used	Section 5
Purpose(s) for which any further development of the land will be permitted (whether under lease or licence or otherwise)	Section 5
Description of the scale and intensity of any permitted uses or developments	Section 5
Authorisation of leases, licences or other estates	Section 6
Performance targets	Section 6
Means of assessing the achievement of objectives and performance targets	Section 6

## 2. DESCRIPTION OF BULGA STOCK RESERVE

### 2.1 LOCATION AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

Bulga Stock Reserve is located at the eastern entry to Bulga village, approximately 300 metres south-east of the village centre – as shown in Figure 3.

Bulga is 24 kilometres, by road, south-west of the Singleton township. The village is surrounded by open-cut coal mines to the east/north-east, agricultural lands (principally grazing) to the south-east and south, and smaller agricultural lots and rural residential landholdings to the west backed by the forested hills of Wolllemi National Park.

At the more local scale the Reserve itself is surrounded by cleared agricultural lands to the east, the vegetated creek corridor of Wollombi Brook to the north, and cleared but unmanaged lands to the west. Putty Road runs along the site's south-western margin, with large residential lots on the road's opposite side. The former Scout Hall (the historic Mt Leonards Public School), for which the Bulga Milbrodale Progress Association is at present the appointed Crown land manager, adjoins the Reserve's far south-east corner.

Bulga Stock Reserve is the larger of the only two areas of Council-managed public open space in the Bulga village. However unlike the Reserve the other, smaller, area – the Bulga Recreational Ground – is readily accessible and has been developed for leisure and recreation use including overnight stays.



Figure 3 Location and Singleton Local Government Area context

Base source: Google Earth

## 2.2 BRIEF HISTORY

Bulga Stock Reserve is part of the traditional lands of the Wonnarua (or Wanaruah) Aboriginal people, which also extend throughout the Singleton area and central lowlands of the Hunter Valley. The Wonnarua (Wanaruah) people have occupied this area for over 30,000 years, with traditional knowledge holding that occupation extends back to the early stages of the Dreaming.

The Bulga area was part of the lands of the Baelpin Clan, who occupied the area from Singleton to Broke and spoke the Wonnarua/Wanaruah dialect. The area was also possibly used by the Wannungine Clan (of the neighbouring Darkinjung Aboriginal people) living in the Bulga to Putty area.

Historical sources recorded the Hunter Valley's abundant natural resources. The Wonnarua (Wanaruah) people would have hunted womboin (kangaroo), murrin (emu), ukae (dingo) and the baninbellang (wallaby) and fished the area's rivers and billabongs – these were traditionally the role of men. Women traditionally took smaller game such as the wirraman (lizard) and possums and also gathered yams, roots, bush foods and waterlilies. The land also provided materials for tools, shelter, medicines and cultural uses. Wollombi Brook was believed to have possibly been a traditional movement route, between the Dividing Range and coast, providing a continuous water supply and pathways (as demonstrated by the abundance of large artefact/occupation sites along its length indicative of resting areas and locations subject to repeated visits). However the traditional patterns of Aboriginal life were dramatically disrupted by European occupation of the district.

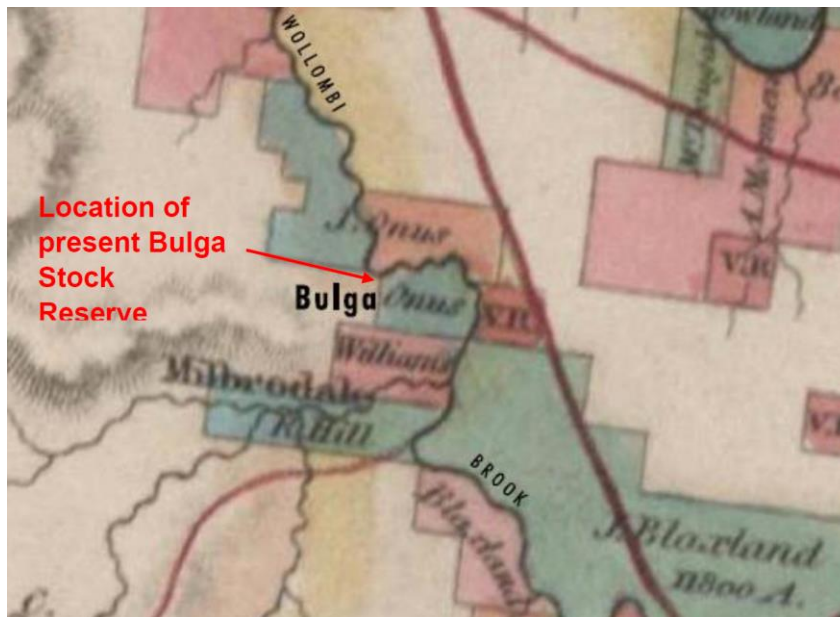
European settlement of the Bulga area dates from the 1820s.

Following earlier settlements in the "Pattersons Plains" area (in the lower Hunter) around 1813-14, Governor Macquarie recognised the value of opening more of the Hunter Valley to settlers. Consequently several exploratory parties attempted to find an overland route from Sydney to the Hunter Valley and open up new areas for colonial settlement. After participating in an earlier exploratory party in 1817 Benjamin Singleton returned to the area on a second expedition in 1818. In October 1819 and March 1820 John Howe (the then Chief Constable at Windsor), with Singleton and others, undertook two expeditions to establish a "line of road" overland between Sydney and the Hunter. The 1820 expedition is believed to have traversed the Bulga area (as the first flat country they came to on exiting the ranges) and crossed the lower reaches of Wollombi Brook to reach the Hunter River around Whittingham on 15 March 1820. Howe's overland route became known as the "Bulga Track" when officially opened in 1823 (it was also known as the Parsons's Road, after the creek just south of Bulga) and is now the Putty Road.

Howe and Singleton were given land grants in the district as their reward for discovering this route, and by late 1821 settlers had occupied lands up the Hunter Valley as far as Singleton. This was spurred on by a survey of the lower Hunter Valley completed in 1821 – and aided by Howe's description of the "Patricks Plains" area as the "... finest sheep country I have ever seen since I left England". A second survey (by Henry Dangar) of the Upper Hunter Valley was completed in 1826 and this, combined with the ability to overland stock from Windsor via the Bulga Track, led to the expansion of colonial settlement.

An 1828 map (of the wider Hunter River area) shows an un-named farmhouse immediately to the south-east of present-day Bulga village, which is believed to be the early Mt Leonard Homestead (south-east of today's Bulga Stock Reserve). Nine years later an 1837 plan (as shown in Figure 4) shows Joseph Onus as occupying two large land blocks at Bulga – a 1,000 acre land grant immediately east of the present-day Reserve site on the west side of Wollombi Brook, and a second block straddling the Brook just north of today's village centre and bridge. Joseph Onus received a life sentence in Kent (U.K.) in 1801 and arrived in the colony in 1803. He later transported cattle overland from Windsor to the Bulga-Broke area, in partnership with Robert Williams. Williams held a large block on the western bank of





*Figure 4 Detail of Robert Dixon's 1837 map of the Colony of NSW, showing landholdings in and around the future Bulga area.*

Source: United Wambo Open Cut Coal Mine Project, Heritage Impact Statement, Umwelt 2016

Wollombi Brook (at its junction with Parsons Creek), shown on the 1837 plan as immediately south of Onus' block. William's block became Mt Leonard. These holdings persisted on Parish Maps for many decades (and Mt Leonard remained in the Williams family until its sale in 1904).

Thomas Eather (Senior) and William McAlpin are also recorded as early settlers of the Bulga area, who travelled to the area along the Bulga Track. Thomas Eather, his wife and infant son (also called Thomas Eather) are claimed to have settled in the area in 1826 on a grant of land from the Crown – however the 1837 plan of landholdings (Figure 4) does not show such a block (the 1892 Parish Map shows two small blocks, one held by Thomas Eather and the other by J. W. Eather, in the previous larger northern land grant of Joseph Onus). William McAlpin returned to settle in Bulga in 1842 with his wife and eldest child (and reportedly remained there until he died in 1902).

European settlement of the 1820s and 1830s resulted in introduced diseases spreading through the district's Aboriginal people and their displacement from traditional lands – particularly the richer country along Wollombi Brook and other watercourses. There are reports of starvation as well as outbreaks of armed conflict as Aboriginal people fought to retain access to resources, lands and spiritual sites. However by around 1830 records suggest that "all armed resistance by local Aborigines" had ceased in this part of the Hunter Valley. In only a few decades the society, culture, traditional land uses and economy of the Wonnarua (Wanaruah) people had been dramatically and irrevocably disrupted. Despite this cultural devastation there are instances of Aboriginal people quickly adapting the settlers' new technologies and materials, as well as the survival of culture and tradition. There are accounts of cultural ceremonies, possibly initiation ceremonies, being conducted in the Bulga area as late as the 1850s. The local Aboriginal names for certain local features were also recorded by the area's new inhabitants.

European settlement in the Singleton and upper Hunter Valley expanded quickly in the mid nineteenth century, aided by development of the Great North Road between 1826 and 1836 (the Bulga Track had quickly become inadequate, given the area's rapid growth and the track's longer and "more treacherous" route). Land holdings around Bulga and along Cockfighter's Creek (as the lower section of Wollombi Brook around Bulga, Fordwich and Broke was known) were typically larger land grants – of 1,000 to 2,000 acres (400 to 800 hectares) – with settlement favouring the more fertile flats along the creek.



Early settlers' descriptions of the Bulga area are of "open well-grassed forest lands to the feet of the mountains ... the timber was mostly large with almost an entire absence of scrub and undergrowth ... accounted for by the bush fires which regularly swept the country side during the dry seasons" (but was portably also due to previous Aboriginal people's use of fire in their land management practices). Wollombi Brook (Cockfighter's Creek) was described as "deep and narrow with alternate stretches of deep water and sand ... fringed with big shady oak trees" and was the main water supply for these early settlers.

The area's grasslands, due to their grazing potential, were very attractive for the early settlers and the stock raised around Bulga reportedly did very well. Stock were driven overland back to Richmond and Windsor to market. Cattle (predominantly) and sheep grazing, dairy farming and agriculture (primarily wheat and maize) became established in the wider district and horse-breeding was undertaken as early as the mid 1800s.

A severe drought impacted Bulga, and the wider area, from 1848 to 1851 interrupting the area's growth. However the increasing population subsequently saw a number of community buildings erected. A building to serve as both a temporary school and church was erected on the site now occupied by St Marks Church of England in the mid 1850s, a Post Office opened in 1878, St Marks Church (the stone building remaining today) was built sometime between 1887 and 1896, a School of Arts built in 1893 (on the site of today's Community Hall), and the Bulga Police Station opened in 1903.

The school operated at first unofficially and from 1868 as a "Provisional School" until construction of a Public School at Bulga was approved in 1876. The new school was completed in early 1880 on a new site in the area known as "Bradford's Flat" – adjoining the south-eastern corner of what is today Bulga Stock Reserve. Construction of the school was hampered by "severe flooding", with floodwaters reaching as high as the rear outhouses.

The 1860s saw legislation introduced to govern the state-wide movement of stock, and to protect the rights of both landholders and drovers. Prior to motorised transport, to assist with the movement of stock the government had established a network of watering points and wide corridors for stock passage. "Stock routes" evolved from the 1830s onwards, with many of the early routes generally following rivers or roads, and Travelling Stock Reserves were designated for the holding and watering of stock en-route. The Bulga area was potentially part of an historic main thoroughfare for travelling stock from the northern districts of the state to Sydney, dating from the early 1800s. Such a route would have accessed first the Bulga Track and then the Great North Road (which was used for stock movement, despite extension of the Great Northern Railway to Singleton in the 1860s, until at least 1889 when the Travelling Stock Reserves along this route were rescinded). The area of today's Bulga Stock Reserve (although not named as such then) was likely part of this route

The Occupation Act 1861 and the Pastures and Stock Protection Act 1880 were intended to regulate the use and administration of stock routes. At this time the area of land closely approximating today's Bulga Stock Reserve was first reserved from sale for the purposes of "water supply and access thereto" and designated as Water Reserve No. 42, under the provisions of the Crown Lands Alienation Act 1861 (N.S.W. Government Gazette No. 378, 28 July 1884 – see Appendix A). There is no written history regarding European land use of this specific land parcel prior to this formal declaration. However it is probable, due to its location on Wollombi Brook, that the site was used for the grazing and watering as well as the movement of stock – as suggested by it being selected for declaration as a "water reserve".

This site was subsequently "reserved from sale for travelling stock" under the Crown Lands Act 1884, as Reserve No. 5783 (N.S.W. Government Gazette No. 180, 17 March 1888 – see Appendix A). This area was then declared as Travelling Stock Reserve No. 5808 for the purposes of "travelling stock" under the Public Watering Places Act 1884 – one of many state-wide "Travelling Stock and Camping Reserves for

the accommodation and agistment of travelling stock, and to enable Inspectors of stock to protect the grass on such Reserves" declared under this Act – and was also reserved from lease (N.S.W. Government Gazette No. 283, 3 May 1888 – see Appendix A). Additional protections for these travelling stock reserves, state-wide, were gazetted in July 1893 (reserving them from occupation under miner's rights, or under business licences, for residence or business purposes – see Appendix A).

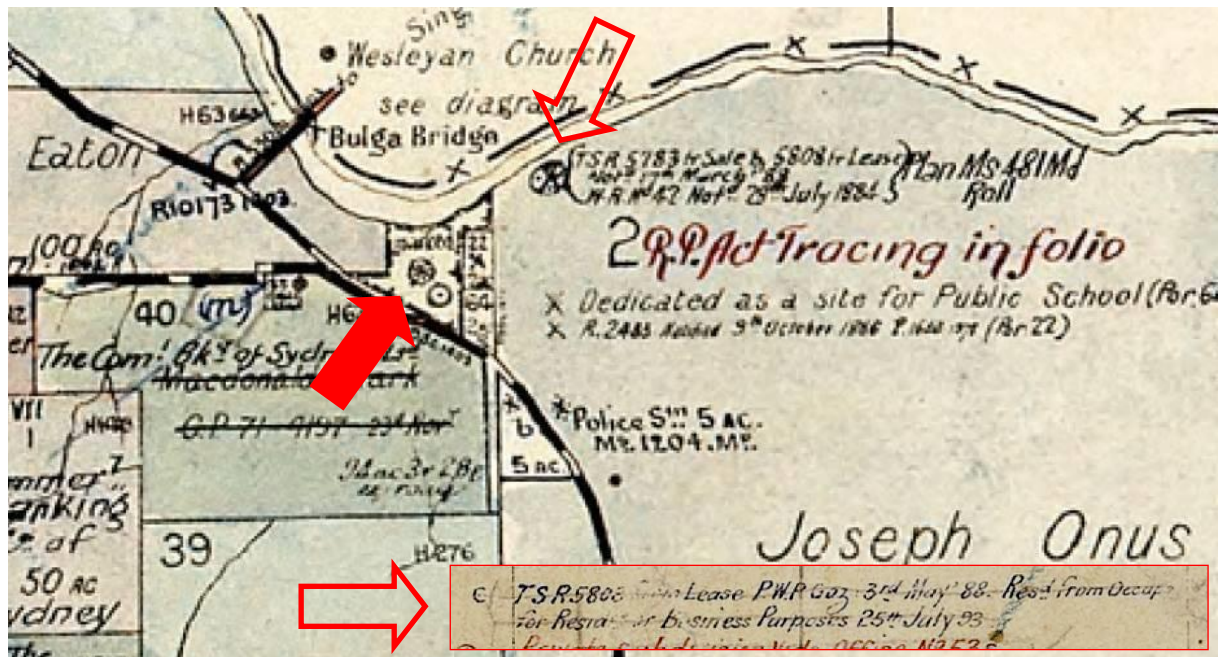


Figure 5 Detail of the Bulga area from the 1892 Parish Plan for the Parish of Whybrow, County of Hunter, showing Reserve No. 5783 ("reserved from sale for travelling stock")

Source: NSW Land Registry Services (Historical Lands Records Viewer)

Many of the district's larger land holdings were subdivided in the early 1900s, some under the Soldier Settlement Scheme following WWI, with many blocks "cut up into wheat-sheep farms". Many returned soldiers established dairy farms on their small blocks using government assistance. Alongside pastoralism, dairying was a prominent land use from the 1920s onward due to increased domestic and international demand (but went into a gradual decline in the latter half of the twentieth century). Large scale commercial viticulture also commenced in the district in the 1920s, including establishment of the Fordwich Soldier Settlement viticultural farms just south of Bulga. However Parish Maps from 1916 to 1934 (and even up to 1950) show only marginal increase in the number of individual landholdings, or intensification of subdivision, in the immediate Bulga area.

In April 1920 all Travelling Stock Reserves across the state, including Bulga Stock Reserve, came under management of the Pastures Protection Board with this arrangement extended in October 1930 (see Appendix A). The extent of the Board's on-ground management of Bulga Stock Reserve specifically, and other uses or users of the site, area unknown. However improvements in the road networks, and the growth in truck transport, saw a decline in the use of stock routes and stock reserves generally (although the use of these areas did pick up somewhat during both world wars). Reconstruction and upgrading of much of the Putty Road in 1942, associated with establishment of the nearby Singleton Army Barracks, would likely have reduced the volume of stock moving on foot through Bulga (Putty Road was declared Main Road No. 503 in 1945 and fully sealed in 1964).

One of the most significant flood events on Wollombi Creek occurred in 1949 resulting in the inundation and destruction of houses, roads and bridges and extensive changes in the riverbanks and channel as

well as widespread destruction of riparian vegetation. At Bulga it is reported to have caused extensive bank erosion and the enlargement of the Wollombi Brook channel by “some twelve metres” as well as realignment of the creek bed. This flood event would have severely impacted the Bulga Stock Reserve – as also suggested by closure of the adjacent Public School, due to the floodwaters reaching as high as the school toilets (an event that occurred again in subsequent floods in 1955 and 1956).

The Bulga Stock Reserve was possibly used for supplementary or periodic stock grazing after WWII, especially during the droughts of the late 1950s (where there was also some resurgence in the grazing use of stock routes generally – both for stock movement and additional feed).

The 1950s also saw the rapid expansion of coal mining within the Hunter Valley (which had begun on a limited scale in the early 1900s), with the establishment of large open-cut mines. Coal mining and electricity generation emerged as major industries in the Singleton area. Many of the district’s smaller land holders were consolidated into large-scale coal mining leases at this time. This industry was to have a major impact on Bulga, when open-cut mining at the Bulga Complex began in 1982. Today open-cut coal mining occurs only 3.3 kilometres from the Bulga village centre (and 2.9 kilometres from the Bulga Stock Reserve), with the impacts of this land use regularly felt within the village. Coal-mining companies also own land parcels, as yet undeveloped for mining, adjacent to the Reserve (to the east) and on the opposite (northern) side of Wollombi Brook.

In the second half of the twentieth century it is likely the Bulga Stock Reserve was used for occasional grazing, and possibly targeted land management activities (mainly noxious weed control and fence maintenance), while still under management of the Pastures Protection Board – however records are largely absent. A hand written annotation on a Department of Lands plan of the Parish of Whybrow (from around the late 1980s) includes the note “licence for grazing” linked to the Bulga Stock Reserve.

A notice in the NSW Government Gazette on 8 April 1988 withdrew the Bulga Stock Reserve from control of the local (Maitland) Pastures Protection Board (noting “part withdrawn - part revoked this day” – see Appendix A) with the site becoming Crown land under the responsibility of the (then) Department of Lands. In the same Government Gazette the site’s reservation from sale was also revoked – for both Reserve No. 5783 (for travelling stock) and Water Reserve No. 42 (see Appendix A).

Shortly thereafter in 1990, the Department of Lands carried out an assessment of the site (under Part 3 of the Crown Lands Act 1989 and Crown Lands Regulation 1990). Subsequently, on 23 July 1993, the Bulga Stock Reserve (although incorrectly mapped in the Gazette notice) was reserved for the “public purpose of public recreation” as Reserve No. 170159 (in NSW Government Gazette No. 82 – see Appendix A). The Bulga Public Recreation (R.170159) Reserve Trust was established and appointed as trustee for Reserve No. 170159 on 20 August 1993 (see Appendix A). A Government Gazette notice on 3 November 1995 replaced the earlier, incorrect, reservation notice of 1993 – amending the area reserved to show the current boundaries of the Bulga Stock Reserve.

The Bulga Public Recreation Reserve Trust is managed by Singleton Council. However despite the change of manager the Reserve’s on-ground management appears not to have altered markedly. Anecdotal reports indicate that the area was still used for occasional grazing (under licence or by permit/agreement), including one previous licensee who reportedly created an opening in the raised bank/levee in the site’s west to increase drainage of the ephemeral wetlands and improve their grazing potential. This opening remains today.

The site was again impacted by major floods along Wollombi Brook in 2007 and 2015. The 2007 flood caused significant damage to the site’s boundary fences, which largely curtailed the area’s subsequent use for licenced grazing. Council’s recent management of the area has primarily been the occasional control of fruit trees within the site and the installation/maintenance of limited signage, however overall

on-site management efforts are generally minimal and limited to “utility” park maintenance standards. The site is not developed, or promoted, for public access and use.

The influx of “tree-changers” and retirees to Bulga in recent decades, as well as the village’s contribution to the tourism appeal of the Singleton/Upper Hunter region, have both seen renewed interest in management and use of the Bulga Stock Reserve in recent years.

Wonnarua (Wanaruah) Aboriginal people still live in the Singleton district today. They have maintained a strong sense of cultural identity and connections to their traditional lands.

## **2.3 LANDSCAPE, FLORA, FAUNA AND NATURAL HERITAGE VALUES**

### **2.3.1 Climate**

The Singleton region, at present, experiences a warm temperate climate with generally hot summers and cool to mild winters (with occasional severe frosts).

Maximum temperatures average around 32 degrees in January and 18 degree in July, while average minimum temperatures are 18 degree and 4-5 degrees for January and July respectively. Rainfall averages around 650-670 millimetres annually, with a slight summer peak. The region’s bush fire season generally runs from September through to March.

CSIRO predictions in relation to the impacts of climate change suggest that the Singleton area may have a hotter and drier climate in 2050 – more comparable to today’s climate of Moree and Narrabri or Goondiwindi and Chinchilla in Queensland (or also possibly comparable temperatures but with a slightly greater annual rainfall, such as today’s Gatton in Queensland). This is according to CSIRO’s Climate Analogues projection tool (using “maximum consensus” projections and mid-range emissions scenarios), which predicts a 1.6 degree Celsius rise in temperatures and a 4% drop in rainfall for the Singleton area by 2050 (both values representing the middle range of these predictions).

### **2.3.2 Landform, Soils and Drainage**

Bulga Stock Reserve is, for the most part, a largely flat to gently undulating area set on the southern creek flat of Wollombi Brook. It is around 60-65 metres above sea level.

Notable landform features of the site are:

- an irregular, sinuous, shallow depression in the site’s south/south-east – approximately 90-100 metres long and between 20 and 50 metres wide, forming an ephemeral wetland and ponding area;
- a low-lying area along most of the site’s far southern boundary, adjacent to Putty Road and in part flanking the ephemeral wetlands;
- a small ephemeral drainage line from the eastern end of the wetlands, which curves north then west as a narrow incised channel (1.5 to 2 metres deep) around a raised sandy bench, before turning sharply north to cut through the sandy levee of Wollombi Creek and flowing north (along the site’s north-eastern boundary) as a wider less-defined and flatter channel to join Wollombi Brook beyond the site boundary;
- a bare, slightly elevated, open sandy flat in the site’s east/north-east (the highest part of the reserve); and



- a sandy slope or levee, running east/north-east to west/south-west along the site's northern edge, dropping down 2 to 3 metres to a mounded/undulating sandy bench with exposed sandy soils above the Wollombi Brook channel (the main channel planform is located some 60 to 70 metres north of the Reserve's northern boundary, possibly being shifted northwards in the 1949 flood, with now only a minor southern branch largely obscured by *Phragmites* reeds).

Putty Road sits on an embankment constructed along the Reserve's southern margin, with a steep slope of 1.5 to 2 metres down to the Reserve along most of its length. The exception being in the site's far south-eastern corner, where for a short distance this slope is more gradual and longer (allowing for easier vehicle, and pedestrian, access to the Reserve).

Surface water flows within the site are chiefly from two sources. Overbank and flood flows from Wollombi Brook enter the Reserve from the south-east, flowing via the ephemeral wetlands and drainage line (at low flows) to exit the Reserve through the north-east and east. These flows are from a chain of inter-connected billabongs/wetlands and overbank flow channels east of the Reserve, along the southern side of Wollombi Creek, including a large elongated billabong called The Horse Shoe (or "By-yang").

Significant stormwater flows also enter the Reserve from the south, via two arrays of large (1.2 metre diameter) stormwater pipes beneath Putty Road – 8 pipes in the east, and 3 in the far western corner. These discharge into the low-lying areas beside the road before connecting with the adjacent ephemeral wetlands and drainage line.

The ephemeral wetlands retain water for varying periods after flows and the adjacent low-lying areas become boggy after rain/flows (but with little open surface water). Draining of the wetland area is more rapid today than it was in the past due to an artificial opening in the western raised bank/levee (see Section 2.2 above).

The Reserve is situated entirely on alluvial soils – deep alluvially derived sands and earthy sands – mapped as the "Wollombi Soil Landscape" (as occurs in a band along much of the Wollombi Brook). These soils are generally over 5 metres in depth, loose-surfaced, highly permeable with low water-holding capacity, are well to rapidly drained, and of low fertility. These soils have a high erosion hazard, with areas of moderate stream bank erosion evident along watercourses and sloping banks.

Away from main the watercourse these soils may overlie sandy clay to medium clay subsoils and be poorly drained, creating areas that pond water or ephemeral wetlands – such as those within the Reserve and areas to the east.





### 2.3.3 Flooding

As described in the brief history of the site (see Section 2.2 above), the Reserve has a history of being impacted by flooding. Significant flooding has occurred in the Wollombi Brook catchment on numerous occasions – with the most severe flood events being recorded as 1893, 1927, 1930, 1949 (the highest recorded flood), 1978, 2007 and 2015. A peak flood gauge reading at Bulga of 7.24 metres, 7.57 metres and 8.29 metres was reached for the 2015, 2007 and 1949 flood events respectively – with all three events meeting the “major flood” classification.

The 1949 flood event is believed to have caused significant changes to channel of Wollombi Brook, due to scouring and erosion of the river bed and banks by floodwaters as well as substantial sand deposition in the river bed and adjacent floodplains plus widespread destruction of riparian vegetation. Notably the Brook’s channel at Bulga was substantially enlarged/widened (reportedly by more than 12 metres) and realigned northwards. This widened channel also resulted in an increased area for in-stream and riparian vegetation, with significantly more in-stream vegetation located within the Wollombi Brook channel today than in 1949.

The *Wollombi Brook Flood Study* completed in 2016 (but with some data/mapping now subject to review) mapped the Reserve as “floodway”, in terms of its hydraulic categorisation (or how the site performs during flood events), and classified it as having a “high flood hazard”.

The study also mapped flood depths and flow velocities along the waterway under differing flood severities. A flood with a 5 year “Average Recurrence Interval” (ARI) – that is, it has a 1 in 5 chance of occurring in any single year (ARI is a way of expressing the likelihood of occurrence of a flood event) – is modelled as flowing into the Reserve from both the south-east (from the chain of billabongs and overbank flow channels to the east) and from the west (via the drainage line and artificial levee opening) to inundate

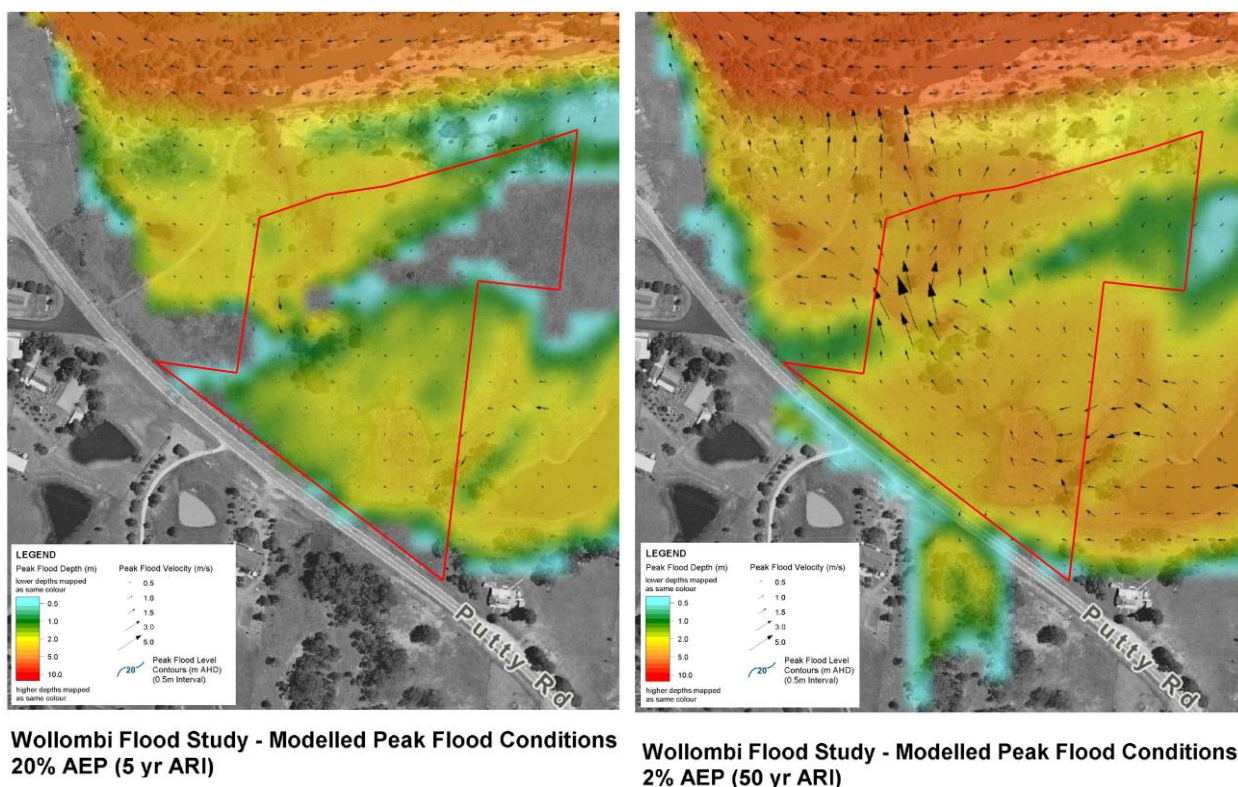


Figure 6 Modelling of flood impacts on Bulga Stock Reserve – 5 year ARI (left) and 50 year ARI (right) (1 in 5 chance of occurring in any year – left, 1 in 50 chance of occurring in any year – right)  
Source: *Wollombi Brook Flood Study* 2016

the low-lying wetland areas. Flood depths would be just under 2 metres across the wetland areas and below (north of) the Wollombi Brook levee – with approximately two-thirds of the Reserve inundated (as shown in Figure 6). Flow velocities would be between 1.5 and 3.0 metres per second where these flood waters enter the site.

A flood with a 1 in 10 chance of occurring in any year is modelled as slightly increasing flood depths over the Reserve, but with little increase in the area flooded (and flood waters only entering from the south-east and exiting to the west/north-west). However flood velocities increase significantly – up to more than 5 metres per second as flows leave the site to the north-east. A flood with a 1 in 50 likelihood of occurrence in any year would inundate the wetland areas and surrounds, and below the Wollombi Brook levee, to between 3 and 4 metres depth and bring significant flow velocities (as also shown in Figure 6). A 1 in 100 year flood event is modelled to flood the entire Reserve with between 1 and 5 metres of water.

### 2.3.4 Native Vegetation Communities and Native Flora Species

The Reserve is a modified landscape from which most, if not all, of the original vegetation has been previously cleared and the area now dominated by exotic grassland communities or native vegetation regrowth.

A biodiversity survey of Council's "natural parks", across the Singleton local government area (outside the Singleton township), in 2015 provides a summary of the site's vegetation. It described the Reserve as "mainly grassland with scattered woody vegetation in the central portion". This survey incorrectly assessed an area larger than the Reserve, extending north down to the Wollombi Brook channel, but within the Reserve area the report mapped and briefly described 3 vegetation communities – as shown on Figure 7.

The site's most extensive vegetation was (and remains today) "exotic grassland" covering the greater majority of the Reserve – including most of the area's northern half, the southern low-lying area beside Putty Road, and parts of the ephemeral wetlands.

This community is dominated by exotic grasses, generally to 1 metre tall, as well as pasture and broadleaf weeds (see Section 2.3.4 below). Some shrub and woody weed regrowth is scattered across this area, including introduced fruit trees. Since the 2015 report part of this grassland, on the raised sandy bench inside the bend of the small ephemeral drainage line (in the site's west/south-west), has been replaced by a dense stand of the weed tree Black Locust (as shown on Figure 7) (see Section 2.3.4 below). A small stand of Black Wattle (*Acacia mearnsii*) has also grown up in the site's far south-west, immediately below the stormwater pipes discharging into the Reserve at this point.

In the Reserve's south-east, centred on and around the main ephemeral wetland area, is an area mapped as "redgum regrowth".

This community is dominated by regenerating stands of Forest Redgum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis*), mostly even-age stands of juvenile trees between 6 and 8 metres tall with a few larger/older individuals (most





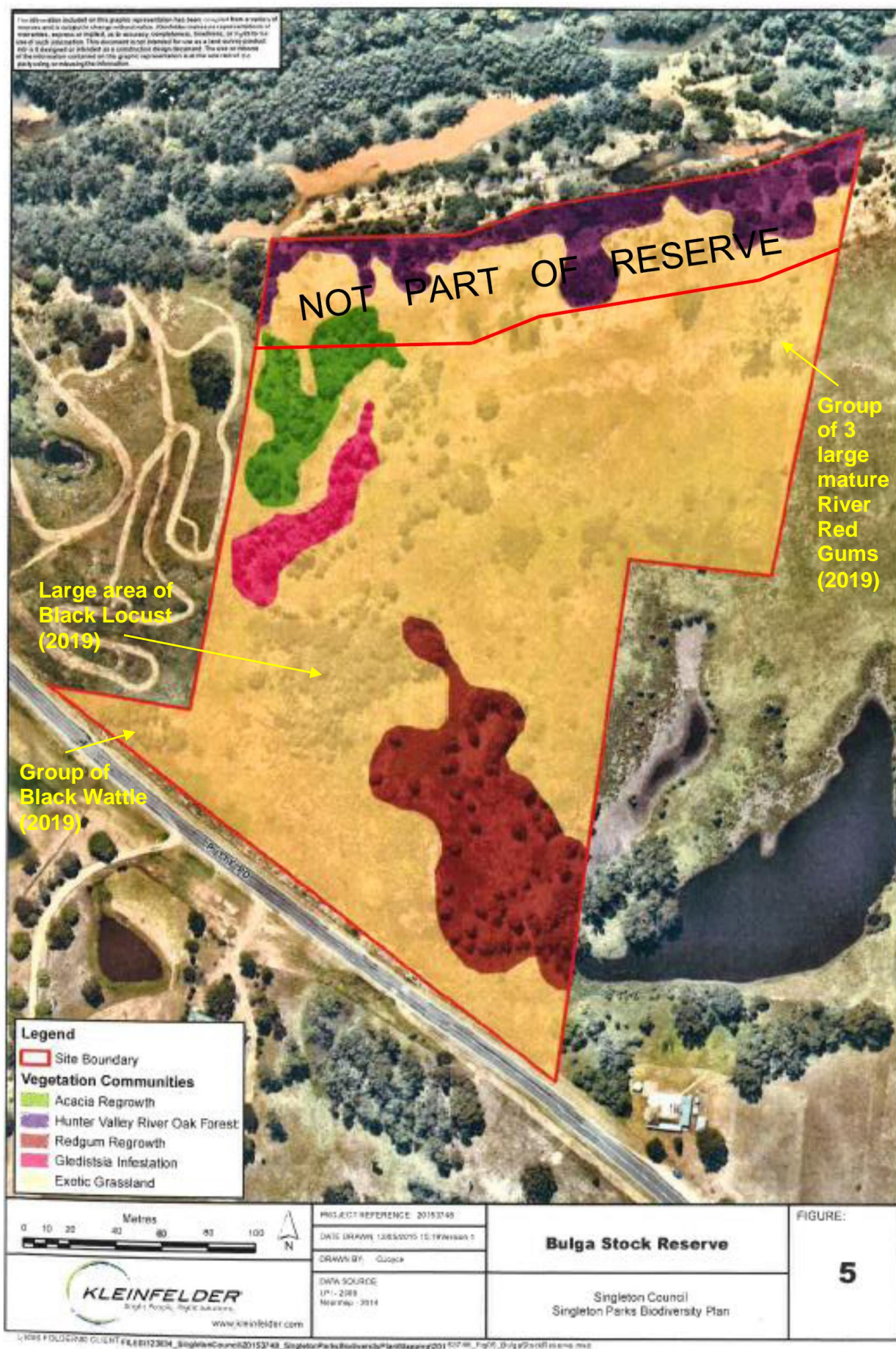


Figure 7 2015 vegetation mapping of Bulga Stock Reserve (incorrect northern boundary shown)  
Source: Singleton Parks Biodiversity Management Plan, Kleinfelder 2015



just outside the Reserve to the east). The open understory is a mix of native sedges, such as Tall Sedge (*Carex appressa*) and Salt Marsh Rush or Jointed Rush (*Juncus kraussii*), and introduced grasses or other weeds. This community appears to be expanding along the ephemeral drainage line and into the adjacent grasslands. Native sedges are also colonising parts of the low-lying areas adjacent to Putty Road, among the introduced grasses that dominate this area.



The 2015 report mapped smaller areas of “Acacia regrowth” community, dominated by Fern-leaf Wattle (*Acacia filicifolia*), and a thicket of the exotic Honey locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*) in the site’s north-east – along the ephemeral drainage line, and on part of the sandy levee, respectively. These stands appear to have largely died off (by late 2019), with only a few Fern-leaf Wattles surviving. The ephemeral drainage line and surrounding sandy areas are today colonised by young open Eucalypt regrowth, with occasional wattles and shrubs, as well as small areas of sedges and Phragmites reeds in damp places. The groundcover is predominantly introduced grasses or other weeds. This band of regrowth extends north off the Reserve.



A feature of the Reserve is a groups of 3 large mature River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) trees in the far north-east corner, on the levee above the slope to Wollombi Brook. These striking specimens include a number of nesting hollows. However there is no evidence of recruitment or regrowth around these trees, which are set in open exotic grassland.



The Department of Environment, Energy and Science’s on-line “BioNet Atlas” contains records of native plants and recorded sightings of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, some fish, and some (mainly endangered) invertebrates. These records are drawn together from a number of sources, and include native flora and fauna species listed as threatened (under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* – and formerly the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995*). The Atlas does not include any flora records for the site or its immediate surrounds.

All three vegetation communities described and mapped in the 2015 report were considered widespread in the Hunter Region, and are not listed as being of conservation significance under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 or other legislation. No native flora species listed as threatened are known from the Reserve.

While not constituting a discrete vegetation community, the three mature River Red Gum trees in the site’s north-east corner are of conservation interest. The *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* population in the Hunter catchment is listed as an endangered population under NSW legislation, due to it being the only population of River Red Gums occurring in a coastal catchment, as well as a disjunct population and at the limit of the species’ range (it may also be genetically distinct).

### 2.3.5 Native Fauna Species

Despite its modified vegetation, the Reserve shows ample evidence of occupation and use by a variety of native fauna species. The site, including the introduced grassland and weedy areas, provides a range of habitats and fauna resources – from shelter and nesting for smaller birds in the regrowth areas or forage and burrow sites over the flats and sandy banks, to the temporary water resources of the ephemeral wetlands and nesting hollows of the larger trees.

Birds are readily observed – and local residents report a variety of bird life including “wrens, finches, willy wag tails, hawks, eagles, magpies, ducks, noisy miners, galahs, corellas, eastern rosella, yellow tail black and sulphur crested cockatoos”. There are numerous Common Wombat (*Vombatus ursinus*) burrows across the area, and Eastern Grey Kangaroos (*Macropus giganteus*) as well as scats of the Short beaked Echidna (*Tachyglossus aculeatus*) were observed during on-site inspections (in late 2019). Species typically associated with open woodland and riparian environments can be expected to occur – such as the Red-bellied Black Snake (*Pseudechis porphyriacus*), Eastern Brown Snake (*Pseudonaja textilis*), common lizards (such as the Common Blue-tongue Skink, *Tiliqua scincoides*) and amphibians (notably in/around the ephemeral wetlands), common glider and smaller marsupial rodent species, various waterbirds, and a range of micro-bats.



The “BioNet Atlas” does not include any fauna records for the site or its immediate surrounds. However a range of species records exist for the wider Bulga village area – including (in addition to those listed above) include the Dingo (*Canis lupus dingo*), Tree Skink (*Egernia striolata*), an unidentified goanna, Broad-palmed Frog (*Litoria latopalmata*), Superb Fairy-wren (*Malurus cyaneus*), Willie Wagtail (*Rhipidura leucophrys*), Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus funereus*), White-throated Needletail (*Hirundapus caudacutus*), Black-eared Cuckoo (*Chalcites osculans*) and Dollarbird (*Eurystomus orientalis*). These species could be expected to occur on, or frequent, the Reserve.

The on-line data base “eBird Australia” does not record any birds for Bulga Stock Reserve but has 3 record sites in the Bulga areas (within 2 kilometres of the site, the closet being 700 metres to the south/south-east and the National Parks and Wildlife Service office). Together these 3 sites record 157 different native bird species. Given the mobility of birds, these species could also be expected to occur on, or frequent, the Reserve at different times.

A number of bird species recorded in these three “eBird Australia” lists, which are likely to occur or pass over/through the Reserve, are of conservation significance. These bird species of interest are – Gray-crowned Babbler (eastern sub-species), Dusky Woodswallow, Speckled Warbler, Little Lorikeet, Hooded Robin, Diamond Firetail, Varied Sittella, Brown Treecreeper, Scarlet Robin, Spotted Harrier, Little Eagle and White-bellied Sea-eagle. All are listed as vulnerable under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*.

### 2.3.6 Weeds and Introduced Animals

The Reserve is heavily infested with weeds and other introduced plants. Much of the site’s understorey is made-up of weed species with Paspalum (*Paspalum dilatatum*), Cobblers Pegs (*Biden pilosa*) and Lacey Ragweed (*Ambrosia tenuifolia*) – the latter two being invasive species.



Weeds figure prominently in the exotic grasslands – notably Tall Fleabane (*Conyza bonariensis*), Purple Top (*Verbena bonariensis*), Wild Aster (*Aster subulata*), Blue Heliotrope (*Heliotropium amplexicaule*) and Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*). All are considered invasive species. Broadleaf weeds and pasture are also common in the grasslands, and on the exposed mounded sandy soils above Wollombi Brook along with other riparian weeds. Several Poplars (*Populus alba*) are well-established on the Reserve's northern boundary in this area.

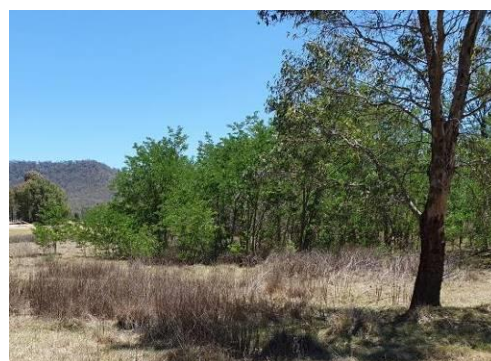


Scotch Thistle (*Onopordum acanthium*) occurs on the more degraded areas of the exotic grasslands and scattered through the Eucalypt regrowth areas. Moth Vine (*Araujia hortorum*) appears to be an emerging weed around the ephemeral wetlands and amongst the stands of Forest Red Gum regrowth. Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*) is also common in and around the wetter areas

Around 150 to 200 introduced stone fruit trees (mainly “wild apricot” and “wild peach”), from seedlings to 3 metre high trees, previously occurred in the Reserve – mainly scattered across the exotic grassland and in the low-lying areas along the southern boundary. However recent control efforts reduced the number and density of these trees, chiefly in the south, as part of the on-going control of these fruit trees (to aid in the control of fruit fly) and other woody weed management. Measures have also been undertaken to control infestations of Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus*, or a *Rubus* species variant) that occurred mainly along the Reserve's southern fenceline. Blackberry is both a State priority weed (a Weed of National Significance) and a regional priority weed in the Hunter Region.

Honey Locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*) which was previously recorded on the Reserve, in the north-east, is also a regional priority weed in the Hunter Region. This requires the control of any specimens that may still occur within the site.

A particular weed problem area is a large patch of Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) occurring in the site's west/south-west – covering an area of over 6,000 square metres, and increasing.



Black Locust is a spiny deciduous tree to about 17 metres high, it produces a large amount of root suckers to form dense thickets that exclude native vegetation. The Department of Primary Industries (2018 Information Sheet) warns that the tree is toxic to humans and can cause discomfort and irritation (but is not life-threatening). It can cause dizziness, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, convulsions and drowsiness. All parts of the plant are poisonous – especially the pods, seeds, bark and leaves.

There are no available records for introduced animal species sighted within the Reserve. However common introduced bird species (such as the Common Myna, House Sparrow or European Starling), are listed from other eBird Australia record sites around Bulga and can be expected to occur on the Reserve. Cats and dogs (both feral/wild animals and wandering domestic pets) as well as foxes are also likely to enter the site.

### 2.3.7 Fire

The recent fire history of Bulga Stock Reserve is not well known, however the area's vegetation does not show any evidence of major fires in the recent past.

The *Singleton Bush Fire Risk Management Plan 2011* identifies recommended fire frequencies for the region's main natural vegetation communities. In "land management zones", such as the Reserve, the plan recommends a fire interval for grasslands of 3 to 10 years, 8 years (but preferably 25 years) to 50 years for dry sclerophyll forests over shrub/grass, and 10 to 35 years (but preferably towards the longer end of this range) for freshwater wetlands.

However given the site's history of disturbance and its regenerating native vegetation communities, these fire thresholds may not be directly applicable to the Reserve. Fire can also be used as a land management and ecological restoration tool, to promote regrowth/regeneration, and also to assist in controlling weeds.

The management of fuel loads and bushfire risks is also important to protect life and property around the Reserve.

## 2.4 CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUES

### 2.4.1 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

The original inhabitants of the Bulga district, including the area now known as the Bulga Stock Reserve, were the Wonnarua (or Wanaruah) Aboriginal people. Despite nearly two centuries of displacement and disruption, the Wonnarua (Wanaruah) people have maintained links to their traditional lands and a strong sense of cultural identity.

Today the Reserve is located within the area of the Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council, which represents the interests and aspirations of the Wonnarua (Wanaruah) Aboriginal people and the region's broader Aboriginal community. Led by the Land Council, and the Wonnarua Nation Aboriginal Corporation, Aboriginal people are continuing to reaffirm and reinvigorate their traditional culture.

The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment's on-line Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) lists recorded "Aboriginal sites" throughout New South Wales (including documented Aboriginal objects and places and declared Aboriginal Places).

The AHIMS register does not list any recorded Aboriginal sites cultural heritage sites within the Reserve (as at December 2019). However the AHIMS register is far from a complete or comprehensive register, and is focused very much towards tangible Aboriginal sites (where there is remaining physical evidence) with a strong bias towards pre-contact sites and has a dearth of intangible cultural or spiritual sites represented in its listings. The absence of a listing on the register does not necessarily mean that no Aboriginal heritage sites are known, remain or could occur in an area.

No comprehensive survey of the Reserve has been undertaken, to-date, for Aboriginal cultural heritage sites and features.

However significantly a large number of Aboriginal cultural heritage sites and features have been recorded (from a number of previous investigations) in the areas around the Reserve. Over 120 such

sites have been documented within a radius of 1.5 kilometres of the Reserve. Most are north of Wollombi Brook, but on similar creek flats or lowland terrain as found on the Reserve, as well as 36 sites recorded around the billabongs and along drainage lines located to the Reserve's east – and which flow into the site's ephemeral wetlands. The closest of these recorded cultural heritage sites/features is located only 115 metres east of the Reserve.

Given its location on a creek flat and within a wider area rich in recorded Aboriginal sites (and the lack of historic disturbance or land uses/development likely to have destroyed such sites) it can be expected that the Reserve has a very high probability of still harbouring Aboriginal cultural heritage sites/features.

## 2.4.2 European/Historic Heritage

Bulga Stock Reserve is not listed on any historic heritage registers.

The adjacent Mt Leonards Public School (now the adjoining Scout Hall, Lot 7300 DP1146128, 2099 Putty Road) is listed in the *Singleton Local Environmental Plan 2013* as a heritage feature of local significance (Item I10).



Two other listed heritage sites are located in proximity to the Reserve:

- Bulga Bridge over Wollombi Brook (300 metres to the north/north-west) is listed on the NSW State Heritage Register, Roads and Maritime Services Section 170 Register, and in the *Singleton Local Environmental Plan 2013* as a heritage feature of local significance (Item I8); and
- “Mount Leonard”, including the Mt Leonard Homestead, (2201 Putty Road, 1.3 kilometres to the south-east) is listed in the *Singleton Local Environmental Plan 2013* as a heritage feature of local significance (Item I9).

The far northern end of the Great North Road, a section now known as Charlton Road (and terminating at Putty Road), passes approximately 3 kilometres east of the site. However this section of the Great North Road has no statutory (or other) heritage listing.

## 2.5 ACCESS, DEVELOPMENTS AND FACILITIES

The Reserve (western edge) is located short easy, 200 metre (approximately), walk south-east of the Bulga village centre (service station/store and tavern) – via the wider/safer southern side of the Putty Road reserve (and crossing the end of The Inlet Road).

The site has a 255 metre frontage to Putty Road along its southern edge. However for most of this length a steep mown grass bank, 1.5 to 2 metres high, drops away from the road edge down to the Reserve fenceline (a three-strand barbed wire fence). There is also only a very narrow grassed road shoulder along this northern side of Putty Road (including that section heading north-west back towards the village centre) which precludes any safe roadside parking. Consequently both vehicle and pedestrian (or cyclist) entry is





severely restricted, and no access points have been developed along this boundary – other than at the far south-eastern end (next to the Scout Hall block) where the road shoulder and Reserve are at the same level for approximately 20 metres. Here a farm style gate, latched but not locked, provides for management vehicle and visitor access (non-motorised) to the site. Informal parking is possible to the east, in the road reserve in front of the Scout Hall, and also along the southern side of Putty Road opposite the Reserve which is mostly a wide mown grass drainage swale (however this requires visitors to cross Putty Road).

Entry to the Reserve along its other boundaries is prevented by the private landholdings flanking the area to the west and east, although entry would be possible via the Scout Hall block with consent of this area's trustees. All these boundaries are fenced, with farm style wire fencing (in varying condition), and a farm-style gate (locked) is situated on the "internal" corner of the Reserve's eastern boundary. Access is possible between the Reserve and the public land corridor of Wollombi Brook in the north, with no fence along this boundary (although a star-picket and wire fence, possibly temporary/mobile, is located further north – just back from the top bank of the minor southern branch channel).

A faint vehicle track leads across and down slope from the south-eastern entry gate into the Reserve, as two worn wheel tracks, and crosses the ephemeral wetland at a narrow point before becoming indistinct and discontinuous across the sandy grassland area to the north. This route enables management vehicle access (although the open grassland nature of much of the site would not prevent easy 4WD vehicle access to other areas). It is also the most obvious, and easily navigable, route for pedestrians (and cyclist or other visitors) to enter the Reserve.



However there are no constructed and/or signposted walking tracks, shared tracks or other routes within the site. The Reserve also has no signage, park furniture or other built facilities or improvements to encourage or support visitor use, enjoyment and appreciation of the site.

The only "facilities" now in place within the Reserve are:

- a routed timber sign (two boards) in the far western corner with "Singleton Council" above and the Reserve name below (set back from Putty Road and partially obscured by vegetation); and
- a small metal sign (newer style, and post-mounted) adjacent to the southern entry gate giving the Reserve name as well as warnings ("uneven ground, steep banks, floodway") and regulatory messages ("no camping, no littering, no fires, no vehicles") in text and pictograms.



Further details of the above infrastructure and developments are provided in Section 2.8 (and Table 2) below.

## 2.6 VISITOR USE, ACTIVITIES AND ENJOYMENT

The Bulga Stock Reserve receives very limited, if any, visitor use at present.



There is no marked evidence of visitor access and use – such as foot pads, trample tracks, vegetation damage, fire scars, toileting waste, or litter.

Anecdotal reports suggest that the site is very occasionally used for access to Wollombi Brook (including by horseriders). However many respondents during the community engagement process advised they were not aware that the site was “available” for public access, and there is no signage on-site to invite or promote visitor access and use.

A few respondents commented that trailbikes had been a problem in the area (and surrounds) in the past, although site inspections did not identify any signs of current or recent trailbike activity.

No community planting or landcare activities, or educational uses, now occur within the Reserve.

As noted in Section 2.2, the Reserve was previously used for occasional grazing under licence, or by permit/agreement, from Council (and potentially also informal grazing without authorisation). However the poor condition of the site’s fencing has limited this use in recent years (possibly the last decade or more), and today the site shows no evidence of recent grazing activity/impacts.

Beyond these on-site activities/uses the Reserve has a minor scenic or amenity “use” within the overall Bulga village landscape. However this role is not, at present, significant given the Reserve’s appearance as just part of the far larger areas of cleared, partially cleared or occasionally managed lands around the village and along Putty Road.

### 2.6.1 Visitor Use Numbers

There are no visitor use statistics available for the Reserve, either monitoring/survey results or observational estimates.

## 2.7 MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT

At present Singleton Council manages Bulga Stock Reserve to its defined “utility” maintenance standards for village parks and reserves. These utility standard maintenance and management measures are described (in the *Plan of Management for Village Parks*) as:

- no or minimal mowing due to site not being used as a park, or located in an isolated area with little use, or too steep to mow;
- grass cover would typically be grazed;
- grass edges are not treated;
- site not irrigated;
- landscape treatment – generally bushland, pasture or site with steep gradients ... where possible areas too steep to mow will be revegetated with shrub/tree cover where bushfires are not likely to be of concern to neighbouring residences.

Recent management interventions at the site appear to have chiefly been the control of larger fruit trees (by poisoning and mulching) to reduce the potential for harbouring fruit fly, mainly along the area’s southern low-lying area, and the



spraying of Blackberry infestations growing over/along the Putty Road. Council also maintains the two signs located along Putty Road. Little fence maintenance appears to have been carried out in recent years, with several breaks or failures in the area's boundary fencelines.

The Reserve is not regularly patrolled, or inspected, by Council staff.



## 2.8 CONDITION AND USE OF LAND AND FACILITIES

A plan of management (for an individual park or reserve) must “include a description of (i) the condition of the land, and of any buildings or other improvements on the land” and “(ii) the use of the land and any such buildings or improvements” (section 36(3A)(a) of the *Local Government Act 1993*).

Table 2 summarises the condition and use of the land and facilities of Bulga Stock Reserve.

**Table 2 Condition and Use of Land and Facilities**

Land or Facility	Condition (Rating)	Current Use
<b>Land</b>		
Southern, central and north-western portions of Reserve	Reasonably continuous ground cover vegetation (especially in south) with patches of tree regrowth, but dominated by introduced species. (Fair)	Native vegetation protection and regeneration/regrowth. Fauna habitat. Ground stabilisation and erosion control.
North-eastern and northern portions of Reserve	Limited to sparse ground cover vegetation with areas of bare soil and mounded exposed sand in lower northern. Dominated by introduced species. (Poor to fair)	Native vegetation protection and regeneration/regrowth. Fauna habitat. Ground stabilisation and erosion control.
<b>Facilities/Infrastructure</b>		
Boundary fencing and gates (southern, western and eastern boundaries only – Reserve's northern boundary is unfenced)	Rural style fencing (wire on timber or metal posts), and fam-style metal gates. (mostly fair, fences poor in parts)	Boundary definition. Stock entry control. Management and emergency vehicle access. Visitor access management.
Timber sign (with Reserve name)	Two routed planks on timber posts. (Good)	Reserve identification.
Metal sign (with Reserve name, warning and regulatory information)	Small metal sign on tall galvanised metal post. (Good)	Reserve identification and visitor information.

## 2.9 LEASES AND LICENCES

There are no leases, licences, permits or other estates granted in relation to the Reserve.

Seasonal or periodic licences, or other permits/agreements, for grazing have previously been issued by Council (see Section 2.2) – but there are none current.

### 2.9.1 Foreign Utilities/Services

Two utilities or services not operated by Singleton Council occur within the Reserve:

- an underground Telstra cable passes roughly east-west through the centre of the site, with a short dead-end spur cable (also underground) in the site's far western corner; and
- a NSW Water monitoring bore is located just inside the Reserve's southern fenceline, approximately midway along the Putty Road boundary.



## 3. PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT CONTEXT

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This section provides an overview of relevant legislation, planning framework and existing Singleton Council plans, strategies and policies. The context of Bulga Stock Reserve within the surrounding network of parks, reserves and open space has also been identified, along with current and likely future planning pressures. This Plan of Management has been developed in consideration of these factors/framework.

### 3.1 LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Planning, management and use of Bulga Stock Reserve (and Singleton Council's parks and reserves generally) must be consistent with, and is framed by, a range of Commonwealth and State legislation. The most relevant of these are addressed below.

#### 3.1.1 Commonwealth Legislation

##### ***Commonwealth Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999***

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) provides for protection and management of nationally and internationally significant flora, fauna, ecological communities and heritage places (defined in the Act as "matters of national environmental significance"). It is the Australian Government's key piece of environmental legislation. It also promotes the conservation of biodiversity and ecologically sustainable development through conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources. The *EPBC Act* provides for the identification and listing of nationally threatened native species and ecological communities. However there are no known matters of national environmental significance found within the Reserve.

##### ***Commonwealth Native Title Act 1993***

This Act recognises the traditional ownership and interest in land and waters that indigenous Australians hold according to their traditions, laws and customs. It describes the process for the recognition of native title rights – including mechanisms for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People to establish the existence of native title, lodge native title claims, determine and validate the extinguishment of native title, and dealing with land and waters where native title persists.

The *NSW Crown Land Management Act 2016* requires that on Crown Reserves (including where managed by a local council – such as Bulga Stock Reserve) native title rights/interests must be addressed (unless native title has been surrendered, extinguished or legally determined to no longer exist). Any dealings in land or water by a Crown land manager that affect (impair or extinguish) native title are classified as "future acts" and must comply with the Act. Examples of a "future act", on Crown land, might include the granting of freehold title, or a lease or licence, or the construction of public works. The Native Title Act sets out procedures to follow before such "future acts" can be validly carried out.



### 3.1.2 State Legislation

#### ***Crown Land Management Act 2016, Crown Land Management Regulation 2018 and Principles of Crown Land Management***

The *Crown Lands Act 1989* (and some associated legislation) was repealed on 1 July 2018 and has now been replaced by the *Crown Land Management Act 2016* (CLM Act). The new *CLM Act* improves the governance of Crown land, including Crown Reserves such as Bulga Stock Reserve, and more closely aligns the planning and management of Council-managed Crown Reserves with the management of community lands under the *Local Government Act 1993* as well as providing for strengthened community involvement.

Managers of Crown Reserves under the previous legislation are automatically appointed as Crown land managers under the new CLM Act, and will continue to have management responsibility for these reserves. The new CLM Act authorises a local council that has management responsibility for an area of dedicated or reserved Crown land (a “council manager”), as Singleton Council does for Bulga Stock Reserve, to manage that land as if it were and in accordance with the public land provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Further, with some specific exceptions, section 3.22 of the *CLM Act* requires that a council manager of a Crown reserve “must manage the land as if it were community land under the *Local Government Act 1993*” and has “for that purpose all the functions that a local council has under that Act in relation to community land (including in relation to the leasing and licensing of community land)”. The *CLM Act* provides that any existing lease, licence or permit issued under the previous legislation will continue for their agreed term. However from 1 July 2018 all new leases, licences and permits will be issued under the new legislation.

Sections 3.22 and 3.23 of the *CLM Act* also stress that the provisions for councils to manage Crown Reserves as if they were “community land” specifically apply in the case of “land that is a public reserve (as defined in the *Local Government Act 1993*)” – which includes public parks and Crown reserves dedicated or reserved for public recreation where a council has been appointed as manager of the reserve trust (as in the case of Bulga Stock Reserve) – and in this case a council “must manage the land as a public reserve under that Act” (the *Local Government Act 1993*).

Section 3.23 of the CLM Act requires a council manager of an area of reserved Crown land to:

- categorise the land, using the community land categories under section 36 of the *Local Government Act 1993*; and
- prepare and adopt a plan of management for the reserved Crown land in accordance with the plan of management provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993* (Division 2 of Part 2 of Chapter 6 of the Act).

The *CLM Act* provides a transition period of 3 years (from commencement) for councils to have prepared and adopted plans of management for the reserved Crown land under their management. This includes preparing and adopting new, replacement, plans for Crown reserves having a plan of management under the former Crown lands legislation – as is the case for Bulga Stock Reserve.

The overall result of these legislative changes is that Singleton Council must prepare this plan of management, and manage Bulga Stock Reserve, in accordance with the community land provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993* – including in relation to categorisation of the land; the preparation of plans of management; and leases, licences and permits.

Similar to the former legislation, the new *CLM Act* also sets out the “principles of Crown land

management” (in section 1.4) – as:

- (a) *that environmental protection principles be observed in relation to the management and administration of Crown land, and*
- (b) *that the natural resources of Crown land (including water, soil, flora, fauna and scenic quality) be conserved wherever possible, and*
- (c) *that public use and enjoyment of appropriate Crown land be encouraged, and*
- (d) *that, where appropriate, multiple use of Crown land be encouraged, and*
- (e) *that, where appropriate, Crown land should be used and managed in such a way that both the land and its resources are sustained in perpetuity, and*
- (f) *that Crown land be occupied, used, sold, leased, licensed or otherwise dealt with in the best interests of the State consistent with the above principles.*

Section 3.15 of the new *CLM Act* also allows the Minister to make, and publish, Crown land management rules “for or with respect to the management of dedicated or reserved Crown land by Crown land managers”.

The new *Crown Land Management Regulation 2018* supports the new *Crown Land Management Act 2016*. The Regulation is a statutory document that prescribes principles and rules relating to the use and management of Crown land in NSW.

### ***Local Government Act 1993 and Local Government (General) Regulation 2005:***

The *Local Government Act 1993* is the primary legislation governing the management of community land by local councils, including the preparation and operation of plans of management. As explained above, under the new *Crown Land Management Act 2016*, the *Local Government Act 1993* now formally applies to planning for Bulga Stock Reserve (as a Crown Reserve managed, as if it were community land, by Singleton Council).

The Act requires that a plan of management be prepared for community land. It also requires that areas of community land be categorised in accordance with the Act’s nominated categories of Natural Area (further categorised as bushland, wetland, escarpment, watercourse or foreshore, or a category otherwise prescribed by the legislation or regulations), Sportsground, Park, Area of Cultural Significance, or General Community Use. The Act then sets out “core management objectives” for each of these categories, as a broad guide to management.

The *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* provides guidelines and criteria to assist in the categorisation of community land, the preparation and adoption of plans of management and other management matters such as the issuing of leases, licences and short term/causal permits on community land.

### ***Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016***

Changes to the biodiversity laws within New South Wales came into effect in August 2017 with commencement of the new *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*. This new legislation repeals (and replaces) the former *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995*, the *Nature Conservation Trust Act 2001* and parts of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*.

The *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* aims to ensure a balanced approach to land management and biodiversity conservation across the state, and protect threatened species and threatened ecological communities, through the application of a risk-based approach to regulating interactions and impacts of human activity on native plants, animals and communities. The new legislation only applies to the terrestrial environment.

The Act sets out a process for listing threatened plants and animals (now aligned with relevant International Union for Conservation of Nature standards), and establishes the “Saving our Species” biodiversity conservation programme for threatened species and threatened ecological communities. Building on the former *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* this new legislation continues to provide for the identification and listing of threatened species (Schedule 1), threatened ecological communities (Schedule 2), key threatening processes (Schedule 4), protected animals (Schedule 5) and protected plants (Schedule 6). It establishes new measures for the conservation of areas considered to be “of outstanding biodiversity value”, according to established criteria (replacing the critical habitat provisions of the former *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995*).

No endangered ecological communities occur on the Reserve. The group of three large River Red Gum trees in the site’s north-east corner (see Section 2.3.4) do not constitute an “ecological community”, and so cannot be considered part of the “endangered *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* population in the Hunter catchment” as listed under the Act (but are nevertheless of conservation interest). No native flora species listed as threatened are known from the Reserve. A number of threatened bird species may occur, use or pass through the Reserve (see Section 2.3.5).

The Act also establishes a new regulatory framework and method for assessing, managing and offsetting the biodiversity impacts of proposed developments – under an expanded Biodiversity Offsets Scheme. It provides for a private land conservation framework with provision for three tiers of voluntary agreements on private lands – Biodiversity Stewardship Agreements (in-perpetuity agreements for the creation of biodiversity credits), conservation agreements and Wildlife Refuge agreements.

### **Biosecurity Act 2015**

The *Biosecurity Act 2015* came into force in 2017 (replacing the former noxious weeds legislation and numerous other pieces of legislation) with the intention of providing an up-dated and more integrated framework for protecting the State from the threat of weeds, pests, diseases and other contaminants.

In broad terms the Act aims to manage biosecurity risks from animal and plant pests and diseases, weeds and contaminants by:

- preventing their entry into NSW;
- quickly finding, containing and eradicating any new entries; and
- effectively minimising the impacts of those pests, diseases, weeds and contaminants that cannot be eradicated through rigorous management arrangements.

The Act establishes a “general biosecurity duty” to ensure responsibility for biosecurity risk is shared among government, industry and the community. It creates a range of tools and powers that may be used to support risk-based management and allow for increased efficiency and effectiveness in pests, weed and disease control/management.

The Department of Primary Industries (which oversees the Act’s operation and implementation) has responsibility for the administration of priority weed control and control of vertebrate pests. However the Act is chiefly implemented and enforced by Local Control Authorities, such as local councils, who have specific responsibilities for the regulation of weeds (with co-ordination of weed and pest control efforts also aided by Local Land Services).

Under the Act invasive weeds are known as “priority weeds” of differing classes (or as a “biosecurity matter”), which are considered a “priority” in terms of eradication or control in NSW. As for species previously labelled noxious or environmental weeds, priority weeds are plants that have the potential to pose a biosecurity risk to human health, the economy, the environment or have other social/cultural

impacts. Some “regional” priority weeds occur within Bulga Stock Reserve (see Section 2.3.6).

The management of vertebrate pests is also an element of a local council’s overall land management responsibility. Under the Act councils have certain legislative requirements to control declared vertebrate pests on community land.

The NSW Biosecurity Act also aims to ensure compatibility with national biosecurity legislation.

### ***Local Land Services Act 2013***

This Act addresses land, water, natural resources and biosecurity management aiming to, among other objectives, ensure the proper management of natural resources (including catchments, soils, water, weeds and noxious/pest animals) in the social, economic and environmental interests of the State, consistent with the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

The *Local Land Services Act 2013*, together with the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016, regulates the clearing of native vegetation on rural land in NSW – these pieces of legislation establishing a new framework for managing native vegetation clearing). (The *Native Vegetation Act 2003* was repealed by the new *Local Land Services Act 2013*.)

In relation to native vegetation clearing, there are two broad categories of land under the Act. Clearing of native vegetation on “Category 1 (Exempt) Lands” in rural settings may be authorised under the Act, but only where the activity is permitted without consent from a local Council (and when no other permit is required under other legislation). Native vegetation clearing on “Category 2 (Regulated, Sensitive or Vulnerable) Land” may be authorised as an “Allowable Activity” or under the Act’s “Land Management (Native Vegetation) Code”, or will otherwise need to be offset under the Biodiversity Offset Scheme (under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*) if approved.

The Act’s *Land Management (Native Vegetation) Code 2018* applies to all rural lands throughout NSW and provides directions on what native vegetation can and cannot be cleared, how much clearing is permitted and under what circumstances. The code includes five reasonable grounds for certain types/degrees of land clearing – one being *invasive native species which* “enables the removal of invasive native species that have reached unnatural densities and dominate an area”. Landholders are still required to notify Local Land Services prior to such clearing for approved or low impact land management activities. Activities that have a high risk of adversely impacting on the environment require certification by Local Land Services prior to being undertaken.

However the Native Vegetation Regulatory Map (as prepared under the Act) identifies Bulga Stock Reserve as “land excluded from the LLS Act”. Meaning that Part 5A of the Act (regarding “Land management (native vegetation)”) and the above clearing limitations, guidelines, codes and procedures do not apply. Such “excluded lands” are typically environmental conservation areas, national park estate, State forestry land and generally urban areas).

Local Land Services are responsible for co-ordinating Regional Weed Committees and Regional Pest Animal Committees in each Local Land Services region. These committees are made up of local control authorities, public and private landholders, and community members.

The Singleton Local Government Area is part of the Hunter Local Land Services (also see Section 3.2.1)



## **Rural Fires Act 1997**

The objectives of the Rural Fires Act 1997 relate to:

- the prevention, mitigation and suppression of bush and other fires in local government areas (or parts of areas) and other parts of the State constituted as rural fire districts;
- the co-ordination of bush fire fighting and bush fire prevention throughout NSW;
- the protection of persons from injury or death, and property from damage, arising from fires; and
- the protection of the environment by having regard to the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

*The Act* address fire and bushfire safety issues, risk reduction and management – including local councils' responsibility for the construction and maintenance of fire trails on the public lands they manage.

Council has legal obligations under the Act (and the *Singleton Bush Fire Risk Management Plan 2011* – see Section 3.4.1) to manage bush fire risk on the lands it owns or manages. As the manager of Bulga Stock Reserve Council has a responsibility to “protect persons and property” immediately adjacent to the Reserve from hazards – notably wildfires – originating on the Reserve. Council is also required to manage the area to not detract markedly from surrounding residents' “quiet enjoyment” of their properties.

## **National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974**

The National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 (NPW Act) establishes the National Parks and Wildlife Service and provides it with responsibility for the management of national parks and other conservation reserves, native flora and fauna protection, the protection of Aboriginal sites/resources, and administration of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*.

The NPW Act contains provisions for the establishment of national parks and other conservation reserves as well as to protect and conserve habitats, ecosystems and wildlife, landforms/landscapes and natural features of significance.

The NPW Act is also the principal legislation governing the protection and management of Aboriginal heritage in the State. The Act defines an Aboriginal Object as “any deposit, object or material evidence (not being a handicraft made for sale) relating to the Aboriginal habitation of the area that comprises New South Wales, being habitation before or concurrent with (or both) the occupation of that area by persons of non-Aboriginal extraction, and includes Aboriginal remains”.

All Aboriginal objects, including sites with physical evidence, are protected under the Act regardless of their size or level of significance or land tenure (with the exception of Commonwealth Lands). The Act makes it an offence to damage, deface, destroy, disturb or collect any Aboriginal object or evidence site without the approval of the Director (with some exceptions).

The Act also provides for the reservation and gazettal of lands as an Aboriginal Area, or the declaration and gazettal of lands as a Protected Archaeological Area.

### **3.1.3 Other State and Commonwealth Legislation**

A range of other State and Commonwealth legislation may have implications (to varying degrees) for the planning, development, management and use of the Reserve. The more likely of these are:

- *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* – the primary piece of land use and planning legislation in New South Wales which allows for the creation of a range of environmental planning instruments (at various levels of government) and sets requirements for assessment and approval of activity or development proposals;
- *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* – addresses environmental offences, air quality, water quality, pollution control and noise control;
- *Heritage Act 1977* – to conserve the State’s heritage being those places, buildings, works, relics, moveable objects, and precincts, of State or local heritage significance;
- *Water Management Act 2000* – to provide for the sustainable and integrated management of water sources, including guidelines to protect and enhance the quality of water in rivers/watercourses;
- *Soil Conservation Act 1938* – addresses the mitigation of erosion and conservation of soil resources;
- *Recreational Vehicles Act 1983* – provides for the designation of private land as a “recreation vehicles area” and authorises Police Officers and Environmental Protection Agency officers to control the use of recreational vehicles on “restricted lands” (being land that is not a public road or a declared recreation vehicle area);
- *Disability Inclusion Act 2014* – provides for the provision of services for, and inclusion of, people with a disability;
- *Companion Animals Act, 1998* – provides for the declaration of Wildlife Protection Areas, provides for owners’ to have effective control of dogs and cats in public places, and prohibits dogs within 10 metres of a playground and food preparation/consumption areas and some recreation areas;
- *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992* – promotes the rights of people with disabilities and provides protection against discrimination based on defined disabilities (including access to public places and facilities such as open space and parks); and
- *Commonwealth Telecommunications Act 1997* – regulates the activities of major participants in the telecommunications industry and enables licensed “carriers” to install a limited range of facilities (most commonly “low-impact facilities”) without seeking State or Territory planning approval.

## 3.2 STATE-LEVEL AND REGIONAL PLANNING DOCUMENTS

### 3.2.1 Regional Level Strategies and Plans

Three regional level planning documents, for the wider Hunter Valley region, contain planning and management directions or actions relevant to Bulga Stock Reserve.

The main directions or implications for the Reserve included in these regional plans are summarised in Table 3, and these documents discussed in more detail in Appendix B.

**Table 3 Key Planning and Management Directions or Implications – Regional Level Plans**

Plan / Strategy / Document	Key Directions or Implications for Bulga Stock Reserve
<i>Hunter Regional Plan 2036</i> (2016)	<p>Relevant (high order) directions, and actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direction 18 to “enhance access to recreational facilities and connect open spaces” includes the actions to facilitate more recreational walking and cycling paths, deliver open space areas for community enjoyment, and enhance public access to natural areas.</li> <li>• Direction 14 to protect and connect natural areas, including</li> </ul>

Plan / Strategy / Document	Key Directions or Implications for Bulga Stock Reserve
<i>Hunter Regional Plan 2036 (2016)</i> (cont'd)	biodiversity corridors such as vegetated riparian strips. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direction 19 to identify and protect cultural heritage (both Aboriginal cultural heritage and historic heritage).</li> <li>• Action 10.3 to increase biosecurity measures to counter the weeds and pests.</li> <li>• Action 16.1 to improve resilience to flooding and bushfire hazards.</li> </ul>
<i>Hunter Local Strategic Plan (Hunter Local Land Services) 2016-2021 (2016)</i>	Relevant priorities and actions for Hunter Local Land Services' customer services, partnerships and investments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support and collaborate with land managers to manage weeds and pest animals;</li> <li>• improving the condition of rivers and wetlands;</li> <li>• maintaining or improving native vegetation and improving native vegetation connectivity;</li> <li>• provide best practice native vegetation management advice;</li> <li>• support land managers to achieve priority Landcare outcomes; improving flood preparedness; and</li> <li>• supporting Aboriginal communities in "Caring for Country".</li> </ul>
<i>Upper Hunter Strategic Regional Land Use Plan (2012)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projected population and economic growth will increase demand "for social infrastructure such as ... community and recreational facilities" and any existing deficiencies in these services are "likely to be compounded".</li> <li>• Promotes the potential for targeted biodiversity off-setting to "deliver regional conservation gains".</li> </ul>

### 3.2.2 State Environmental Planning Policies

The following State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) are relevant, to varying extents, to Bulga Stock Reserve.

#### State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007

This SEPP assists local governments and the communities they support by simplifying the process for providing essential infrastructure and enabling greater flexibility in the location, development and upkeep of infrastructure and service facilities. It includes specific planning provisions and development controls for a range of infrastructure works or facilities including parks and other public reserves, roads, emergency services, electricity delivery, and telecommunications networks. The following clauses are of particular relevance for parks and other public reserves such as Bulga Stock Reserve.

Clause 66 allows for certain construction or maintenance works to be undertaken as "exempt development" (subject to certain conditions and compliances set out in Clause 20) in parks and other public reserves – including Crown land (under a Crown land manager).

These include (among others) – walking tracks, raised paths (including boardwalks), viewing platforms (less than 100 square metres in area), ramps and stairs, handrails and barriers, park furniture items (seats, picnic tables, barbecues, bins, shelters or shade structures), landscaping and landscape maintenance, gates, vehicle barriers, bicycle parking or storage facilities, play equipment (including soft-fall surfaces), a range of sporting facilities, routine maintenance of playing fields and other infrastructure



(including access roads), and ticket machines or park entry booths. Such exempt development must involve “no greater disturbance of native vegetation than necessary” and “not result in an increase in stormwater run-off or erosion”.

Additionally Clause 65 of the SEPP permits specified works to be undertaken on community land or Crown land (under a Crown land manager) without consent “if the development is for the purposes of implementing a plan of management adopted for the land”. These “without consent works ” include (among others) – environmental management works, pedestrian pathways and bridges, viewing platforms and bridges, cycleways, recreation areas and outdoor recreation facilities (excluding grandstands), information boards and other information facilities, lighting (with controls around light spill), landscaping and irrigation, visitor/user amenities (such as toilets, change rooms, food preparation and related facilities), roads, single storey car parks, and maintenance depots.

Clauses 128 and 129 of the SEPP refer to waterway (or foreshore) management activities. A local council (as a deemed public authority), does not require development consent to undertake waterway activities (including construction, maintenance, environmental and emergency works) such as – environmental management works, riparian corridor management, bank management and stabilisation, erosion control, revegetation activities, weed management, aquatic habitat rehabilitation, in-stream works to maintain/restore environmental flows (for ecological purposes), and the provision of access ways.

### **State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008**

This SEPP specifies exempt and complying development, and has State-wide application. Exempt development may be carried out without the need for development consent under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. Such development is not exempt from any approval, licence, permit or authority that is required under any other Act and adjoining owners’ property rights and the common law still apply.

## **3.3 LOCAL PLANNING CONTROLS**

### **3.3.1 Local Strategic Planning Statement (draft in preparation)**

In accordance with a State-wide direction from the (then) NSW Department of Planning and Environment, Singleton Council is preparing a *Draft Singleton Local Strategic Planning Statement 2040* (Draft LSPS).

The Draft LSPS is to be a high-level plan that brings together state and regional objectives for land use planning (notably the *Hunter Regional Plan 2036*) and Council’s own community planning activities (notably the *Singleton Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027*) into a single directions document.

The Draft Singleton LSPS 2040 will be a 20 year plan, which sets the scene for how the Singleton Local Government Area will grow and develop over time. It will also guide updates and amendments to Council’s Local Environmental Plan(s), Development Control Plan(s) and Local Contributions Plan(s). It will also assist in the prioritisation of strategic planning projects.

When adopted Singleton LSPS 2040 will override, and replace, the *Singleton Land Use Strategy 2008*, and will be an enforceable planning document under Part 3 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

### 3.3.2 Singleton Local Environmental Plan 2013

A plan of management's provisions must be consistent with the land uses and developments permissible for an area under a local environmental plan and other planning regulations.

The *Singleton Local Environmental Plan 2013* (SLEP) is Council's key local land use planning document. It is shaped in accordance with the relevant standard environmental planning instrument under section 33A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

The SLEP sets out Council's planning and land use objectives, as well as permitted and prohibited developments and uses as well as other controls, for all parts of the local government area. It designates land use zones, development objectives and permissible uses for every parcel of land (other than in deferred areas) within the Singleton Council area.

Under the 2013 SLEP Bulga Stock Reserve is entirely zoned RE1 (Public Recreation) – as shown on Figure 8

The objectives of the RE1 Public Recreation Zone are to:

- to enable land to be used for public open space or recreational purposes,
- to provide a range of recreational settings and activities and compatible land uses, and
- to protect and enhance the natural environment for recreational purposes.

Table 4 shows the land uses that are permitted with or without Council consent, and prohibited, with the RE1 Public Recreation Zone is zone.

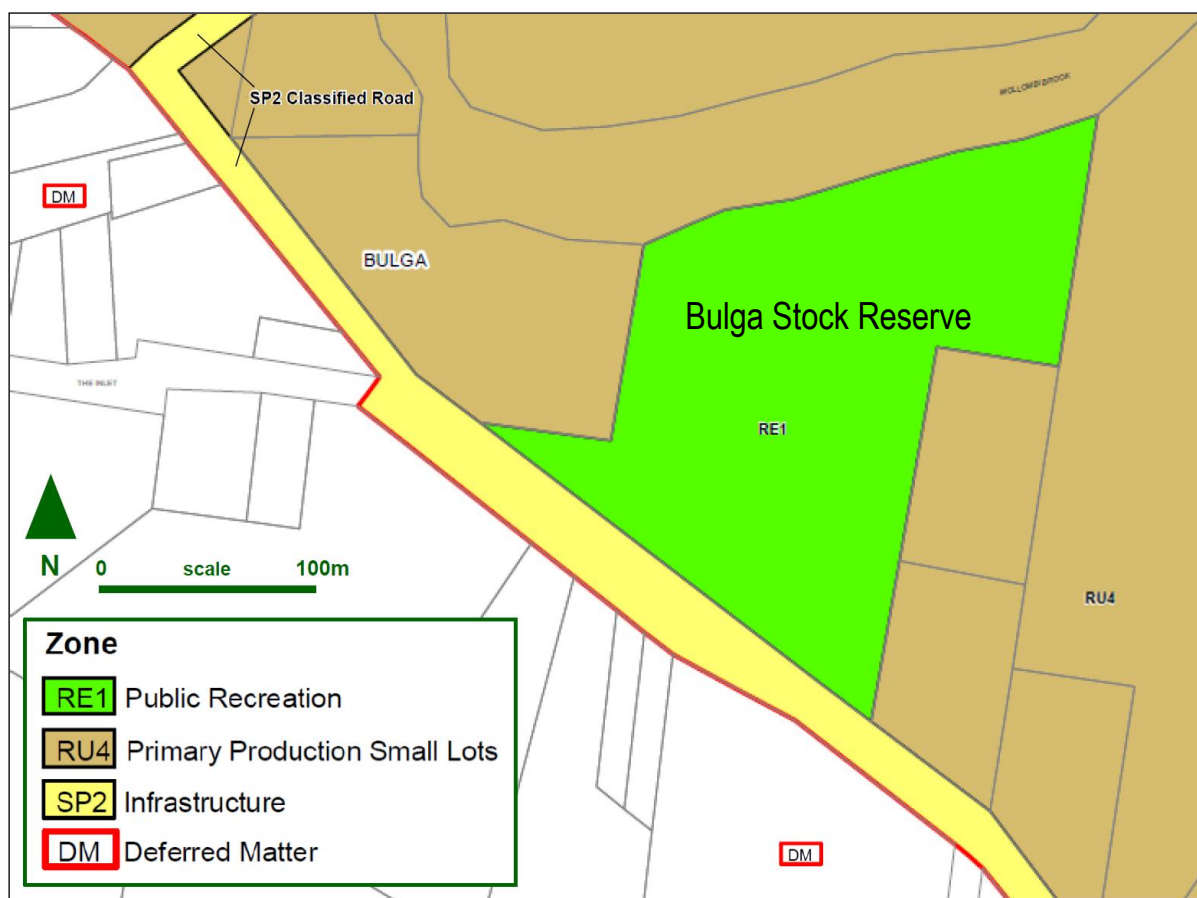
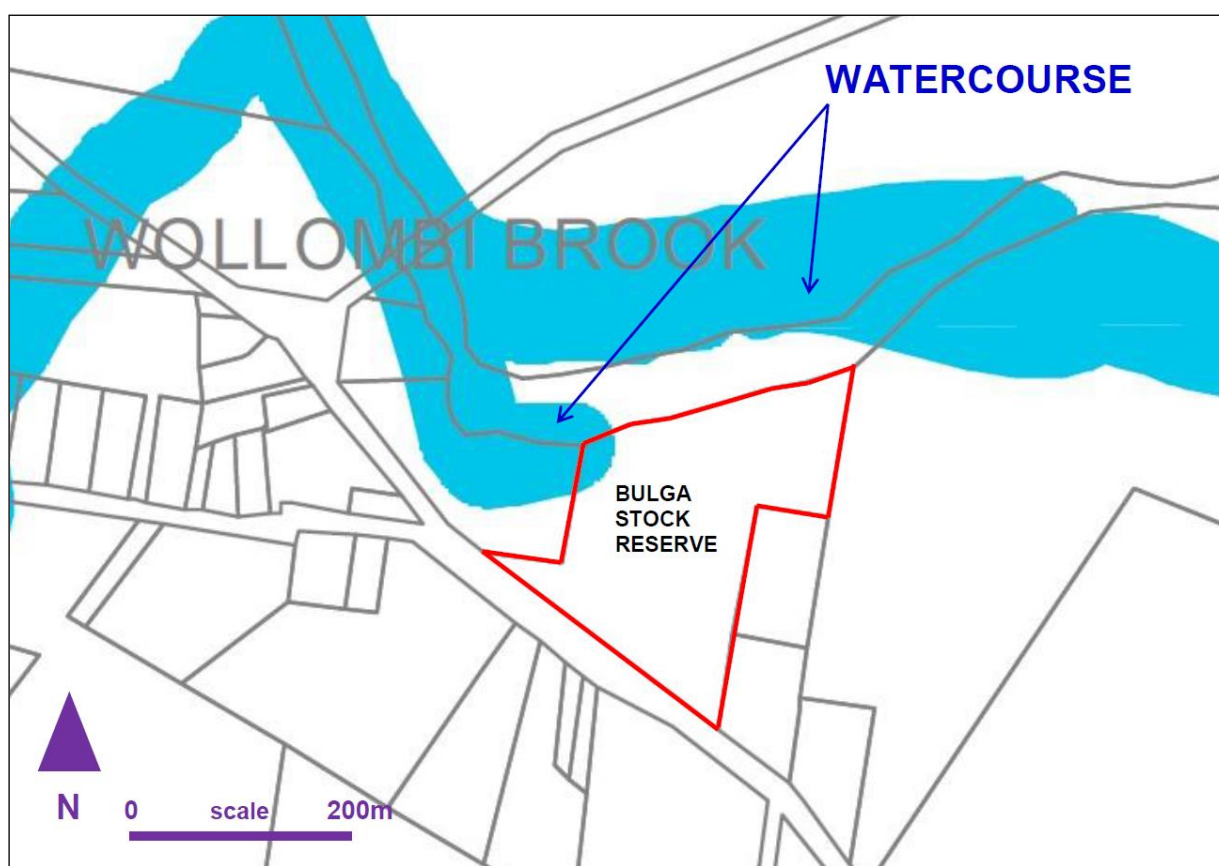


Figure 8 Zoning plan (extract from Singleton Local Environmental Plan 2013)

**Table 4 Permitted and Prohibited Land Uses – RE1 Public Recreation Zone**

Permitted without consent	Permitted with consent	Prohibited
<b>RE1 Public Recreation Zone</b>		
Environmental protection works.	Boat launching ramps; Boat sheds; Camping grounds; Child care centres; Community facilities; Emergency services facilities; Environmental facilities; Flood mitigation works; Information and education facilities; Jetties; Kiosks; Markets; Recreation areas; Recreation facilities (indoor); Recreation facilities (major); Recreation facilities (outdoor); Respite day care centres; Restaurants or cafes; Roads; Signage; Water recreation structures; Water supply systems.	Any development not specified in item 2 or 3.



*Figure 9 Riparian lands and watercourses map (extract from Singleton Local Environmental Plan 2013)*

In addition to its RE1 Zoning, the far north-eastern corner of the Reserve is mapped as a “watercourse” on the SLEP’s Riparian Lands and Watercourses Map – as shown on Figure 9.

Identification as a watercourse imposes additional development consent requirements under the SLEP – under Clause 7.6 Riparian Land and Watercourses (of Part 7 Additional Local Provisions).



Clause 7.6(3) of the SLEP requires that when assessing a development application for lands mapped as a watercourse the consent authority (Council) must consider:

- (a) *whether or not the development is likely to have any adverse impact on the following:*
  - (i) *the water quality and flows within the watercourse,*
  - (ii) *aquatic and riparian species, habitats and ecosystems of the watercourse,*
  - (iii) *the stability of the bed and banks of the watercourse,*
  - (iv) *the free passage of fish and other aquatic organisms within or along the watercourse,*
  - (v) *any future rehabilitation of the watercourse and riparian areas, and*
- (b) *whether or not the development is likely to increase water extraction from the watercourse, and*
- (c) *any appropriate measures proposed to avoid, minimise or mitigate the impacts of the development.*

Clause 7.6(4) requires that development consent must not be granted to developments on land mapped as watercourse, unless the consent authority is satisfied that the development:

- (a) *the development is designed, sited and will be managed to avoid any significant adverse environmental impact, or*
- (b) *if that impact cannot be reasonably avoided—the development is designed, sited and will be managed to minimise that impact, or*
- (c) *if that impact cannot be minimised—the development will be managed to mitigate that impact.*

The Reserve is not identified or mapped in relation to other “additional local provisions” of the SLEP – including the SLEP’s Heritage Map, Flood Planning Map, and Drinking Water Catchment Map (and Buffer Areas Map).

### **3.3.3 Singleton Development Control Plan 2014**

The Singleton Development Control Plan 2014 (SDCP 2014) is a more detailed planning document that sets out standards and controls in relation to both development generally (for individual buildings to master-planned sites and subdivisions) as well as for specific types of activity or development.

The section of the SDCP most applicable to Bulga Stock Reserve is “2.17 Vegetation Management”, which applies to lands zoned RE1 Public Recreation and places restrictions and approval requirements around vegetation clearing and management.

## **3.4 SINGLETON COUNCIL STRATEGIES, PLANS AND POLICIES**

### **3.4.1 Singleton Council Strategies, Plans and Reports**

Several existing Council strategies, plans or reports provide planning and management directions applicable, to varying degrees, to Bulga Stock Reserve – some provide broad principles or directions, and others include more specific recommendations.

The main directions or implications for the Reserve included in these strategies, plans or reports are summarised in Table 5, and these documents discussed in more detail in Appendix C.

**Table 5 Key Planning and Management Directions or Implications – Singleton Council Strategies, Plans or Reports**

Plan / Strategy / Document	Key Directions or Implications for Bulga Stock Reserve
<i>Singleton Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027 (2017)</i>	<p>Applicable strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.1 Provide services and facilities that meet the needs of our community at different stages of life</li> <li>• 1.2 Provide social, recreational and cultural services which educate, inspire and entertain</li> <li>• 1.3 Promote, facilitate and provide services for public health, healthy living and lifestyles</li> <li>• 2.1 Provide safe and well maintained facilities and infrastructure</li> <li>• 3.1 Collaborate to enhance, protect and improve our environment</li> <li>• 4.6 Seek funding to provide infrastructure, programs, services or events which value add to the delivery of the objectives of Singleton 2027</li> <li>• 5.1 Council's service delivery is aligned with our community's needs and delivered the best way possible</li> </ul>
<i>Singleton Delivery Program 2017-2021 (2107)</i>	<p>Relevant deliverables or outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.1.2 Deliver or facilitate the delivery of all priority actions from Council's Community Development Strategies including actions relation to ... cultural, social, recreational and leisure aspects and Aboriginal engagement.</li> <li>• 1.2 1 Integrate Council's Cultural, Social and Recreational Development Strategies</li> <li>• 1.3.3. Address healthy living and lifestyles as part of Council's Community Development Strategies</li> <li>• 2.1.5 Implement the Singleton Open Space and Recreational Needs Strategy</li> <li>• 2.1.6 Maintain Singleton's open spaces in line with the Service Level Agreements</li> <li>• 3.1.3 Support community organisations to obtain funding for environmental projects</li> <li>• 4.6.2 Drive the attraction of external funding for Council priority projects</li> <li>• 5.1.7 Demonstrate delivery of services aligned to community needs</li> </ul>
<i>Singleton Operational Plan 2019-2020 (2019)</i>	<p>Relevant actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2.1.6.1 Consult with community to establish levels of service for open spaces and reserves.</li> <li>• 2.1.6.2 Maintain open spaces and reserves to agreed levels of service.</li> </ul>
<i>Asset Management Strategy 2017-2021 (2017)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.3 Continue to review and update Asset Management Plans, to maintain their currency and validity</li> <li>• 2.3 Review the completeness and accuracy of the data for all major infrastructure classes</li> <li>• 5.1 Identifying Level of Service through consultation with the community</li> <li>• 5.3 Developing Service Level Agreements; and</li> <li>• 5.4 Developing Maintenance Management Framework</li> </ul>
<i>Singleton Village Masterplan (2016)</i>	See Section 3.5 for a detailed discussion.

Plan / Strategy / Document	Key Directions or Implications for Bulga Stock Reserve
<i>Wollombi Brook Flood Study (2016)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides information on flood levels and depths, velocities, flows, hydraulic categories and provisional hazard categories for the Wollombi Brook catchment under differing scenarios/severities of modelled flood levels and behavior.</li> <li>• Detailed flood mapping produced as part of the Study provides a forecast of flood depths and water velocities across Bulga Stock Reserve under floods of differing severity – see Section 2.3.3 Flooding for further details.</li> </ul>
<i>Child Friendly Strategy 2016-2021 (2016)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommendation: When reviewing bike paths and walking trails, Singleton Council incorporate child friendly principles including possible extension of bike paths and walking trails across Singleton to connect child friendly spaces.</li> </ul>
<i>Singleton Community – Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan (2016)</i>	<p>Relevant actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a Tree Management Policy to provide integrated guidelines for tree removal, planting and preservation.</li> <li>• When reviewing Plans of Management for Open Space, identify and prioritise riparian areas requiring regeneration and rehabilitation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ create the opportunity for increased public recreation; and</li> <li>▪ improve conditions and connectivity of riverine vegetation and habitat with the broader landscape.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• An enhanced connection and commitment to the protection and management of community open space.</li> <li>• Promote and support environment and Landcare based groups to foster sustainable land management practices and to actively restore degraded soils.</li> </ul>
<i>Singleton Bike Plan Revision (2016)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The community of Bulga “has limited to no formal cycle facilities”.</li> <li>• There are no specific works identified for within Bulga Stock Reserve. However a proposed on-road regional Broke-Milbrodale-Bulga Loop (to provide for regional cyclists primarily via upgraded road shoulders) would pass along Putty Road adjacent to the Reserve.</li> <li>• Recommends provision of secure parking and other end of trip facilities for cyclists, as well as infrastructure adjacent the cycleway routes (such as benches, access to tap water, and bike racks/lockers).</li> </ul>
<i>Singleton Parks Biodiversity Management Plan (2015)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This LGA-wide report summarised the biodiversity values of Council-managed parks and reserves. The entry for Bulga Stock Reserve gave an overview of the site’s local setting, ecological values, ecological threats, habitat restoration and rehabilitation.</li> <li>• It recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ slashing of the exotic species that dominate the Reserve (avoiding the main areas of native vegetation) as the most viable option for controlling weeds and increasing habitat connectivity; and</li> <li>▪ feral animal control measures.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>See Sections 2.3.4 to 2.3.6 for further details.</p>

Plan / Strategy / Document	Key Directions or Implications for Bulga Stock Reserve
<i>Singleton Council Villages Place Making Strategy (2015)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Strategy for place management, enhancement and activation of each of Singleton's 17 villages, including Bulga.</li> <li>• Described Bulga as having a "passionate and resilient community" and identified several challenges and opportunities for the village, as well as set of actions for the years 2014 to 2016.</li> <li>• Did not make any specific references to, or recommended actions for, Bulga Stock Reserve but did identify overall opportunities for the improved maintenance of public areas and improved facilities in recreational areas.</li> </ul>
<i>Singleton Youth Strategy 2015-2019 (2015)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The most popular activities for the 12-24 years age group were playing sports and hanging with friends.</li> <li>• Improvement options suggested by survey respondents included "More things to do, opportunities and resources", "Better BMX park and skate park" and "Sporting Centre, Football Stadium, more sporting opportunities"</li> <li>• No specific references to Bulga or the Bulga Stock Reserve, however other recommended actions of some possible relevance include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ implement relevant actions of Bike Plan; and</li> <li>▪ encourage young people in to get involved in community environmental education programs.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<i>Singleton Lifestyle Plan for Older People (2015)</i>	<p>Relevant actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extend the network of pathways, walking trails and cycling tracks ... to cater for the popularity of walking as a recreational activity for all age groups, including older people.</li> <li>• Develop parks and gardens with interest and destination points that will attract and appeal to older people.</li> <li>• Explore incorporation of seating, shade, resting places and "Stop &amp; Drop Zones" in the design of public spaces and facilities within the Singleton local government area.</li> </ul>
<i>Singleton Community Safety Strategy 2015-2020 (2015)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify opportunities for landscaping, maintenance and design improvements to improve natural surveillance, appearance and perception of the neighbourhoods.</li> </ul>
<i>Hunter Valley Visitor Economy Destination Management Plan (2014)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies activities – such as "nature (soft adventure e.g. walking, cycling, fishing), heritage (convict and industrial), and Indigenous" – as "second-tier" activities and tourism opportunities to build and promote the attraction of the Hunter Valley as a food and wine destination and extend such visits/experiences (Strategic Priority 1 and 2).</li> <li>• Develop co-ordinated place making, including expansion of public facilities such as parks and toilets/conveniences (Strategic Priority 5).</li> <li>• Recommends the immediate development of cycling and walking trails.</li> </ul>



Plan / Strategy / Document	Key Directions or Implications for Bulga Stock Reserve
<i>Open Space and Recreation Needs Study (2013)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bulga Stock Reserve was classified as “undeveloped” within the limited open space network of the wider Bulga Village.</li> <li>• Bulga Village had an “adequate supply of open space and adequate facilities within the Recreation Ground”, and sufficient (in terms of open space provision) for a “Tier Two” location. There was assessed to be “little demand for additional facilities”.</li> <li>• However it was considered Bulga Stock Reserve “may lend itself to the future development of an environmental park”.</li> <li>• Recommended Action No. 3.2.15 (low priority, ranked 41<sup>s</sup> LGA-wide) to “implement an environmental rehabilitation program at the Bulga Stock Reserve, to provide the community with a future natural area for environmental protection, awareness and low key outdoor recreation opportunities”.</li> <li>• In 2012 the Bulga community identified a key local project as a cleanup day at Bulga Stock Reserve to create a more usable place for the local community and as a stopping place for visitors, and to enhance the environmental values of the site as a park with wetlands (including a walkway through the wetlands).</li> </ul>
<i>Disability Access Plan 2020 (2013)</i>	<p>Relevant strategies and actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancing social and recreational opportunities for people with a disability.</li> <li>• Providing information in multiple formats to meet varying requirements of people in the community.</li> </ul>
<i>Singleton Waste Strategy 2013-2033 (2013)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Continue to support and promote litter reduction initiatives” such as through on-site signage during park and reserve upgrades or maintenance.</li> </ul>
<i>Singleton Bush Fire Risk Management Plan (2011)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides context for fire services, Council, and other landholders in carrying out bushfire hazard reduction and control activities.</li> <li>• Does not include any recommendations, or include any specific information or directions, regarding the Reserve.</li> </ul>
<i>Singleton Land Use Strategy 2008 (2008)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bulga is described as “No significant development potential due to development constraints. Generally has rural small holding character rather than residential. Environmental Living zone appropriate”.</li> <li>• Identifies the policy to “maintain and enhance the distinctive character and landscape setting of existing villages”.</li> <li>• Planning in rural areas needs to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ identifying environmental values, constraints and protection requirements;</li> <li>▪ continuing population growth, with further ageing of population;</li> <li>▪ increasing demand for maintaining environment and amenity and “tree change” lifestyle; and</li> <li>▪ requirement to improve landscape connectivity for biodiversity and maintain native vegetation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Natural hazards “primarily flooding and bushfires” are significant issues, with need to “ensure that natural hazards are considered when making development decisions, and that hazards are minimized wherever possible”.</li> </ul>
<i>Plan of Management for Village Parks (undated)</i>	See Section 3.5 for a detailed discussion.

### 3.4.2 Singleton Council Policies

The following Singleton Council policies are relevant, to varying degrees, to the planning and management of Bulga Stock Reserve:

- Environmental Management Policy;
- Enforcement and Compliance Policy;
- Asset Management Policy; and
- Lease Licence of Council Land and Buildings to Community Groups Policy.

## 3.5 PREVIOUS PLANNING FOR BULGA STOCK RESERVE

Two existing Council plans already include directions for the future planning, management, development and use of the Bulga Stock Reserve.

### 3.5.1 *Plan of Management for Village Parks (undated)*

The *Plan of Management for Village Parks* (undated) is a generic plan of management for (then) Singleton Shire's village parks. It is the Plan of Management that guides Council's current management of Bulga Stock Reserve.

The objectives of this generic Plan of Management are to:

- develop various possible levels of maintenance for the parks so as to select an appropriate level of service at an acceptable cost;
- develop recreation facilities suitable for the village parks;
- protect and enhance the scenic amenity of the parks;
- protect the environment of the parks especially in relation to vegetation;
- ensure that the community can contribute to the operation and development of village parks and the implementation of the plan; and
- provide a planning document that can be updated as additional land is dedicated as Council Village Park.

The parks located in villages and rural areas are recognised as providing sports facilities and passive recreation areas for people in Singleton's rural areas and villages. They provide a range of facilities and settings – such as natural areas, tennis courts, netball courts, basketball courts, children's play equipment, picnic facilities, and buildings used for sports amenities, playgroups and club meetings. The primary value of the village parks is noted as "the recreation function they provide to the village communities and rest of the Shire for sporting and passive recreation, for example picnics".

Management policies identified for the village parks include:

- park maintenance – keep village parks at acceptable standards to the community, within Council's financial constraints; and
- community user group self-help for maintenance at village parks should be encouraged.

The generic Plan's "Schedule of Land" lists Bulga Stock Reserve as Reserve No. 11, as undeveloped Crown land and (then) zoned 6(a) Public Open Space and Recreation.

Bulga Village itself is noted as an area that has access to "good quality large play systems that provide good play value". However a general issue identified is "the lack of toilets and poor quality of some of

the existing toilets (drop pits)".

The generic Plan classified Bulga Stock Reserve as a "utility" area in terms of park maintenance standards and the identified "level of care". Maintenance standards and management of areas classified as "utility" are described as:

- no or minimal mowing due to site not being used as a park, or located in an isolated area with little use, or too steep to mow;
- grass cover would typically be grazed;
- grass edges not treated;
- site not irrigated; and
- landscape treatment – generally bushland, pasture or site with steep gradients e.g. some areas Singleton Heights gully parks. Where possible areas too steep to mow will be revegetated with shrub/tree cover where bushfires are not likely to be of concern to neighbouring residences.

As an undeveloped reserve many of the generic Plan's performance targets and priority actions do not apply to Bulga Stock Reserve, however the following are relevant:

- village park grounds maintenance (performance target) – building and equipment maintenance/mowing/cleaning (action);
- level of village park use (performance target) – provide suitable facility and encourage parks use (action), and review the need to retain unused reserves (action); and
- future village parks (performance target) – assess sites if required (action), and assess cost/benefits (action).

The generic Plan notes that the level of use of village parks varies with location and facilities provided. It states that "it has been widely recognized as an issue that the parks are generally under utilized", and some parks "are used so little that Council should consider disposing of these sites". Bulga Stock Reserve is named as one such location, and the generic Plan states "Council needs to review whether these sites should remain as reserve".

Once adopted, this Plan of Management will replace the earlier generic *Plan of Management for Village Parks* in regards to providing the directions and actions for Bulga Stock Reserve's future management, development and use.

### 3.5.2 Singleton Village Masterplan (2016)

This Masterplan was prepared to provide a vision, strategies and actions/initiatives for enhancement of the villages of Broke, Bulga and Jerrys Plains.

It's vision and recommendations for Bulga village were developed based on an overview analysis of the village and surrounds' history and European heritage, planning regime, physical and land use settings, demographics, open space and community facilities, public infrastructure, landscape character and views, and strategic (planning) overview.

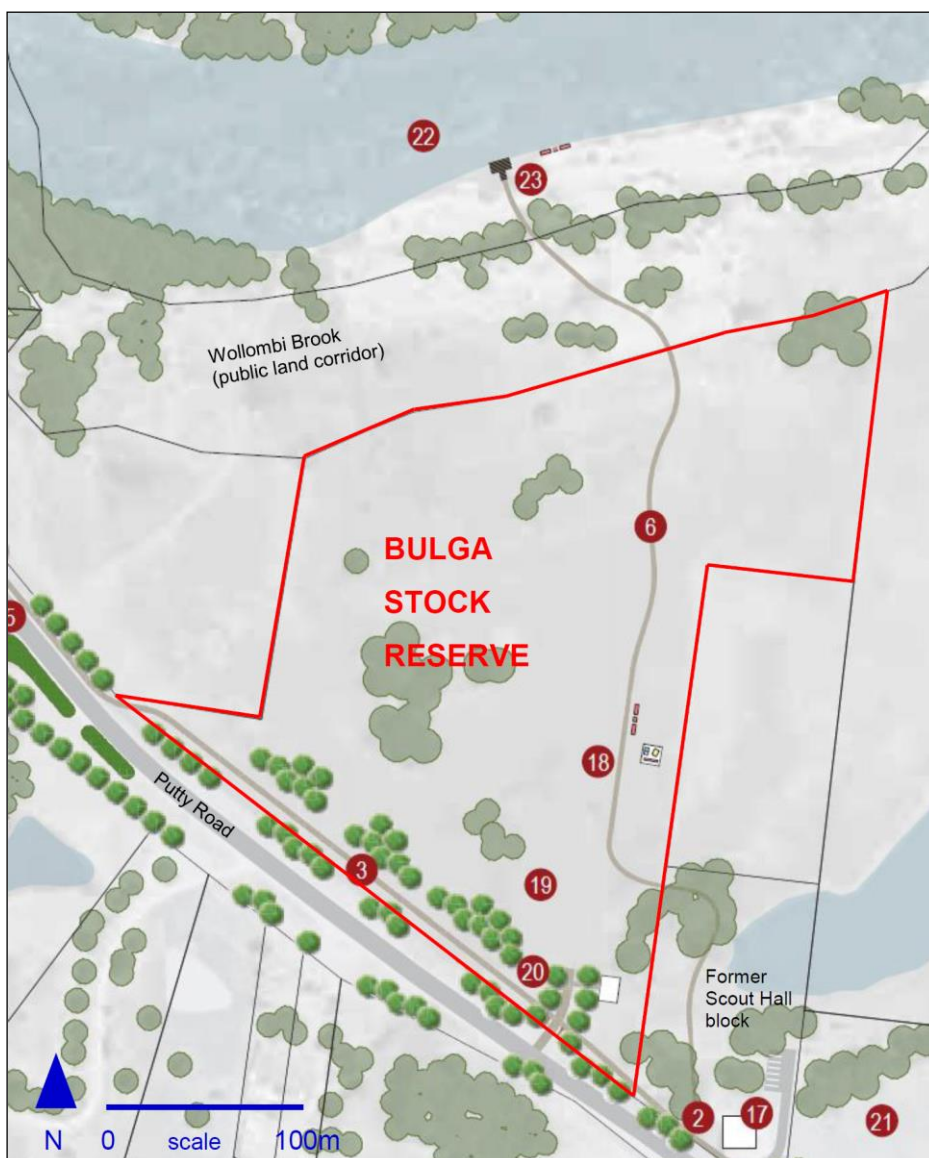
The Masterplan recognised the Bulga Stock Reserve as one of the village's open space assets, however it did not include an analysis of the constraints and opportunities of the Reserve specifically.

The Masterplan's "vision" for Bulga village includes "the Bulga Stock Reserve that has been adapted to provide a range of services and facilities including for the overnight campers in the paddock next door" as part of diversifying and growing the village's economy and businesses to "provide services for visitors and locals, that capitalise on the natural and cultural features of the locality". The principles on which the Masterplans' actions/initiatives are founded include providing "diversity by encouraging the development

of attractions for visitors and residents to increase the village's economic and cultural base including access to ... the Stock Reserve and wetlands, the Wollombi Brook".

In its recommended "village concepts" the Masterplan describes the following "key concepts" for the "Bulga Stock Reserve and Wetlands", as listed below and shown on Figure 10.

- Informal pathways to be used throughout the open space areas. (Concept No. 6)
- Encourage the development and beatification of the Stock Reserve in discussions with the State Government. Improvements to the Scout Hall. (Concept No. 17)
- Provide various informal access paths to and from and within the Park and to Wollombi Brook. Provision of facilities including seating, barbeque facilities, amenities block, toilet, shower fitness equipment located along the pathways creating an exercise route. Possibility of bushwalking tracks and garden trails. (Concept No. 18)
- Possibility for a short term camping site to reduce conflict with the recreation grounds and as overflow camping when events are held in the recreation grounds. (Concept No. 19).
- Rural fences to define access areas to the reserve. (Concept No. 20).
- A section of path/trail running along the Reserve's southern edge (adjacent to Putty Road) as a small part of the wider promotion of the Yellow Rock Trail including mapping, signage, identifying key landmarks and destinations. (Concept No. 3).
- Tree planting along the Reserve's Putty Road frontage.



*Figure 10 Bulga Village Masterplan (Bulga Stock Reserve detail)*

Source: Peter Andrews & Associates (2016)



The Masterplan proposes the main pedestrian access to the Reserve being through the former Scout Hall block – via one of a series of “pathways to lead visitors and residents to items of interest, e.g. Wollombi Brook, heritage buildings, community hall” (Concept No. 3). It does not acknowledge that this block is under different managers and management from the Reserve (this also applies to Concept No. 17).

As also shown on Figure 10, the Masterplan envisages the proposed “informal access path” on the Reserve as accessing Wollombi Brook. Here it proposes providing a boardwalk and viewing platform to provide for recreational access (e.g. kayaking, fishing) to the Brook from the Stock Reserve (Concept No. 23) and improving the amenity and usability of Wollombi Creek by clearing debris and rubbish (Concept No. 22). The Masterplan does not make any reference to this section of the Wollombi Brook channel being physically located on private property, or to the flood risks along this waterway and to the adjacent Reserve area generally.

The Masterplans also recommends that “festivals could be held throughout the village including ... the Bulga Stock Reserve”. Other “village concepts” described in the Masterplan of possible relevance for the Reserve’s planning include:

- gateway treatment including feature tree planting and rainwater gardens to assist in identifying key locations, e.g. the entries to Bulga (Concept No. 3) – the Masterplan identifies a location approximately 170 metres south-east of the Reserve beside Putty Road for an eastern “gateway treatment” for the village;
- provide pedestrian refuges at appropriate places (on Putty Road) (Concept No. 7); and
- establish a “heritage trail” with “appropriate markers to identify the heritage sites/buildings of Bulga”.

### **3.5.3 Open Space and Recreation Needs Study (2013)**

This 2013 Study of the Singleton Local Government Area’s open space, recreation and sports and recreation provision and future requirements. It found that Bulga Village had an “adequate supply of open space and adequate facilities within the Recreation Ground”.

The Open Space and Recreation Needs Study’s recommendations and directions specifically for Bulga Stock Reserve were:

- the Reserve was “relatively undeveloped and while there is little demand for additional facilities, the site may lend itself to the future development of an environmental park”; and
- that Council “implement an environmental rehabilitation program” (Reference 3.2.15) “to provide the community with a future natural area for environmental protection, awareness and low-key outdoor recreation opportunities” with this identified as a low priority (priority action 41 of 41).

## **3.6 OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION CONTEXT**

There are only two Council-managed parks or open space reserves in Bulga village – the undeveloped Bulga Stock Reserve and the smaller, but developed, Bulga Recreational Ground on The Inlet Road.

Bulga Recreational Ground is chiefly an open mown grassed area with scattered perimeter trees. It offers recently refurbished toilets, a new playground, two synthetic surfaced tennis courts (enclosed and floodlit), a War Memorial zone (a small memorial garden and heritage listed gates), sheltered picnic tables, single electric barbeque (in a brick enclosure), rubbish bins, an unsealed informal parking area, an informal/undefined sports oval, and a small building (not open to the public). The Recreational Ground is promoted by Council as a “free camping area” and receives low, to occasionally moderate, levels of use

for most of the year. The Recreational Ground is the venue of the annual “Bulga Beats Festival” – a three day festival of “music, dance, and connection” – and an Anzac Day ceremony occurs annually at the War Memorial Gates. The Recreational Ground is regularly maintained by Council.

The Bulga Recreational Ground offers a developed and managed leisure and recreation setting, as compared to the vegetated and largely unmanaged setting of Bulga Stock Reserve.

Council’s 2013 *Open Space and Recreation Needs Study* identified that Bulga Village had an “adequate supply of open space and adequate facilities within the Recreation Ground”, and assessed that there was (in 2013) “little demand for additional facilities”.

Despite being public land, the corridor of Wollombi Brook is Crown land under the control and management of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.

Despite having only two “public parks”, the location of Bulga village within a rural area backed by forested slopes to the west and south-west, and the village itself being dominated by larger residential and rural residential lots, gives the village an open and spacious character.

Bulga is also an entry point for the nearby Wollemi and Yengo National Parks. Both are less-developed and more “basic” national parks in terms of the standard of visitor facilities and destinations.

### 3.7 LOCAL DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE AND POPULATION FORECASTS

As at the 2016 Census the Bulga area had a resident population 354 people, roughly evenly split between males and females. The population had a median age of 43 years, and occupied 144 private dwellings (all “separate houses”) with an average of 3 people per household.

Notable features of the area’s population (in 2016, Australian Bureau of Statistics data) included:

- an age profile skewed markedly older than the rest of NSW (Bulga has 40.5% of people in the 50 to 79 years age range, compared to 30.3% for the remainder of NSW) – the 55 to 59 year age group was the largest group with 110.1% followed by the 60 to 64 and 65 to 69 year age groups each with 8.7%;
- a community that is markedly ethnically and culturally homogeneous, with a low degree of cultural or linguistic diversity – with over 80% of people being born in Australia (over 71% having both parents born in Australia) and 86% of people only speaking English at home;
- 32 residents who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- a dominance of family households (95 households, or 89.6% of all households which is above the NSW average of 79.0%), but skewed much more strongly towards couple families without children (51.0%) than the NSW average (36.6%) and with fewer couple families with children or one parent families than the NSW average;
- fewer single (or lone) person households than the rest of NSW;
- markedly fewer residents with tertiary level qualifications than the NSW average (19.0% compared to 32.3%) and fewer resident with any post high school qualifications (40.7% to 47.1%);
- 46.8% of residents actively participating in the workforce, with slightly lower levels of full-time or part time employment than the rest of NSW;
- of those people who are employed, markedly more were “technicians and trades workers” or “machinery operators and drivers” than the NSW average (with 34.9% of workers employed in coal mining);
- fewer renters and more home owners or mortgagees than the NSW average; and

- a median weekly household income of \$1,553 (slightly higher than the NSW average of \$1,486).

The population of Bulga has been relatively stable over recent years, with very little change (in numerical terms) from a resident population of 358 at the 2011 Census. While there are no available population forecasts for Bulga village or its surrounds there are no foreseeable factors (such as sizeable land development or subdivision projects, new industries or employers establishing in the district, etc.) that would generate a marked increase in the population or a significant shift in the age profile. In the absence of such changes it is likely that the current ageing trend in the village population will continue.

The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment's 2019 population projections for the overall Singleton Local Government Area indicate that the region's population is also estimated to remain stable between 2016 and 2041 – changing by only 200 people between 2016 and 2041, from 23,600 to 23,400. Natural change is estimated to offset the movement of people away from Singleton, but with an ageing trend also likely with the number of people aged 65 and over estimated to increase from 2,850 people in 2016 to 5,100 by 2041.

### 3.8 CURRENT AND FUTURE DEMANDS

The Reserve shows very little, to no, evidence of current use by people seeking to access and enjoy the Reserve for leisure and recreation (or other) purposes – as discussed in Section 2.6. However the site is not developed or promoted for any form of access or visitor use at present, which may depress any local expression of latent or unsatisfied recreational demand.

The above demographic data indicate that there is unlikely to be any additional demand on Bulga Stock Reserve, or the village's open space and recreation facilities generally, due to local population growth in the foreseeable future. As noted in Section 3.5.3, Council's *Open Space and Recreation Needs Study* concluded there was (then) "little demand for additional facilities" at the Reserve, and there is little to suggest that this assessment does not remain valid.

Tourism – both overnight visitors and day-trippers – contribute to the economy of Bulga and nearby villages. Visitors are attracted by the Bulga-Fordwich-Broke area's wineries as well as boutique, farm-stay and other accommodation. The Putty Road is also a popular route for motorcyclists, cyclists and tourists due to its scenic nature and role as a key touring route as well as an access road in and out of the district. The proximity of Sydney and Newcastle enhances the village's/area's appeal as a "weekend escape". While not all visitors to the district are explicitly seeking a nature-based experience, and there are far more attractive destinations in the surrounding national parks, the Bulga Stock Reserve – if managed and available for greater visitor use – could nevertheless add to the "critical mass" of nature-based or scenic attractions in Bulga and surrounds.

However overall given its limited size, very modest tourism appeal, limited leisure/recreation assets, and lack of strong local demand or tourism demands the future access, leisure, recreation or tourism pressures for use of the Reserve are likely to be limited – even should the site be made more accessible and developed for some form of visitor use.



## 4. BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT OF BULGA STOCK RESERVE

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The future management, use and development of Bulga Stock Reserve is founded on and shaped by a number of considerations – including the Reserve’s values, Council’s and the community’s aspirations for the area, the area’s current level of use or developments and management, the issues and pressures or threats to which the Reserve and its values are subject, legislative requirements and existing planning or policy directions, and the realities of Council’s budget or resources and management capabilities.

This section draws these considerations together to – derive a “vision statement” for the Reserve and identify the categorisation (as required under the *Local Government Act 1993*) applicable to the Reserve and the consequent broad management directions as set by the legislation.

Together these form the basis for management of the Reserve, and have informed specification of the Reserve’s purpose, use and levels of development as described in the following Section 5 and the formulation of Management Actions as described in Section 6.

### 4.1 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

This Plan of Management must comply with the provisions of the *Crown Land Management Act 2016*, *Local Government Act 1993*, *Crown Land Management Regulation 2018* and *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* as well as the requirements of other applicable legislation and the current *Singleton Local Environmental Plan 2013* – as described in Sections 3.1 to 3.3.

It should also acknowledge the recommendations, directions and findings of existing Council planning documents, strategies and policies and directions – as described in Section 3.4.

### 4.2 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNITY VIEWS

#### 4.2.1 Draft Plan of Management Engagement Measures

A number of community engagement measures were undertaken prior to preparation of the Draft Plan of Management. The aim of the community engagement process was to encourage and provide a range of opportunities for Reserve users, neighbours, community groups, other stakeholders and the wider Bulga and Singleton community to provide their ideas, inputs and opinions about Bulga Stock Reserve and its future use, development and management.

The following measures were undertaken to raise awareness of the Draft Plan’s preparation and opportunities for input:



- large awareness and promotional posters were installed at 3 locations along the Reserve's Putty Road fenceline (and entry gate), and smaller posters located on the informal community noticeboard at the Bulga Service Station and outside the entrance to the Community Hall;
- a two page *Bulga Stock Reserve Plan of Management* Information Sheet was prepared to respond to requests for information and for promotional use;
- a four page (five question) *Bulga Stock Reserve, Its Future - Your Views* Feedback Form was prepared to enable people to offer their views on Bulga Stock Reserve – the importance of the Reserve, any use they make of the area, the management issues or challenges they see, how Council should manage the area and any changes to the area (if any) they would suggest, and other comments (a copy of the Feedback Form is provided at Appendix D);
- personalised letters, along with the Information Sheet and Feedback Form, were mailed to all neighbouring (x3) and opposite (x4) land owners, inviting their input to the planning process;
- a personalised letter, along with the Information Sheet and Feedback Form, were mailed to the Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council, inviting their input to the planning process (and an informative response received with considerable data about Aboriginal cultural heritage in and around the Bulga area;
- the Information Sheet and Feedback Form were directly letterboxed to all properties with 1 kilometre of Reserve (57 properties), and a random selection properties (8 properties) further west along The Inlet Road;
- a news article was featured in *Singleton Argus* (26 November, 2019); and
- awareness raising, and promoting input opportunities, via a dedicated "Have Your Say" page on Council's website, and via Council's Facebook page (and organically via other local Facebook pages).



Representatives of local community and stakeholder groups were invited to a meeting, in the Bulga Community Hall in the early evening of Thursday 5 December, to discuss the Reserve's future and provide their views in regard to the Plan of Management's desired directions. The Bulga Milbrodale Progress Association, Broke Bulga Landcare Group, and Mount Thorley Warkworth Voluntary Planning Agreement Community Committee were represented at this meeting – which was also attended by a number of local Bulga residents. The Milbrodale Public School, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Rural Fire Service and Hunter Local Land Services were also invited but unable to attend.



#### 4.2.2 Feedback Form Community Inputs/Views

Only 12 completed Feedback Forms and 1 e-mailed submissions were received in response to the local community engagement efforts – a very low sample size. However the information provided was of interest.

## **Respondents**

Respondents:

- were about evenly split between females and males;
- were mainly in the 56 to 70 years (38.5%) over 70 years (30.8%) age groups;
- were chiefly local residents – 54% from Bulga and 23% from Milbrodale, plus 8% from Singleton; and
- most had never entered the Reserve (despite being aware of the site).

Respondents were free to offer multiple comments/inputs to the Feedback Form questions regarding the Reserve's values, issues and challenges, suggested directions, and "other" comments. This resulted in many more "response items" for each of these questions than simply the total number of forms/submissions received – 24 response items for values, 39 for issues and challenges, 80 for suggested directions or changes, and 25 other comments.

A detailed analysis of the input and feedback received is provided at Appendix E, and summarised below.

### **Values (24 response items)**

When asked what they saw as the Reserve's principal values the most frequently nominated responses, cited by 31.3% of all responses, were the area's environmental values or features. Native vegetation, environmental, habitat and wildlife values were identified in 20.8% of all responses, and specific biodiversity values (wetlands, hollow-bearing trees, large/mature River Red Gums) cited by 12.5% of responses. Other significant values were seen as the Reserve's historic value and past use as a stock reserve (25.0%) and its location/function as a highly visible "entrance" to Bulga village (20.8%).

### **Issues or Challenges (39 response items)**

Respondents identified a variety of issues or challenges they felt needed attention in the Reserve's planning and management. The principal issues or challenges nominated were:

- the site is neglected, overgrown, unmanaged and poorly maintained, has fallen into disuse, and is hazardous to enter and needs to be "cleaned-up" or "tidied up" or should be made more presentable as a more impressive entrance to Bulga – an opinion expressed by most respondents (38.5% of all responses to this question);
- need for weed removal and control (including the removal of "wild fruit trees") (15.4%); and
- the Reserve is flood liable/impacted, and flooding severely constrains site's future use and development (12.8%).

The following perceived issues or challenges were each identified by 7.7% of responses – a need to conserve native vegetation and support regeneration or revegetation; the Reserve is not promoted or known as a public reserve or readily accessible to the public; and safe access to the site is limited (in part due to excessive traffic speeds along Putty Road).

### **Future Directions or Changes (80 response items)**

Respondents suggested a varied range of future directions or changes they would like to see in the Reserve's management. These can be grouped into the three broad areas of – visitor access and facilities (46.6%), environmental "improvements" (26.3%), and appearance and scenic appeal (17.5%) – and other comments (10.1%).

Most responses suggesting greater access to the Reserve and the provision of visitor facilities proposed modest levels of leisure/recreation use and visitor infrastructure (23.9% of all responses), specifically:

- providing walking tracks or pathways, to enable safe and navigable access (11.3%);
- providing low-key/small picnic areas, seating and shade to support the area's use as an "environmental park" for birdwatching and wildlife viewing (8.8%); and
- including information, educational or interpretation signs (3.8%).

Others saw the Reserve as becoming a more developed/modified and intensively managed visitor attraction (10.2% of all responses), suggesting:

- developing the Reserve as described in the "original concept plan" – with vehicle parking, walking tracks, bridges, picnic tables, brook access, and native tree planting (3.8%);
- it should be a more managed open parkland, with mown/slashed grass and scattered trees (3.8%);
- developing the site as a caravan/camping area (1.3%); and
- building a car park on Putty Road for Reserve users (1.3%).

Some respondents did not see any level of development as appropriate (no developed/built facilities, including no vehicle entry and no camping – 7.5%) while others sought greater visitor access and use but without providing details (make it available/accessible and appealing for public access and enjoyment (non-specific) – 5.0%).

Improved environmental management of the Reserve was the preferred future identified by 26.3% of all responses. This was made up of suggestions to:

- protect remaining native vegetation, promote natural regeneration/re-growth, revegetate the area with native species, undertake tree/shrub planting and habitat restoration (including plantings to offer a vegetated buffer to nearby mining areas) (13.8%);
- more actively and effectively controlling weeds, introduced trees and noxious species (7.5%); and
- reinstate/restore the natural wetlands (including closing the artificial levee opening – "the cutaway") (5.0%).

Beautifying and "cleaning-up" the Reserve and making the site more appealing or presentable from Putty Road, was the third most popular overall direction – cited in 17.5% of all responses.

Of the "other" directions or changes suggested, the most common was once again using the Reserve for grazing (und release or licence) or returning the site to its original use as a traveling stock reserve, with necessary repairs to the site's fencing (6.3%).

#### **"Other" Comments (25 response items)**

The general question asking for "any other comments, ideas or suggestions" attracted a variety of responses, the most common ones being:

- funding for the Reserve's future maintenance and management needs to be assured (20.0%);
- there is potential for wasted spending if facilities are "washed away in the next flood", and funds should be better spent on sustainable projects (15.0%); and
- encourage community involvement in the Reserve's management (such as clean-ups, revegetation activities, developing interpretive material, etc.) (15.0%).

### **4.2.3 Local Community/Stakeholder Groups Meeting**

The key themes expressed at this meeting – on Thursday 5 December and attended by representatives of the Bulga Milbrodale Progress Association, Broke Bulga Landcare Group, Mount Thorley Warkworth Voluntary Planning Agreement Community Committee a number of local Bulga residents – were:

- a broad consensus around the site's poor appearance and management, and the need for general site improvements – “clean it up”, remove the weeds, repair the fencing;
- the Reserve is important as the southern gateway to Bulga village (potential to install a new fenceline along Putty Road to make the site “stand-out”).
- revegetate the site and restore native vegetation, possibly with community involvement.
- “re-wet the wetlands” to support native vegetation regrowth and enhanced habitat value (the wetlands are drained by an artificial opening in the brook's levee which was opened by a past grazing licensee);
- manage and promote the site as an accessible natural attraction;
- the conservation importance of River Red Gum vegetation within the site, and in the Hunter Region generally;
- flooding is a serious issue, and a threat to any developments and visitor activities;
- car parking and access along Putty Road is a problem (safety issue and physical access);
- greater recognition and celebration of the site's history and historic use as stock route/reserve is warranted; and
- the adjacent Scout Hall (for which the Bulga Milbrodale Progress Association is the appointed Crown land manager) should be used as a potential entry point to the Reserve.

The meeting offered divergent views as to the appropriate level of development and visitor use of the Reserve. Many people felt the area should be a low-key natural attraction with winding walking tracks or nature walks with informative and educational signs – and considered the 2016 Masterplan as too ambitious and unrealistic. However some attendees were adamant that the previous Masterplan should still be Council's guide to developing the site, and Council should “do more with it” believing this would be “good for Bulga”. They also suggested linking the Reserve to the Bulga Recreational Ground, and making efforts to attract more “grey nomads” to stay overnight at these locations.

Several attendees felt the available Voluntary Planning Agreement funds should be used for the Reserve's development, on the principle that funds were available to “hit it hard” now and develop the site in full and that repeat/further capital works funding may not be forthcoming. However the Voluntary Planning Agreement should not be used for on-going maintenance, which should be funded by Council.

#### **4.2.4 State Government Agencies**

A site inspection and discussions about the Reserve's future management was undertaken with a representative of the Hunter Local Land Services, on 10 February 2020, and a brief follow-up report provided. Hunter Local Land Services provided useful comment and input addressing public access, native vegetation, weed management, riparian area management and community engagement.

#### **4.2.5 Public Exhibition of the Draft Plan of Management**

Following review and approval by Council, and later concurrence from the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (Crown Lands), the Draft Plan of Management was placed on public exhibition from 9 November until 20 December 2020.

The Draft Plan's exhibition was advised on the “Public Exhibition” page on the Singleton Council website. Copies of the Draft Plan could be downloaded from this website or hard copies inspected at:

- Council's Administration Building;
- the Singleton Public Library; and
- the Singleton Visitor Centre.



Community members, Reserve neighbours and organisations who had contributed their views during preparation of the Draft Plan were also notified of the document's exhibition for comment.

Submissions were invited by e-mail or in writing.

Only a single submission was received at the close of the exhibition period. This submission primarily focused on land, vegetation and resource management issues. The comments offered were assessed by Council staff and appropriate amendments to the Draft Plan recommended.

#### 4.2.6 Recategorisation Public Hearing

A Public Hearing into the proposed recategorisation of Bulga Stock Reserve (as required under section 36(4) of the *Local Government Act 1993*, and chaired by an independent facilitator) was held in Bulga, at the Bulga Community Hall, on 30 November 2020 during the Draft Plan of Management's public exhibition. Community members, Reserve neighbours and organisations who had contributed their views during preparation of the Draft Plan were again notified. The Public Hearing was also promoted on the "Public Exhibition" page on Council's website. A background information booklet was prepared for distribution (on request) to intending attendees – to provide information regarding the categorisation process, the current categorisation and the Draft Plan of Management's proposed categorisation, and the public hearing's purpose and process.

The Hearing was attended by 19 community members, most taking the opportunity to speak. Five substantive comments, or discussion points, raised at the Hearing related to the Reserve's categorisation and proposed recategorisation. The greater majority of comments were more general feedback about the Draft Plan of Management's proposed directions for the Reserve and specific management actions/proposals – which were also recorded for consideration by Council as part of the Draft Plan's wider public exhibition and comment process.

Written submissions were invited at the Hearing, but none were received. Attendees were advised that written submissions could also be made until 11 December 2020. One written submission, specifically addressing the Reserve's proposed recategorisation was received by this closing date.

A separate *Public Hearing Report to Singleton Council in Relation to the Proposed Recategorisation of Bulga Stock Reserve* details the outcomes of this process and was considered by Council.

### 4.3 VALUES

Values are what make a place important, they can be based on a site's inherent attributes (such biodiversity or cultural heritage values) or be ascribed to a place through usage or as perceived or nominated by the community, or both.

A plan of management is a "values-based document" – meaning that management actions are shaped to reflect, maintain and enhance the values of a place. Values-based planning is seen as preferable, and more long-lasting and durable, than preparing plans of management that are focused on current management issues alone.

A number of core values have been identified for Bulga Stock Reserve. The Reserve's values derive from its prominent location on the outskirts of Bulga village and the connection it provides to the public

lands along Wollombi Brook, its link with the area's history and past use as a travelling stock reserve, the recovering native vegetation communities and habitats across the site including small areas of ephemeral wetlands/channels. The area also has considerable potential to harbour Aboriginal cultural heritage sites and values (although the occurrence any such sites has yet to be confirmed).

Community feedback during the Draft Plan of Management's preparation (see Section 4.2 above and Appendix E) strongly identified the Reserve's environmental qualities or features – its native vegetation, wetlands, habitat and wildlife values – as the area's primary values. The Reserve's location as a highly visible area on the south-eastern "entry" to Bulga village, and the Reserve's historic value and past use as a stock reserve, were other values aspects of the Reserve. Although the community feedback differed somewhat on the appropriate intensity and type of development and visitor use of the Reserve, there was an overall recognition that the Reserve has potential value for greater visitor access and enjoyment than is now realised on-site.

Table 6 lists the assessed level of significance for each of the main values identified for Bulga Stock Reserve.

**Table 6 Values Identified for Bulga Stock Reserve and their Assessed Level of Significance**

Value	Basis of Value and Significance	Level of Significance
Native vegetation communities and fauna habitat	Regrowth/regeneration of native vegetation with a variety of recovering native plant communities. Areas of ephemeral wetlands/channels, variety of habitats, and stand of three mature River Red Gums trees. Native vegetation and habitats areas valued by majority of the community.	Local
Scenic	Area of undeveloped vegetated open space, with potential for enhancement as a scenic asset and potential village "gateway". Scenic importance and potential of the site recognised by majority of the community.	Local
Visitor access and enjoyment	Conveniently located on outskirts of village with potential for greater provisions for visitor access and enjoyment, and promotion as a feature of interest at Bulga. Potential visitor access/enjoyment role and value recognised by majority of the community.	Local
Public access and connection	One of only two areas of (Council-managed) public open space in Bulga village. Public land connection to Wollombi Brook public land corridor.	Local
Historic heritage	Past use as a travelling stock reserve, and potential connection with districts early European history.	Local
<b><i>Likely/Potential Values</i></b>		
<i>Aboriginal cultural heritage</i>	<i>High potential to harbor as yet unrecorded Aboriginal cultural heritage sites/features.</i>	<i>Local</i>

## 4.4 MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES, ISSUES OR THREATS

Threats to the values, and uses, of the Reserve and current or foreseeable management issues need to be considered in shaping a plan of management. This is to ensure that threats to values and other management issues are adequately addressed by a plan's management objectives and actions.

Threats or issues for Bulga Stock Reserve have been identified from:

- on-site inspections and assessments of the Reserve's threats and management issues;
- discussions with Council staff;
- advice from Hunter Local Land Services;
- the outcomes of the community engagement measures (see Section 4.2); and
- knowledge of largely natural or generating small parks/reserves in rural settings.

The chief management challenges, issues or threats identified for Bulga Stock Reserve are listed in Table 7 below (excluding small-scale, site-specific or day-to-day operational matters).

**Table 7 Management Challenges, Issues or Threats to Values**

<b>Management Challenges, Issues or Threats to Values</b>
Entire Reserve is subject to an Aboriginal Land Claim (lodged by the Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council) under the <i>Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983</i> (NSW)
Reserve provides access to but does not include Wollombi Brook – southern creekbank and main channel largely inaccessible from Reserve (on private property and intervening fence)
Adjoining lands (cleared agricultural land, and cleared but unmanaged land) and Putty Road reserve are sources of weed invasion and other “pressures” (Reserve suffers considerable “edge effects”)
Reserve's dominant alluvial soils have a high erosion hazard
Sandy bank down to Wollombi Brook flood terrace creek is highly susceptible to erosion (under medium to high, or unmanaged, use), flood terrace is loose mobile sand mounds/banks
Reserve is classified as a “high flood hazard” area, entire Reserve is part of the Wollombi Brook “floodway”
Reserve periodically impacted by “major flood events” – in 1927, 1930, 1949 (highest recorded flood in Wollombi Brook), 1978, 2007 and 2015
1 in 5 chance of approximately two-thirds of Reserve being flooded, to up to 2 metres depth in places, in any single year (a 1 in 100 year flood would inundate the entire Reserve under 1 to 5 metres of water)
Overbank, flood and stormwater flows modified across Reserve due to artificial opening of raised bank/levee on western boundary – ephemeral wetlands more readily drained and drier than previously
Significant stormwater inflows – and pollution (including weed propagules and gross pollution/litter), nutrient loads and sediment impacts – from under Putty Road in south
No stormwater management across the site
Reserve is largely cleared open areas of exotic grassland with little shrub cover and few trees, with smaller areas of recovering/regrowth native vegetation
Little regeneration/recruitment of larger native vegetation, no active revegetation or replanting programme (at present)
Extensive areas of weeds and introduced plants (both priority weeds and environmental weeds) – and weed spread, both naturally as well as due to stormwater flows and flood events
Large infestation of Black Locust ( <i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i> ) – toxic to humans
Regional priority weeds present on-site, and fruit trees with potential to harbour fruit fly

<b>Management Challenges, Issues or Threats to Values</b>
Woody weed management, and management of riparian weeds from Wollombi Brook in north (and flood events)
Potential for climate change to alter Reserve's vegetation over mid to long term
Limited systematic/formal data on native fauna occurring on the Reserve
Potential for occurrence (or temporary/transit presence) of threatened bird species
Presence of feral and pest animals (and wandering domestic pets)
Potential for intrusion by wandering stock (due to poor condition of Reserve fencing, and part of Wollombi Brook boundary unfenced)
Managing bushfire risks for surrounding "life and property"
Recent fire history of Reserve not well known
Balancing fire hazard reduction obligations with and vegetation community recovery and habitat protection
Potential for ecological use of fire
Lack of knowledge or information about Aboriginal cultural heritage or sites (no Aboriginal cultural heritage investigation of area to-date)
Very high potential for occurrence of unrecorded Aboriginal cultural heritage material/sites – will require special care/precautions when undertaking ground-breaking or larger development works
Lack of on-site acknowledgement and interpretation of Reserve's past land uses and possible heritage associations/value
Reserve presents as one of many cleared, partially cleared or occasionally managed lands around Bulga and along Putty Road – not "legible" as a Council-managed reserve
Weedy/recovering vegetation considered unattractive by many people
Low-key signage along Putty Road, Reserve not identified or promoted as open/accessible for public access and use
Reserve lacks an obvious attraction or focal point for visitor interest/attention
Predominance of recovering/regrowth vegetation, and large open areas with little shrub cover and no trees, of little visitor/usage appeal (at present)
Reserve's small area and modest attractions/assets limits appeal/potential for visitor uses/activities or facility provision (risk of over-capitalising/over-investing relative to standard of attraction/s)
No safe roadside parking possible along narrow road shoulder on northern side of Putty Road adjoining the Reserve (and to west)
Steep grassed slope off northside of Putty Road for almost entire length of Reserve severely limits options for vehicle or pedestrian access (without earthworks/engineering solutions)
Putty Road past the Reserve is (mostly) a 60kph zone, but traffic frequently exceeds this speed limit presenting risk to pedestrians and cyclists – challenge for Reserve access/entry
Parking possible in wider roadside area in front of former Scout Hall, adjoining Reserve's south-east – but on sweeping curve in 80kph zone, and would require Roads and Maritime Services approval
Location of wetlands and low-lying areas along much of Reserve's south constrains positioning of entry and walking tracks (without boardwalks or other elevated track treatments)
Reserve has (at present) no walking tracks or other visitor infrastructure to the support access, use and enjoyment of the area by visitors
Open vegetation over much of site will be vulnerable to creation of short-cut and "trample" tracks – walking tracks will need careful alignment to avoid this problem while maximising visitor interest
Flood hazards severely restrict the type and location of visitor facilities across the Reserve, facilities such as boardwalks and other built infrastructure requiring sizeable investments are high risks in a known flood-prone area
Lack of interpretive signage regarding Reserve's values – recovering vegetation communities and biodiversity/habitat values, native flora species of interest, historic land use and heritage values, Aboriginal cultural heritage associations and potential cultural heritage features/sites, and hydrological function as part of Wollombi Brook floodway



Management Challenges, Issues or Threats to Values
Visitor use hazards – flooding, fire, hazardous trees/limbs, venomous or nuisance fauna, etc.
Restricting/managing visitors' use of fire
Identification and management of hazardous trees
Managing dog access and regulations
Previous inappropriate and damaging use by trailbikes, risk of recurrence
Reserve perimeter fencing is in poor condition (very poor in places)
Distant from Council's works depots and offices, limiting day-to-day presence and management capacity (Reserve not regularly patrolled, or inspected, by Council staff)
Utilities/services not operated by Singleton Council occur within Reserve

## 4.5 RESERVE VISION

A "vision" for Bulga Stock Reserve has been developed to define a guiding purpose for the Reserve. It will assist in developing specific, site appropriate, management objectives and actions to reflect the area's values, address current threats and issues, and align with the key directions of this Plan.

The vision for Bulga Stock Reserve is:

*An area of regenerating native vegetation and recovering natural landscape, managed according to sound natural resource and conservation management principles, to provide a scenic area on the outskirts of Bulga village offering a location for low-key nature-based leisure, recreation and educational uses and appropriate community or volunteer land management activities.*

## 4.6 LAND CATEGORISATION

The *Local Government Act 1993* requires that community land be "categorised" according to the five categories of sportsground, park, area of cultural significance, natural area (which has a further five sub-categories), or general community use. The *Crown Land Management Act 2016* provides that this same requirement also now applies to Crown reserves under the control of a "Council manager" – such as Bulga Stock Reserve.

Guidelines for the categorisation of community land, including the attributes or values warranted for areas to be included in the various categories, are provided in the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* (sections 102 to 111).

The (then) Department of Local Government's *Practice Note on Public Land Management* (revised edition, 2000) also provides advice and guidelines for categorising community land. It states:

- *Council must have regard to the guidelines in determining a category (cl.9) but are not required to adopt any category merely because the land fits the description in the guidelines. Council should look at all the circumstances of the land in making a decision as to categorisation. For example, a piece of land may seem to satisfy the guidelines for more than one category. Council has a discretion in this case to look at the land in context, taking into account all relevant material before determining a category. It is important that Council be able to justify a decision; and*
- *It is strongly recommended that the land in each category not overlap. Overlapping categories may*

*cause conflict in management objectives and will create confusion in the minds of Council staff and the community.*

The *Local Government Act 1993* also sets out management objectives for each of the above categories. These objectives provide broad directions to be pursued in the management of an area.

Considering the values, uses, type and level of development, and management of Bulga Stock Reserve (current and proposed) this Plan of Management has identified the most appropriate and applicable categorisation for the entire area as – Natural Area (Bushland). The rationale for this categorisation is outlined in Table 8.

**Table 8 Rationale for Categorisation**

<b>Category (or Sub- category)</b>	<b>Guideline for Categorisation (<i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2005</i>)</b>	<b>Applicability to Bulga Stock Reserve</b>
Natural Area	Land, whether or not in an undisturbed state, possessing a significant geological feature, geomorphological feature, landform, representative system or other natural feature/attribute sufficient to further categorise the area as bushland, wetland, escarpment, watercourse or foreshore.	(See following Natural Area sub-categories)
<b>Natural Area – Bushland</b>	Land containing primarily native vegetation that (a) is the natural vegetation or a remainder of the area's natural vegetation, or (b) although not remnant natural vegetation is still representative of the structure or floristics, or structure and floristics, of the locality's natural vegetation.	<b>Applicable</b> to entire Reserve – dominated by regrowth of native vegetation/communities, or potential for the regrowth of native vegetation/communities.
Natural Area – Wetland	Land with marshes, mangroves, backwaters, billabongs, swamps, sedgelands, wet meadows or wet heathlands forming a waterbody that is inundated cyclically, intermittently or permanently with fresh, brackish or salt water.	Not applicable – Reserve's ephemeral wetlands are irregularly filled/wet (depending on flooding of Wollombi Brook and/or major stormwater inflows), only cover a limited percentage of the Reserve and are ill-defined in parts – not sufficient to warrant separate categorisation.
Natural Area – Escarpment	Land that includes such features as a long cliff-like ridge or rock, and the land includes significant or unusual geological, geomorphological or scenic qualities.	Not applicable – not present.
Natural Area – Watercourse	Land that includes (a) any stream of water, whether perennial or intermittent, flowing in a natural channel (or in a natural channel that has been artificially improved, or in an artificial channel that has changed the course of the stream of water, and any other stream of water into or from which the stream of water flows), and (b) associated riparian land or vegetation,	Not applicable – not present. Wollombi Brook channel and riparian vegetation corridor is outside Reserve to north. Minor drainage line in north-east flows irregularly for short periods only (depending on flooding of Wollombi Brook and/or

Category (or Sub-category)	Guideline for Categorisation ( <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2005</i> )	Applicability to Bulga Stock Reserve
Natural Area – Watercourse (cont'd)	(including land that is protected under applicable rivers and foreshores improvement or Native Vegetation Conservation legislation)	stormwater inflows), and is ill-defined in northern section – not sufficient to warrant separate categorisation.
Natural Area – Foreshore	Land is situated on the water's edge and forming a transition zone between the aquatic and terrestrial environment.	Not applicable – not present. Wollombi Brook channel and bank/edge is outside Reserve to north.
Sportsground	Land used (or proposed to be used) primarily for active recreation involving organised sports or the playing of outdoor games.	Not applicable – not present (or proposed).
Park	Land that is (or is proposed to be) improved by landscaping, gardens or the provision of non-sporting equipment and facilities, for use mainly for passive or active recreational, social, educational and cultural pursuits	Not applicable – not present (or proposed). Visitor use envisaged as occurring in a natural setting (not in a modified landscape settings or gardens).
Cultural Significance	Land that is an area of Aboriginal significance, of aesthetic significance (by virtue of a strong visual/sensory appeal, a significant landmark, or features of technical or architectural excellence), of archaeological significance, of historical significance, of technical or research significance, or of social significance.	Not applicable – no known sites/features of significant Aboriginal cultural heritage or historic heriage.
General Community Use	Land that is or may be made available for use for any purpose for which community land may be used, whether by the public at large or by specific sections of the public, and is not required to be categorised as a natural area under section 36A, 36B or 36C of the Act and does not otherwise satisfy the guidelines for categorisation as a natural area, a sportsground, a park or an area of cultural significance.	Not applicable.

Section 36 of the *Local Government Act 1993* prescribes the “core objectives for management” for each of the above land categories as listed in Table 9 – to provide objectives or broad directions for the management of these areas. The Act's core objectives for the management for land categorized as Natural Area are:

- to conserve biodiversity and maintain ecosystem function in respect of the land, or the feature or habitat in respect of which the land is categorised as a natural area; and
- to maintain the land, or that feature or habitat, in its natural state and setting; and
- to provide for the restoration and regeneration of the land; and
- to provide for community use of and access to the land in such a manner as will minimise and mitigate any disturbance caused by human intrusion; and
- to assist in and facilitate the implementation of any provisions restricting the use and management of the land that are set out in a recovery plan or threat abatement plan prepared under the (then) *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* or the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*.

## 4.7 RESERVE MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

The following set of management objectives have been identified for Bulga Stock Reserve. They:

- elaborate and support the Reserve “vision”;
- are consistent with the core management objectives for the Reserve’s categorisation as Natural Area;
- provide broad statements of management intent and priority, to guide management actions as well as to assist in making management decisions when responding to unforeseen situations, usage or development pressures, and management challenges; and
- have been used to inform the Reserve’s management strategies and actions (as detailed in Section 6) to work towards the Reserve’s vision, support the area’s key values, and address issues and threats as identified in the preparation of this Plan of Management.

The Reserve’s overall management objective is to restore, regenerate and maintain the site as a naturally vegetated area – to protect regenerated native vegetation communities and species of interests, improve habitat and biodiversity values, serve as a setting for low-key nature-based recreation and educational uses, enhance landscape and scenic qualities, and deliver flood and stormwater management and other environmental services.

Specific management objectives are listed below.

- To continue the regrowth, regeneration, revegetation and restoration of native vegetation to improve the natural state and setting of the Reserve.
- To maintain and enhance the biodiversity, habitat, natural systems, and scenic values of this recovering natural vegetation area.
- To reduce the occurrence and impacts of weeds, pests and significant erosion within the Reserve.
- To protect communities and species legislated as having high conservation value/significance, or of conservation or visitor interest.
- To maintain links to the Wollombi Brook riparian vegetation corridor and other nearby natural areas.
- To provide sustainable opportunities for low-key short-stay nature-based leisure and recreation uses, and appropriate educational and volunteer activities, within the Reserve without significantly impacting the area’s native vegetation, biodiversity and scenic values or natural processes.
- To provide visitor access and a limited array of low-key facilities to support nature-based visitor use, enjoyment and appreciation of the Reserve – in a manner consistent with the area’s intended natural character/setting and protection of its natural values and scenic quality.
- To ensure the Reserve’s visitor facilities, infrastructure and furniture – although modest or basic standard – are presentable, safe, well-maintained and fit for purpose.
- To accommodate occasional small group volunteer, educational, recreational or special uses or activities – with necessary approvals and conditions if required.
- To encourage and accommodate appropriate volunteer and community involvement in the Reserve’s management – with necessary approvals and guidelines where required.



- To provide for appropriate public access to/from the adjacent Wollombi Brook public land corridor – with minimal impacts on the Reserve’s values and management.
- To enhance and maintain the Reserve’s natural landscape qualities and scenic appeal, as seen from Putty Road and Bulga village and other external vantage points, including functioning as a part of an attractive south-eastern “gateway” to Bulga village.
- To manage any Aboriginal cultural heritage or historic heritage features or values found to occur within the Reserve in accordance with requirements of the relevant legislation, and recognise and promote the area’s cultural heritage or historic values (where appropriate).
- To provide for the safety of visitors, Council staff (and contractors), volunteers, licencees, and neighbouring landholders.
- To minimise the risks to life and property posed by flooding, wildfire, hazardous trees or other dangers.
- To support flood management, mitigation and warning measures along Wollombi Brook (and associated overland flood flows) and not exacerbate flood hazards in areas around the Reserve.
- To protect water quality in Wollombi Brook from any adverse impacts arising from the Reserve’s use and management.
- To minimise direct and indirect impacts on the Reserve from adjacent land uses, and mitigate hazards that the area may present for Reserve neighbours.
- To manage the Reserve in an effective and efficient manner, including a periodic Council inspection and patrol/presence regime.
- To manage the Reserve in a sustainable manner as well as ensuring future use and development of the area is in keeping with its natural values and setting, character and management intent – and implemented without significant impacts or disturbance.
- To authorise, and provide guidelines for, any future granting of licences or permits for short-term use of all or parts of the Reserve that are compatible with the area’s values, enjoyment and management.

## 5. PERMITTED RESERVE PURPOSES, INTENSITY OF USE AND DEVELOPMENT, AND MASTERPLAN

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### 5.1 PERMITTED RESERVE PURPOSES

The purposes for which Bulga Stock Reserve – including both the land and any existing or future improvements (or buildings) – will be permitted to be used (specified in accordance with Section 36(3A) of the *Local Government Act 1993*) are listed below. These uses are also consistent with the area's 1993 reservation purpose for "public recreation" (see Appendix A).

- Native vegetation, biodiversity, habitat and native flora and fauna preservation.
- Restoration and regeneration of the land to a natural state and setting.
- Sustainable land and natural resources management, and environmental protection.
- Casual or independent nature-based leisure and recreation activities, of a low-key character and day-use only, principally focused on the area's natural setting and features, and causing minimal impact or disturbance.
- Provision of tracks/paths, furniture, and other facilities or infrastructure to support the area's access, use and land/resource management activities.
- Community and volunteer conservation, land and natural resource management activities.
- Environmental appreciation and educational pastimes or activities by schools, other groups and individuals.
- Access to and from the Wollombi Brook public land corridor.
- Health, physical, cultural and intellectual welfare or development of the community and community members.
- Low-key scenic sight-seeing and tourism asset.
- Local scenic, visual, and landscape amenity benefits.
- Protection of cultural heritage features and promotion of heritage values.
- Floodway and flood storage area, and flood water and stormwater management.
- Permissible leases, licences or other estates to meet the current and future needs of the local community and wider public.

These permitted purposes are elaborated by the descriptive and "exemplar" activities or uses listed in Table 9.

Table 9 lists some – but not all – of the range of activities or uses that are consistent with the Reserve's permitted purposes. They have been drawn from community feedback (albeit extremely limited) regarding the role and use of Bulga Stock Reserve at present and in the recent past, observations of those activities now undertaken on the site (chiefly land and resource management

operations/activities), possible activities/uses that are consistent with the permitted purposes and Reserve values, and activities/uses that can or do typically occur on parks of a similar scale or nature and situation as well as having comparable attributes and values as the Reserve. This list is not intended to be exhaustive, and so is not prohibitive in terms of excluding any “illustrative” or “exemplar” activities or uses not included (where these can be shown to be consistent with the Park’s permitted purposes).

**Table 9 “Illustrative” or “Example” Activities/Uses to Elaborate the Permitted Purposes for Bulga Stock Reserve**

<b>“Illustrative” or “Example” Activities or Uses (Elaborating Permitted Purposes)</b>
All-abilities access (selected areas, where feasible)
Artistic pursuits
Bee keeping (in specified areas and subject to approval)
Birdwatching
Bushfire hazard reduction works
Bush regeneration, restoration or revegetation works
Bushwalking
Camping and overnight use – but small group and only in association with specifically approved activities/events (and only very occasionally)
Commercial filming and photography (with approval)
Commercial tourism activities (not requiring vehicle access) – such as small group, low-key, guided walks or bird-watching activities (with approval)
Commemorations, memorial services and small community events (with approval)
Cultural and historic heritage presentation and viewing/appreciation
Cycling (on designated tracks/paths only) – using road/conventional bicycles, mountain bikes or BMX etc.
Demonstration, extension or knowledge-sharing activities regarding natural vegetation, natural area, habitat, natural resource or conservation management practices - such as field days, site visits or on-site teaching for bush regenerators, natural area managers, professional associations, etc.
Dog walking/exercising – on-leash only and on designated tracks/paths only
Drainage and stormwater management and works (including stormwater control and harvesting)
Emergency operations/responses
Environmental education, outdoor learning and awareness or appreciation activities
Erosion control and remediation works
Escorted/guided nature walks or similar nature-based activities and experiences (commercial and non-commercial, with approval where required)
Facility/infrastructure maintenance (fencing, gates, tracks/trails and paths, boardwalks or track improvements, park furniture, signs, etc.)
Feral or pest animal control activities
Fire hazard reduction activities
Flood management, mitigation or warning activities (as compatible with the Reserve’s wider values and purpose)
Gateway feature/installation (as part of south-eastern entry to Bulga village)
Grazing, under licence or permit (for management purposes, or net environmental benefit outcomes) – short-duration, controlled and subject to approval
Habitat restoration and enhancement (including habitat manipulation)
Horse-riding (for transit to/from the Wollombi Brook public land corridor only)
Jogging or fitness training, along tracks/paths and management accesses only (not cross-country)

<b>“Illustrative” or “Example” Activities or Uses (Elaborating Permitted Purposes)</b>
Landscaping and amenity works (installation and maintenance, including with temporary/removable irrigation)
Maintenance of foreign services/utilities
Native flora species revegetation and replanting (including managed “mass plantings”) and on-going management
Native vegetation management and environmental protection activities
Natural habitat protection and enhancement, and native fauna management
Nature appreciation, “immersion”, study or photography – such as bird watching, wildlife viewing, wildlife photography, etc.
“Nature play” – such as bush or adventure play, exploring, building “cubbies” or tree house, watching/catching small animals (insects or lizards), and similar independent/casual nature-based child’s play
Nature-based independent casual or informal leisure and recreation uses
Organised outdoor leisure, recreation or community activities (such as Scouting or Guiding activities, with approval where required).
Passive leisure and recreation activities – walking/strolling, walking babies in prams, sitting, relaxing, and other casual/informal independent leisure and recreation activities
Photography (personal)
Picnicking – using low-key facilities provided or informal/bush picnicking (fires not permitted)
Private, small group, leisure or social activities – such as family gatherings, birthdays parties, weddings, celebrations, commemorations and dedications (subject to approval, size limits and conditions)
Protection/management of cultural or historic heritage material (including salvage) – with any necessary approvals
Provision, operation, upgrading and maintenance of public utilities and/or infrastructure and access – including stormwater management
Reserve management and operation activities – including authorised management vehicle access
Restoration/replanting of wildlife or habitat corridors
Running, jogging and independent fitness training (on tracks/paths only)
Rural Fire Service, Fire and Rescue NSW or other emergency services operations
School use – educational, health and well-being, or low-key leisure/recreation uses (with approval)
Scientific or educational research, studies or investigation – including volunteer or “citizen scientist” programmes (with approval)
Seed collection (with appropriate approvals) and soil seedbank translocation
Sightseeing and scenic viewing
Site management, safety, enforcement and regulation activities
Socialising
Stormwater management and water quality improvement works – including detention, biofiltration, and cleaning/maintenance of infrastructure
Sustainable land management activities/operations
Transit access (non-motorised only) to/from Wollombi Brook public land corridor
Tree management activities/works (including isolating/falling hazardous trees and tree planting, removal and maintenance)
Vegetation management activities/works
Visiting attractions, vantage points, or features of interest and scenic viewing
Volunteer activities (with approval, and in support of or associated with Reserve management)
Walking – for leisure/pleasure, fitness or socialising
Weed and pest animal control activities



Section 6.4 Use, Facilities and Developments elaborates and provides more detailed management directions and actions in relation to many of these permitted uses and activities.

In considering the appropriateness of a future, previously unforeseen, activity or use of the Reserve (of the land or improvements) Council will consider:

- compliance or consistency of the activity or use with the Reserve's permitted purposes (as above, and elaborated in the Table 9 descriptions/examples);
- consistency with the management objectives for the Reserve's categorisation as Natural Area (Bushland) (as described in Section 4.6); and
- consistency with the management objectives for the Reserve (as described in Section 4.7);
- the potential for unacceptable adverse impacts on the Reserve's natural and scenic values;
- vulnerability of an activity or use to flood damage, or the potential to exacerbate flood or fire risks;
- the extent to which the activity or use will increase the Reserve's intensity of use, and perceived levels of use or development;
- likely impacts on the experiences of other Reserve users, and any impacts on adjacent or nearby properties;
- Council's ability to effectively manage the proposed activity or use and any management, maintenance or resourcing implications for Council;
- uses and activities as permitted under the *Local Government Act 1993*;
- permitted land uses under the current *Singleton Local Environmental Plan 2013* (as described in Section 3.3.2);
- the Reserve's "public purpose", as land reserved for public recreation;
- relevant legislation, notably the *Local Government Act 1993* and *Crown Land Management Act 2016*;
- the conditions of any applicable approved (or permissible) lease, licence or estate (also see Section 6.5); and
- known community values, views and objectives for the Reserve.

## 5.2 INTENSITY OF USE, AND SCALE AND INTENSITY OF DEVELOPMENT

### 5.2.1 Intensity of Use

This Plan of Management envisages and authorises an increase in the intensity of use of Bulga Stock Reserve, and range of activities/uses, beyond the existing negligible or very insignificant levels of visitor use and management input now evident across Bulga Stock Reserve.

The type and intensity of visitor use proposed will be limited to non-motorised access only and be predominantly independent or casual leisure and recreation uses or activities that are largely based on and in keeping with the area's natural values and setting. Visitor uses or activities will mostly entail a short length-of-stay within the Reserve and largely be dispersed across the area, with only a few scattered locations having facilities (and/or attractions) where visitor may stop or gather for longer periods. Visitor uses or activities will be managed so as not to significantly impact the recovering vegetation communities, biodiversity values and natural processes, natural setting/character, or scenic quality of the Reserve. However compared with its present situation, this Plan will see a noticeably greater level of visitor access, uses and enjoyment of the Reserve (and low-key scattered facility provision) – but without any real or perceived crowding or congestion of the area, or any sense of excessive "busyness" that would detract from the site's underlying natural character and appeal.

The intensity of management of the Reserve will noticeably increase due to the proposed greater management efforts directed towards vegetation regrowth/regeneration and revegetation, weed control measures, and other natural resource management actions as specified in this Plan. These will progressively lead to visible improvements in the extent and condition of the Reserve's native vegetation communities and restored natural landscape.

### 5.2.2 Scale and Intensity of Development

This Plan of Management proposes only a limited suite of low-key developments to support the Reserve's increased visitor access and use as well as its improved management.

The principal visitor facilities to be developed will be track/trails, low-key park furniture items, and signage.

Park furniture items – such as seating, picnic tables, platform tables and if required small open shade shelters (see Action UFD11) – will be scattered/spaced around the area's walking tracks/trails or shared path, and provided at other selected sites within the Reserve (such as the site's entry or near features of interest).

No enclosed built (permanent) structures will be developed within the Reserve. As the Reserve is intended as a short-stay destination and activity area (with visitor also having to displaying a level of self-reliance and responsibility) no toilets, barbecues, fireplaces, rubbish bins, drinking water or other higher standard visitor facilities will be developed. This is also in recognition of the serious constraints imposed by the area's flood risks.

The Reserve's tracks or paths will largely be natural or improved surface routes (indicatively a "Grade 3 Walk" under the Australian Walking Track Standards) with track "treatments" or improvements if required – such as compacted gravel sheeting, stone armouring, embedded stepping stones, "board and chain" corduroy or "track matting", boardwalks or decking, small observation platforms/decks, safety railings, causeways, short sections of low bridge, or low-profile box culverts (see Actions UFD9 and UFD10). Tracks/trail may be developed to shared path standards, if warranted by usage/demand (see Action UFD16). Track/trail or path maintenance works and rationalisation will be undertaken as required – including the realignment of existing tracks or construction of new routes, and the closure and rehabilitation of dis-used tracks and unapproved informal or "trample" tracks. However the density, and configuration, of tracks or paths within the Reserve will be constrained, so as not to compromise the area's natural character and avoid the perception of excess numbers of people being "visible" in the landscape.

Signage may include Reserve name/identification, orientation, directional/wayfinding, information, interpretive/educational, warning, regulatory and other signage (see Actions UFD12 and UFD13). Themed signage, public art or modest "installations" – such as a Bulga village "welcome and entry statement" – may also be installed (see Action UFD14).

Management facilities, infrastructure or works will similarly be low-key and limited, including:

- management, service and emergency vehicle accesses – preferably as uncleared but navigable routes, rather than cleared and/or surfaced tracks (see Action UFD21);
- perimeter fencing and gates (see Actions UFD18 to UFD20);
- revegetation/regeneration, mass planting, weed control/removal, tree planting, tree care/management, and habitat enhancement or management works;
- minor flood or drainage management works (see Action FFBL26);
- fire hazard and fuel load management works;
- structures for the purposes of stormwater treatment and/or retention;

- erosion control, stabilisation and remediation works; and
- removable works (such as temporary fencing) associated with grazing or stock agistment and other approved licence or permit activities.

### 5.3 MASTERPLAN

The Bulga Stock Reserve Masterplan, as shown in Figure 11, provides an overview of this Plan of Management's broad management directions and key on-ground actions (and an indicative layout or configuration) for the future use, low-key development, and management of the Reserve. The Masterplan is a guiding document and should be read in conjunction with this Plan.

The Masterplan's elements would be implemented over time, as resources become available (see Section 7).



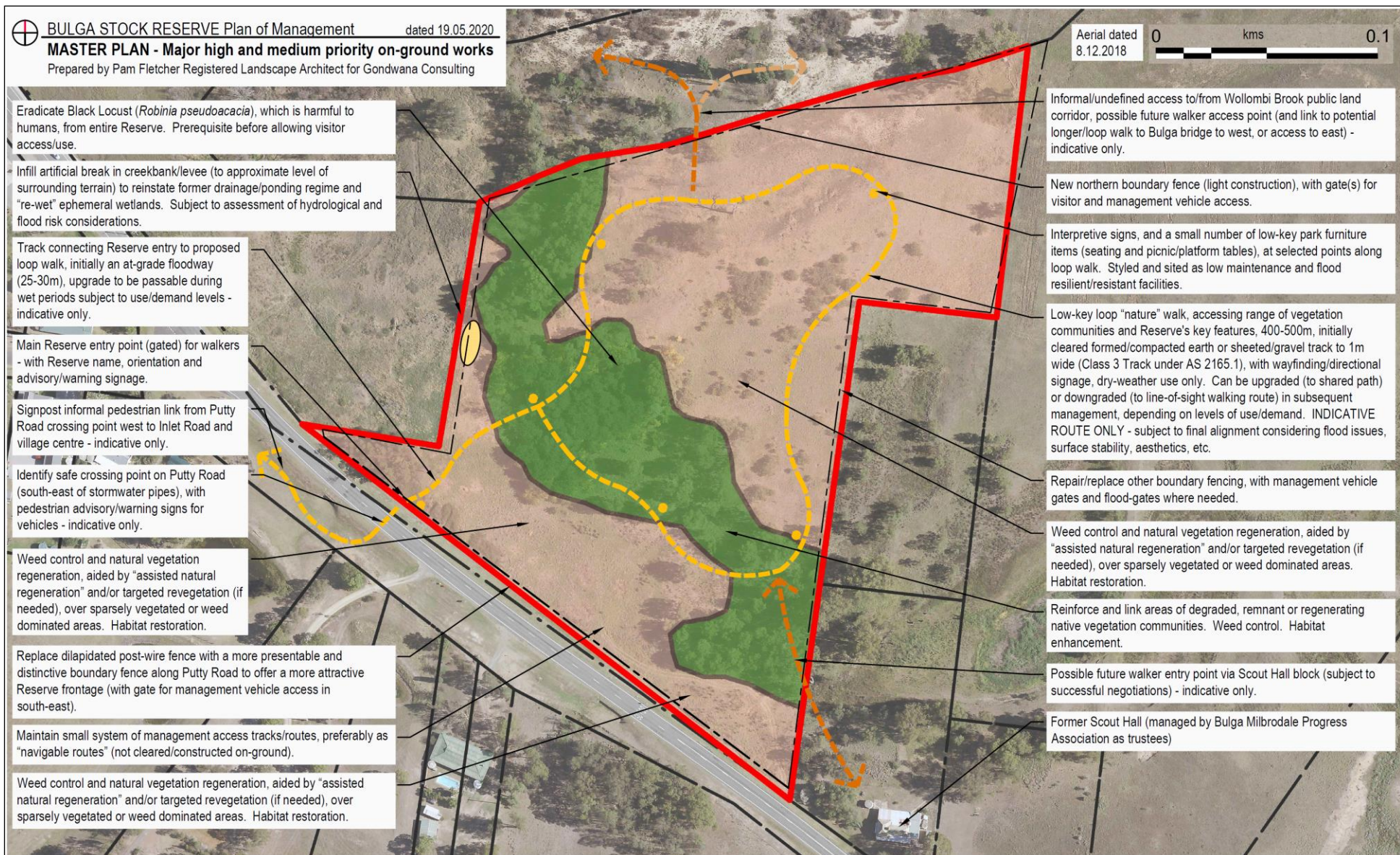


Figure 11 Bulga Stock Reserve Masterplan



## 6. MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

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### 6.1 GUIDE TO MANAGEMENT ACTION TABLES

The following Management Action Tables present a range of actions – comprising both specific on-ground or tangible actions as well as policies and management directions or guidelines – that will guide management, use and development of the Bulga Stock Reserve over the coming 5-10 years or possibly longer.

The management actions have been identified in response to the Reserve's values, the threats to these values and other management issues, the area's current limited use and potential for greater access and enjoyment, its prominent location within the village and proximity to Wollombi Brook, funding and resourcing considerations, known user and community values and views or aspirations as expressed through the various community consultation measures during the Plan's preparation, and the vision for the Reserve as well as the management objectives listed in Section 4.

The Management Action Tables present a range and varied scale of initiatives/actions proposed to be undertaken all of which require either recurrent Council commitment in the form of personnel and funding or one-off allocated funding for specific initiatives in this Plan of Management. Therefore implementation of the Plan will necessarily be staged over time.

Management Actions have been grouped into specific value or operational areas, as follows.

- ▶ **Flora, Fauna, Biodiversity and Landscape** – comprising management actions for native flora and vegetation communities and habitats, native fauna, weeds and pests and introduced animals, flooding and drainage/stormwater, water quality, fire management, and landscape values. (Section 6.2)
- ▶ **Cultural Heritage** – comprising management actions for Aboriginal cultural heritage, and European (non-Aboriginal) history and heritage. (Section 6.3)
- ▶ **Use, Facilities and Developments** – comprising management actions describing the Reserve's intended uses, and the facilities and developments to support these uses as well as the Reserve's management (Section 6.4)
- ▶ **Leases, Licenses and Permits** – comprising management actions for lease, licence or other permit arrangements within the Reserve as authorised by this Plan of Management. (Section 6.5)
- ▶ **Reserve Management and Administration** – comprising management actions in relation to land tenure matters, management and maintenance, planning and development approvals, on-going stakeholder engagement, Reserve neighbours, information and promotion, monitoring, safety/security and hazards, sustainability, revenue/funding, and foreign services and easements. (Section 6.6)

The Management Action Tables also include an indication of each action's "priority", the "resource estimation" to implement or undertake an action, an action's "performance target" or intended outcomes, and "means of assessment" or measuring the achievement of the performance target – as



a guide to the Plan's implementation (staged as necessary) or operation, realisation and evaluation.

The identified priorities give an indication of both an action's relative importance, and the preferred timing of each action (noting that many actions will be "on-going" and will apply or continue throughout the Reserve's management and/or the life of this Plan) – as follows.

- **HIGH** – Essential to achievement of the Reserve's management objectives, or where there is potential for the public to be exposed to an unacceptable level of risk, or there is potential for a serious threat to Reserve values or the environment and warranting funding consideration until achieved (or to sustain on-going management activities).
- **Medium** – These actions are desirable to enhance achievement of the Reserve's management objectives, or to address issues that meet a significant community need, or to improve management outcomes and ideally should be implemented within the life of this Plan.
- **Low** – These actions are useful for the overall management of the Reserve or address issues that have longer-term impacts (such as meeting less urgent community needs or improving inefficient services) and should be undertaken if resources permit.

Resource requirements are generalised according to the following categories:

- not applicable (n/a) – actions that are of a policy nature or guidelines, that do not have a resource requirement attached or where implementation/operational costs are part of other actions;
- negligible – actions that are largely procedural or require minimal budget/resources inputs;
- minor – actions that are routinely part of the Reserve's management and can be met from normal Reserve/Council operational budgets and management resources;
- moderate – actions that will require special allocations in the Reserve's or Council's operational budgets, additional resourcing, may extend over a number of funding cycles, and/or require a level of capital works funding; and
- high – actions that are significant projects, typically requiring sizeable capital works or other funding.

"Performance target" describes the objective, goal or outcome that a management action is intended to achieve.

"Means of assessment" set outs practical measures and mechanisms as to how the implementation of a management action, and achievement of performance targets, is to be assessed. CW&MR in the "means of assessment" column in the following tables refers to use of Council's capital works and/or maintenance records by which the tangible works or actions proposed can be assessed.

## 6.2 FLORA, FAUNA, BIODIVERSITY AND LANDSCAPE

Action No.	Flora, Fauna, Biodiversity and Landscape - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
6.2.1 General					
FFBL1	The overall direction for management of the Reserve's vegetation, biodiversity and landscape will be to manage the block as an area of regenerating native vegetation communities to deliver habitat, biodiversity, low-key leisure/recreation and scenic values while also acknowledging the site's flooding and fire hazards.	HIGH (on-going)	n/a	Expanded and enhanced native vegetation communities. Improved biodiversity, leisure / recreation and scenic values. Hazards managed.	Observation. Natural resources monitoring, mapping and photographic records.
6.2.2 Native Flora, Vegetation Communities and Habitats					
FFBL2	<p>Manage the Reserve to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>support the recovery and expansion of degraded, remnant or regenerating native vegetation communities now on-site (principally the areas of Forest Redgum regrowth, ephemeral wetlands, and patches of Eucalypt/Acacia regrowth); and</li><li>to re-establish native vegetation communities across the exotic grasslands, and sparsely vegetated or weed dominated areas, that make up the majority of the Reserve.</li></ul> <p>This is intended to protect and enhance the Reserve's natural environment, habitats and biodiversity values; to provide an attractive setting for appropriate low-key nature-based passive leisure/recreation and educational activities; maintain and reinforce the Reserve's scenic value/appeal; and to help improve the quality of water flowing into Wollombi Brook.</p>	HIGH (on-going)	Moderate	Expanded and enhanced native vegetation communities. Improved biodiversity, leisure / recreation and scenic values.	Observation. Natural resources monitoring, mapping and photographic records. Village and visitor feedback.

Action No.	Flora, Fauna, Biodiversity and Landscape - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
FFBL3	Natural vegetation regeneration (and minimising disturbances – to the extent as consistent with other actions identified in this Plan) will be the principal management measure employed to reinforce or expand existing native vegetation communities, re-establish native vegetation communities across the Reserve's exotic grasslands and sparsely vegetated or weed dominated areas, and to enhance the area's habitat/biodiversity values. This will be supported by targeted revegetation measures (see Actions FFBL5 to FFBL7 below).	<b>Medium</b> (on-going)	Minor	Cost-effective expansion or re-establishment of native vegetation communities and habitat. Improved vegetation viability, resilience and survival. Reduced management / maintenance costs	Observation. Natural resources monitoring, mapping and photographic records. Management / maintenance expenditure.
FFBL4	Natural vegetation regeneration may be aided ("assisted natural regeneration") or supported – chiefly across the Reserve's exotic grasslands and sparsely vegetated or weed dominated areas – by measures such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• temporary exclusion fencing;</li> <li>• slashing and mowing;</li> <li>• the ecological use of fire (see Action FFBL29 below);</li> <li>• controlled cattle grazing (such as "crash" grazing or seasonal grazing) (see Action LL3);</li> <li>• feral/introduced animal control; and</li> <li>• involvement of community groups (e.g. Landcare, local schools, etc.).</li> </ul>	<b>Medium</b> (on-going)	Minor / Moderate (depending on measure and extent)	Cost-effective re-establishment or expansion of native vegetation communities and habitat. Improved vegetation viability, resilience and survival.	Observation. Natural resources monitoring, mapping and photographic records.
FFBL5	Active/interventionist revegetation measures (such as planting or direct seeding) may be undertaken: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to reinforce existing degraded, remnant or regenerating native vegetation communities;</li> <li>• to link existing native vegetation areas (including to better connect the Reserve's existing, and future, native vegetation communities to the vegetated corridor of Wollombi Brook);</li> <li>• to assist in weed eradication or control;</li> </ul>	<b>Medium</b> (on-going)	Moderate (depending on measure and extent)	Re-establishment or expansion of native vegetation communities and habitat (and /or other site-specific outcomes). Improved vegetation viability,	Extent of successfully treated areas. Observation. Natural resources monitoring, mapping and photographic

Action No.	Flora, Fauna, Biodiversity and Landscape - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
FFBL5 (cont'd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>for targeted habitat enhancement, scenic, or visitor experience purposes (such as along the Reserve's Putty Road frontage);</li> <li>to support/improve natural vegetation regeneration measures in challenging or problematic areas (such as the Reserve's more degraded mid-eastern and north-eastern areas); and</li> <li>for land stability and erosion control (such as along the Reserve's northern margin, on sandy slope down to Wollombi Brook).</li> </ul>			resilience and survival.	records.
FFBL6	Revegetation (and other plantings) will preferably use local-provenance endemic species wherever possible, ideally grown from seeds or vegetative material sourced (under managed conditions) from within the Reserve or nearby bushland areas.	<b>Medium</b> (on-going)	n/a	Maximum use of local-provenance native plants.	Works contracts or Council records.
FFBL7	Revegetation, and other active/interventionist vegetation enhancement measures, will include provision (and sufficient funding) for establishment and maintenance as well as for adequate follow-up treatments to ensure revegetation areas and habitat enhancements are assured.	<b>HIGH</b> (on-going)	n/a (part of FFBL5 above)	Successful re-establishment or expansion of native vegetation communities and habitat. Improved vegetation survival and resilience.	Extent of successfully treated areas (in longer term). Observation. Natural resources monitoring, mapping and photographic records.
FFBL8	Undertake (or facilitate) occasional vegetation condition assessments – to assist in the managing the Reserve's native vegetation, habitat values, and weed control efforts (also see Action FFBL21 below) as well as to improve the Reserve/management knowledge base (support "citizen scientist" and community biodiversity survey initiatives, see Action RMA17). Including after major events such as wildfire or periods of extreme climatic conditions that impact vegetation communities/conditions.	Low (on-going)	Minor / Moderate	Improved monitoring of native vegetation. Increased knowledge of Reserve's native flora and vegetation communities.	Condition assessments completed as / when warranted.

Action No.	Flora, Fauna, Biodiversity and Landscape - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
6.2.3 Native Fauna					
FFBL9	Habitat protection and enhancement – through protecting existing areas of native vegetation, supporting natural vegetation regeneration, targeted revegetation, and minimising disturbances – will be the dominant management measures employed to support native fauna populations within the Reserve.	HIGH (on-going)	n/a (see 6.2.2)	Diversity and abundance of Reserve's native fauna is maintained or enhanced.	Observation. Fauna sightings, monitoring or surveys.
FFBL10	Features or areas of high habitat or native fauna value – notably large/mature trees with nesting hollows, the Reserve's ephemeral wetlands, large fallen logs, etc. – will be afforded special attention or protection (as far as practicable) in the area's management, to ensure their habitat values are not unduly compromised.	Medium (on-going)	Minor	Reserve's key habitat features / areas maintained.	Observation. Natural resources monitoring, mapping and photographic records.
FFBL11	Install nest boxes, including species-specific nest boxes as required, if warranted to enhance the Reserve's habitat values, encourage native fauna, and provide additional visitor interest.	Minor	Low	Diversity and abundance of Reserve's native fauna enhanced.	Number of nest boxes installed.
FFBL12	Wildlife may be actively managed (including relocation or habitat/nest manipulation) in and around visitor use areas, where/when required, for visitor and public safety reasons. Approval from the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service will be obtained where required.	Medium (on-going)	Negligible	No native fauna incidents.	Number of fauna related user / visitor complaints. Incident reports.
FFBL13	Undertake opportunistic native fauna monitoring and recording. Encourage/support visitors and surrounding residents to report fauna sightings (support "citizen scientist" and community biodiversity survey initiatives, see Action RMA17).	Medium (on-going)	Negligible	Increased knowledge of Reserve's native fauna.	Number of fauna records annually.
FFBL14	Undertake (or facilitate) occasional fauna survey and monitoring within the Reserve – to assist in the managing native fauna and habitat values, as well as to improve the Reserve/management knowledge base	Medium (on-going)	Minor / Moderate	Increased knowledge of Reserve's native fauna.	Survey and monitoring completed as / when warranted.



Action No.	Flora, Fauna, Biodiversity and Landscape - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
6.2.4 Significant Native Flora Species/Communities and Native Fauna/Populations					
FFBL15	Undertake special management measures, when/where required, to protect and conserve any threatened or significant native flora species, vegetation communities, and native fauna species or populations that may (in future) be found to occur or be resident within the Reserve – in accordance with the NSW <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i> and other applicable legislation. . Seek management advice from specialist agencies, where required.	HIGH (on-going)	Minor	Native species, communities or populations of conservation significance are maintained or enhanced.	Observation. Degree of compliance with relevant legislation.
6.2.5 Weeds, Pests and Introduced Animals					
FFBL16	Continue to undertake weed control measures within the Reserve – via opportunistic actions, targeted or species-specific measures, and a rolling programme of weed control measures – targeting listed priority weeds (state, regional and local priority weeds) as well as other pasture and environmental weeds.	HIGH (on-going)	Moderate	Reduced occurrence (extent and biomass) of priority and other weeds. Enhanced native vegetation communities and habitats.	Documented control efforts / actions and programme records. Observation, and weed monitoring / survey data.
FFBL17	Eradicate the stand of Black Locust ( <i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i> ), which is harmful to humans, in the Reserve’s west as well as all occurrences of this plant (mature and emergent) elsewhere in the Reserve. Also remove/control any remanent specimens of Honey Locust ( <i>Gleditzia triacanthos</i> ) within in the Reserve.  Due to its hazardous characteristics, Black Locust must be eradicated from the Reserve prior to implementing any management actions to invite/encourage visitor access to the area (see Section 6.4).	HIGH	Moderate	Black Locust ( <i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i> ) eradicated from the Reserve, and Honey Locust actively suppressed or eradicated.	Documented control efforts / actions. Observation, and weed monitoring / survey data.

Action No.	Flora, Fauna, Biodiversity and Landscape - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
FFBL18	Resources permitting, targeted control efforts will be directed to weeds within parts of the Reserve open to visitor access/use that are likely to cause a nuisance or discomfort to visitors or have a high potential for spread by visitor activity or movement (such as Cobblers Peg [ <i>Bidens pilosa</i> ])	<b>Medium</b> (on-going)	Minor	Nuisance weeds, or weed at high risk of spread by visitors, effectively controlled.	Documented control efforts / actions. Observation, and weed monitoring / survey data.
FFBL19	In addition to Council-initiated weed control actions, Council will continue to participate in co-ordinated regional weed programmes/initiatives as well as co-ordinating major weed control efforts on the Reserve with neighbouring landholders (where possible). This includes the control of fruit trees within the Reserve to assist in the district/regional level control of fruit fly.	<b>Medium</b> (on-going)	Minor	More effective weed control. Reduced weed occurrence (extent and biomass).	Programme records and documented control efforts / actions. Observation, and weed monitoring / survey data.
FFBL20	Weed control efforts will include provision (and sufficient funding) for adequate follow-up treatments to ensure effective weed control or eradication.	<b>HIGH</b> (on-going)	n/a (part of FFBL15 to FFBL18 above)	Effective weed control or eradication	Extent of successfully treated areas (in longer term). Observation, and weed monitoring / survey data.
FFBL21	Undertake periodic, and opportunistic, monitoring of weed occurrence to assist in planning and implementing control efforts – targeting areas vulnerable to the introduction and spread of weeds, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ disturbed sites and existing major weed infestations;</li> <li>▪ high risk sites/areas for weed invasion/spread (such as roadsides, stormwater discharge points, drainage lines, and high visitor use areas/tracks); and</li> <li>▪ Reserve boundaries.</li> </ul>	<b>Medium</b> (on-going)	Minor	Improved information and monitoring of weed occurrence, infestation and invasion.	Weed data / records regularly updated. Weed surveys completed.

Action No.	Flora, Fauna, Biodiversity and Landscape - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
FFBL22	Initiate a programme to control feral/pest and introduced animals within the Reserve – particularly species with significant potential for environmental or biodiversity impacts (such as feral cats, foxes and feral pigs).	Medium (on-going)	Minor	Reduced populations and impacts of feral/pest and introduced animals.	Programme records. Observation, and reported feral/pest and introduced animal sightings.
FFBL23	In addition to Council-initiated control actions, Council will participate in co-ordinated regional feral/pest and introduced animal control programmes/initiatives as appropriate.	Low (on-going)	Minor	More effective control actions. Reduced populations and impacts of feral/pest and introduced animals.	Programme records and documented control efforts / actions. Observation, and reported feral/pest and introduced animal sightings.
FFBL24	Undertake opportunistic monitoring and recording of feral/pest and introduced animals within the Reserve – to assist in planning and implementing control efforts.	Low (on-going)	Minor	Improved information and monitoring of feral / pest animal occurrence.	Feral / pest animals data / records regularly updated.
FFBL25	Dogs will be permitted on approved tracks within the Reserve, but only if on-leash and under full control and dog owners/walkers will be required to collect and remove all dog faeces. Dogs will be prohibited from “untracked” areas of the Reserve. This policy will be periodically reviewed – especially in regard to observed/reported levels of compliance, reported or possible impacts on the area’s native fauna, visitor safety and nuisance issues, and the perceptions of other visitors – and dogs may subsequently be banned from the Reserve. Cats will be prohibited from the Reserve.	Low (on-going)	Negligible	Dogs on-leash, on-tracks and appropriately managed. Dog access subject to periodic review.	Observed level of compliance and number of reported dog-related incidents / issues annually. Frequency of policy reviews.

Action No.	Flora, Fauna, Biodiversity and Landscape - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
6.2.6 Flooding, Drainage and Stormwater Management					
FFBL26	Infill the artificial break (previously created) in the creekbank/levee, on the Reserve’s western boundary, to the approximate level of the surrounding terrain to reinstate the former drainage and ponding regime across the Reserve’s southern low-lying areas – to “re-wet” the ephemeral wetlands so they retain flows for longer periods and encourage regeneration of native wetland vegetation and habitat enhancement. This will be preceded by investigation of the likely impacts of such works/change on the area’s hydrological functioning and any increase in flood threats to surrounding areas or assets – and will not be undertaken should these risks be unacceptable.	Medium	Moderate (investigation)  High (works)	No unacceptable threats to surrounding areas / assets.  Reinstatement of earlier drainage / ponding regime. “Re-wetting” of ephemeral wetlands and enhanced biodiversity outcomes.	Hydrological and flood threat investigation competed. Works in place and effective. CW&MR.
FFBL27	Install stilling/detention ponds below (downstream) of each of two arrays of stormwater pipes beneath Putty Road that discharge into the Reserve – to reduce the sediment loads, weed propagules and amount of rubbish entering the Reserve (as well as to help improve the quality of water flowing into/through the area). The ponds will be regularly cleaned and maintained – as/when required.	Low	Moderate	Reduced sediment loads, weed propagules entering the Reserve. Improved water quality of inflows.	CW&MR. Observed functioning / effectiveness of ponds. Maintenance records.
6.2.7 Fire Management					
FFBL28	Manage bushfire hazards within the Reserve in accordance with the principals and strategies set out in the <i>Singleton Bush Fire Risk Management Plan 2011</i> (including the preferred fire thresholds for specified vegetation communities), and other relevant policies and legislation. Co-operate with other agencies in the management and control of fire within the Reserve – including through hazard reduction burns, pile burns, ecological use of fire (see Action FFBL29 below), applying appropriate Indigenous burning practices where known/applicable, clearing/maintaining asset protection zones if required, and neighbour education/preparedness.	HIGH (on-going)	Minor	Fire, and fire risks, managed in compliance with existing plans and obligations	Fire risk management action, and fire incident, reporting.

Action No.	Flora, Fauna, Biodiversity and Landscape - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
FFBL29	Co-ordinate, or undertake, the use/management of fire for ecological purposes – where beneficial for vegetation and habitat management outcomes (such as promoting natural regeneration or mirroring natural fire periods) or to assist in weed control.	Medium	Minor	Improved ecological use of fire. Biodiversity benefits.	Number of ecological burns undertaken over 5 year period.
<b>6.2.6 Natural Landscape Values</b>					
FFBL30	Maintaining, reinforcing and expanding native vegetation/communities across the Reserve will ensure protection and enhancement of the area's scenic and natural landscape values – including views into the Reserve from Putty Road and other parts of the village (as well as providing an attractive setting for visitor enjoyment of the area).	HIGH (on-going)	n/a (see 6.2.2)	No lessening of Reserve's scenic quality or overall natural landscape values.	Observation, photographic records and vegetation mapping.
FFBL31	Public vehicle access/parking will not be provided, and no major built/enclosed structures or facilities will be developed, within the Reserve (beyond the scattered low-key park furniture items – such as seating, picnic/platform tables, interpretive or other signage as well as tracks/paths). (Also see Section 6.4)	HIGH (on-going)	n/a	Retention of Reserve's undeveloped character and appearance.	CW&MR. Observation and photographic records.
FFBL32	Possible impacts on the Reserve's scenic and natural landscape values (especially when viewed from Putty Road) will be considered in the siting, scale and design of low-key park furniture items and other facilities (including the alignment and "visibility" of tracks/trails in the landscape).	Medium (on-going)	n/a	Negligible adverse impacts on Reserve's scenic quality.	Observation, photographic records and mapping.



## 6.3 CULTURAL HERITAGE

Action No.	Cultural Heritage - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
6.3.1 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sites/Values					
CH1	Apply a precautionary approach to works that require ground clearing/disturbance (likely to cause a level of impact beyond “trivial or negligible” harm), given the high likelihood of encountering unrecorded Aboriginal cultural heritage material/sites within the Reserve. Seek advice from Council’s Aboriginal Advisory Committee and comply with the <i>Due Diligence Code of Practice for the Protection of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales</i> ” (NSW Department of Environment, Energy and Science), as well as liaising with the Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council as warranted.	HIGH (on-going)	Minor	No inadvertent damage to Aboriginal cultural heritage materials / sites. Compliance with legislative obligations.	Incidence of inadvertent or unapproved damage to Aboriginal cultural heritage materials / sites. Due Diligence assessments competed.
CH2	Ensure any Aboriginal cultural heritage materials/sites that may be located/recorded within the Reserve (in future) – as listed on the NSW Department of Environment, Energy and Science’s <i>Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System</i> – are appropriately managed as consistent with the <i>National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974</i> . The approach of not publicly disclosing the location of Aboriginal sites, and avoiding locating facilities in close proximity to Aboriginal sites, will be applied as the principal management tool and means of protecting such places.	HIGH (on-going)	Minor	Aboriginal cultural heritage sites managed in compliance with legislative obligations.	Incidence of inadvertent or deliberate (unapproved) damage to Aboriginal cultural heritage sites
CH3	Seek advice from the NSW Department of Environment, Energy and Science, as well as the Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council, regarding the protection and management of any Aboriginal cultural heritage materials/sites within the Reserve.	Medium (on-going)	Negligible	Increased knowledge and capabilities in Aboriginal cultural heritage management.	Frequency with which advice is sought. Council staff knowledge, confidence and performance in site management.

Action No.	Cultural Heritage - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
CH4	Engage with, and actively involve appropriate Aboriginal people and organisations, in protection and management (and presentation if appropriate) of the Reserve's Aboriginal cultural heritage sites and values. Including involvement in the preparation of Aboriginal cultural heritage interpretive materials (see Action UFD12).	Medium (on-going)	Minor	"Ownership" of site management and interpretation by Aboriginal community.	Frequency and nature of involvement of Aboriginal people / organisations.
<b>6.3.2 European/Historic Heritage</b>					
CH5	Undertake, or encourage/support, research into the Reserve's post 1788 (European) history and past land uses – with a focus on the site's past as a travelling stock reserve and role in the Bulga district's early European history.	Low	Minor	Improved knowledge base re post 1788 (European) history.	Research undertaken and available.

## 6.4 USE, FACILITIES AND DEVELOPMENTS

Action No.	Use, Facilities and Developments - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
6.4.1 Principal Visitor Use of the Reserve					
UFD1	<p>As outlined in Section 5, visitor use and enjoyment of the Reserve will principally be for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• low-key nature-based leisure and recreation activities;</li><li>• environmental appreciation and education; and</li><li>• community conservation and land management activities.</li></ul> <p>Nature-based independent casual or informal leisure and recreation activities are typically those that are reliant on the natural environment, where the experience of nature or scenery is central to the motivation and enjoyment of participants, which do not require substantial modification of their natural settings, and are managed to be environmentally sustainable.</p> <p>Public vehicle access/parking will not be provided, and camping or other overnight visitor use of the Reserve will not be permitted.</p> <p>These activities are in addition to the Reserve’s native vegetation and biodiversity protection “uses” (as described in Section 6.2) as well as its role as a scenic or landscape asset (which also provides for scenic viewing from outside the Reserve – notably from along Putty Road and elsewhere in the village).</p> <p>(Also see Actions UFD17 and Actions LL2 to LL4)</p>	HIGH (on-going)	n/a	Accommodating appropriate nature or landscape based independent / casual leisure and recreation use, and environmental education or community conservation / management activities, while protecting Reserve’s natural and scenic values.	Observation. User feedback. Impact / disturbance monitoring.
UFD2	<p>Visitor entry and use of the Reserve will not be invited or encouraged, and no visitor facilities will be developed, until the area’s infestation of Black Locust (<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>) has been eradicated or effectively suppressed – due to the health risk this species can pose to humans (and its prominent/central location within the Reserve). (Also see Action FFBL17)</p>	HIGH	n/a	No risk to visitor health and safety due to presence of Black Locust weed species.	Observation, and weed monitoring / survey data.

Action No.	Use, Facilities and Developments - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
6.4.2 Reserve Access					
UFD3	The Reserve will initially be open for access and use by walkers only (also see Actions UFD5 to UFD7 below). Bicycle access to, and within, the Reserve may subsequently be provided – if warranted and practical (see Action UFD16 below). Horseriding entry to and through the Reserve will be permitted, on a limited access, trial basis, only (see Action UFD8 below).	HIGH (on-going)	n/a (see Actions UFD5 to UFD8, and UFD16, below)	Non-motorised access to the Reserve managed to ensure visitor safety and experience, environmental protection and manageability.	Observation. User feedback.
UFD4	Private vehicle access (motor vehicles, motorbikes, trial bikes, etc.) to the Reserve will not generally be permitted, or provided for. Council may approve private vehicle entry to the Reserve (subject to any conditions/limitations as necessary) for specific activities/purposes – such as community conservation or land management activities, approved groups events, school use etc.	HIGH (on-going)	n/a	Private vehicle entry managed to ensure environmental protection and visitor safety / experience.	Observation. Levels of compliance. User feedback.
UFD5	<p>The main walker access point for the Reserve will be via an entry to be developed in the site's west – as shown on the Masterplan (Figure 10). This will be accessed via a safe crossing point identified on Putty Road (just south-east of the triple stormwater pipe array) in the 60kph zone – the final location of this crossing point will be determined with input from Council's traffic engineer. An informal pedestrian linkage from this crossing point (and the Reserve entry) west to Inlet Road and the village centre is possible along the wide mown southern verge of Putty Road – as shown on the Masterplan (Figure 10).</p> <p>A “kissing gate”, or other gate/entry assembly, to permit walker (and possibly bicycle) access but exclude motorbikes/trail bikes will be installed on the Reserve's Putty Road fenceline at this point.</p>	HIGH	Minor	Provision of safe access for walkers to, and entry into, the Reserve. Control of non-authorised vehicle entry.	Traffic safety advice obtained. CW&MR – walker entry developed and in use. Observation and user feedback. Levels of compliance.

Action No.	Use, Facilities and Developments - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
UFD6	A second walker access point to the Reserve may be developed in the site's south-east, via the Scout Hall block, if/when the use of this neighbouring block for pedestrian access (and visitor parking if necessary) can be negotiated with this parcel's appointed Crown land manager (at present the Bulga Milbrodale Progress Association).	Medium	Minor	Provision of safe pedestrian entry to the Reserve.	Access via adjacent block negotiated. CW&MR – walker entry developed and in use. Observation and user feedback.
UFD7	Informal (undefined) walker access will be permitted between the Reserve and the Wollombi Brook public land corridor. If warranted by use/demand, or necessary to manage environmental impacts, a preferred route will be identified/developed for this connection (also see Action UFD15 below).	Medium	Minor	Leisure / recreational access to Wollombi Brook via the Reserve.	Observation and user feedback.
UFD8	Occasional entry to the Reserve will be permitted by horseriders. This will be for "transit only", to pass through the Reserve to/from the Wollombi Brook public land corridor – with horseriding as an activity within/using the Reserve itself not permitted. Along Putty Road horseriders will be required to only enter/exit the Reserve using the management access gate in the south-east, and within the area must not ride along the track network to be developed for walkers (and potentially cyclists).  The impact of horseriding on the Reserve (including conflicts/hazards for other users) will be regularly reviewed and horseriding entry and transit prohibited if these impacts become unacceptable.	Low	Minor	Horseriding access to/from Wollombi Brook public land corridor accommodated. Reserve values and visitor safety / enjoyment not unduly impaired.	Observed levels of horseriding activity and compliance. Natural resources monitoring and photographic records. User feedback.
<b>6.4.3 Visitor Facilities and Developments</b>					
UFD9	A low-key loop walking track will be developed encompassing much of the Reserve and accessing, or enabling views to, the area's key features (including the various vegetation communities, ephemeral wetlands, attractive mature trees and Wollombi Brook corridor). It will offer a short (400-500 metre) easy walking experience within the Reserve – as shown, indicatively only, on the Masterplan (Figure 10) – initially intended mainly for dry-weather use only.  This loop walk will be styled as a low-key nature walk initially (with the potential	HIGH	Moderate	Low-key, minimal impact and manageable loop walking track providing defined safe (mainly dry weather)	CW&MR. Observation. User feedback.



Action No.	Use, Facilities and Developments - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
UFD9 (cont'd)	<p>for upgrading, to a higher standard track, or shared path, if demand/use subsequently warrants) and constructed as a cleared formed/compacted earth or sheeted/gravelled track up to approximately 1 metre wide. Wayfinding markers or low-key directional signage will be included. (Track standards will generally align with a "Grade 3 Walk" under the Australian Walking Track Grading System, which corresponds to a Class 3 Track under AS 2165.1.)</p> <p>Track "treatments" or improvements to manage potential environmental impacts or to allow for passability or ease of walking will generally be limited or low-key and low maintenance measures – such as stone flagging (or large embedded stepping stones) in periodically wet or boggy areas, or "board and chain" corduroy or "track matting" in sandy sections – rather than major structural solutions (such as boardwalks).</p> <p>This loop walk will be connected to the Reserve's proposed (main) western entry by, initially, an at-grade floodway across the 25-30 metres of lower-lying ground north of the Putty Road boundary at this point.</p>			<p>visitor access to the Reserve's key features. Adverse biodiversity and environmental impacts minimised. Visitor enjoyment and appreciation / education opportunities.</p>	
UFD10	<p>Dependent on usage levels and demand, the standard and management of the loop walking track may be improved, or down-graded, as warranted.</p> <p>Under greater use/demand the track may be upgraded in terms of width and surface standards/finish as well as flood resistance/resilience and improved trafficability. Low-lying areas may be improved with boardwalks or more flood resistant/resilient measures, such as low-profile box culverts, where needed – including across the floodway at the Reserve's western entry. The frequency and standard of management and maintenance would also be increased.</p> <p>Under reduced use/demand the track standards and levels of management/maintenance may be scaled back – such as reverting to a natural ground surface track or managed as a "line-of-sight" route (with users finding their own path between route markers).</p>	<b>Medium</b>	<p>Moderate / High (for track upgrading, dependent on scope of works)</p> <p>Minor (for track down-grading)</p>	<p>Track standards and management / maintenance commensurate with, and responds to, levels of use or demand. Cost-effective use of Council resources.</p>	<p>CW&amp;MR. Observation. User feedback.</p>

Action No.	Use, Facilities and Developments - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
UFD11	<p>A limited number of low-key park furniture items will be located at selected points along the proposed loop walk – such as near the eastern entry point, track junctions, shady trees, vantage points and other sites of interest (and will also be sited in consideration of flood risks). Appropriate park furniture items would include seating (bench and backed seats), picnic/platform tables and (if subsequently warranted by use/demand) small open shade shelters. Low maintenance and flood resilient/resistant facilities will be preferred, but in materials and styles - but in keeping with the Reserve's natural setting.</p> <p>Due to the Reserve's small size, natural low-key character, and intended "short-stay" experience, facilities such as toilets and barbeques will not be provided. Rubbish bins (and dog litter bags) will not be provided, and visitors required to take any rubbish away with them.</p> <p>Fireplaces will not be provided, and visitors' use of fire will not be permitted (also see Action RMA12).</p>	Medium	Minor / Moderate	Low-key park furniture installed to support Reserve's appeal and visitor use – consistent with area's natural setting and largely undeveloped character.	CW&MR. Observation. User feedback.
UFD12	<p>Develop and install, at appropriate locations around the loop track (and elsewhere, such as Reserve entry points), on-site interpretive signage to present, and enhance visitors' understanding and appreciation of, the Reserve's native vegetation and fauna values as well as its past use as stock reserve or other aspects of the site's European history (and Aboriginal cultural heritage values if appropriate – also see Action CH4). Investigate alternative ways of presenting interpretive information (such as public art, installations, "apps", QR codes, etc.) and implement – as supporting/supplementary measures only – if feasible.</p>	High	Moderate	Increased visitor appreciation and understanding of the Reserve's features, values and history.	Interpretive signage / measure in place. User feedback.

Action No.	Use, Facilities and Developments - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
UFD13	<p>Maintain, and improve as required (in terms of standard, position, messaging and consistency), the Reserve's on-site management signage – including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reserve name/identification (along the Putty Road frontage and at entry points, including from the Wollombi Brook public land corridor if/when warranted);</li> <li>visitor use opportunities/facilities and orientation;</li> <li>safety and warning signs (especially floodway warning signs, see Action RMA11); and</li> <li>regulatory/ordinance/ information (especially relating to the controls/requirements regarding dogs within the Reserve, see Action FFBL25).</li> </ul> <p>Signage styles will be consistent with Council's wider signage style/standards. Preference for simple signs, incorporating pictograms, to be accessible to users from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.</p>	Medium	Minor	Improved signage and information for Reserve users.	Observation. CW&MR. Positive feedback from Reserve users.
UFD14	<p>A Bulga Village "name and entry statement" (such as themed signage and/or a public art feature) may be installed at a suitable location just inside the Reserve's south eastern boundary on Putty Road – as a "gateway" or "welcome". Landscape/amenity plantings, using local native species, may be included in this entry statement. This feature may be installed by a third party – with Council's approval.</p>	Low	Minor / Moderate	Improved village entry / promotion for visitors arriving from the south-east.	Observation. Visitor and village community feedback.
UFD15	<p>The proposed loop walking track may be extended to enable it to be accessed from/connected to the following additional Reserve entry points if/when these become available (as shown on the Masterplan, Figure 10):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>in the site's south-east via the Scout Hall block (see Action UFD6); and</li> <li>in the north to/from the Wollombi Brook public land corridor (see Action UFD7), particularly if additional public access/use opportunities become available along this creek corridor (see Action RMA4).</li> </ul>	Medium	Minor	Enhanced visitor use opportunities. Improved access and connectivity to/from the Reserve's loop track.	CW&MR. Observation. User feedback.

Action No.	Use, Facilities and Developments - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
UFD16	<p>If warranted by future usage levels and demand, and to accommodate the full range of visitors who may seek to access and enjoy the Reserve, the loop walking track may be upgraded to a shared path standard – suitable for all-abilities access and shared walker-cyclist use.</p> <p>This would require significant track upgrading and surface widening/improvement, and possibly some realignment of the route to enable all-abilities access (within the applicable standards), as well as improvements to enhance flood resistance/resilience. Additional park furniture, such as wheelchair accessible/usable picnic tables, may be provided in conjunction with these track upgrades.</p>	Low	High	Track standards, and management / maintenance, upgraded to accommodate shared usage (walker-cyclist) and all-abilities access – if warranted by demand / usage.	CW&MR. Observation. User feedback.
<b>6.4.4 Other Visitor Activities</b>					
UFD17	<p>Accommodate use of the Reserve for the following organised or group activities (where these are considered compatible with the area's assets, values, permitted purposes, intended character/settings, and the directions set out in this Plan):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• school use of the area for nature study and appreciation, outdoor education, cultural, health and well-being activities;</li> <li>• gatherings or group events (up to maximum group size of 30 people) for educational, demonstration/extension, volunteer, community, cultural or historical commemorations/celebrations, or special events.</li> </ul> <p>Such uses will be on a bookings basis and require a permit, licence or other approval from Council (see Section 6.5).</p> <p>The frequency, scale and location of specially booked/approved uses will be monitored – and managed as necessary (including a limit on the number of events over a given period and/or in a specific area/facility) – to ensure these uses do not adversely impact the Reserve's values or unacceptably disadvantage other users. Organised sporting uses and commercial or corporate activities will not be permitted.</p>	Low (on-going)	Negligible	Regulated use of the Reserve for other organised activities as compatible with the area's values and management.	Booking records for organised or group activities. Group user feedback. Reserve user and neighbour feedback. Impact / disturbance monitoring.

Action No.	Use, Facilities and Developments - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
6.4.5 Management Facilities and Developments					
UFD18	The existing dilapidated post and wire fence along Putty Road will be replaced with a more presentable and distinctive boundary fence to provide a more attractive Reserve frontage.	HIGH	Minor to Moderate (depending on fence type)	Improved presentation and more appealing Reserve frontage.	CW&MR. Community feedback.
UFD19	The Reserve's other boundary fences (excluding the Putty Road fencing) will be repaired or replaced as required with farm-style wire fencing. The northern fenceline will include one or more points (including a vehicle gate) enabling visitor, and management vehicle, access to the Wollombi Brook public land corridor.	Medium	Moderate	Effective fencing of the Reserve.	CW&MR. Observation.
UFD20	A vehicle gate will be maintained at a safe and practical location along the Reserve's south-eastern frontage to Putty Road to provide vehicle access to the area for management, service, emergency and other approved vehicles.	HIGH	Negligible	Safe and effective management vehicle access.	CW&MR. Observation.
UFD21	A small system of management access tracks/routes will be maintained within the Reserve, preferably as "navigable routes" that are not cleared/constructed on-the-ground.	HIGH	Minor	Safe and effective management vehicle access.	CW&MR. Observation.
6.4.6 Maintenance of Facilities and Developments					
UFD22	<p>All facilities/developments within the Reserve will be maintained in a safe, serviceable and presentable condition through a programmed system of monitoring, maintenance and replacement – supported by responsive and opportunistic maintenance works, as required.</p> <p>Cleaning, maintenance and management of the Reserve's facilities and developments – both those provided to support leisure/recreational or educational use of the area, and those provided for management purposes – will be in accordance with Council's adopted service standards for its parks and reserves. This will include both programmed and opportunistic maintenance, repairs and replacement.</p>	HIGH (on-going)	Minor / Moderate	Facilities safe, available, fit for purpose and presentable. Good to high standards of condition and presentation of facilities.	Maintenance records and CW&MR. Periodic inspections / audits. User feedback and satisfaction, and number of complaints annually.



Action No.	Use, Facilities and Developments - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
UFD23	<p>The reserve's tracks will be maintained through a programmed system of monitoring/inspections and maintenance (addressing track condition, user safety and environmental impacts), supported by responsive maintenance works as required (all maintenance, preventative and other works will be documented). Additional track inspections and maintenance will be undertaken, resources permitting, after flood or fire events affecting the Reserve.</p> <p>Informal and unauthorised tracks will be closed and rehabilitated.</p>	<b>HIGH</b> (on-gong)	Minor	Safe, sustainable, and manageable walking track network that delivers quality nature-based visitor access / experiences.	Monitoring and works / maintenance records. User feedback.

## 6.5 LEASES, LICENSES AND PERMITS

Action No.	Leases, Licenses and Permits- Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
6.5.1 General Lease, License and Permits Considerations					
LL1	<p>In deciding whether to grant a lease, licence, or other estate (or other permit or hire arrangements) Council will consider whether the proposed use or activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ is consistent with the provisions of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> and <i>Crown Lands Management Act 2016</i> and associated regulations;</li><li>▪ is consistent with the principles of Crown land management;</li><li>▪ is consistent with the objectives, directions and provisions of this Plan of Management;</li><li>▪ is consistent with the management objectives for categorisation of the area in which the proposed use/activity will occur;</li><li>▪ is consistent with applicable Council policies and guidelines;</li><li>▪ is consistent with, and unlikely to have a significant adverse impact on, the Reserve’s values, intended character and settings;</li><li>▪ will cause unacceptable disturbance/impacts for Reserve neighbours and/or surrounding land uses;</li><li>▪ will provide identifiable benefits for the community or particular users/groups;</li><li>▪ will exclude or unduly disadvantage or displace other Reserve users, or is likely to unacceptably impair an area’s reasonable enjoyment by others;</li><li>▪ is permissible under the Reserve’s land use zoning in the <i>Singleton Local Environmental Plan 2013</i>; and/or</li><li>▪ places excessive demands on Council’s Reserve management or administrative capacity.</li></ul>	HIGH (on-going)	n/a	Lease, licence, other estate, or other permit or hire arrangements are fully evaluated prior to issue or approval.	Periodic audit of licence, other estate, or other permit or hire arrangements for compliance with assessment procedures and permissibility.

Action No.	Leases, Licenses and Permits- Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
6.5.2 Licences, Permits and Hire Approvals					
LL2	<p>This Plan of Management expressly authorises Council to grant or enter into a licence, deed of agreement, other permit or hire arrangements, and other estates/approvals (excluding leases) for the seasonal, regular, periodic, set (short) duration or once-off use of the Reserve (or specific areas of the Reserve) for appropriate leisure/recreational, community, group, educational, scientific or park management events and activities (as described in Section 6.4 and Action RMA17).</p> <p>Such licences, permits or other arrangements will only be granted as consistent with the provisions of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> and <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2005</i>, and as in accordance with Council's <i>Lease/Licence of Council Land and Buildings to Community Groups Policy</i> and other applicable policies or guidelines. They may include appropriate fees, bonds, conditions and other requirements as deemed necessary by Council.</p> <p>The term of any such arrangement will not exceed one year.</p> <p>Such licences, permits or other arrangements will not be granted for uses or activities that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• are inconsistent with the Reserve's values, or have unacceptable effects on the area's assets or intended character and settings; or</li><li>• present a hazard for other Reserve users or neighbours;</li><li>• exclude or unduly disadvantage other users, or are likely to impair an area's reasonable enjoyment by others; or</li><li>• require exclusive use/occupation of the Reserve for more than 48 hours (other than for the storage of equipment or materials); or</li><li>• involve the erection of any structure or installation (requiring ground disturbance);</li><li>• involve the erection of any or advertising that detracts from the visual qualities of the Reserve; or</li></ul>	HIGH (on-going)	Minor	Approved and managed use of the Reserve for by short-term, casual or once-off "under permit" activities.	Booking / approval records. User and attendee satisfaction and feedback. User and neighbour feedback / complaints.

Action No.	Leases, Licenses and Permits- Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
LL2 (cont'd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>place excessive demands on Reserve management; or</li> <li>are for activities that are purely commercial in nature, or commodity/product marketing oriented.</li> </ul>				
LL3	<p>This Plan of Management expressly authorises Council to grant a licence or permit for grazing or stock agistment (cattle only) and/or other low-impact land uses (such as bee-keeping) within parts of the Reserve on a seasonal or set (short) period basis. Such licences or permits will only be granted as consistent with the provisions of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> and <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2005</i> ("the agistment of stock" is a prescribed short-term casual activity for which a Council may grant a licence for the use of community land under Section 116 of the Act).</p> <p>The primary purpose for issuing such a licence or permit for land management/use activities will be to assist in the Reserve's management (such as controlling fuel loads, supporting weed control, or assisting in native vegetation regeneration).</p> <p>Such licences or permits will include conditions and other requirements as deemed appropriate by Council – such as stocking levels, timing, "crash grazing" for fire hazard reduction, temporary fencing requirements and areas to be excluded/protected (such as regenerating vegetation communities or revegetation areas), weed and pest control, erosion control and remediation, visitor safety and provisions for visitor access, water supply, and other matters.</p>	Low (on-going)	Negligible	Approved and managed use of the Reserve for land management / use activities to support the area's management. No significant adverse impacts on Reserve.	Short-term licence or permit records. Licencee satisfaction. Levels of compliance. Natural resources monitoring and photographic records.

Action No.	Leases, Licenses and Permits- Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
LL4	As required by the <i>Filming Related Legislation Amendment Act 2008</i> , and as consistent with the provisions of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> and <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2005</i> , licences or permits will be granted for commercial filming within the Reserve.	Low (on-going)	Negligible	Appropriate commercial filming and photography occurring in Reserve, with approval. No significant impacts on Reserve.	Approval records and observation. Applicant satisfaction. Levels of compliance and user / neighbour feedback or complaints.
<b>6.5.3 Native Title Advice in Respect to Leases, Licences, or Other Estates</b>					
LL5	Further Native Title Manager advice will be required prior to issuing approval for a lease, licence or other estate for any purpose not consistent with the Actions in Section 6.4 (or this Section 6.5) or for any corporate hiring and events or commercial activities not associated with the Reserve's public recreation (reservation purpose).	<b>HIGH</b> (on-going)	Minor	Appropriate advice sought in relation to Native Title implications of leases, licences or other estates.	Any authorisation or restriction on use of the Reserve (Crown reserve) is consistent with the <i>Native Title Act 1993</i> (Comm).



## 6.6 RESERVE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Action No.	Reserve Management and Administration - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
6.6.1 Land Tenure					
RMA1	Maintain the situation regarding the Reserve’s status and management – with Bulga Stock Reserve remaining under the day-to-day care, control and management of Singleton Council (as the “council manager” of an area of dedicated or reserved Crown land – in accordance with the <i>Crown Land Management Act 2016</i> ).	HIGH (on-going)	n/a	Reserve continues to be managed and maintained by Council.	Site tenure / status. Council's annual Operating Plan, Budget and staff allocations.
RMA2	Liaise with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (Crown Lands) to provide evidence/documentation to demonstrate that the Reserve, at the lodgement date of Aboriginal Land Claim by the Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council (under the NSW <i>Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983</i> ) was subject to lawful occupation and use – to assist in the determination of this ALC.	HIGH	Minor / Moderate	Lawful occupation and use of subject Reserve demonstrated. Determination of ALC, and continued Council management as public park.	Determination of ALC.
RMA3	Confirm/clarify location of the Reserve’s eastern boundary, along the northern end of the adjacent lot (2119 Putty Road). If warranted realign the Reserve’s boundary fence in this area, in negotiation with other affected landholders, to more accurately follow the cadastral boundary (with allowance for natural features and “give-and-take” fencing).	Low	Minor / Moderate	Reserve boundary accurately identified and fenced.	Survey completed. Fencing completed (if necessary).

Action No.	Reserve Management and Administration - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
RMA4	If the opportunity arises – Council will consider consolidating additional lands along the southern side of Wollombi Brook, ideally from Wollombi Bridge in the west to the Scout Hall in the east, to realise a larger area of public land (with the potential for longer walking routes/loops, such as between the Reserve or Scout Hall to Wollombi Bridge, and for management as a vegetated buffer to nearby land uses).	HIGH	High	Enlarged public lands. Associated scenic, recreation and buffer opportunities.	Size of the public land estate along Wollombi Brook.
<b>6.6.2 Management and Maintenance</b>					
RMA5	<p>Ensure that adequate Council staff resources, especially to undertake park/facility maintenance and management site visits or inspections and on-ground works, are dedicated to provide for the Reserve's inspection/patrol and management/maintenance. This resourcing and effort will be commensurate with the Reserve's location, assets, "profile" and usage levels as well as being guided by Council's adopted service standards for parks and reserves.</p> <p>Maintenance and management may be undertaken on a contract basis where this is efficient, cost-effective and delivers outcomes that meet Council's specified standards (and the requirements of this Plan of Management). This includes potentially arranging with local organisations or residents to be involved in the Reserve's maintenance/management.</p>	HIGH (on-going)	Moderate	Continued provision of adequate Reserve maintenance and management capacity.	Number of staff (and contract or other resources) allocated to Reserve, and changes over time. Council's annual Operating Plan and Budget.
<b>6.6.3 Planning and Development Approvals (Including Native Title)</b>					
RMA6	<p>SEPP (Infrastructure) 2007 allows Council to undertake certain construction or maintenance works within the Reserve (as a park or other public reserve, including Crown land under a Council manager) without planning assessment and approval. This is as "exempt development" or as "without consent works" (being development "for the purposes of implementing a plan of management adopted for the land") under the SEPP.</p> <p>However Council may choose to undertake appropriate environmental assessments and approval procedures (including obtaining development consent and other approvals/permits as prudent) for larger works/projects –</p>	Low (on-going)	Minor / Moderate (if undertaken and depending on assessment / approval pathway)	Environmental assessment and development approval procedures applied (where Council deems necessary).	Type and number of projects assessed. Development approvals obtained where required.

Action No.	Reserve Management and Administration - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
RMA6 (cont'd)	such as those with the potential to significantly impact the area's values or significantly impact surrounding land uses.				
RMA7	Where it is proposed to construct or establish a public work on the Reserve (as Crown land) if/where Native Title is not extinguished, and that work is not shown on the Masterplan or sufficiently described in this Plan of Management to determine its location, prior to approval Council will notify (and give an opportunity to comment) any representative Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander bodies, registered Native Title bodies corporate and registered Native Title claimants in relation to the land or waters covered by the reservation or lease as required under the Commonwealth <i>Native Title Act 1993</i> .	<b>HIGH</b> (on-going)	Minor	Appropriate consideration of Native Title implications of other public works.	Public works are consistent with the <i>Native Title Act 1993</i> (Comm).
<b>6.6.4 Stakeholder Engagement</b>					
RMA8	Continue to engage with, support and involve neighbours, stakeholders and the community to contribute to and assist in the Reserve's management – such as local Landcare groups, progress associations, or schools (also see Action RMA17 below). These engagement/involvement programmes will be directed towards projects and priorities consistent with the directions of this Plan of Management.	<b>Medium</b> (on-going)	Minor	Effective stakeholder / community engagement. Supplementing Council management resources.	Number of engagement initiatives annually. Participant satisfaction and feedback.
<b>6.6.5 Monitoring</b>					
RMA9	Undertake periodic monitoring and assessment of the Reserve's assets/values, usage levels, management issues as well as the effectiveness and cost-efficiency of management measures being employed – to inform the Reserve's management and assist Council in adjusting/refining its management efforts (within the parameters of this Plan of Management).	<b>Medium</b>	Minor	Up-to-date Reserve information. Continued review and effectiveness of management.	Monitoring or assessment reports / data. Observation.

Action No.	Reserve Management and Administration - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
6.6.6 Safety, Security and Hazards					
RMA10	Encourage Reserve users and neighbours to report any safety concerns, incidents of damage or anti-social behavior, and management issues to Council.	Low (on-going)	Negligible	Increased Council awareness of safety or other management issues.	Number of reported / recorded issues annually.
RMA11	Flood safety/warning advice will be included in the orientation/welcome or advisory signage at the Reserve’s visitor entry points (see Action UFD13).	HIGH	Negligible	Visitors informed / aware of flood risks.	Observation. Flood safety/warning advice in place.
RMA12	Visitors will not be permitted lit or use fires within the Reserve.	HIGH (on-going)	n/a	Reduced risks of bushfire ignitions.	Levels of compliance. Number of enforcement actions annually.
RMA13	Consider the installation of an Adjustable Fire Danger Ratings Sign at a prominent position on the Reserves’ southern margin, fronting Putty Road, to alert visitors of the prevailing fire danger rating.	Low	Minor	Visitors informed / aware of prevailing fire dangers.	Adjustable Fire Danger Ratings Sign in place, and operational.
RMA14	Council may, at its discretion, close the Reserve at times of declared or expected “catastrophic” bushfire risk or on Total Fire Ban days or when flood events are forecast/imminent. Closures will be notified on-line, as well as using temporary signage on-site (if feasible).	HIGH	Negligible	Visitor safety. Reduced risks of bushfire ignitions.	Number of notified closures annually.

Action No.	Reserve Management and Administration - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
RMA15	Periodically undertake a hazardous tree assessment, by a suitably qualified arborist, and carry out necessary actions to isolate, or make safe, any hazardous trees.	Medium (on-going)	Moderate	Safety inspections undertaken, and tree hazard issues addressed.	Inspection findings. Grounds maintenance records and observation.
<b>6.6.7 Revenue, Funding and Resourcing</b>					
RMA16	Fees from licences, permits, hiring charges or others usage as well as other revenue (for Council) generated on-site will be returned to help fund the Reserve's upkeep, management and improvement – to the fullest extent possible under the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> and <i>Crown Lands Management Act 2016</i> and associated regulations	HIGH (on-going)	Negligible	Maximum cost recovery and re-investment of fees and revenue generated on-site back into Reserve.	Reserve's annual income and operational/works budget allocation. Cost recovery percentage annually.
RMA17	Involve volunteers (individuals or groups) in the Reserve's management where this is cost-effective and/or builds community support for the Reserve and its protection/management – such as community vegetation or biodiversity surveys, "citizen scientist" programmes, weed control or native vegetation planning, track maintenance, etc. Volunteer projects will be directed towards actions and priorities consistent with the directions of this Plan of Management.	Medium (on-going)	Minor	Greater community involvement / support for Reserve's management. Effective engagement of volunteers. Council management resources supplemented.	Number of volunteer projects annually. Participant satisfaction and feedback.

Action No.	Reserve Management and Administration - Actions	Implementation			
		Priority	Resource Estimation	Performance Target	Means of Assessment
RMA18	Regularly pursue grant and external funding for on-ground environmental works, environmental education, facility maintenance or provision, and other actions.	Medium (on-going)	Negligible	Securing additional funds for Reserve's upkeep, management and improvement.	Amount of grant and external funding secured annually.
<b>6.6.8 Foreign Services/Utilities and Easements</b>					
RMA19	Liaise with utility providers, foreign service operators or third parties with infrastructure through or within the Reserve, to establish effective and on-going communication protocols and procedures regarding their management requirements/operations and measures to reduce impacts on the Reserve and its values.	Low (on-going)	Negligible	Minimal impacts on Reserve values and uses by utilities and foreign services.	Utility and foreign service management agreements in place, effective, and adhered to.
RMA20	Grant easements through the Reserve for stormwater management and other public utilities (to the extent permitted/required by the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> , <i>Crown Lands Management Act 2016</i> and other applicable legislation) with conditions as required to ensure the protection of Reserve assets, values and uses. (The granting of easements of over Crown land will also be subject to the provisions of the <i>Native Title Act 1993</i> and Division 8.7 of the <i>Crown Lands Management Act 2016</i> .)	Low (on-going)	Negligible	Provision for essential public utilities while protecting Reserve assets, values and uses	Number of new easements granted.
RMA21	Council will oppose the creation of any additional (foreign) services or utility installations, or easements, through the Reserve – unless there is an advantage for the Reserve and its management, or an overriding community benefit. (The granting of easements of over Crown land will also be subject to the provisions of the <i>Native Title Act 1993</i> and Division 8.7 of the <i>Crown Lands Management Act 2016</i> .)	Medium (on-going)	Negligible	No new utilities or foreign services installation or easements.	Incidence of new utilities or foreign services.



## 7. FUNDING AND IMPLEMENTATION

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### 7.1 FUNDING

This Plan of Management contains a considerable list of management actions. Some of these are management guidelines, providing policies or directions to guide future decision-making for the Reserve's management.

However there are also numerous physical actions that will require the commitment of Council funds or resources – such as staff time – to implement. Council does not have the capacity to undertake all of these, more resource-intensive, management actions immediately.

Management and development of Bulga Stock Reserve will ultimately be reliant on, and largely determined by, the funding and resources available to Council.

As such, the funding of the Reserve's capital works, upgrading (for environmental or visitor use reasons), maintenance and other management actions must be assessed against the other priorities of Council. Budget allocations will be assigned as part of Council's wider rolling Council Delivery Program and shorter-term annual Operational Plans, annual budget cycles and business planning for Council's various units.

Council also provides funds and resources for the operational management of the Reserve – including staff salaries, contract services, repairs and maintenance and the like – and may, in future, raise some (albeit limited) income from the Reserve's use (such as licence payments, permits fees, etc.). However Council is likely to invariably fund the Reserve's management, and development, in excess of any net revenue generated by the area.

In view of these financial realities/constraints a priority was assigned to each Management Action identified in Section 6 – High, Medium or Low – to reflect their relative importance and implementation timing in order to achieve this Plan's objectives. Actions can also be single once-off tasks or, as for many actions, "ongoing" – where the action in question will require funding throughout the Reserve's management and/or the life of this Plan. As noted above, many actions which are of a more management guideline, policy or direction-setting character also may not require the direct allocation of resources.

Funding and resources may come from many sources – including specific-purpose grant funding, volunteer involvement, corporate donations, stakeholder fund raising, bequeaths, university projects, and others.

As a result of this "reality", identified Management Actions of different priority may proceed in differing orders or at different rates – and high priority actions need not necessarily precede lower-priority actions. Implementation of some actions may also be contingent on or influenced by the results of other actions, changing management circumstances or opportunities to gain management efficiencies. In some cases, the resources to deliver a low priority or longer-term action may be available before a high priority action. This may be due to the amount of money required, or the project being funded from resources other than Council funds, or factors outside of Council's control.

## **8.2 EVALUATION, REPORTING AND REVIEW**

### **8.2.1 Evaluation and Reporting**

The objectives, actions and performance measures outlined in this Plan of Management provide a basis for qualitative reporting on the performance of Council in managing Bulga Stock Reserve and progress in implementing this Plan. Evaluation of performance should be undertaken at the end of each financial year to align with Council's reporting requirements.

The Reserve's management, development and financial performance should – ideally – be included in Council's Annual Report. Council may also choose to audit and report on the implementation of this Plan of Management as part of its established reporting practices.

### **8.2.2 Review**

Typically a Plan of Management will remain relevant and have a time horizon of approximately 10 years. However, management strategies and actions can be reviewed and updated prior to this “use-by” date if required.

Implementation of this Plan and its ongoing relevance will be reviewed annually as part of Council's internal and external reporting processes.

Consideration of the need for a major review and update of this Plan of Management should occur ten years from the date of adoption of the Plan, if not undertaken prior.

# APPENDICES

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## APPENDIX A

### Gazettal Records – Lot 7001 DP 93633

- NSW Government Gazette No. 378, 28 July 1884 (folio 5123)  
Reserved from sale for the purposes of "water supply and access thereto" as Water Reserve No. 42, under the section 4 of the *Crown Lands Alienation Act 1861*

5123

[4917] Department of Lands,  
Sydney, 28th July, 1884.

**RESERVES FROM SALE FOR WATER SUPPLY AND ACCESS THERETO.**

**H**IS Excellency the Governor, with the advice of the Executive Council, directs it to be notified that in pursuance of the provisions of the 4th section of the Crown Lands Alienation Act of 1861, the land specified in the Schedule appended hereto shall be reserved from sale for water supply and access thereto.

**JAMES S. FARNELL.**

No. 213. County of Bathurst, parish of Three Brothers, area about 2 acres. The Crown Lands within the following boundaries: Commencing on the left bank of Caloola Creek at a south-eastern corner of portion No. 316; and bounded thence by an eastern boundary of said portion No. 316 bearing north 1 chain; thence by south-eastern boundaries of that portion bearing north 82 degrees 23 minutes east 6 chains 40 links, and north 56 degrees 38 minutes east 7 chains 13 links to the west side of the road forming the eastern boundary of said portion No. 316; thence by that side of that road bearing south 29 minutes east upwards, to the point of commencement.  
[Ms. 84-13,518]

No. 42. County of Hunter, parish of Whybrow, area about 12 acres. The Crown Lands within the following boundaries: Commencing on the left bank of the Wollombi Brook at the north-west corner of portion No. 2, Joseph Onus' 1,000 acres; and bounded thence on part of the east by part of the western boundary of that portion bearing south to the north-east corner of portion No. 64 of 2 acres; thence on the south and the remainder of the east by the north and west boundary of that portion bearing west and south to its south-west corner; on the south-west by the north-eastern side of a road 1 chain wide bearing north-westerly to the south boundary of portion No. 4 of 100 acres; thence on the north by part of the south boundary of that portion bearing east to its south-east corner; thence on the west by the east boundary of that portion bearing north to the Wollombi Brook aforesaid; and thence again on the north by that brook upwards, to the point of commencement.  
[Ms. 84-13,519]

No. 378, 28TH JULY, 1884.—2.



- **NSW Government Gazette No. 180, 17 March 1888** (folio 1972)  
Reserved from sale for "travelling stock" as Reserve No. 5783 (and reserved from lease as Number 5808) under section 101 the *Crown Lands Act 1884*

1972

[1704]

Department of Lands,  
Sydney, 17th March, 1888.

**RESERVES FROM SALE FOR TRAVELLING STOCK.**

**H**IS Excellency the Governor, with the advice of the Executive Council, directs it to be notified that, in pursuance of the provisions of the 101st section of the Crown Lands Act of 1884, the land specified in the Schedule appended hereto shall be reserved from sale for travelling stock, and is hereby reserved accordingly.

THOS. GARRETT.

**EASTERN DIVISION.**

**LAND DISTRICT**

[Ms. 88-824]

No. 5,722. County of containing an area of abo the following boundaries Ellenborough River, at th M. J. Kirkman's conditio thence on part of the portion bearing north t thence by part of that bc of that portion bearing boundary of portion 17; part of the north-easter north and south-easterly boundarv of portion 62

**LAND DISTRICT OF SINGLETON.**

No. 5,782. County of Northumberland, parish of Warkworth, containing an area of about 376 acres. The Crown Lands within the following boundaries: Commencing at the north-west corner of portion 97, E. Parmeter's conditional purchase of 40 acres; and bounded thence on part of east by the west boundaries of that portion and portion 144, bearing south to the south-west corner of the last-mentioned portion; on part of the north by the south boundary of that portion bearing east to the west boundary of portion 161; thence by parts of the west and south boundaries of that portion bearing south and east to the westernmost boundary of portion 164; thence by that boundary bearing south to the north boundary of portion 129, being part of travelling stock reserve 21, notified 23rd January, 1886; on part of the south by part of that boundary of that portion bearing west to its north-west corner; on the remainder of the east by part of the west boundary of that portion bearing south to the north-east corner of J. Hale's 100 acres; on the remainder of the south by part of the north boundary of that portion bearing west to a north-eastern side of the road from Jerry's Plains to Putty; on the south-west and west by that road bearing north-westerly and north to a point due west of the commencing point; and on the remainder of the north by part of the south side of a road 1 chain wide, part of the north side of which forms the south boundaries of portions 92 and 93, bearing east to the point of commencement. Reserved from lease as No. 5,807 this date.

[Ms. 87-15,463]

No. 5,783. County of Hunter, parish of Whybrow, containing an area of about 10 acres. The Crown Lands within the following boundaries: Commencing on the left bank of Wollombi Brook, at the north-west corner of portion 2, Joseph Onus' 1,000 acres; and bounded thence on part of the east by part of the west boundary of that portion bearing south to the north-east corner of 22, a site for Public School paddock; on the south by the north boundary of that portion bearing west to its north-west corner; on the remainder of the east by the west boundary of that portion and portion 64, a site for Public School, bearing south to the north-east side of the road 1 chain wide from Jerry's Plains to the Bulga; on the south-west by that road bearing north-westerly to a south boundary

of portion 4; thence by that boundary and the easternmost boundary of that portion bearing east and north to Wollombi Brook aforesaid; and thence by that brook upwards, to the point of commencement.

Reserved from lease as No. 5,808 this date.

[Ms. 87-15,463]

No. 5,784. County of Northumberland. Parish of MIMBODIE.

- **NSW Government Gazette No. 283, 3 May 1888** (folio 3155)  
Declared as Travelling Stock Reserve No. 5808, reserved from lease, for the notified purpose of travelling stock – as part of the wider declaration of travelling stock and camping reserves for “the accommodation and agistment of travelling stock, and to enable Inspectors of stock to protect the grass on such Reserves” under the *Public Watering Places Act 1884*

Department of Mines,  
Stock Branch,  
Sydney, 1st May, 1888

**PUBLIC WATERING PLACES ACT OF 1884.—DECLARATION OF RESERVES.**

FROM 1ST JANUARY TO 31ST MARCH, 1888.

**H**IS Excellency the Governor, with the advice of the Executive Council, directs it to be notified, for general information, that the Reserves particularly specified in the Schedule below, so far as the same have not been cancelled under the Crown Lands Act of 1884, or under any Act repealed by that Act, are hereby declared Travelling Stock and Camping Reserves for the accommodation and agistment of travelling stock, and to enable Inspectors of stock to protect the grass on such Reserves.

FRANCIS ABIGAIL.

County.	Parish.	No. of Reserve.	Area.	Date of Notification.	Folio.	No. of Papers.	For what purpose notified.
110	110	5054	540 0 0	17 Mar...	1978	88- 587	do do
<b>FROM LEASE.</b>							
Cooper.....	Stanbridge .....	5764	540 0 0	17 Mar...	1978	88- 587	do do
Do .....	Pulletop and Tabbita North .....	5765	640 0 0	17 " ...	"	"	do do
Do .....	Stanbridge and Bingai .....	5766	640 0 0	17 " ...	"	"	do do
Do .....	Pulletop .....	5767	640 0 0	17 " ...	1979	"	do do
Cowper .....	Nurathulla .....	5382	640 0 0	4 Feb. ...	963	87-14899	do do
Do .....	do .....	5383	640 0 0	4 " ...	"	"	do do
Cunningham .....	Gunningbland, Dulhunty, &c. ....	4256	1175 1 0	10 Mar...	1817	12498	Travelling stock.
Evelyn .....	Milparinka .....	5553	640 0 0	25 Feb. ...	1499	16192	Travelling stock and camping.
Flinders .....	Whitbarrow .....	5522	640 0 0	18 " ...	1360	15631	do do
Fitzgerald .....	Fiby .....	5778	640 0 0	17 Mar...	1979	88- 895	do do
Do .....	do .....	5779	640 0 0	17 " ...	"	"	do do
Georgiana .....	Irraman .....	5710	308 0 0	15 Feb. ...	1284	87- 7590	do do
Hunter .....	Whybrow .....	5808	10 0 0	17 Mar. ...	1976	15463	Travelling stock.

- **NSW Government Gazette No. 529, 29 July 1893** (folio 5855)  
Additional protections for travelling stock and camping reserves, declared under the *Public Watering Places Act 1884*, reserving them from occupation under miner's rights, or under business licences, for residence or business purposes

[5732]

Department of Mines and Agriculture,  
Stock Branch,  
Sydney, 25th July, 1893.

**RESERVATION OF RESERVES DECLARED TRAVELLING STOCK AND CAMPING RESERVES, FOR THE ACCOMMODATION AND AGISTMENT OF TRAVELLING STOCK, UNDER THE PUBLIC WATERING PLACES ACT OF 1884, FROM OCCUPATION UNDER MINER'S RIGHTS OR BUSINESS LICENSES FOR RESIDENCE OR BUSINESS PURPOSES.**

**H**IS Excellency the Governor, with the advice of the Executive Council, directs it to be notified that the reserves notified under the Crown Lands Acts, which, under the Public Watering Places Act of 1884 have been declared travelling stock and camping reserves by notification in the Government Gazette, shall be and the same are hereby reserved, and shall until they are cancelled under the Crown Lands Acts, but no longer, continue to be reserved, in accordance with the 26th section of the Mining Act of 1874, from occupation under Miner's Rights or Business Licenses for residence or business purposes.

This refers to reserves declared travelling stock and camping reserves up to the 31st December, 1892, under the Public Watering Places Act of 1884.

**NOTE.**—This reservation is in lieu of one appearing in the Government Gazette of the 18th October, 1892, folio 8327, which is hereby revoked, and is also in lieu of reservations under 26th section of the Mining Act of 1874, contained in Gazette notices of 17th May, 1892, pp. 4149, 4150, 4151, 23rd August, 1892, pp. 6813, 6814, 18th November, 1892, pp. 9153, 9154, 9155, and 14th March, 1893, pp. 2083, 2084,—which are hereby revoked.

T. M. SLATTERY.



- **NSW Government Gazette No. 80, 23 April 1920** (folios 2515-6)  
Bulga Stock Reserve placed under control of the Singleton Pastures Protection Board (as part of the Statewide transfer of travelling stock and camping reserves to be under the control of Pastures Protection Boards) under section 26A of the *Pastures Protection Act 1912*

[6981]

Department of Lands,  
Sydney, 23rd April, 1920.

NOTIFICATION PLACING TRAVELLING STOCK AND CAMPING RESERVES UNDER CONTROL OF  
PASTURES PROTECTION BOARDS.

IT is hereby notified under the provisions of Section 26A of the Pastures Protection Act, 1912, that the travelling stock and camping reserves, or parts thereof not being held under lease other than annual lease or occupation license or not being within State forest or embraced by a public road or area under the control of a Shire Council, and being those mentioned in the schedule hereunder are placed under the control of the respective Pastures Protection Boards set forth in the said Schedule for a period of five years.

[Ms. 1920-3,795]

P. F. LOUGHLIN, Minister for Lands.

Purpose.	No.	Parish.	County.	Remarks.
Camping reserve ... ..	24,532	Shenstone ... ..	Durham ... ..	.....
<b>PASTURES PROTECTION DISTRICT OF SINGLETON.</b>				
Travelling stock and camping reserve...	44,773	Herschell ... ..	Durham ... ..	.....
Do do ... ..	14,552	Foy ... ..	do ... ..	.....
Do do ... ..	24,532	Shenstone ... ..	do ... ..	.....
Do do ... ..	21	Wollombi ... ..	Northumber- land. ... ..	.....
Travelling stock reserve ... ..	5,790	Burton ... ..	do ... ..	.....
Do do ... ..	5,811	do ... ..	do ... ..	.....
Do do ... ..	5,811	Milbrodale ... ..	do ... ..	.....
Do do ... ..	17,817	Lemington ... ..	Hunter ... ..	.....
Travelling stock and camping reserve...	18,550	do ... ..	do ... ..	.....
Travelling stock reserve ... ..	5,783	Whybrow ... ..	do ... ..	.....
Do do ... ..	18,098	Bulga ... ..	do ... ..	.....
Do do ... ..	23,754	do ... ..	do ... ..	.....
Travelling stock and camping reserve...	5,793	do ... ..	do ... ..	.....
Do do ... ..	48,612	Lemington ... ..	do ... ..	.....

- **NSW Government Gazette No. 164, 31 October 1930** (folios 4479, and 4483-4)  
Extension of Pastures Protection Boards' control of travelling stock and camping reserves (Statewide) under section 26A of the *Pastures Protection Act 1912* (as amended)

(9042)	Sydney, 31st October, 1930.	104, Parish Linsdowne, County Macquarie. 104, Parish Stewart, County Macquarie.
<b>NOTIFICATION EXTENDING THE PERIOD OF CONTROL OF TRAVELLING STOCK RESERVES, &amp;c., BY PASTURES PROTECTION BOARDS.</b>		<b>PASTURES PROTECTION DISTRICT OF SINGLETON.</b> <b>RESERVES THE CONTROL OF WHICH EXPIRED 22ND APRIL, 1930.</b>
<p>IT is hereby notified that, in pursuance of the provisions of section 26A of the Pastures Protection Act, 1912 (as amended by the Act No. 49, 1918, and the Act No. 25, 1920), the travelling stock or camping reserves (as defined in that Act) or parts thereof particularised hereunder, and the period of control of which by the respective Pastures Protection Boards for the districts mentioned expired on the dates hereunder specified respectively, are hereby placed under control of those Boards for a further period of five years from such respective dates.</p>		14,552, Parish Foy, County Durham. 24,532, Parish Shenstone, County Durham. 18,098, Parish Bulga, County Hunter. 23,754, Parish Bulga, County Hunter. 5,793, Parish Bulga, County Hunter.
R. T. BALL, Minister for Lands.		
<b>LAND BOARD DISTRICT OF ARMIDALE.</b> <b>PASTURES PROTECTION DISTRICT OF INVERELL.</b> <b>RESERVES THE CONTROL OF WHICH EXPIRED 22ND APRIL.</b>		<b>No.</b> <b>Locality.</b> 18,550, Parish Lemington, County Hunter. 5,783, Parish Whybrow, County Hunter. 21, Parish Wollombi, County Hunter. 48,402, Parish Carrow, County Durham. 34,932, Parish Darlington, County Durham. 197, Parish Liddell, County Durham. 11,217, Parish Sedgfield, County Durham. 28,453, Parish Lemington, County Hunter.
		<b>PASTURES PROTECTION DISTRICT OF UPPER HUNTER.</b> <b>RESERVES THE CONTROL OF WHICH EXPIRED 22ND APRIL.</b>

- **NSW Government Gazette No. 68, 8 April 1988** (folio 2169)  
Revocation of reservation from sale for Travelling Stock Reserve No. 5783 and Water Reserve No. 42 (both being Bulga Stock Reserve) under section 30 of the *Crown Lands Consolidation Act 1913*

#### **REVOCATION OF RESERVES FROM SALE**

IN pursuance of the provisions of section 30, Crown Lands Consolidation Act 1913, the reserves from sale described hereunder are revoked.

I. R. CAUSLEY, Minister for Natural Resources.

Sydney, 8th April, 1988.

*Land District and Shire—Singleton  
Parish—Milbrodale; County—Northumberland*

Reserve Number: 55825.

*Land District and Shire—Singleton  
Parish—Whybrow; County—Hunter*

**Reserve Number: 5783.**

**Purpose: For travelling stock.**

**Date of Notification: 17th March, 1888.**

**Area: About 3.6 hectares.**

**Part Revoked: The whole.**

**Papers Number: MD87 H 11.**

**Reserve Number: 42.**

**Purpose: For water supply.**

**Date of Notification: 28th July, 1884.**

**Area: About 3.6 hectares.**

**Part Revoked: The whole.**

**Papers Number: MD87 H 11.**

- **NSW Government Gazette No. 68, 8 April 1988** (folios 2170-1)  
Withdrawal/revocation of Bulga Stock Reserve from the control of the Maitland Pastures Protection Board (Denman-Singleton Pastures Protection District), as part of the Statewide withdrawal of travelling stock and other reserves from Pastures Protection Board control, under section 42(1) of the *Pastures Protection Act 1934*

#### **WITHDRAWAL OF RESERVES FROM CONTROL OF PASTURES PROTECTION BOARDS**

IN pursuance of the provisions of section 42 (1), Pastures Protection Act 1934, the parts of the reserves and reserves specified hereunder are withdrawn from the control of the Pastures Protection Board for the Pastures Protection District.

I. R. CAUSLEY, Minister for Natural Resources.

Sydney, 8th April, 1988.

*Land Board District—Maitland  
Pastures Protection District—Denman-Singleton*

*Parish Milbrodale, County Northumberland, Reserve No for Camping, notified 10th November, 1922.*

*Part withdrawn—that part of Reserve 55825 revoked th*

*Parish Putty, County Hunter, Reserve No. 18092 for Travelling Stock, notified 8th July, 1893.*

*Part withdrawn—part Reserve No. 18092 revoked this day.*

*(Placed under control, Gazette, 9th December, 1932.) MD87*

*Parish Whybrow, County Hunter, Reserve No. 5783 for Travelling Stock, notified 17th March, 1888.*

*Part withdrawn—part revoked this day.*

*(Placed under control, Gazette, 31st October, 1930.) MD87 H 11.*

- **NSW Government Gazette No. 123, 5 October 1990** (folio 8899)  
Notification of a Draft Crown Land Assessment of former Travelling Stock Reserve No. 5783 and Water Reserve No. 42 (Bulga Stock Reserve) under Part 3 of the *Crown Lands Act 1989* and *Crown Lands Regulation 1990*

**MAITLAND LANDS OFFICE  
NEWCASTLE ROAD  
EAST MAITLAND 2323  
POST OFFICE BOX 6  
PHONE (049) 302777  
FAX (049) 302742**

**ASSESSMENTS OF LAND UNDER PART  
3 OF THE CROWN LANDS ACT 1989  
AND CROWN LANDS REGULATION  
1990**

Draft assessments have been prepared for Crown land situated as described hereunder.

Inspection of these draft assessments may be made at Maitland Lands Office, Corner Newcastle Road and Banks Street, East Maitland and at the Council office at the address shown in the schedule hereunder, during normal business hours.

Submissions in writing will be accepted by the Regional Director, Maitland Lands Office, at the above address, until 4 p.m., Friday 9 November 1990.

**GARRY WEST**  
Minister for Tourism, Lands and Forests

About 7.7 hectares partly bounded by Neath, Quorrobolong and Melbourne Streets at East Cessnock, Parish of Cessnock, County of Northumberland. Cessnock City Council, North Avenue, Cessnock. MD90 H 347.

5.499 hectares, being Lot 2025 in D.P.729983 at Mount Hutton, Parish of Kahibah (Sheet 4), County of Northumberland. Lake Macquarie City Council, Main Road, Speers Point. MD87 H 161.

4144 square metres, being Lot 152 in D.P.729929 at Howes Valley, Parish of Bulga, County of Hunter. Singleton Shire Council, Queen Street, Singleton. MD90 H 94.

Crown land (formerly T.S.R. 5783 and W.R. 42) fronting both the Putty Road and Wollombi Brook, at Bulga, Parish of Whybrow, County of Hunter. Singleton Shire Council, Queen Street, Singleton. MD87 H 11.



- **NSW Government Gazette No. 82, 23 July 1993** (folio 4175)  
Reservation of Crown Land for the "public purpose of public recreation" as Reserve No. 170159 (Bulga Stock Reserve boundaries shown incorrectly) under section 87 of the *Crown Lands Act 1989*

23 July 1993

OFFICIAL NOTICES

4175

**MAITLAND OFFICE**  
**Department of Conservation and Land Management**  
**Newcastle Road, (P.O. Box 6), East Maitland, N.S.W. 2323**  
**Phone: (049) 34 2280; Fax: (049) 34 2252**

**ASSESSMENT OF LAND UNDER PART 3 OF THE CROWN LANDS ACT 1989 AND CROWN LANDS REGULATION 1990**

A DRAFT assessment has been prepared for Crown Land situated as described hereunder.

Inspection of this draft assessment may be made at the Maitland Office of the Department of Conservation and Land Management, Corner Newcastle Road and Banks Street, East Maitland, the Newcastle Office of the Department, 464 King Street, Newcastle and at the Council office at the address shown in the Schedule hereunder, during normal business hours.

Submissions in writing will be accepted by the District Manager, at the above address, until 4.00 p.m., Friday, 27th August, 1993.

GEORGE SOURIS, M.P.,  
Minister for Land and Water Conservation.

About 65 square metres adjacent to Lot 403, D.P. 755233 at Blacksmiths, Parish Kahibah, County Northumberland. Lake Macquarie City Council, Main Road, Speers Point. MD92 H 247.

**ADDITION TO RESERVED CROWN LAND**

PURSUANT to Section 88 of the Crown Lands Act 1989, the Crown Land specified in Schedule 1 is added to the reserved land specified in Schedule 2 hereunder.

GEORGE SOURIS, M.P.,  
Minister for Land and Water Conservation.

*Land District — Gosford;  
City — Lake Macquarie;  
Parish — Morisset;  
County — Northumberland*

**SCHEDULE 1**

2.67 hectares at Morisset, being Lot 545, D.P. 727762 and Lot 555, D.P. 821108. Torrens Title Identifiers: C.F. 545/727762 and C.F. 555/821108.

**SCHEDULE 2**

Reserve 91166 for public recreation and preservation of native flora and fauna notified 16th June, 1978, at Morisset. MD87 H 852.

**RESERVATION OF CROWN LAND**

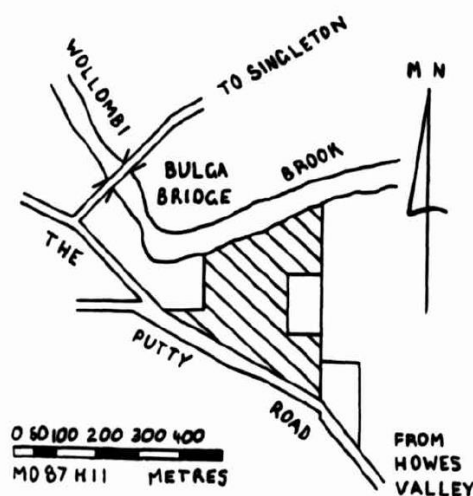
PURSUANT to Section 87 of the Crown Lands Act 1989, the Crown Land specified in Schedule 1 hereunder is reserved as specified in Schedule 2.

GEORGE SOURIS, M.P.,  
Minister for Land and Water Conservation.

*Land District and Shire — Singleton;  
Parish — Whybrow;  
County — Hunter*

**SCHEDULE 1**

The area shown by hatching on the diagram hereunder, about 4.9 hectares at Bulga.



**SCHEDULE 2**

Reserve 170159 from sale for the public purpose of public recreation. MD87 H 11.

**RESERVATION OF CROWN LAND**

PURSUANT to Section 87 of the Crown Lands Act 1989, the Crown Land specified in Schedule 1, hereunder is reserved as specified in Schedule 2.

GEORGE SOURIS, M.P.,  
Minister for Land and Water Conservation.

*Land District — Gosford;  
Shire — Wyong;  
Parish — Wallarah;  
County — Northumberland*

**SCHEDULE 1**

About 25.27 hectares at Chain Valley Bay, being Lots 593, 594 and 595, D.P. 727722. Torrens Title Identifiers: C.F. 593/727722, C.F. 594/727722 and C.F. 595/727722.

**SCHEDULE 2**

Reserve 170158 for the public purpose of public recreation. MD86 H 294.

- **NSW Government Gazette No. 91, 20 August 1993** (folio 4691)  
Establishment of Bulga Public Recreation (R. 170159) Reserve Trust under section 92(1) of the *Crown Lands Act 1989*

### **ESTABLISHMENT OF RESERVE TRUST**

**PURSUANT** to section 92 (1) of the *Crown Lands Act 1989*, the reserve trust specified in **Schedule 1** hereunder is established under the name stated and is appointed as trustee of the reserve specified in **Schedule 2** hereunder.

**GEORGE SOURIS, M.P.,**  
Minister for Land and Water Conservation.

Parish — Whybrow;  
County — Hunter;  
Land District and Shire — Singleton

#### **SCHEDULE 1**

**Bulga Public Recreation (R.170159) Reserve Trust.**

#### **SCHEDULE 2**

Reserve 170159 for the purpose of public recreation notified in the *Government Gazette* of 23 July 1993. MD87 H 11.

- **NSW Government Gazette No. 135, 3 November 1995** (folio 7591)  
Erratum replacing previous Government Gazette notice of 23 July 1993 (Folio 4175) regarding reservation of Crown Land under section 87 of the *Crown Lands Act 1989* in respect of R. 170159, and showing corrected boundaries of Bulga Stock Reserve

### **ERRATUM**

**THIS** notice replaces the notice published in the *Government Gazette* of 23 July 1993, Folio 4175, under the heading "RESERVATION OF CROWN LAND IN RESPECT OF R.170159".

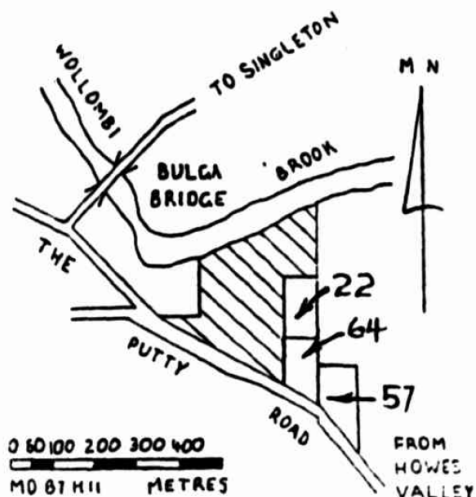
Reservation of Crown Land pursuant to section 87 of the *Crown Lands Act 1989*, the Crown Land specified in **Schedule 1** hereunder is Reserved as specified in **Schedule 2**.

**KIM YEADON, M.P.,**  
Minister for Land and Water Conservation.

#### **SCHEDULE 1**

Land District and Shire — Singleton;  
Parish — Whybrow;  
County — Hunter.

The area shown by hatching on the diagram hereunder, about 3.6 hectares at Bulga.



#### **SCHEDULE 2**

Reserve 170159, for the public purpose of public recreation. File No.: MD87 H 11.

## APPENDIX B

### Regional Level Strategies and Plans

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#### ***Hunter Regional Plan 2036 (2016)***

The Hunter Regional Plan is intended to guide the NSW Government's land use planning priorities and decisions over the next 20 years. Singleton local government area is part of the Hunter Region, and the Plan states that its directions "needs to be incorporated into each stakeholder's future activities". It notes "funding will be provided to growth areas for the transport, health, education and justice sectors, as well as for open spaces".

As a high level planning document it makes no direct reference to Bulga, or the Bulga Stock Reserve, however several of its directions are of some relevance for the Reserve's planning and management.

Direction 18 is to "enhance access to recreational facilities and connect open spaces" with relevant actions including:

- facilitating more recreational walking and cycling paths
- delivering connected biodiversity rich corridors and open space areas for community enjoyment;
- enhance public access to natural areas; and
- assist councils to develop open space and recreation strategies that identify a range of accessible open space and recreation opportunities, integrate open space, active transport and recreation networks, and improve public foreshore access

Direction 14 to protect and connect natural areas includes the recognition that biodiversity corridors, such as continuous vegetation along riparian strips (such as Wollombi Brook), can also have "significant scenic values and often support recreation" (in addition to supporting vegetation, habitat and ecological processes and allowing for wildlife movement). The Plan recognises that investing in conservation (including biodiversity offsets) which protects, and where possible enhances, natural vegetation and habitat connections will deliver multiple benefits to the environment and the community.

Direction 19 provides for identification and protection of cultural heritage (both Aboriginal cultural heritage and historic heritage).

Action 10.3 is to apply increased biosecurity measures to counter the negative impacts of weeds, pests and diseases.

Action 16.1 is to "improve the region's resilience to flooding" and bushfire, as well as other hazards including the risk of climate change.

#### ***Hunter Local Strategic Plan (Hunter Local Land Services) 2016-2021 (2016)***

Hunter Local Land Services (HLLS) delivers services and programs that add value to local industries, enhance natural resources, protect primary production from pests and disease, and help local communities prepare for and respond to emergencies, such as flood and fire.

The HLLS region includes the Singleton local government area. The *Hunter Local Strategic Plan 2016-21* sets out the organisation's goals and priorities and directs HLLS' customer services, partnerships



and investments across the region over the five years to 2021. The Plan has been developed to be consistent with the Local Land Services Act (2013). It describes the strategies by which the specified four goals, and related priorities, will be addressed. Three goals have relevance for Bulga Stock Reserve.

Under Goal 1: Resilient, Self-Reliant and Prepared Local Communities priorities relevant to Bulga Stock Reserve include:

- improving flood preparedness;
- supporting Aboriginal communities in “Caring for Country”; and
- supporting adaptation to climate risks.

Goal 2: Biosecure, Profitable, Productive and Sustainable Primary Industries includes priorities to:

- support land managers ... to manage existing weeds and environmental woody weeds, and prevent the spread of new and emerging weeds, along with improving coordination of weed management in the region; and
- to manage pest animals.

Applicable priorities under Goal 3: Healthy, Diverse, Connected Natural Environments include:

- improving the condition of rivers and wetlands;
- improving native vegetation connectivity; and
- maintaining or improving native vegetation.

Specific actions identified in the Plan particularly relevant for Bulga Stock Reserve include:

- 3.3 – conduct surveillance and monitoring of animal and plant pests and diseases;
- 4.3 – deliver a Landcare Support Program with ... land managers to achieve priority landcare outcomes;
- 4.6 – collaborate with ... land managers to deliver effective weed management, and develop Regional Weeds Strategy;
- 4.9 – support the delivery of the National Landcare Programme, Catchment Action NSW, the Green Army Programme, and other government programmes;
- 8.2 – provide best practice native vegetation management advice;
- 8.3 – provide information and education services to assist landholders comply with weed, pest, disease ... requirements; and
- 9.3 – provide information to users of Crown land as to their biosecurity and natural resource management responsibilities.

### ***Upper Hunter Strategic Regional Land Use Plan (2012)***

The Upper Hunter Strategic Regional Land Use Plan (UHSRLUP) is a sub-regional land use strategy that applies to Local Government Areas (LGAs) within the Upper Hunter Region, including the Singleton LGA. It is a broad “framework” 20 year plan that outlines a range of key challenges facing the Upper Hunter region and lists over-arching actions to address these challenges.

The Plan identifies that “growth of the coal and gas extraction industries will be one of the most significant factors in shaping the communities and the infrastructure needs of the Upper Hunter region over the next few decades”. It notes that “as a result of population and economic growth” the “demand will increase for social infrastructure such as health, education, emergency services and community and recreational facilities”. This increased demand is also expected to compound any existing deficiencies in this social infrastructure.

The Plan promotes the potential for targeted biodiversity off-setting to “deliver regional conservation gains” and the value of Aboriginal cultural heritage landform mapping to assist in the investigation, identification and protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage values.

## APPENDIX C

### Singleton Council Strategies, Plans and Reports

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#### ***Singleton Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027 (2017)***

The Singleton Strategic Community Plan (SCP) is a long term vision for the community, outlining the expectation, aspirations and challenges for the Singleton community into the future. It provides clear understanding of the community's priorities and aligns the services and activities Council provide with expectations and needs. It has a ten year timeframe and is a high level strategy.

The SCP outlines five pillars to group the challenges and priorities, being Our People, Our Places, Our Environment, Our Economy and Our Leadership. Relevant strategies under these pillars, which are applicable to Bulga Stock Reserve as shown in the following table.

Pillar	Strategy
<b>Our People</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ 1.1 Provide services and facilities that meet the needs of our community at different stages of life</li><li>▪ 1.2 Provide social, recreational and cultural services which educate, inspire and entertain</li><li>▪ 1.3 Promote, facilitate and provide services for public health, healthy living and lifestyles</li></ul>
<b>Our Places</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ 2.1 Provide safe and well maintained facilities and infrastructure</li></ul>
<b>Our Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ 3.1 Collaborate to enhance, protect and improve our environment</li></ul>
<b>Our Economy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ 4.6 Seek funding to provide infrastructure, programs, services or events which value add to the delivery of the objectives of Singleton 2027</li></ul>
<b>Our Leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ 5.1 Council's service delivery is aligned with our community's needs and delivered the best way possible</li></ul>

Some of these "ideas, desires and suggestions" that were offered by the community during preparation of the SCP that are applicable to Bulga Stock Reserve include the following:

- enhanced natural attractions; and
- parks, gardens and facilities are integrated.

#### ***Singleton Delivery Program 2017-2021 (2017)***

The Delivery Program drives the medium-term action plan for Council to turn the Strategic Community Plan (SCP) into reality. It outlines deliverables that are achievable, measurable and provide direction to be able to report on implementation at the end of the four year period.

In relation to the Pillars and Strategies outlined in the SCP, the Delivery Program includes the following deliverables relevant, in varying degrees, for Bulga Stock Reserve.

Pillar	Strategy	Deliverable
<b>Our People</b>	1.1: Provide services and facilities that meet the needs of our Community at different stages of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1.2 Deliver or facilitate the delivery of all priority actions from Council's Community Development Strategies including actions relation to ... cultural, social, recreational and leisure aspects and Aboriginal engagement.</li> </ul>
	1.2: Provide social, recreational and cultural services which educate, inspire and entertain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.2.1 Integrate Council's Cultural, Social and Recreational Development Strategies</li> <li></li> </ul>
	1.3: Promote, facilitate and provide services for public health, healthy living and lifestyles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.3.3 Address healthy living and lifestyles as part of Council's Community Development Strategies</li> </ul>
<b>Our Places</b>	2.1: Provide safe and well-maintained facilities and infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1.5 Implement the Singleton Open Space and Recreational Needs Strategy</li> <li>2.1.6 Maintain Singleton's open spaces in line with the Service Level Agreements</li> </ul>
<b>Our Environment</b>	3.1: Collaborate to enhance, protect and improve our environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1.3 Support community organisations to obtain funding for environmental projects</li> </ul>
<b>Our Economy</b>	4.6: Seek funding to provide infrastructure, programs, services or events which value add to the delivery of the objectives of Singleton 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.6.2 Drive the attraction of external funding for Council priority projects</li> </ul>
<b>Our Leadership</b>	5.1: Council's service delivery is aligned with our Community's needs and delivered the best way possible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5.1.7 Demonstrate delivery of services aligned to community needs</li> </ul>

### ***Singleton Operational Plan 2019-2020 (2019)***

The Operational Plan identifies the individual projects and activities that Council will undertake in 2019/2020 to achieve the commitments made in the Delivery Program and in turn, the Community Strategic Plan.

Strategy	Deliverable	Action
2.1 Provide safe and well maintained facilities and infrastructure	2.1.6 Maintain Singleton's open spaces in line with the Service Level Agreements	2.1.6.1 Consult with community to establish levels of service for open spaces and reserves
		2.1.6.2 Maintain open spaces and reserves to agreed levels of service

There no capital works projects listed that specifically relating to Bulga Stock Reserve.

### ***Asset Management Strategy 2017-2021 (2017)***

The purpose of the Asset Management (AM) Strategy is "to provide Council with direction for development and implementing the ongoing processes and objectives relating to managing its assets". The AM Strategy will provide the framework for improving the way services are delivered across all asset classes, which, in relation to Bulga Stock Reserve includes open spaces and reserves.

First generation Asset Management Plans (AMPs) were developed in 2009 and 2010 for key infrastructure assets including open spaces. The AM Strategy states that "Levels of Service (LoS) for

each asset class will be reviewed as part of the asset management plans”.

Asset Class	Asset Category	Description of service the asset provides
Open Space & Reserve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Parks</li><li>• Sports</li><li>• Cemeteries</li><li>• Recreation Reserve</li></ul>	The open space and reserve assets typically reflect park based infrastructure commonly seen in parks. These range from bins and seats to shade shelters and playgrounds

*Taken from Table 3 Definition of Asset Classes*

The AM Strategy states asset condition “reflects the physical state of the asset...to provide the required LoS to customers”. For the asset class “Open Spaces & Reserves” the average condition is rated as 2 (on a scale of 1-5). This rating is “good” and described as “slight defects and deterioration but no significant impact on the performance, user comfort and safety”.

Key AM “Strategy Objectives” relevant to Bulga Stock Reserve, include:

- 1.3 Continue to review and update Asset Management Plans, to maintain their currency and validity;
- 2.3 Review the completeness and accuracy of the data for all major infrastructure classes;
- 5.1 Identifying Level of Service through consultation with the community;
- 5.3 Developing Service Level Agreements; and
- 5.4 Developing Maintenance Management Framework.

A key focus of sustainable asset management is the provision of adequate renewal funding, to address on-going asset deterioration, and a community desire to maintain a minimum level of asset service and performance. Renewals programming is about forecasting when funding will need to be allocated to ensure the reliability of infrastructure to be able to continue providing the required levels of service.

### ***Singleton Village Masterplan (2016)***

See Section 3.5.2.

### ***Wollombi Brook Flood Study (2016)***

The objectives of the Wollombi Brook Flood Study were to define the existing mainstream flood behaviour in the Wollombi Brook catchment and establish the basis for subsequent floodplain management activities. The Study addressed the entire catchment area, from the Brook’s source in the Watagan Ranges (in the Cessnock Local Government Area) to its confluence with the Hunter River near Warkworth approximately 16 kilometres upstream of Singleton.

The Flood Study defined Wollombi Brook’s mainstream flood behaviour under historical, existing and future conditions for a full range of design flood events. It provides information on flood levels and depths, velocities, flows, hydraulic categories and provisional hazard categories. The Flood Study also identified the impact on flood behaviour as a result of future climate change.

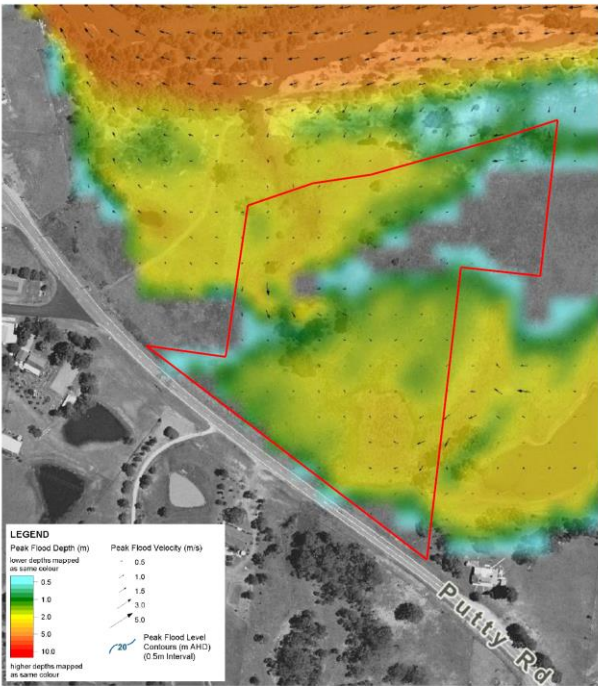
A suite of design event scenarios was defined that is considered the most suitable for future floodplain management planning with validated modelling used to simulate flood events at a range of severities – at 0.5%, 1%, 5%, 10% and 20% Annual Exceedance Probability as well as for the “extreme flood event” (3 x 1% Annual Exceedance Probability).

Community consultation was an important component of the Study – to inform the community about



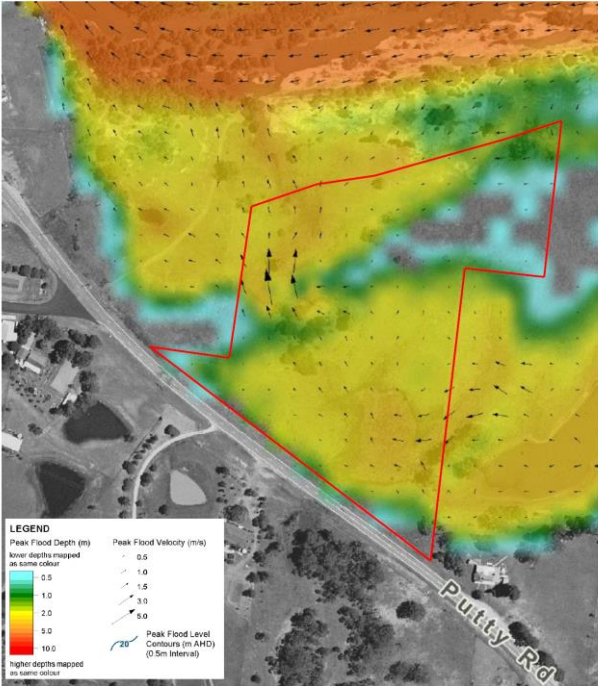
predicted flood behaviour (as a precursor to subsequent floodplain management activities) as well as to collect information on people’s flood experience and their concerns regarding flooding issues.

Bulga is located in the lower part of the Wollombi Brook catchment and the detailed flood mapping produced as part of the Study – based on modelled flood levels and behaviour – provides a forecast of flood depths and water velocities across Bulga Stock Reserve under floods of differing severity (as shown in the detailed extracts of these flood plans below).



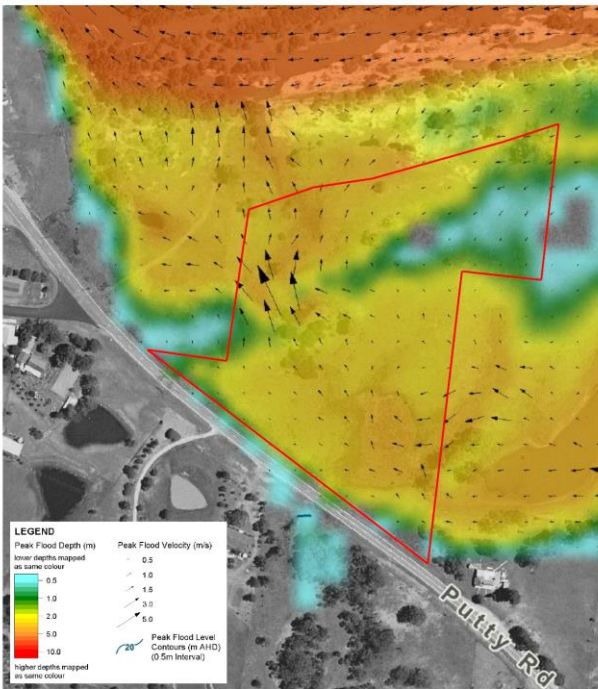
**Wollombi Flood Study - Modelled Peak Flood Conditions 20% AEP (5 yr ARI)**

i.e. a 1 in 5 chance of occurring in any single year



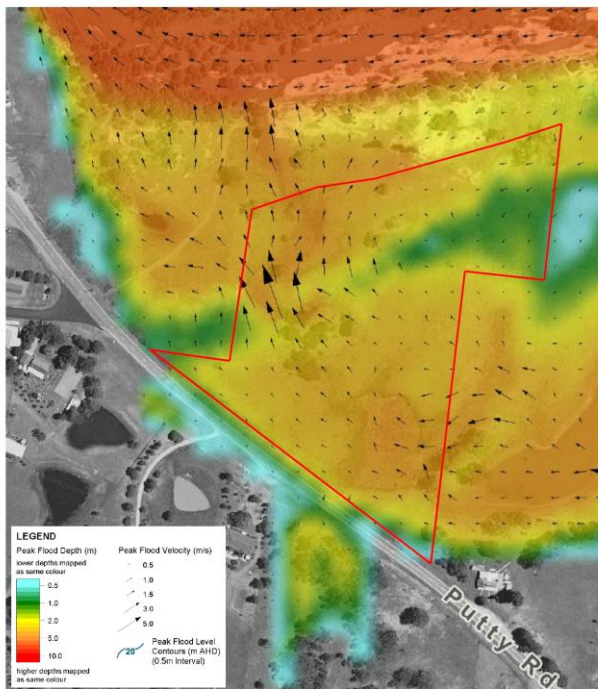
**Wollombi Flood Study - Modelled Peak Flood Conditions 10% AEP (10 yr ARI)**

i.e. a 1 in 10 chance of occurring in any single year



**Wollombi Flood Study - Modelled Peak Flood Conditions 5% AEP (20 yr ARI)**

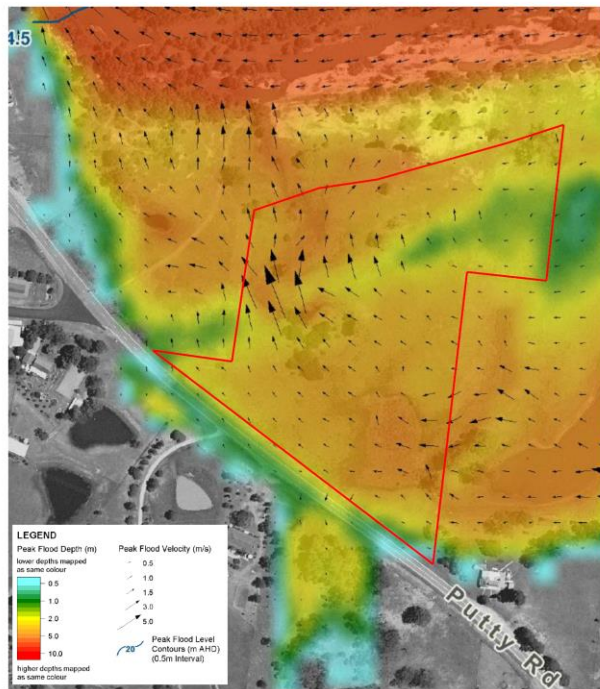
i.e. a 1 in 20 chance of occurring in any single year



**Wollombi Flood Study - Modelled Peak Flood Conditions 2% AEP (50 yr ARI)**

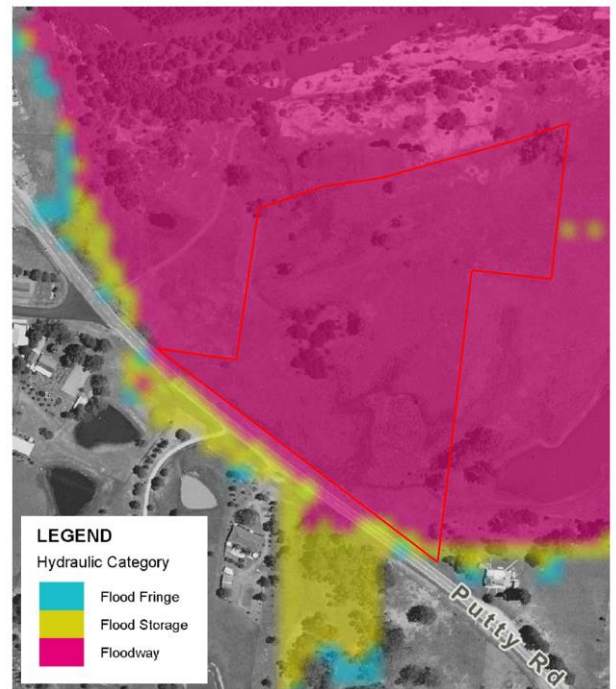
i.e. a 1 in 50 chance of occurring in any single year





**Wollombi Flood Study - Modelled Peak Flood Conditions  
1% AEP (100 yr ARI)**

i.e. a 1 in 100 chance of occurring in any single year



**Wollombi Flood Study - Hydraulic Categorisation  
1% AEP (100 yr ARI)**



**Wollombi Flood Study - Provisional Flood Hazard  
1% AEP (100 yr ARI)**

## ***Child Friendly Strategy 2016-2021 (2016)***

The Child Friendly Strategy “aims to build on successful Child Friendly initiatives and engagement activities already in place in the Singleton LGA and to facilitate Council’s aim to operate within a Child Friendly framework”. The age range for the purposes of the Strategy is 0-11 years. Key principles guiding the strategy include:

- children’s healthy development and active participation are uniquely crucial to the healthy future of any city or society; and
- children’s wellbeing during their formative years determines the cost or contribution they will make to society over the rest of their lives.

At the 2011 Census there were 3,975 children in the 0-11 year old age bracket in the Singleton LGA, making up 17.5% of the area’s population. The Strategy noted that NSW Government projections (Department of Planning and Environment) showed that the number of children aged 0-14 will fluctuate between 2016 and 2031.

Consultation undertaken for the Strategy found “parks and outdoor play areas are well utilized with 77% of survey respondents indicating they have used an outdoor recreational facility in the LGA in the last week”. It also found that “although parks and recreation areas are well used, an often repeated request from families was for more fenced areas, better maintained community parks” and extra shade.

The Strategy has no specific actions listed for Bulga Stock Reserve, however the following recommended action is relevant – “When reviewing bike paths and walking trails, Singleton Council incorporate Child Friendly principles including possible extension of bike paths and walking trails across Singleton to connect Child Friendly spaces” (priority – medium).

## ***Singleton Community – Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan (2016)***

Development of the Singleton Community – Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan (ESSAP) was initiated by Council to provide a clear direction for promoting, facilitating and supporting community environmental sustainability with the local government area. The plan seeks to “identify priority activities for the community, Council and partner organisations that promote sustainable environmental outcomes in the community”, among other things.

The ESSAP is structured around Sustainability Themes and Sub-themes. Those relevant to Bulga Stock Reserve, include:

- Human Settlement – Population and Settlement;
- Human Settlement – Community Lands;
- Land – Soil Health;
- Land – Plant and Animal Pests; and
- Biodiversity – Terrestrial and Aquatic Ecosystems (flora and fauna) incorporating restoration and rehabilitation.

The ESSAP identifies priorities of different actions to sustain or improve environmental sustainability. It states “there is generally a high level of community support for the nature and focus of all actions that included in the Strategy and Plan”. As part of the consultation undertaken respondents were asked to prioritise 39 action directions. The action statement seen as top priority was “ensuring illegal dumpers and people who litter are fined or prosecuted”. However the following action statements are more applicable to Bulga Stock Reserve:

- ensuring the quality of water in the rivers and creeks (priority number 6);

- improving the environmental quality of parks, reserves and other community lands (priority number 20);
- reducing loss of vegetation to protect plants and animals” (priority number 21);
- controlling weeds and animal pests (priority number 25);
- increasing bushland reserves and other community natural open space (priority number 28); making safe walking paths more widely available (priority number 29);
- protecting Aboriginal heritage areas (priority number 31);
- protection of the heritage or European settlement of the area (priority number 35); and
- making cycle paths and bicycle racks more widely available (priority number 39).

The overall vision for the ESSAP “seeks to clearly identify and inspire the long-term behaviour change that is sought from implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan. It aims to do so by establishing a clear picture for the Singleton community of what an environmentally sustainable Singleton would be”. The vision established for this purpose is “Singleton is a clean, health and productive community practicing good stewardship of its finite resources and environment”.

For the sub-themes noted above, the ESSAP identified the following objectives.

- Population and Settlement
  - Development incorporates environmentally sustainable practices and design
- Community Lands
  - Community land is of high quality, promotes ecological connectivity, invites human interactions, celebrates nature and outdoor life and enhances the urban environment;
  - Community land and its facilities are designed, enhanced and maintained to meet the needs of the community and natural environment;
  - The community values and is actively involved in managing community land.
- Soil Health
  - The community is knowledgeable and active in implementing management practices that maintain and improve soil quality and health
- Plant and Animal Pests
  - Plant and animal pest species are proactively identified and collaboratively managed to reduce negative impacts on amenity ,natural ecosystems and economic productivity
- Terrestrial and Aquatic Ecosystems (flora and fauna)
  - Existing natural areas and ecologically significant environments are identified, protected and preserved
  - The community is actively involved in biodiversity protection and rehabilitation activities

ESSAP actions in these sub-themes most relevant to Bulga Stock Reserve are listed in the following table.

Outcome	Planning Pillar - Priority - Action
<b>Population and Settlement Sub-theme Actions</b>	
A strategic approach urban greening that restores trees and vegetation in the landscape	Our Places - Medium - 1.1.4 Develop a Tree Management Policy to provide integrated guidelines for tree removal, planting and preservation
<b>Community Land Sub-theme Actions</b>	
Improved management and protection of riparian zones located within public open spaces	Our Places - Medium - 1.3.1 When reviewing Plans of Management for Open Space, identify and prioritise riparian areas requiring regeneration and rehabilitation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ create the opportunity for increased public recreation</li> <li>▪ improve conditions and connectivity of riverine vegetation and habitat with the broader landscape</li> </ul>

Outcome	Planning Pillar - Priority - Action
Community land is utilized to showcase environmentally sustainable land practices	Our Places - High - 1.3.2 An enhanced connection and commitment to the protection and management of community open space
<b>Soil Health Sub-theme Actions</b>	
Increased community participation in environmental Landcare based activities to protect and restore the quality and extent of the native vegetation and waterway health	Our Community - High - 7.2.5 Promote and support environment and Landcare based groups to foster sustainable land management practices and to actively restore degraded soils.

### ***Singleton Bike Plan Revision (2016)***

This is a revision of the Singleton Council Bike Plan 2009. The revised plan's aims include to "meet the current and future cycleway needs for Singleton through community consultation" and "increase bicycle use". Objectives include, but are not limited to:

- improve access to community and education facilities, and other cycle trip attractors/generators;
- improve rider safety along bicycle routes; and
- improve linkages between existing cycle routes and provide continuity to the existing network.

The plan identifies that the community of Bulga "has limited to no formal cycle facilities". The main cyclist demand is thought to be students to/from school. Proposed cycle routes for Bulga are limited to upgrading the shoulders on primarily Putty Road to provide for regional cyclists.

The Bike Plan states "end of trip facilities are an important element in a cycleway network as they provide services that enable and encourage cycling, such as the provision of bicycle parking facilities, toilets and/or change rooms". Section 7.1 Strategies to Promote Cycling recommends Council "provide secure parking and end of trip facilities for cyclists".

The plan also presents further ideas and opportunities for Council to consider including infrastructure adjacent to cycle ways. It recommends "Council should investigate in consultation with the community locations for infrastructure adjacent the cycleway routes such as benches, access to tap water, and bike racks/lockers".

The Bike Plan adapted a prioritisation methodology for bicycle routes in the local government area based on achieving the objectives in the plan. There are no specific works identified for within the Bulga Stock Reserve. However the Bike Plan recommends establishment of an on-road regional Broke-Milbrodale-Bulga Loop "consisting of Broke Road, Milbrodale Road and Putty Road visiting the villages of Broke, Milbrodale and Bulga" as, mostly, a high priority action. Such a regional loop would run adjacent to Bulga Stock Reserve along Putty Road.

### ***Singleton Parks Biodiversity Management Plan (2015)***

This LGA-wide report summarised the biodiversity values of Council-managed parks and reserves. The entry for Bulga Stock Reserve gave an overview of the site's – local setting, vegetation communities, ecological values, weeds and pests ecological threats, habitat restoration and rehabilitation.

It recommended:

- slashing of the exotic species that dominate the Reserve (avoiding the main areas of native vegetation) as the most viable option for controlling weeds and increasing habitat connectivity; and

- feral animal control measures.

See Sections 2.3.4 to 2.36 for further details.

### ***Singleton Council Villages Place Making Strategy (2015)***

This Strategy was prepared for Council in 2015, in partnership with (and funding from) Coal and Allied Ltd, to deliver a “Place Making Strategy” that was intended to guide place management, enhancement and activation in the local government area’s 17 villages. It also identified prioritised opportunities for implementation over the subsequent years.

Bulga is one the villages addressed in the Strategy, which was prepared with considerable community consultation.

The Strategy identified the following challenges for Bulga village and surrounds:

- risk of coal mine expansions and subsequent impacts;
- division in the community;
- lack of diversity in the local economy and dependence on the mining industry; and
- a reluctance within the local community to working with Council.

The Strategy described Bulga as having a “passionate and resilient community” and the following opportunities were identified for the village:

- improvements to the facilities in recreational areas (particularly children’s play areas) and the community hall;
- improved maintenance of public areas;
- family-friendly activities, and informal community “get togethers”; and
- a community notice board.

The Strategy’s “Villages Action Plan” recommended the following actions (without any elaboration/explanation or detail):

- in 2014-15 – youth workshop, signage, village study, masterplanning, library education, events, fire shed, maintenance, and toilet upgrade); and
- in 2015-16 – BBQ and information session, and notice board.

Some of these recommended actions have subsequently been implemented – such as upgrade the toilets (at the Bulga Recreational Ground).

The Strategy did not make any specific references to, or recommended actions for, Bulga Stock Reserve.

### ***Singleton Youth Strategy 2015-2019 (2015)***

The Singleton Youth Strategy ‘*Our Youth – Engaged, Empowered, Included*’ (2015) purpose is to ensure that young people of Singleton Local Government Area are engaged, empowered and included, and to consider their specific needs. The Strategy targets young people aged 12-24 years and was developed with input from Singleton’s young people, local youth service providers, and a variety of services across Council.

It was also developed to align with Council’s (then) Community Strategic Plan *Our Place: A Blueprint for*



2022 with strategies and actions from the Youth Strategy to be included in Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plans.

The 2011 ABS Census identified 4,344 young people between 12-24 years of age in the local government area, or 19.8% of the total population (and this group was skewed slightly more towards males than the wider population – at 54% males to 46% females). The Strategy recognised that with “one fifth of the community in this age group, this has significant implications for planning promotions, opportunities, services, and infrastructure; providing an opportunity for changing the direction of planning to more accurately reflect the composition of the community”.

The Strategy noted declining levels of physical activity in young adults aged 16-24 years (based on data for the wider Hunter New England Area Health Service) “are of concern”. However a survey conducted with students from year 7 to 11 in the Upper Hunter, Muswellbrook and Singleton areas in 2012-13 recorded that the majority of Singleton respondents had regularly participated in a sporting activity in that year, but that one quarter had not participated in any sport. Of the options provided, touch football was most popular (with just under 30% of the surveyed participation) and netball was also popular (with over 20% participation). Football, swimming and soccer were also popular, at around 15% participation. Singleton returned the lowest number of respondents who rode their bikes, with 51% “never riding a bike”.

The Youth Strategy was developed based on findings of consultations undertaken with young people aged 12-24 (53% 12 to 14 years old, 36% 15 to 17 years, and 11% 18 to 24) and with those working in the youth sector. The most popular activities for this group of young people were playing sports and “hanging with friends”, at 60% of the sample. Some felt “that their lives would improve with...having more things to do in Singleton, such as sporting, shopping or being with friends”. Of the top 10 things that young people thought were “great about Singleton” three were – sporting options (ranked 3<sup>rd</sup>), parks (ranked 8<sup>th</sup>) and “it’s safe” (ranked 9<sup>th</sup>).

Three improvement options respondents suggested included “more things to do, opportunities and resources”, “better BMX park and skate park” and “sporting centre, football stadium, more sporting opportunities”.

The Action Plan within the Strategy does not include any specific references to Bulga or the Bulga Stock Reserve, however identifies the following recommended actions may be of some relevance:

- Our Places (infrastructure and services enable community connectivity) – implement relevant actions of Bike Plan and
- Our Environment (the community is more aware of environmental issues and is educated through programs) – encourage young people in to get involved in community environmental education programs.

### ***Singleton Lifestyle Plan for Older People (2015)***

Over the next 20 years, numbers of people aged 65 and over are expected to double within the Singleton Local Government Area. The Singleton Lifestyle Plan for Older People (SLPOP) is intended to enable Council to develop an approach “which directs actions and resources appropriately to ensure that the diverse needs of older people will be met”.

Among the five most important factors for people over the age of 55 to live a healthy and happy life are good health (rated 1), interacting with friends and family (rated 2); and being physically active (rated 3). Of the top five challenges people are facing the first was maintaining health and fitness.

Actions in the SLPOP relevant to Bulga Stock Reserve, include:

- recreation facilities meeting community needs,
  - extend the network of pathways, walking trails and cycling tracks ... to cater for the popularity of walking as a recreational activity for all age groups, including older people,
  - develop parks and gardens with interest and destination points that will attract and appeal to older people; and.
- infrastructure and services enable community connectivity,
  - explore incorporation of seating, shade, resting places and “Stop & Drop Zones” in the design of public spaces and facilities within the Singleton local government area.

### ***Singleton Community Safety Strategy 2015-2020 (2015)***

The Singleton Community Safety Strategy (the strategy) is Singleton Council’s key initiative to ensuring safety for people who live in, work in and visit the Singleton Local Government Area (LGA). The strategy recognises that our perception of safety impacts our quality of life and identifies ways to “enhance actual and perceived safety in Singleton”.

In relation to parks and facilities, Council staff have undertaken “Safety By Design” training, including the application of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Principles which promote actions to improve safety – including maintaining public spaces to improve surveillance and amenity, removing graffiti quickly to discourage further incidences, designing parks and sporting facilities to attract community members, and promoting local ownership of spaces.

Bulga Village was not identified as a community safety problem area. The primary concern for small villages was for “older people...who are isolated”.

The Strategy’s main action of relevance for Bulga Stock Reserve would be to “identify opportunities for landscaping, maintenance and design improvements to improve natural surveillance, appearance and perception of the neighbourhoods”.

### ***Multicultural Action Plan (2014)***

The Multicultural Action Plan seeks to “ensure that all members of our diverse community feel welcome, included, able to participate in community activities and decision making, and able to access appropriate services and facilities”. It recognised that over the past 10 years, Singleton had become “a community with a significant element of cultural and ethnic diversity through the population” with 1,865 people (or 8.2% of the total population) with the Singleton local government area born overseas (2011 census data), an increase of 16.5% from 2006 figures.

However the Plan does not include any actions especially applicable to Bulga Stock Reserve.

### ***Hunter Valley Visitor Economy Destination Management Plan (2014)***

The aim of this Destination Management Plan (Draft 25 March 2014) is to “double the value of the Hunter Valley’s visitor economy by 2020”. Singleton Council partnered in preparation of the Plan with Cessnock City Council and the Hunter Wine and Tourism Association Board. The Plan’s approach is to build the attraction of the Hunter Valley to visitors as food and wine experience and extend such visits/experiences with second-tier activities (such as “Nature [soft adventure e.g. walking, cycling, fishing], Heritage [convict and industrial], and Indigenous”).

The plan does not specifically reference Bulga. However identified strategic priorities and actions – with some relevance to the Bulga Stock Reserve – include:

- Strategic Priority One – Grow destination appeal and Hunter Valley brand awareness with key actions, including building and promoting second-tier experiences and activities on themes of nature (soft adventure);
- Strategic Priority Four – Develop the Hunter Valley’s destination products and experiences focusing on, amongst other aspects, experiences in nature such as walking, cycling, and fishing; and
- Strategic Priority Five – Develop co-ordinated visitor economy planning and place making, including expansion of public facilities (e.g. parks, conveniences)

Recommendations for early or immediate development more generally include the development of a “World Heritage Nature Trail”, cycling and walking trails, and building golf and sports tourism.

### ***Singleton Council Open Space and Recreation Needs Study (2013)***

This 2013 Study (an update of the previous similar study from 2002) analysed issues around the provision and adequacy of open space, recreation and sports facilities and identified a schedule for the future provision of these assets across the local government area. The aim being to “create an accessible and integrated network of spaces and places that provides a diverse range of sport and recreation opportunities for the community” and deliver “interesting spaces that are activated and encourage physical activity, creativity and social connections”.

In 2013 the Singleton local government area was assessed as having approximately 413 hectares of Council-managed open space, across a range of open space types and hierarchies. The Study mapped the Bulga Village open space network as comprising the Bulga Recreation Ground (classified as “Sport District”), Bulga Stock Reserve (classified as “Undeveloped”) and Wollombi Brook (classified as “Specialised”).

The Study found that:

- Bulga Village had an “adequate supply of open space and adequate facilities within the Recreation Ground” which was the village’s key sport and recreation; and
- the Bulga Stock Reserve was “relatively undeveloped and while there is little demand for additional facilities, the site may lend itself to the future development of an environmental park”.

The Study establishes a three tier hierarchy of places to appropriately plan for the future open space, sport and recreation needs of each community across the area. Bulga is considered “Tier Two” in terms of open space provision. In addition to a “village sport and recreation park”, tier two towns and villages often provide a local recreation park with play opportunities as well as usually a suitable area for visitors to rest.

To assist in formulating its recommendations the Study also considered Singleton’s social profile, population projections, a predicted aging of the population (i.e. persons over 65 years of age across the 25 years to 2038, despite Singleton having a younger population profile than state and national averages), health, and activity/exercise levels. Trends in open space and recreation were also considered – the broad trends being “a move away from traditional organised sport toward physical activity and non-organised (social) sport” for adults, and decreases in physical activity (although with no real change in formal sport participation) and increases in the amount of indoor recreation activities among children.

The Study's Implementation Plan recommended a single specific action in relation to Bulga Stock Reserve, as set out in the table below (from *Table 3.1 Implementation plan* and *Table 32. Prioritisation of facility specific improvements*).

Reference	Action	Rationale	Priority	Overall (LGA-wide) ranking
3.2.15	Implement an environmental rehabilitation program at the Bulga Stock Reserve	To provide the community with a future natural area for environmental protection, awareness and low key outdoor recreation opportunities	Low	41

The Study also noted that in 2012 Council undertook a community driven "Place Making Pilot Project" for a number of local villages, including Bulga. This included raising a number of open space, sport and recreation related issues and opportunities.

The key project chosen by the Bulga community was a cleanup day of Bulga Stock Reserve to create a more usable place for the local community and as a stopping place for visitors, and to enhance the environmental values of the site. The pilot project also recommended that the Bulga Stock Reserve be "established" as a park with wetlands as well as improved amenities for visitors (including a walkway through the wetlands).

Opportunities for the wider Bulga Village were identified in this pilot project as recreational facilities for children such as skate park and BMX area, community tree planting programmes and a community garden, cleared roadside walking tracks, and beautification and improvements to the Bulga Recreation Ground.

Also see Section 3.5.3.

### ***Disability Access Plan 2020 (2013)***

The *Disability Access Plan 2020* aims to achieve "a truly inclusive environment for all, with the aim of contributing to the liveability of the community for all its residents and those who visit". Strategies and actions relevant to planning for Bulga Stock Reserve include:

- providing information in multiple formats to meet varying requirements of people in the community; and
- enhancing social and recreational opportunities for people with a disability.

### ***Singleton Waste Strategy 2013-2033 (2013)***

The Waste Strategy sets the context, targets and actions for waste management in Singleton Council for the next 20 years. It provides direction for future waste management, resource recovery, public education and public advocacy for waste minimization.

Actions and resources are identified in Table 6 of the Strategy. The action most relevant to Bulga Stock Reserve includes "continue to support and promote litter reduction initiatives" such as through on-site signage during park and reserve upgrades or maintenance.

### ***Singleton Bush Fire Risk Management Plan (2011)***

This Plan – prepared by the Singleton Bush Fire Management Committee – covers both public and private lands and guides fire services (NSW Rural Fire Service and Fire and Rescue NSW), other emergency services and authorities, Council, and other landholders in carrying out bushfire hazard reduction and control activities. These measures include such things as hazard reduction burning, clearing asset protection zones, grazing, community education, fire trail maintenance and establishing community fireguard groups.

The Plan considers environmental and social factors, as well as the history of bush fire frequency and ignition causes in the region. The main sources of ignition in the Singleton area are identified as lightning strikes from summer storms, fire escape from private properties, and accidental ignitions in the rural areas and along the transport corridors. It recognises “assets”, that require protection or special management measures during fire operations, as well as bushfire risk reduction “treatment strategies and actions” and maps these across the local government area. The Plan maps the following four types of “Bush Fire Management Zones” to identify the fire management intent for specific areas:

- Asset Protection Zone (APZ);
- Strategic Fire Advantage Zone (SFAZ);
- Land Management Zone (LMZ); and
- Fire Exclusion Zone (FEZ).

The Plan identifies Bulga village as an asset at medium risk and a high priority for protection. The former Mount Leonard's Public School (the old Scout Hall), abutting Bulga Stock Reserve, is also listed as an asset at medium risk and a high priority for protection. However the Plan does not make any recommendations, or include any specific information or directions, regarding the Reserve.

### ***Singleton Land Use Strategy 2008 (2008)***

This Strategy outlines key land use policies and principles for the Singleton local government area and provides the planning context for the preparation of local environmental plan provisions. The Strategy has a time frame of 25 years, to 2032. The proposed vision for the Strategy is “to create a progressive community of excellence and sustainability”.

Key land use planning issues were classified as mainly urban or rural issues. The key issues most applicable to planning Bulga Stock Reserve would include:

- urban – catering for settlement needs, providing and maintaining urban infrastructure, and providing for social infrastructure and urban amenity; and
- rural – identifying environmental values, constraints and protection requirements.

Projected or anticipated changes, trends or pressures for the next 15 years which the Strategy identified as warranting consideration in land use planning included that are of particular relevance for Bulga Stock Reserve include:

- continuing population growth, with further ageing of population;
- increasing demand for maintaining environment and amenity and “tree change” lifestyle; and
- requirement to improve landscape connectivity for biodiversity and maintain native vegetation.

Singleton's growth scenario anticipated for the 25 years to 2032 “is for a population increase in the range 1-1.5%”, which is an average increase of 300 persons per year. The Strategy considered the Singleton local government area was “well accessed by roads and transport routes and is adequately

served with infrastructure". The Strategy's situation analysis report reviewed key infrastructure issues within the local government area – including water supply, sewer, transport, stormwater, waste management, bushfire facilities and open space.

In a summary of key issues for infrastructure, the Strategy noted the following items of relevance for Bulga Stock Reserve:

- accessibility and transport – in relation to bikeways, a small network of recreational bikeways exists which is proposed to be progressively extended in accordance with the Singleton Bike Plan;
- open space – for rural areas active and passive open space needs are currently well catered for;
- strategic actions - provide for parks within walking distance of all homes in accordance with the Open Space and Recreational Needs Study (2002).

The Strategy noted villages, including Bulga, have individual character and planning issues and "currently have minimal infrastructure services". Land is predominantly zoned 1(d) and Bulga is described (in Table 14) as 'No significant development potential due to development constraints. Generally has rural small holding character rather than residential. Environmental Living zone appropriate'. The Strategy identifies a policy to "maintain and enhance the distinctive character and landscape setting of existing villages".

In terms of environmental values and constraints, a key issue included natural hazards. Natural hazards "are primarily flooding and bushfires". A recommended objective of relevance for Bulga Stock Reserve is to "ensure that natural hazards are considered when making development decisions, and that hazards are minimized wherever possible".

### ***Plan of Management for Village Parks (undated)***

See Section 3.5.1.



## APPENDIX D

### Feedback/Input Form

# Bulga Stock Reserve Its Future - Your Views



## Bulga Stock Reserve Plan of Management

Singleton Council is preparing a Plan of Management for Bulga Stock Reserve, in Bulga Village, and would like your opinions, ideas and input. The Plan will guide the management, development and use of the area into the future.

Bulga Stock Reserve is a 5.3 hectare area Crown Reserve located off the north-east side of the Putty Road in the village of Bulga. Originally a stock reserve, the area was gazetted for public recreation in 1993 and is no longer used as a stopping or holding point for travelling stock. Recent changes to Crown land legislation in NSW requires Council to prepare a Plan of Management – as a guiding document for the area's future. Council has engaged Gondwana Consulting to assist in preparing the Plan.

Today the reserve is largely an open paddock, mostly cleared with scattered clumps of trees and other woody vegetation, extending from Putty Road in the south to the irregular levee and sandy slope down to Wollombi Brook in the north.

The reserve is mainly exotic grassland with patches of redgum regrowth, and occasionally larger mature trees, especially in and around ephemeral wet areas and drainage lines. Weeds are very common across the entire site – mostly grassland and pasture weeds, but also a large stand of Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) which is toxic to humans in the south-west and scattered clumps of Blackberry.

A series of depressions in the reserve's south-east and south form an interconnected series of ephemeral or temporary wetland areas that feed into a small drainage line in the site's west. Flood modelling for Wollombi Brook shows that the majority (approximately 75%) of the reserve, especially the lower southern and north-western areas, is likely to be inundated by between 1 and 2 metres of floodwater once every 5 years (or put another way, there is 20% chance that such flooding will occur in any year). There is a 1% chance the entire site will be flooded, some areas to over 3 metres deep, any year. The reserve is also impacted by large piped stormwater flows (in two places) under Putty Road.

Bulga Stock Reserve is one of the larger areas of public open space in the village. The reserve is fenced on three sides and the only other items of infrastructure are two reserve name signs. The reserve does not, at



present, feature any developed community access or recreation facilities. However it is strategically located within Bulga Village, and is the main area of public land connecting and providing access to the Wollombi Creek corridor. The reserve's potential was recognised by the *Bulga Landscape Masterplan* (prepared for Council in 2015) which envisioned the site becoming a low-key "environmental park" and proposed a number of minor developments for the enjoyment of visitors and residents. These included – pathway access (and boardwalks) to Wollombi Brook (to a viewing platform, and a craft launching facility on the water's edge – both outside the reserve); an internal path network; informal facilities such as seating, barbeques, fitness equipment and amenities; potentially serving as an "overflow camping area" during major village events; and general "development and beautification" works.

The Plan of Management will guide the management, development and use of the reserve. This will address managing the site's landscape and vegetation as well as practical, manageable and sustainable opportunities for recreational or visitor access and enjoyment.

It is important that reserve neighbours, Bulga residents, interest groups and other stakeholders, and the wider community have a role in preparing the Plan of Management. Your input early in the planning process will help identify what you value about the reserve, what opportunities you see for the site, if and how you use the area, any perceived management issues or challenges to address, and your desires for the reserve's future character, protection, management, and possibly suitable developments or uses.

**This brief (5 questions) reply-paid Feedback/Input Form is one of the first steps in formulating the Draft Plan of Management.** Your responses, inputs and ideas would be appreciated and will contribute to the new Plan's preparation. **Please complete and return this Form by Friday 20 December 2019, or sooner.** There will be several opportunities for community involvement during the Plan's preparation, including formal public exhibition of a Draft Plan.

For further information about this Feedback/Input Form or to offer your ideas and input to the Plan's preparation please contact Alan Ginns, at Gondwana Consulting on e-mail [gwanacon@tpg.com.au](mailto:gwanacon@tpg.com.au), or (02) 9913 3720, or mobile 0429 913 300. For information about the reserve and the Plan of Management project overall, please contact Council's Recreation Planner, Myffy Doyle, on e-mail [council@singleton.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@singleton.nsw.gov.au) or (02) 6578 7290.

## Your Views/Input:

Your gender (please circle)	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Other</i>
Your age group (please circle)	<i>15 and under *</i>	<i>16 to 20</i>	<i>21 to 25</i>
	<i>36 to 55</i>	<i>56 to 70</i>	<i>71 and over</i>
Where do you live?			

1. What do you consider to be of importance or valuable about Bulga Stock Reserve, or why is the reserve important to you? What opportunities or potential do you see at the site?

2. Do you ever visit/enter Bulga Stock Reserve? If so, how often and what do you usually do there?

3. What do you consider to be the main issues or challenges facing the area and its management, and how would you suggest these issues or problems are addressed in the reserve's future planning and management? (Please list in your order of importance/concern)

(1)

(2)

(3)

Others:

5. What other changes, initiatives or directions would you like to see in the management, protection, development/facilities, or use of Bulga Stock Reserve?



5. Any other comments, ideas or suggestions you would like to make would be welcome.  
(feel free to attach additional pages)

**Contact details for future involvement/notification:**

If you would like to be kept informed of further opportunities to provide input or comments during preparation of the Bulga Stock Reserve Plan of Management, or the availability of material for public review (such as public exhibition of the Draft Plan) please provide your name and preferred contact details below.

Name:	Preferred contact details (e-mail, telephone or postal address):

**(Privacy Statement:** All information collected is to assist in the development of the Bulga Stock Reserve Plan of Management and related documents. A summary of submissions may be published as part of the Plan however individual respondents will not be identified (please note that these may be made available through Freedom of Information processes if requested).

(\* If you are under 16 years old please ensure you have a parent's or guardian's permission or supervision when completing this Feedback/Input Form [in accordance with Australian Market and Social Research Guidelines].)

*Thank you for your time and responses*

**TO RETURN THIS FEEDBACK/INPUT FORM**

Fold it into thirds (at edge marks shown), with the mailing label below showing on the outside (& your contact details folded inside), & seal the end & edges with tape. Then drop it into any Australia Post mailbox, **YOU DO NOT NEED A STAMP.**  
***Please complete and return your Feedback/Input Form by Friday 20 December 2019, or sooner.***

Delivery Address:  
23 Sydney Rd  
WARRIEWOOD NSW 2102

No stamp required  
if posted in Australia



Gondwana Consulting  
Reply Paid 84252  
WARRIEWOOD NSW 2102

## APPENDIX E

### Feedback/Input Analysis

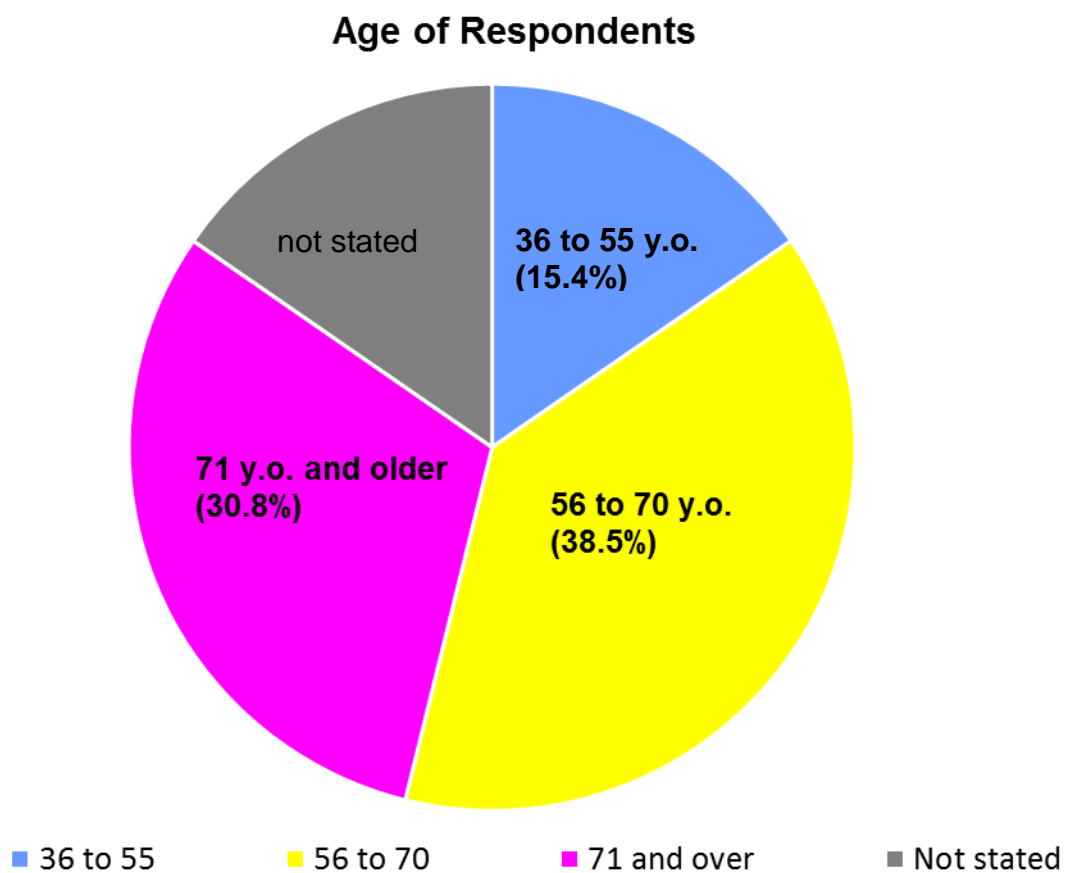
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#### Respondent Age

Age of Respondent	Number of Respondents	%
15 and under	0	0.0
16 to 20	0	0.0
21 to 25	0	0.0
26 to 35	0	0.0
36 to 55	2	15.4
56 to 70	5	38.5
71 and over	4	30.8
<i>Not stated</i>	2	15.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0 *</b>

\* percentages may not total 100.0% due to rounding

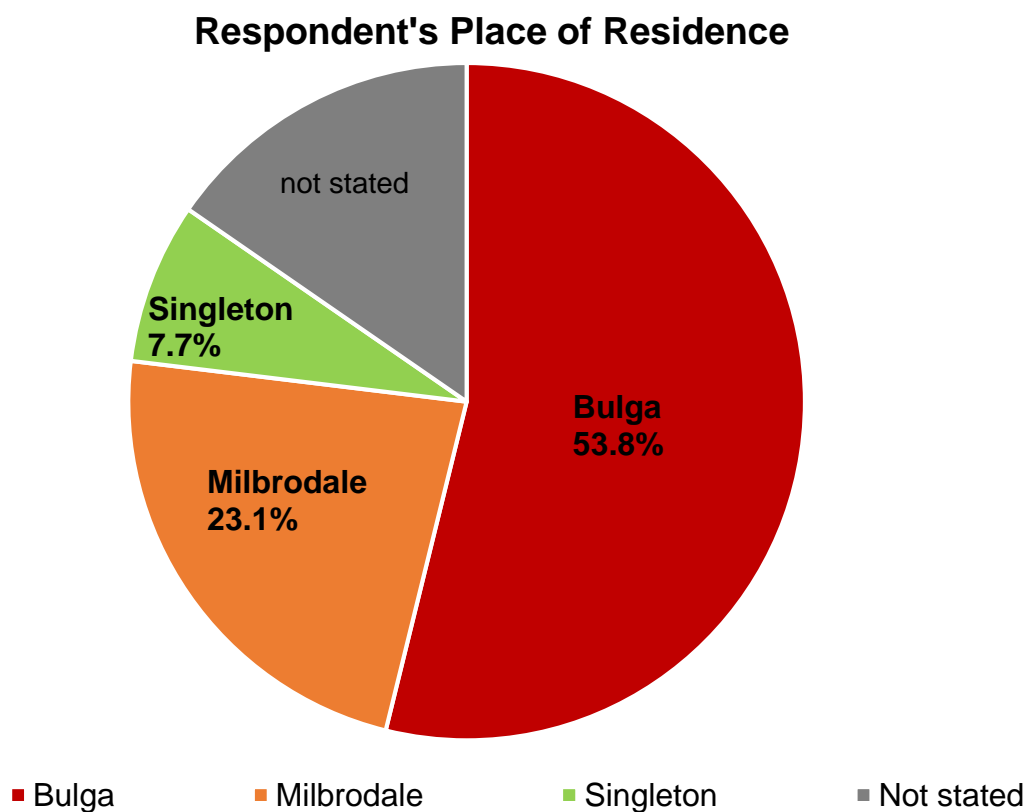
**Note: Only 13 responses total** (12 completed Feedback Forms and 1 e-mail submission)



## Place of Residence

Respondent's Place of Residence	Number of Respondents *	%
Bulga	7	53.8
Milbrodale	3	23.1
Singleton	1	7.7
<i>Not stated / unknown</i>	2	15.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Note: Only 13 responses total** (12 completed Feedback Forms and 1 e-mail submission)





## Values

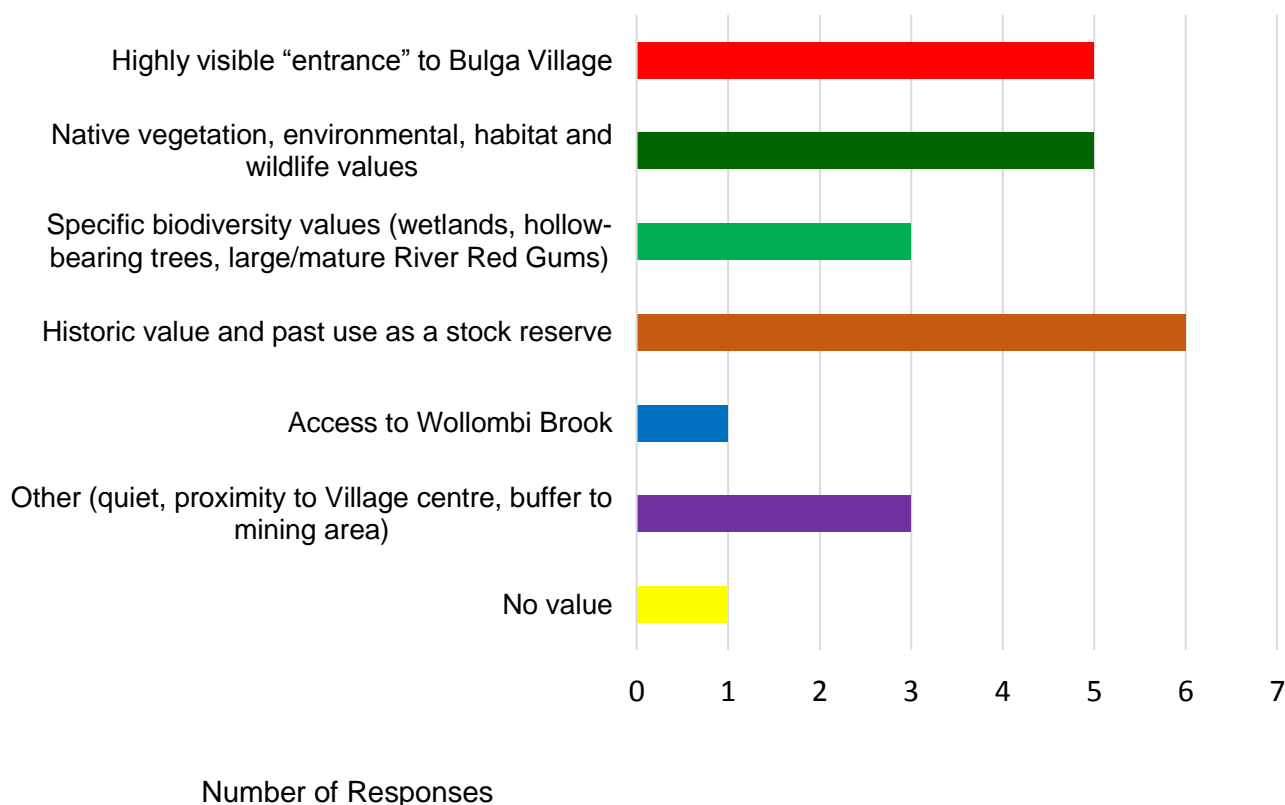
Respondent Identified Value	Response Items *	
	Number	%
Highly visible “entrance” to Bulga Village	5	20.8
Native vegetation, environmental, habitat and wildlife values	5	20.8
Specific biodiversity values (wetlands, hollow-bearing trees, large/mature River Red Gums)	3	12.5
Historic value and past use as a stock reserve	6	25.0
Access to Wollombi Brook	1	4.2
Other (quiet, proximity to Village centre, buffer to mining area)	3	12.5
No value	1	4.2
<b>Total “Response Items”</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### Top 3 responses

>10% of responses

\* From all respondents – 13 responses total (12 completed Feedback Forms and 1 e-mail submission). **Multiple responses possible = 24 individual response “items”**.

## Values



## **Selected Cross-section of Comments (Values)**

*A valuable and beautiful native vegetation remnant.*

*Has environmental value for our area.*

*A natural wetlands area.*

*Safety for wildlife.*

*A wildlife refuge habitat ... the wildlife that currently use the area is quite diverse and numerous.*

*It is very visual to both residents and visitors/travellers.*

*It is the entrance to Bulga village.*

*It is also important because of its position in the village where visitors passing through cannot help but see it.*

*People see it every day while driving along Putty Road.*

*It is part of Bulga's history.*

*Has historical value for our area.*

*The Bulga Stock Reserve is historically important to me.*

*Historical value as a stock watering place.*

*Access to the river.*

*I don't see any value in the area.*

*The true value in the reserve to the village of Bulga is in it being a mining buffer vegetation zone.*

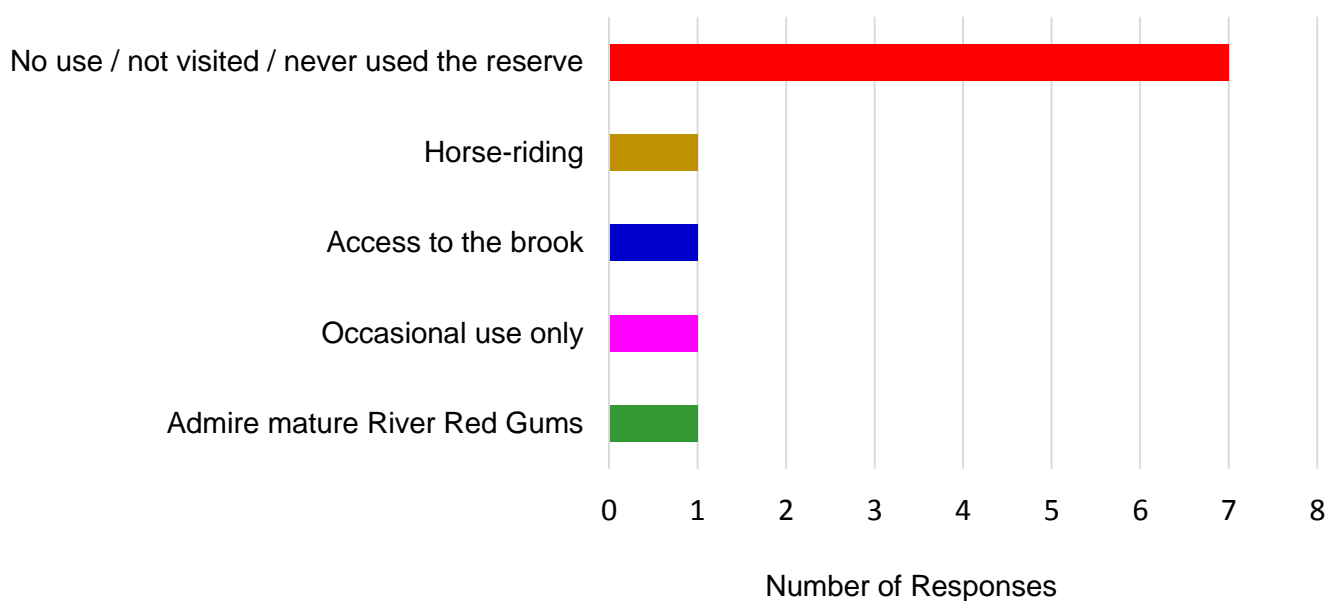
## Respondents' Use of the Reserve

Respondent Identified Use	Response Items *	
	Number	%
No use / not visited / never used the Reserve	7	63.6
Horse-riding	1	9.1
Access to the brook	1	9.1
Occasional use only	1	9.1
Admire mature River Red Gums	1	9.1
<b>Total "Response Items"</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### Top response

\* From all respondents – 13 responses total (12 completed Feedback Forms and 1 e-mail submission). **Multiple responses possible = 11 individual response "items"**.

## Use of the Reserve



## Selected Cross-section of Comments (Use of the Reserve)

*I have not visited the reserve.*

*I use it to ride my young horses in and gain access to the brook.*

*I occasionally visit the area to admire the majestic Redgums.*

*Never enter it.*

*No ... I didn't know it was public land/access.*

*Never stepped foot on it.*

## Issues and Challenges

Respondent Identified Issues/Challenges	Response Items *	
	Number	%
<b>Site neglected, overgrown, unmanaged, poorly maintained, fallen into disuse, and hazardous to enter</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>23.1</b>
<b>Weed removal and control (including removal of fruit trees)</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15.4</b>
Need for conservation of native vegetation, supporting regeneration, and revegetation	3	7.7
<b>Site should be made more presentable / needs to be “cleaned-up” or “tidied up” / not an impressive entrance to Bulga</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15.4</b>
Presents a fire hazard/danger	2	5.1
<b>Flood liable/impacted, flooding severely constrains site’s use and development</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12.8</b>
Not promoted or known as a public reserve or that the site is accessible to the public	3	7.7
No safe access / excessive speeds on Putty Road	3	7.7
Climate change impacts on the reserve and its management	1	2.6
Motorbike use and impacts/disturbances	1	2.6
<b>Total “Response Items”</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>(100.0)</b>

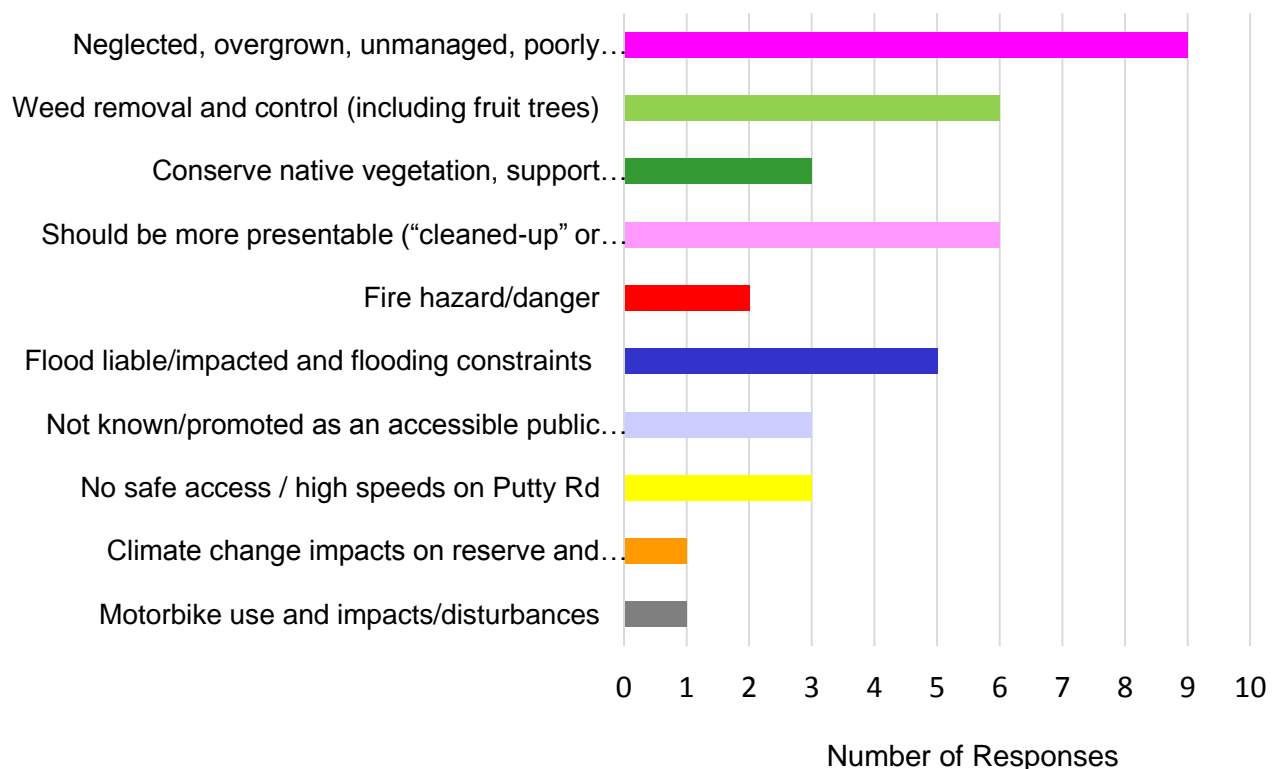
(percentages may not total 100.0% due to rounding)

### Top 3 responses

**>10% of responses**

\* From all respondents – 13 responses total (12 completed Feedback Forms and 1 e-mail submission). **Multiple responses possible = 39 individual response “items”**.

## Issues



## **Selected Cross-section of Comments (Issues)**

*It has been allowed to fall into disuse and scrub ... province of weeds and fallen trees it is neither pleasant nor safe.*

*People don't know if it is a public place or not.*

*It needs to be tidied up.*

*Promoting natural regeneration is a greater priority than (tree) planting, and more sensible given current dry conditions.*

*Flooding ... this area has been impacted by major flooding !*

*It is just a big mess and an eyesore for Bulga residents to look at.*

*The Reserve is too overgrown to attempt to walk into it.*

*There is no safe access to the Reserve.*

*At present it is viewed as a neglected area of huge fire danger.*

*Generally a run-down appearance.*

*Has been underwater twice in the last 20 years.*

*An overgrown useless piece of ground. It is covered in scrub and rubbish and looks terrible.*

*The reserve has been left to be overgrown as it is.*

*Major flood area ... the on-going cost after floods.*

*It is a major flood zone and future use, or infrastructure construction, is limited by this fact.*

## Directions

Respondent Identified Directions	Response Items *	
	Number	%
<b>Beautified / Cleaned-up / More appealing/presentable from Putty Road</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>17.5</b>
Made available/accessible and appealing for public access and enjoyment (non-specific)	4	5.0
<b>Provide walking tracks or pathways, enable safe and navigable access</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11.3</b>
<b>Low-key/small picnic areas, seating and shade – including as an “environmental park” for birdwatching and wildlife viewing</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8.8</b>
As more managed open parkland, with mown/slashed grass and scattered trees	3	3.8
As a caravan/camping area	1	1.3
Build a car park on Putty Road for reserve users	1	1.3
Developed as described in original concept plan – with vehicle parking, walking tracks, bridges, picnic tables, brook access, native tree planting)	3	3.8
Provide information or interpretation signs	3	3.8
<b>No developed/built facilities – including no vehicle entry and no camping</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7.5</b>
<b>Protect native vegetation, promote natural regeneration/re-growth, revegetate with native species, tree/shrub planting and habitat restoration (including as vegetated buffer to mining areas)</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13.8</b>
Reinstate/restore natural wetlands – including closing the “cutaway” (artificial levee opening)	4	5.0
<b>Active/more effective control of weeds, introduced trees and noxious species</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7.5</b>
Reduced fire hazard and fuel loads (regular grass slashing)	1	1.3
<b>Used/leased for grazing or returned to original Traveling Stock Reserve use – including repairing fencing</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6.3</b>
Other (various)	2	2.5
<b>Total “Response Items”</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>(100.0)</b>

(percentages may not total 100.0% due to rounding)

### Top 3 responses

#### >5% of responses

\* From all respondents – 13 responses total (12 completed Feedback Forms and 1 e-mail submission). **Multiple responses possible = 80 individual response “items”.**

### Selected Cross-section of Comments (Directions)

*I support proposals for walking trails with interpretive signage.*

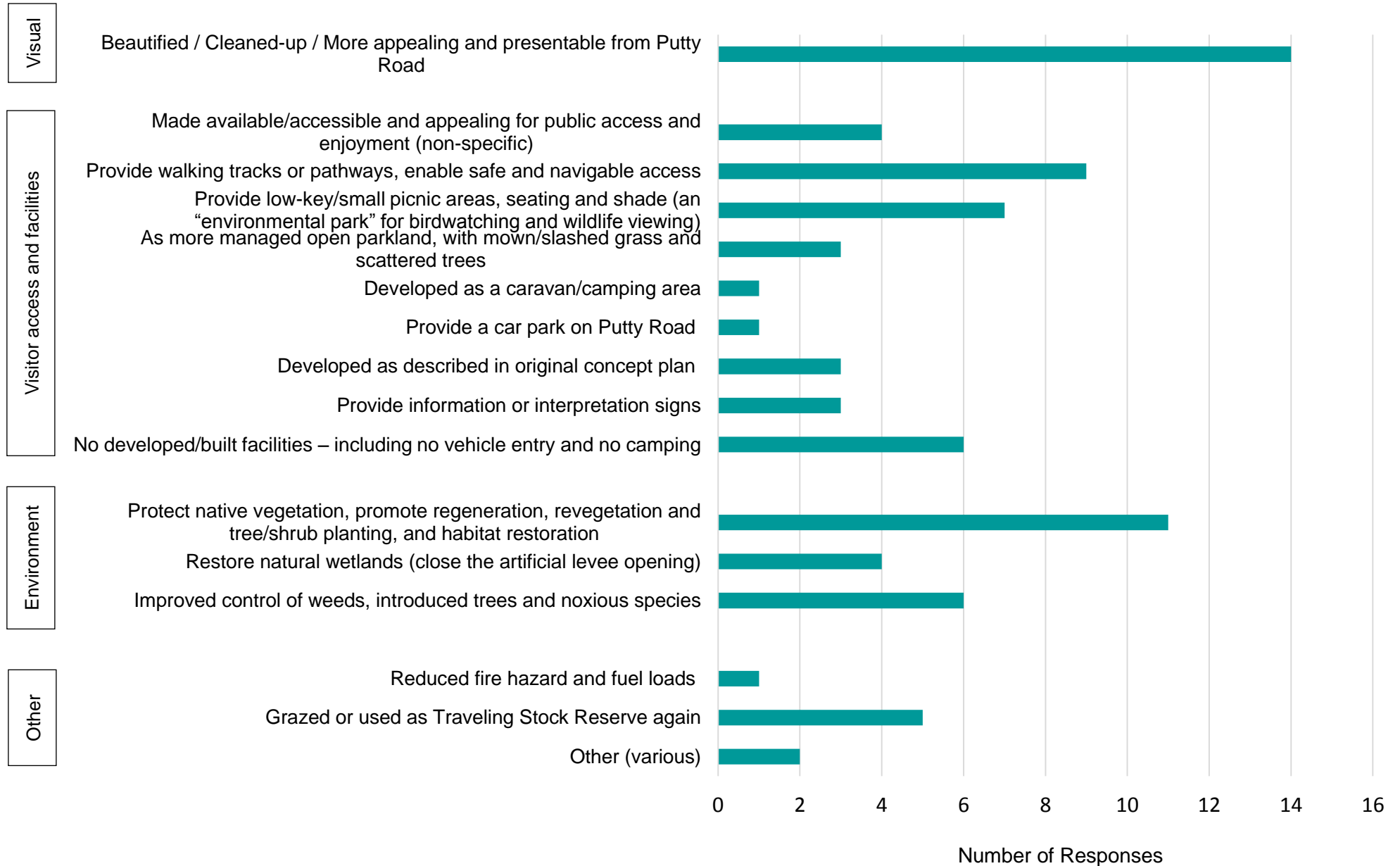
*Closing the cutaway and returning the site to an ephemeral wetland.*

*An area of natural beauty and calm.*

*Definitely no more exercise stations, playgrounds or facilities.*



## Directions



## **Selected Cross-section of Comments (Directions) (cont'd)**

*Visual and recreational asset to residents and travellers.*

*No permanent structures erected.*

*Just a few shrubs for medium height, trees for shade.*

*No need for buildings or shade shelters as this is a flood zone.*

*Replace fencing.*

*Quality signage acknowledging our explorers.*

*Weeds and trees removed (except for natives).*

*Kept mown and made parkland where travellers could stop for a break.*

*No infrastructure should be built except for cement (or some material that will withstand flooding) seating and maybe shelters.*

*The area needs to be cleaned up and made available for public enjoyment.*

*The original concept plan including establishment of picnic table, vehicle parking areas, walking tracks, planting of native trees, a bridge over drainage channels and restoration of wetlands.*

*Lease it to stockman to run cattle on and keep vegetation down and control feral weeds.*

*Making the area interesting for visitors.*

*A picnic area created so people could use it ...some areas could be created for caravanners to have an overnight stay.*

*Somewhere public people can walk.*

*A parking area near the Putty Road but not m-bikes/vehicle tracks into the area.*

*Used as it was before that is leased out for people to have stock on.*

*Existing stands of native vegetation are to be protected and should not be removed or altered.*

*Construct basic low maintenance pathway/walking tracks to allow limited pedestrian access ... and also conduct the basic maintenance and revegetation/noxious weed control management.*

## “Other”

Respondent Identified “Other” Feedback, Suggestions or Inputs	Response Items *	
	Number	%
<b>Multiple Comments</b>		
Future maintenance and management funding needs to be assured	5	20.0
Potential for wasted spending (if facilities “washed away in the next flood”) / Better to spend funds on sustainable projects	3	15.0
Encourage community involvement in reserve’s management (cleaning-up the reserve, revegetation activities, developing interpretive material, etc.)	3	15.0
Money would be better spent upgrading Bulga Recreation Ground	2	10.0
Representation on “Community Consultative Forum” should be broadened	2	10.0
<b>Other Comments – offered in a single submission only (1 = 4%)</b>		
Biodiversity values could be used to seek grant funding/support (e.g. as at McNammara Park in Broke)		
A “useless” area in its present state		
Plan for the reserve’s best use		
Very few people visit the reserve		
Replicate the Bulga sign on south side of town		
Link reserve to Old School House (Scout Hall) and creekside block near Bulga Bridge, with connecting walking tracks		
Flooding frequency likely to change with drying climatic conditions		
VPA funds should be spent on what the community wants, not wishes of a few individuals		
Maintenance should not be funded from VPA budget		
A “Concept Plan” for the reserve’s improvement was prepared 18 years ago but deferred		

### Top 3 responses

\* From all respondents – 13 responses total (12 completed Feedback Forms and 1 e-mail submission). **Multiple responses possible = 25 individual response “items”.**

### Selected Cross-section of Comments (“Other”)

*Council to develop future management plan and budget.*

*Who will be responsible for maintaining the proposed ‘environmental park’ ?*

*Important that a maintenance management plan is instituted.*

*Have a plan as to how it would be best used.*

*Council can’t take care of it now, let alone with pathways, platforms, craft launching facilities, bar-b-qs, fitness and amenities.*

*The ongoing cost after floods ... the cost annually of the general mowing and upkeep.*

*Significant capital expense for this project would be economically unviable.*

