



Honeyeater Bushland Reserve Management plan 2021-2026

Junortoun Community Action Group
as committee of management for
Honeyeater Bushland Reserve, Junortoun



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Acknowledgement of country

Honeyeater Bushland Reserve is located on the lands of the Dja Dja Wurrung people.

The Junortoun Community Action Group recognises the Dja Dja Wurrung people as Traditional Owners of the land and acknowledges their rich culture and heritage, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. JCAG pays respects to Dja Dja Wurrung Elders and Ancestors and their ongoing living culture.

Part 1 – Overview

1.1 Purpose of the plan

This management plan sets out the committee’s strategic vision for managing and developing Honeyeater Bushland Reserve and how it will be achieved. The plan is based on the template provided by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning 2021.

1.2 About the reserve

Honeyeater Bushland Reserve is a 17-hectare reserve located in Junortoun. It is the site of a former quarry and is land that has experienced significant human-influenced disturbance and degradation over many years. The reserve is zoned PUZ7 “public use”.

For additional details of the reserve, including location, existing condition, and current informal and formal activities and usage of the reserve, see Part 4 (page 10).



1.3 Role of committee

The Junortoun Community Action Group Inc. (JCAG) was appointed as Committee of Management for Honeyeater Bushland Reserve in July 2019.

The role of the committee is to **'manage, improve, maintain and control'** the reserve for the purposes for which it is reserved under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*. The committee does so in the public interest for the benefit of the Junortoun community, as well as the wider community.

1.4 Process used to develop plan

To develop this management plan the committee:

- assessed the current situation, including the existing facilities and use of the reserve ('what do we have?')
- determined its strategic (long term) vision for the future of the reserve ('what do we want?')
- set objectives (goals) and decided on strategies and actions ('how do we get there?')

Community engagement

In preparing this plan, the committee engaged with the community. For details, see Section 4.2 (page 10).

Operating environment

In preparing this plan, the committee considered the external operating environment, for example, social, environmental, economic, political and other considerations. For details, see Section 4.3 (page 11).

1.5 Committee's strategic vision

The committee's strategic vision for the reserve is that Honeyeater Bushland Reserve is preserved as a place for nature and a space for passive recreation for the local community and visitors.

1.6 Objectives (goals)

Objective 1: Preserve, protect and rehabilitate the natural environment.

For details of this objective and the strategies/actions to achieve it, see Part 2 (page 6).

Objective 2: Develop the reserve as a place that people enjoy and value.

For details of this objective and the strategies/actions to achieve it, see Part 3 (page 8).

1.7 Strategies and actions – core and aspirational

The committee has developed strategies and actions to achieve each objective (goal). These are either **core** or **aspirational**. The committee aims to implement all of them. However, if budget or other constraints arise, core strategies and actions have priority. Those that are aspirational will be the most likely to be delayed or not implemented, for example, if a major safety hazard arises that must be addressed, which significantly affects the budget.

Changes to the priority of strategies and actions may occur if funding or resource opportunities arise and applications are successful.

1.8 Duration, commencement and review

This plan covers the period April 2021 to March 2026 (five years).

The plan, and any subsequent updates, start operating when:

- the committee (the Junortoun Community Action Group) has received any approvals necessary from the department, and
- the committee has formally endorsed the plan and this is recorded in the minutes.

Note:

- If any legal and government policy requirements apply to the plan, it cannot be finalised and commence until these requirements have been met.
- If the plan includes development works, these works cannot start until the committee has received all necessary approvals, for example, a planning permit may be required.

Annual review of management plan

This plan will be reviewed by the Junortoun Community Action Group at least annually and will be updated if required.

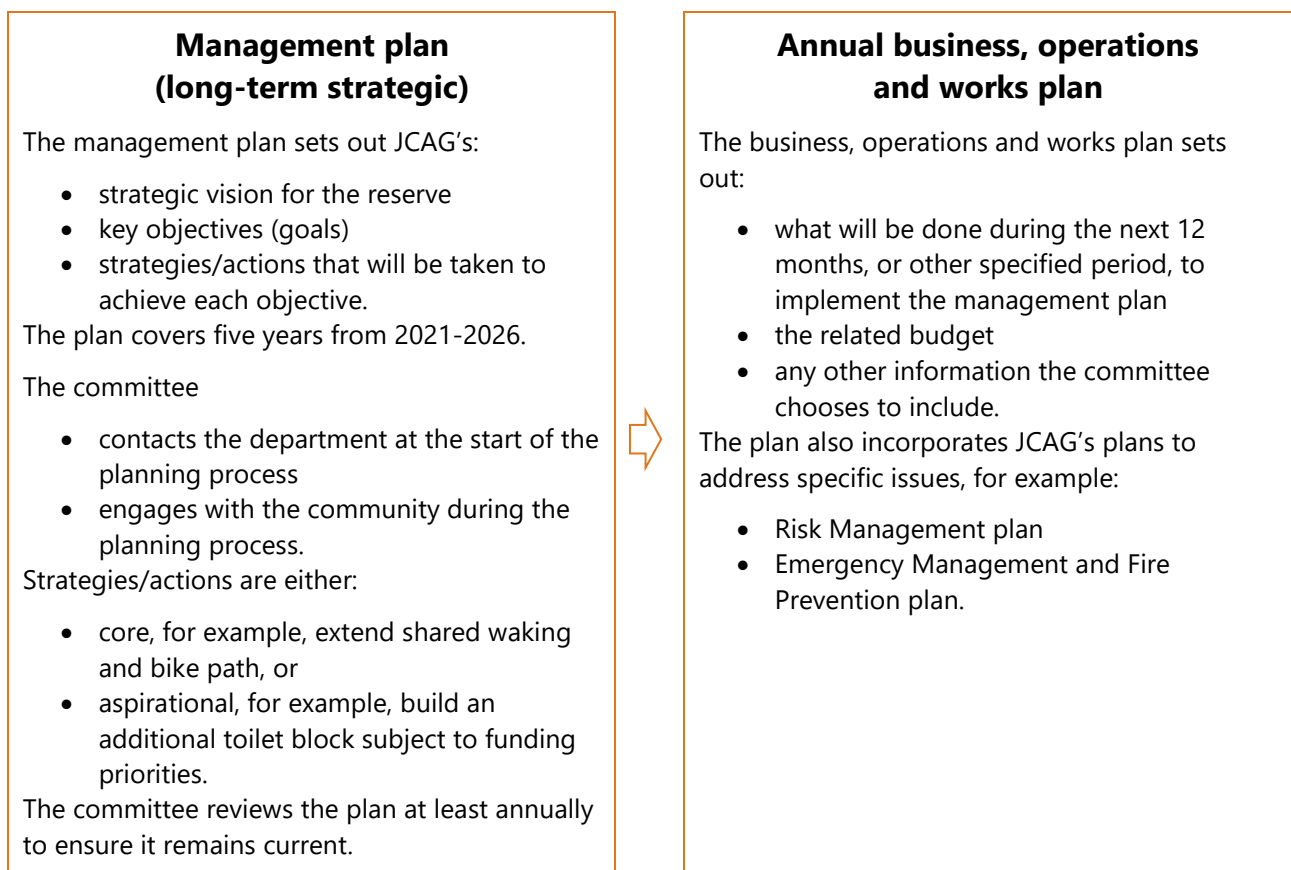
1.9 Business, operations and works plan

To ensure the committee achieves its long-term vision for the reserve expressed in this management plan, the committee will also develop a Business, Operations and Works plan that sets out:

- what will occur in the next 12 months, or other specified period, to implement this management plan
- the related budget
- any other information the committee chooses to include, such as implementation details.

The business, operations and works plan also incorporates plans made by the committee to address specific issues, such as the Risk Management plan, and the Emergency Management and Fire Prevention plan.

1.10 Overview diagram



Part 2 – Strategies and actions to achieve objective 1.

2.1 Objective 1: Preserve, protect and rehabilitate the natural environment.

The first objective of the Junortoun Community Action Group is to protect and restore Honeyeater Bushland Reserve as a space for nature and an important part of a nature corridor in Junortoun.

2.2 Strategies and actions to preserve and protect the natural environment

Strategies/Actions	Type	Timeframe
Remove non-indigenous trees and weeds in the wetland project area	Core	2021-22
Manage water erosion on the quarry face (south end of reserve) due to sodic soils.	Core	2021-22
Repair, maintain and replace boundary fences and barriers to prevent or discourage access by vehicles and trail bikes.	Core	2021-23
Undertake weed control.	Core	Ongoing
Undertake fire prevention measures.	Core	Ongoing
Maintain existing nest boxes.	Core	Ongoing
Vermin control activities.	Core	Ongoing
Conduct surveys of birds, reptiles and mammals to provide lists of species within the Reserve.	Core	Ongoing
-- From the surveys, support species identified as "at risk". E.g. provide roosting boxes for microbats and habitat boxes for native bees etc.	Core	Ongoing
Remove non-indigenous trees throughout the reserve	Aspirational	Ongoing

2.3 Strategies and actions to rehabilitate the natural environment

Strategies/Actions	Type	Timeframe
Grade and add topsoil to areas (gateway area and picnic area) to enable slashing for fire prevention (and to encourage public use)	Core	2021-22
Cover sodic soils on southern slope of former quarry with clean fill and topsoil to allow for subsequent replanting	Core	2021-23
Continue tree planting in fenced paddock below NBN tower	Core	2021-22
Enhance existing wetland area at the Reserve to support mammals, birds, reptiles and plants.	Core	2021-23
Plant grasses, shrubs and trees in wetland project area	Core	2021-22
Prepare for and plant shrubs and trees in "roundabout" area of quarry floor (will require fencing and soil preparation).	Core	2021-22
Revegetation (tree planting) on areas of remediated sodic soils (southern slope of former quarry)	Core	2022-24
Cover the rocky sloping face, located to the east of the existing wetland, with topsoil to allow for subsequent replanting	Aspirational	Ongoing
Cover areas of the sloping face along the southwestern and western side of the former quarry that are subject to significant erosion with topsoil to allow for subsequent replanting	Aspirational	Ongoing
Revegetation (tree planting) in other areas of the reserve including the quarry floor	Aspirational	Ongoing
Install additional nest boxes for mammals, microbats and birds (50 nest boxes in 5 years)	Aspirational	Ongoing

Part 3 –Strategies and actions to achieve objective 2.

3.1 Objective 2: Develop the reserve as a place that people enjoy and value

The second objective of the Junortoun Community Action Group addresses risks and hazards at the Reserve and aims to provide facilities that support its use for passive recreation.

3.2 Strategies and actions to make the reserve a place that people enjoy and value

Strategies/Actions	Type	Timeframe
Implement high priority actions identified in Risk Management Assessments.	Core	2021 and ongoing
Install barrier fencing at top of cliff near NBN tower to prevent falls. Install warning signs as required.	Core	2021-22
Manage (fence or fill) gravel/clay extraction holes on quarry floor that fill with water.	Core	2021-22
Remove dead trees where these represent a danger to park users.	Core	2021 and ongoing
Fire prevention activities, as advised by Junortoun Fire Brigade.	Core	Ongoing
Grade and add topsoil to grassed area at north of Reserve near entrance gate (gateway and picnic areas).	Core	2021-22
Grade and add topsoil to former seed orchard at north of the Reserve, near entrance gate.	Core	2021-22
Grade or redistribute piles of topsoil stored at north-west corner of reserve.	Core	2021-22
Assess the requirement for aerial survey to assist project development.	Aspirational	2023-25

3.3 Strategies and actions to improve amenity for people

Strategies/Actions	Type	Timeframe
Install identification signage on reserve boundaries	Core	2021-22
Install information signage at entrance(s) of reserve	Core	2021-22
Install pedestrian access points at reserve entrances	Core	2021-22
Maintain and develop walking tracks as required.	Core	Ongoing
-- Regrade and roll Rim Walk track, and also include linking path that leads to lane from Turners Rd.	Core	2021-22
-- Relocate and/or reconstruct section of rim walk at south-eastern end to minimise erosion and boggy surface	Core	2021-22
Request that City of Greater Bendigo grades and maintains Honeyeater Lane for better access to Honeyeater Bushland Reserve	Core	2021 and ongoing
Install bench seating at various locations within the Reserve	Aspirational	2022-23
Plan for a viewing point over the quarry basin at southern end of the Reserve	Aspirational	2022-25
Install new picnic tables at suitable locations within the Reserve	Aspirational	2022-25
Consider a gate and walking path to provide safe access to Reserve from Binks Road	Aspirational	2023-24
Consider gates and walking connections to provide safe access to Reserve from Somerset Park Road to satisfy community needs	Aspirational	2024-25 or later
Provide interpretive signage at specific locations within the park drawing attention to natural features	Aspirational	Ongoing
Grade and define car parks at entrances	Aspirational	2023-24
Provide a formal bicycle parking point (e.g. hoops on concrete base)	Aspirational	2023-24
Investigate the provision of drinking water point(s) and toilets	Aspirational	2025-26

Part 4 – Background information

4.1 About the reserve

Honeyeater Bushland Reserve is a 17-hectare nature reserve in Junortoun, Victoria managed by the Junortoun Community Action Group.

The Reserve is located on Honeyeater Lane, between Binks Road and Somerset Park Road in Junortoun. It borders the Strathfieldsaye Bushland Reserve (24ha), and a 15.8ha reserve owned and managed by the City of Greater Bendigo. The site is close to Knul-doorong Woodland and the O’Keefe Rail Trail. It is zoned PUZ7 (other public use).

History of the site

Honeyeater Reserve is the site of a former gravel quarry that was operated by the former Shire of Strathfieldsaye. The site has also been used in past years to bury municipal waste, and to store gravel used for road base. The quarry has not operated for approximately 25 years.

Features of the reserve

Wildlife: Honeyeater Reserve is home to many plants, insects, reptiles, birds and mammals. Together with adjacent bushland it forms a valuable space for nature.

Dam: There is a dam present on the site which maintains a year-round supply of water. This site is used by agreement by the Junortoun Fire Brigade for training and firefighting purposes.

Sodic soil and erosion: Areas of sodic soil, exposed by previous quarry operations, are present, especially at the southern face of the quarry basin. These areas will need to be managed to minimise the severe erosion before revegetation can commence.

NBN tower: An NBN communications tower has been erected within Honeyeater Reserve. JCAG receives an annual rental for the presence of this tower. This income is used to maintain and improve the Reserve.

4.2 Community engagement

In preparing this Management Plan the Junortoun Community Action Group considered:

Community opinions

The community’s support for preservation of the natural environment and the development of reserves for passive recreation was established in the Junortoun Community Plans (2013-15) and (2017-22). Each of these plans involved extensive community engagement.

In addition to the experience and expertise of committee members, the committee has received and considered advice provided by a volunteer and advisory group which operated during 2020.

Technical report

The committee considered the observations and recommendations of a 36-page technical report prepared by Karen Stuart and Tristan Hudson in 2019.

Agency and other consultation

Representatives from the management committee have met with: City of Greater Bendigo Natural Reserves staff, North Central Catchment Management Authority staff, DELWP staff, representatives of Bendigo Field Naturalists, Karl Just (wetland ecologist), City of Greater Bendigo Councillors, and staff from other units of the City of Greater Bendigo.

Commitment to ongoing engagement

JCAG will continue to meet and work with all relevant organisations and representatives that can provide expertise and information.

4.3 External operating environment

Location

The location of the Reserve is significant as it is part of a series of reserves which form a valuable green corridor. (See map in section 1.2)

To the south east, Honeyeater Bushland Reserve adjoins the Strathfieldsaye Bushland Reserve, which in turn abuts a 16ha reserve owned and managed by the City of Greater Bendigo.

To the north the Reserve adjoins a protected piece of private land, the Knul-Doorong Woodland, and the O'Keefe Rail trail. The Rail Trail serves as Junortoun's "linear park".

Relevant local, state, national and other policies

Policies of relevance which influence this Management Plan.

- City of Greater Bendigo Community Plan 2017-2021
 - Goal 5: Environmental sustainability
- Greater Bendigo Public Space Plan
- Greening Greater Bendigo strategy
- Regional Catchment Strategy - North Central Catchment Management Authority
- One Planet Living
 - Land and nature: Protecting and restoring land for the benefit of people and wildlife.

4.4 About the Junortoun Community Action Group Inc.

The Junortoun Community Action Group (JCAG) is a volunteer community organisation representing and advocating for the interests of residents of Junortoun.

JCAG was formed in 2012 when a group of residents came together to develop the first community plan. The Action Group incorporated in 2014.

Junortoun Community Action Group exists to:

- Improve the community of Junortoun, Victoria by developing activities and initiatives in accordance with the wishes of those who live and work in Junortoun; and
- Achieve a friendly, safe and peaceful, semi-rural environment, with a sense of community and a focus on families.

The Action Group elects a committee each year at its annual general meeting. The role of this committee is to:

- Manage and govern the activities of the Junortoun Community Action Group Inc.
- Act as Committee of Management for Honeyeater Bushland Reserve.