Trust Land Management

Plan 2010-2015



Prepared by Desert Channels Queensland

Blackall-Tambo Regional Council

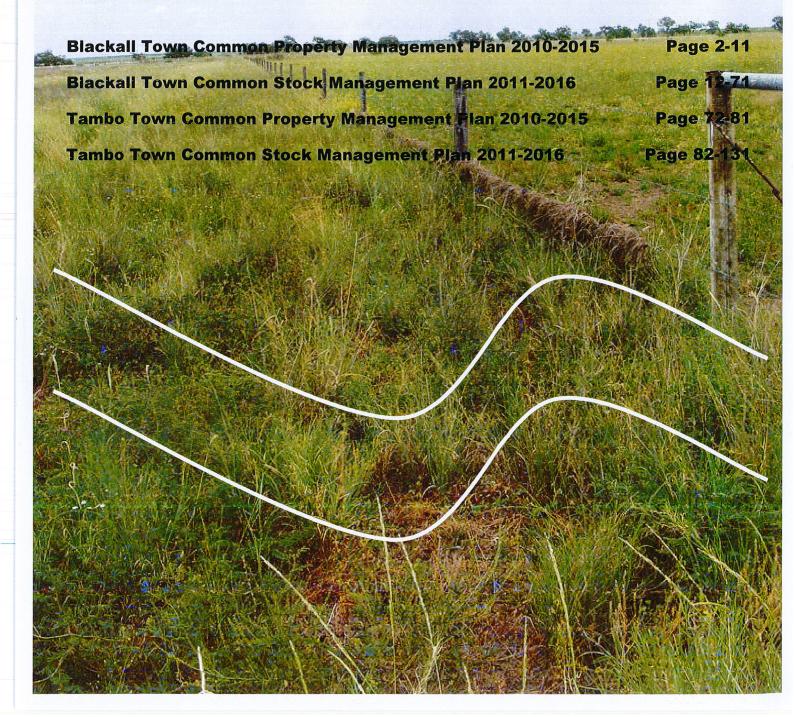


for the Community



Overview of Plans

The Trust Land Management Plan 2010-2015 which has been prepared by Desert Channels Queensland and the Blackall-Tambo Regional Council for the community consists of the following:







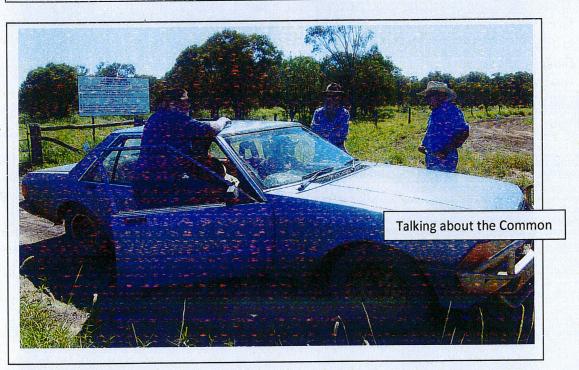
Blackall Town Common Property Plan 2010-2015



Prepared by Desert Channels Queensland for the

Blackall-Tambo Regional Council and Community

| PROCESS TIMEFRAME | | | |
|-----------------------|---|--|--|
| Timeframe | Action | | |
| October 2009 | Council decides to proceed with Town Common Plans | | |
| February 9 & 11, 2010 | Inspection of Town Commons by DCQ & Council Staff. INITIAL AWARENESS MEETINGS Feedback Forms distributed. | | |
| March 10&11, 2010 | ISSUES WORKSHOP | | |
| March 15 to 26, 2010 | PLAN DRAFTED from Issues Work Workshop, Feedbacks and Meetings with stakeholders. | | |
| March 29, 2010 | DRAFTED PLAN DISTRIBUTED FOR REVIEW AND FEEDBACK. | | |
| April 30, 2010 | Deadline for comments to be returned to DCQ. | | |
| May, 2010 | FINAL PLANS WRITTEN. | | |
| June, 2010 | FINAL PLAN DELIVERED TO COUNCIL. | | |



BACKGROUND

Blackall celebrates work and effort. It has its' heroes - the legendary shearer, John "Jackie" Howe and Victoria Cross winner, Major Edgar Thomas Towner. It is home to the iconic "black stump" – the ultimate salute to the hard working surveyors who literally put Australia on the map, point by point. Australians treasure the expression "beyond the black stump" that captures the vastness and challenge of this country.

This culture of hard work, do and dare, openness to anyone willing to have a go persists today in the attitude of the residents of Blackali. These qualities exhibit themselves in their interest in and concern for the Town Common.

History

Major Thomas Mitchell explored the country around Blackall in 1846 with convicts Douglas and Graham and his trusted Aboriginal guide Yuranigh. Mitchell described the area as the finest and most extensive pastoral region that he had seen in Australia - an El Dorado. By contrast when the explorers AC and FT Gregory travelled through twelve years later they encountered a dry and desolate landscape. These early experiences reflect the cycle of wet and dry that dictates the seasonal capacity of this amazingly resilient landscape.

These conflicting descriptions did not deter the growing southern interest in the area and tenders for runs were submitted before the area was declared open for pastoral occupation in 1861. J T Allan drove the first cattle into the Barcoo in 1862 and settled to the south of Blackall. Many other settlers and speculators followed with much trading of runs and licences.

Joun Commons The Alienation of Crown Lands Het of 1860 gave right of commonage to all the unenclosed lands within any agricultural or other reserve to purchasers of land within the reserve and to the residents in any adjacent township, to be determined by regulation. The Grown Lands of Genetion Stee 1808 formalised the setting up of town commons The Governor in Council could proclaim any unsold land as a town common provided that it was requested by a petition signed by not less than thirty freeholders living in the town, and if, after the petition had been notified in the Government Gazette for so days, no counter petition had been presented that was signed by a larger number of resident freeholders, the common could be proclaimed. The Land Het of 1910 changed all commons to pusturage reserves.

In 1876 many people selected agricultural blocks in the hope of making a living as dairy farmers or for growing crops but this did not reflect the reality of the volatile seasons. Larger grazing farm leases carved out of the original extensive runs became eagerly sought after. Although cattle preceded sheep, by 1889 sheep and wool had become the dominant pastoral activities utilising the extensive tracts of grass named after Mitchell.

The township of Blackall was established around 1867 to supply goods to the surrounding pastoral properties, bullock wagon teams, explorers and travellers. Blackall was the frontier town servicing areas to the north and north-west until Barcaldine was established as a railhead in 1886. An early artesian bore was completed in 1888 and drought proofed the town which allowed it to expand and prosper.

- written and researched by Christine Campbell.

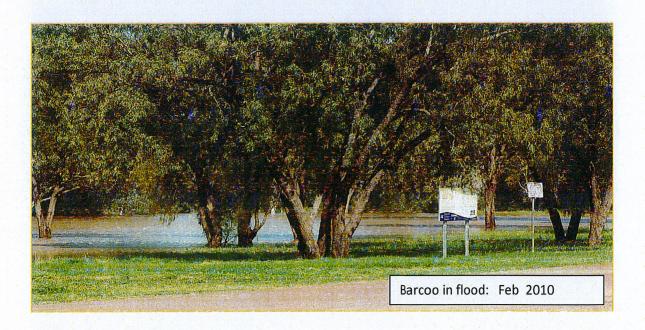
Description of the Town Common

<u>Environment</u> – The Blackall Town Reserve, or the Town Common, is an area of approximately 2500 ha – 6250 acres (the exact size was not determined at the time of plan writing as a new plan of the common was in the process of being drawn up by the Department of Environment and Resource Management). The northern section of 1460 ha (3600 acres) includes a paddock of approximately 395 ha to the northwest, leased as a butcher's paddock.

The northern section is the grazed part of the common and is separated by an east/west running fence from the grid on the Evora Road near the Wool Scour. This area is wooded with gidgee, dead finish, ironwood, boree and coolibah on loamy red soils which grades into heavy black soil and Mitchell grass along the western boundary. Areas of scrub have been pulled but not raked and burnt. The dominant grass in the timbered area is buffel with a very good cover of grass after the wet season in 2010.

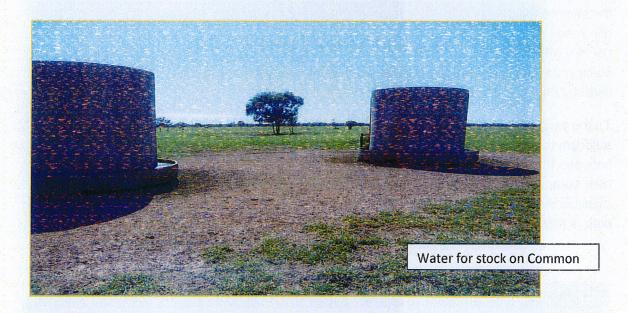
Moving south is an area of the common not normally grazed, adjacent to the saleyards with the cemetery and the rubbish dump as separate areas within it. The area once devoted to a rifle range is no longer used and will be included in the common. This area is timbered country with loamy red soil similar to the northern part of the common, grading into heavy black soil Mitchell grass country to the south on the edge of town. The town water facility used by travelling stock is in the latter part of the common.

To the west and south west of the town there is an area of common (open Mitchell grass) adjacent to the race course, down past the hospital, south to the sewage works then between the river and the airport. This narrow strip follows the river to the bend where the river swings due north. The latter area is woodland with coolibah, river gum and wattle. It is possible that this strip along the river may not be retained in the town common when the final plan is resolved.



<u>Cultural Heritage</u> – The Blackall Common area is under the claim of the traditional owners, the Bidjera. The Iningai are disputing the country on the north of the River and this will be settled by them this year. Other historical sites and places of interest mentioned in the plan include the Woolscour, Cotswold Dairy, old "Alice Downs" Gate, the Cemetery, Charcoal Burners site, and Rotten Rock Borrow Pits. Those who attended the meetings were interested in preserving and promoting these sites, as reflected in the plan.

<u>Use of the Town Common</u> – In recent years the Town Common has been used to graze town horses and cattle, and has been a hub of recreational activity for the Blackall community, visitors and tourists. Horse and motorbike riding, walking, and camping are activities that continue to be enjoyed on the Common. Balancing recreational activity with protecting the environment and heritage sites on the Town Common is a challenge recognised by the Blackall Shire Council and community and is addressed in this plan.



Map

The map of the Town Common in this plan shows a number of sites of interest some of which are mentioned in the plan. The scheduling of this plan overlaps with the replanning of the whole of Blackall. The later is more complicated, and the process more meticulous. DERM is helped by the Town Common planning, but cannot yet release any final maps. These maps are of the areas currently known as the Common, and focus on the grazing/recreational area, and the reserve along the river.

Map placed on inside of back cover for ease of reference.

HOW THIS PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

The issues most important to the sustainable management and continued enjoyment of the Town Common were determined from discussions with community members and input at the community consultation workshop. These issues and solutions to deal with them form the foundation of this plan. Each issue is dealt with separately, however many objectives and actions are interlinked. The issues dealt with in this plan include Heritage, Infrastructure, Tourism, Biodiversity, Recreation and Grazing.

The community of Blackall and the Blackall Tambo Shire Council have demonstrated a commitment to making this plan work. Actions to ensure the timely implementation of this plan were raised during the community consultation workshop.

LOCAL LAWS AND POLICIES

It is recognised that in the Blackall Tambo Regional Council area there are two sets of local laws and policies inherited from the previous Blackall Shire Council and the Tambo Shire Council. The Blackall Tambo Regional Council Area is working to develop a new set of laws and policies which will include the area of town reserves (town commons).

There is a good opportunity to put in place sound laws and policies that support the wise management of the commons for all users whilst allowing for local differences that reflect the community needs. Both towns have different size commons, different populations and different histories of grazing management.

| HERITAGE | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|--|--|
| Issue | Objective | Solution/Actions | Implementation | | |
| Identify and preserve heritage sites | Have good information available on heritage value of the Common | Expand list of already identified sites * Old "Alice Downs" Gateway * Charcoal Burner Sites * Railway Line * Cemetery * Rotten Rock Borrow Pit * Cotswold Dairy * Wool Scour * Family dwellings | Town Common Group (TCG), Tourism Group, Historical Group, Blackall Tambo Regional Council (BTRC) | | |

| | (behind Cemetery). | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|--|--|
| | | Place suitable signs/mud maps. Protect from vandals and souvenir hunters. Interview older residents and record their stories. | DCQ and TCG. Common Ranger. School Project?. | | |
| | INFRASTRU | ICTURE / RESOURCES | | | |
| Issue | Objective | Solution/Actions | Implementation | | |
| Access to saleyard for mustering stock from common. | Better regulation for the mustering and sale of common stock. | Yards/ramp to be locked for proper management. | BTRC Sales Yard Manager | | |
| Separation of common and sale yard stock. | Prevent loss of sale stock into the common. | Construct a check fence around the sale yards. | BTRC Sales Yard Manager | | |
| More water points | Better distribution of grazing. | Pipes are already there. Compare cost of additional watering facilities. | Common Ranger, BTRC | | |
| Rubbish Dump | No rubbish visible and no offensive smell discernible. | Bury all rubbish, preferably in one spot and be sure it is properly fenced off from stock. Rehabilitate old dump areas. Identify areas for dump expansion from Common. | Council garbage disposal. TCG and BTRC Town Planner. | | |
| Limited residential blocks to accommodate population increase. | Provide for population increase. | Identify areas for future residential and separate these from Common by a roadway to maintain open space and prevent encroachment. | BTRC/Town Planner | | |
| Limited industry to support population. | Proceed with Industrial Estate. | BTRC has new Industrial Estate. Needs investors to fence off the area. | BTRC/Town Planner | | |
| Stock Route Easement | For ease of travelling stock, less dust for residents, and no mixing with Common stock. | Need to realign stock route around industrial estate, assess need for fencing. | Stock Route Officer and Common Ranger. BTRC | | |
| Pulled timber on grazing area. | To avoid damage to stock and musterers | Scheduling gradual clean up and burning of pulled trees. | BTRC and TCG | | |
| Need for a dedicated Town Common Ranger | To provide more effective management of | Review staff resources for town commons. | BTRC | | |

| Regular maintenance | pasture, stock, infrastructure and adherence to policies. An accessible, attractive and well kept Common | Council controls budget, personnel and equipment. | BTRC |
|--|--|---|--|
| | | TOURISM | |
| Issue | Objective | Solution/Actions | Implementation |
| Walking/riding trail SW and W along river | To attract locals and visitors to enjoy the Common | Get DERM OK for trail. | DERM, then BTRC and TCG DCQ |
| Walking/riding trail along old railway line to Wool Scour | To attract locals and visitors to enjoy the Common | Get permission from QR Initial clearing. | BTRC with TCG (Tourism Ass.) |
| Signage | Better information for tourists | Categorize signs, write wording and make list. Submit project proposal. | BTRC, TCG with support from DCQ. |
| Town common tour | Tourist drive around + billy tea. | Guide available. Print brochure. | Tourist operators and BTRC. |
| Low cost camping area. | To provide a low cost camping option for visitors. | Consider further areas as demand warrants. | Zoning by BTRC, DERM and TCG. |
| | | NATURE | |
| Issue | Objective | Solution/Actions | Implementation |
| Loss of biodiversity | Maintain and increase biodiversity. | Fencing of critical areas. | BTRC, interested groups e.g. Bird watchers. DCQ funding. |
| Weeds | Control / eradicate | Use of "Weed Declarations". Informative signage, spraying and wash down bays. | BTRC/community DPI,DCQ BTRC,TCG BTRC,TCG |
| Feral Animals | A feral free Common | Ban / remove. Trapping project ongoing. Sponsored de-sexing program for dogs and cats | RLO, DPI |
| Abundance of | A balanced refuge for wildlife. | Liaise with QNPWS re kangaroo numbers | DPI, QNPWS, BTRC |
| kangaroos Illegal dumping of rubbish/ old cars | A litter free Common | Public education. Signage. Increase patrols and penalties. Clean up old vehicles/rubbish. | BTRC, Schools BTRC BTRC, Police Working bee with |

| | | Town Common clean-up day. | Council backup of equipment |
|--|---|---|---|
| Habitat destruction by camping. | Protection of stock and biodiversity. | Compliance with zoning. Limit fires. Provide firewood. No souveniring. | BTRC, Common Ranger, Police |
| | | RECREATION | |
| Issue | Objective | Solution/Actions | Implementation |
| Motorbike riding | A designated and maintained area for safety of riders and spectators. | Discuss with Council re area for recreational riding. | Bike Riding Community and Council |
| Currently no opportunities on offer for young. | Motivate outdoor activities | Form a Motorbike Club. Organize events. Teach skills. | Local bike riding community, BTRC,DERM |
| No dedicated areas for possible future activities e.g. archery or paintball. | Areas zoned for possible recreation. | Identify areas of low conservation / grazing quality | Zoning by BTRC, DERM, TCG. |
| | | GRAZING | |
| Issue | Objective Good stock | Solution/Actions | Implementation |
| Management of grazing areas of Common | management by maintaining pasture | Rotate available water to rest pasture. | Common Ranger / TCG |
| Mustering | Agistment paid by all users. Use restricted to Shire residents. | 2 Musters a year – all stock. Owners present at sale yards. Calves weaned. Cattle tagged, records updated and fees paid. Poor, abandoned horses removed (animal welfare). | Common Ranger, hired musterers. TCG DPI |
| Mining of good soil | To avoid eyesores, erosions and depletion of quality soil. | Restrict council and contractors to defined areas for quarrying. | Common Ranger, BTRC |
| Signs on main Evora Rd. | For safety of stock and motorists. | Wording "UNFENCED ROAD CATTLE AND HORSES AHEAD" | BTRC |
| | | | BTRC |

BUDGET AND TIMEFRAME

Part of the process during the community workshop was allocating responsibility against identified solutions/actions. Timeframes and budgets to implement actions in the plan will be largely determined by the capacity of those assigned responsibility.

Many of the actions outlined in this plan have been designated by the workshop participants as a Council responsibility. Council resources will largely dictate what actions are implemented within a workable timeframe for Council. In making decisions to fund works on the Common the Council needs to balance its' budget with due regard to the revenue raised from the Common.

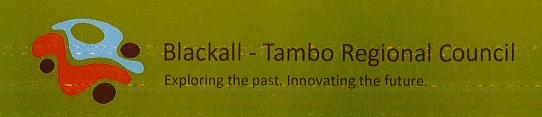
As discussed by workshop participants, all stakeholders, including community, Council and relevant agencies, may be able to assist the implementation of certain actions through securing grant funding.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

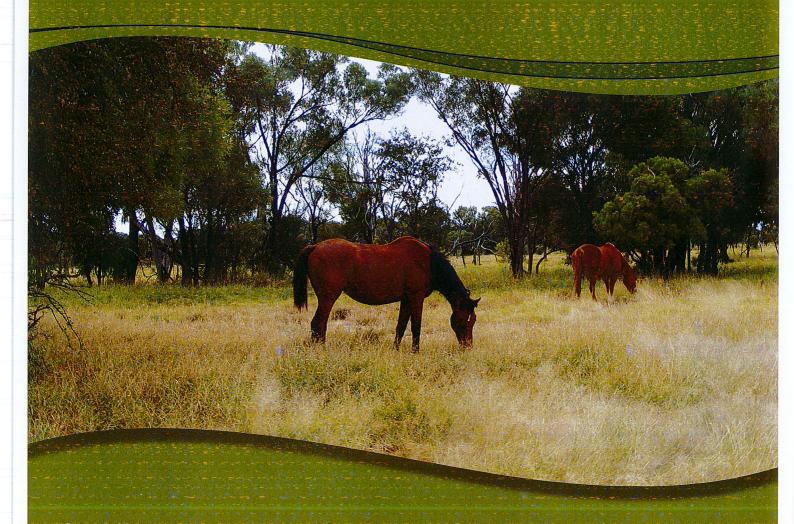
How will we know if this plan is working to protect and promote the Blackall Town Common according to the wishes of community and the Council? As part of the plan consultation there was a clearly expressed view that the community wished to have a proactive role in setting priorities and assisting with the management of the common.

This plan is a starting point and in time should evolve as objectives are achieved, new ones aspired to, and better ways discovered. To enable this to happen the following recommendations are made:

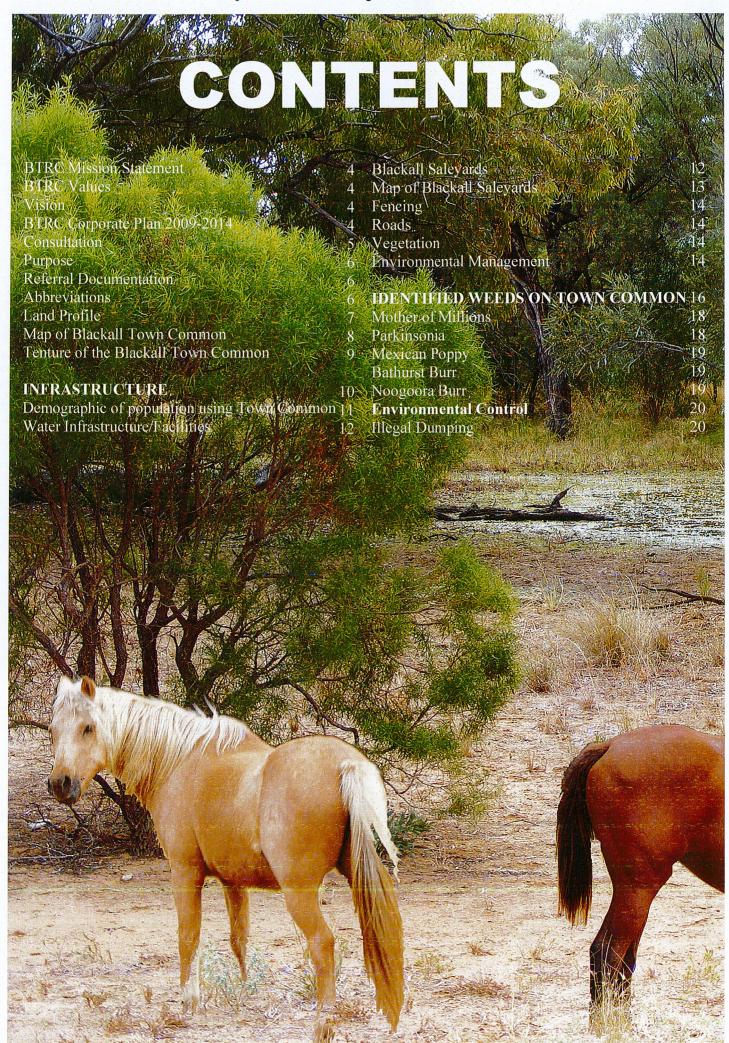
- A Blackall Town Common Advisory Committee be established consisting of community representatives and a Council representative. The Town Common Advisory Committee would meet regularly, perhaps once every three months, to monitor and review implementation of the Town Common Management Plan. Recommendations made at these meetings would be communicated to Council for consideration and communicated to the wider community via the Council newsletter.
- An annual work plan should be drawn up for works on the common. This work plan could indicate possible sources for funding actions and then go to council for consideration as part of the annual budget cycle.
- The plan will be reviewed every five years.



Blackall Town Common



Stock Management Plan 2011-2016





Blackall Town Common Stock Management Plan 2011-2016 Page 14

BLACKALL-TAMBO REGIONAL COUNCIL MISSION STATEMENT

To sustain and further enhance the appealing rural lifestyle within the western Queensland area by managing resources and providing leadership to ensure its residents and visitors enjoy a quality of life to the highest possible standard.

BLACKALL-TAMBO REGIONAL COUNCIL VALUE

The manner in which we accomplish our mission is as important as the mission itself.

A united team approach by our elected representatives and our staff is required to achieve the best quality in services and facilities.

These core values are fundamental to how Council carries out its activities and to the ultimate achievement of its long term goals.

VISION

The Blackall-Tambo region is an active, health and progressive community rich in social capital. Residents enjoy state of the art health, education, cultural, recreational and business facilities and opportunities.

The Blackall-Tambo region is recognized as a leader in environmentally responsible practices and industries.

Blackall-Tambo Regional Council promotes economic development and the sustainable management of our natural environment.

BLACKALL-TAMBO REGIONAL COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN 2009-2014

ENVIRONMENT:

Strategy - Rural Lands - Council controlled lands are well managed;

Outcome Management Plan (Controlled Land) is current

Strategy to achieve Outcomes -

Review and implement Town Common Management Plans.



Blackall Town Common Stock Management Plan 2011-2016 Page 15

CONSULTATION

October 2009 the Blackall-Tambo Regional Council resolved to proceed with the development of a Town Common Management Plan for Blackall.

Council in partnership with Desert Channels Queensland planned and commenced community consultation. In February 2010 familiarization inspections were conducted by DCQ and Council staff of the Town Common. After these inspections, feedback forms were distributed to the community in preparation for planned workshops.

In March 2010, an "issues" workshop was held in Blackall with a diverse array of the community in attendance. As a result of this workshop, feedback forms, and meetings with stakeholders a draft plan was developed.

On 29 March 2010 the "Draft Town Common Plan" was distributed for review and feedback with a deadline for comments to be returned to DCQ by 30 April 2010.

In May 2010 the final Plan was written and presented at the June 2010 Council Meeting to be ratified.

As a result of feedback from the Blackall Town Common Advisory Committee, further consultation commenced between Council and the Committee. This consultation was in the form of two meetings held between Councillors, Administration, Rangers and the Committee.

Outcomes from these consultative meetings were that Council developed in conjunction with the existing Town Common Management Plan an operational plan that identified issues, delegated areas of responsibility, and gave direction to the management of stock on the Blackall Town Common.

In addition to the consultation with the Advisory Committee, discussions were held with a range of Council staff and Councillors. These people are valuable sources of information for the development of a Management Plan due to their deep understanding of many of the issues facing the management and viability of Town Commons within their region.

This Town Common Management Plan has been developed with the intention of documenting all of the agreed strategies between Council, stakeholders and the Town Common Advisory Committee focusing on best practice management of both stock and the environment. Its intention is to ensure the continued viability of the Blackall Town Common.



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PURPOSE

The purpose of this plan is to provide direction, operational information, and framework for the development, management and maintenance of the Blackall Town Common identifying the community needs and matching them to Council resources in an effort to provide services in a cost efficient and effective way.

This Management Plan incorporates forward planning, an action plan and budget that can be used in the daily management of this natural resource.

REFERRAL DOCUMENTS

Blackall-Tambo Regional Council – Corporate Plan 2009-2014 Blackall-Tambo Regional Council Community Plan 2009-2029 Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002 Blackall-Tambo Regional Council Operational Plan 2010 Local Government Act 2009 Blackall-Tambo Regional Council Local Laws & Subordinate Local Laws Blackall-Tambo Regional Council Pest Management Plan 2009-2014 Blackall-Tambo Regional Council Community Consultation Policy 2010 Biosecurity Queensland - Fact Sheet - Declared

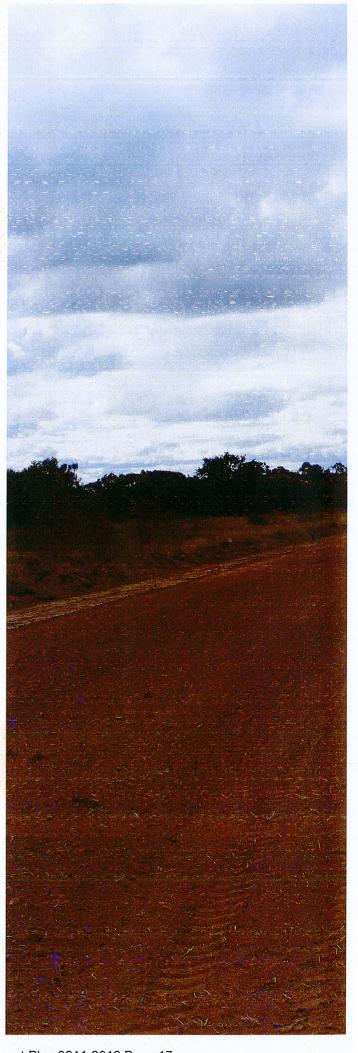
ABBREVIATIONS

Tambo Town Common Management Plan 2011-

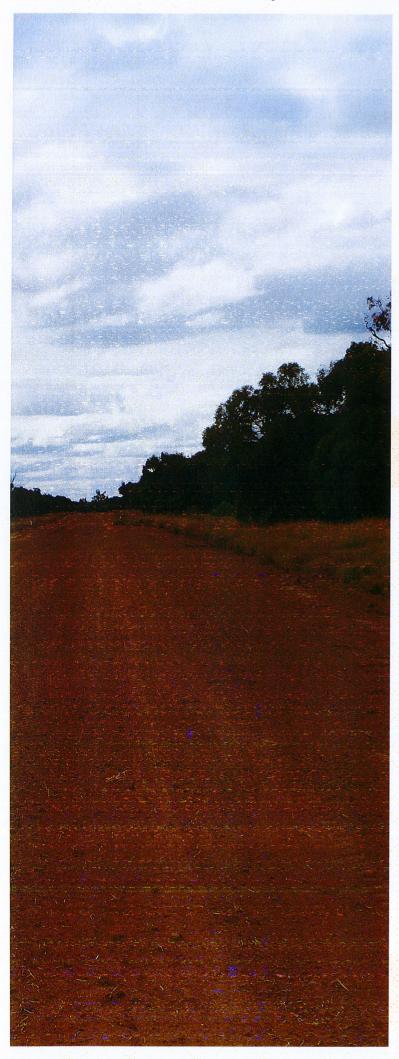
Pest Plants of Queensland

2016

BTC - Blackall Town Common PMP - Pest Management Plan BTCAC - Blackall Town Common Advisory Committee







BTRC - Blackall-Tambo Regional Council BTCM - Blackall Town Common Management DCQ - Desert Channels Queensland

LAND PROFILE

The Blackall Town Common has an area of approximately 1,460 ha (3,600 acres). This consists of several smaller parcels of land in and around the town with the largest part stretching north of town along the Evora Road. The other substantial part of the Common begins at the western entrance to town and follows the Barcoo River around the airport.

Of the 1,460 ha (3,600 acres), approximately 220 ha (500 acres) is leased.

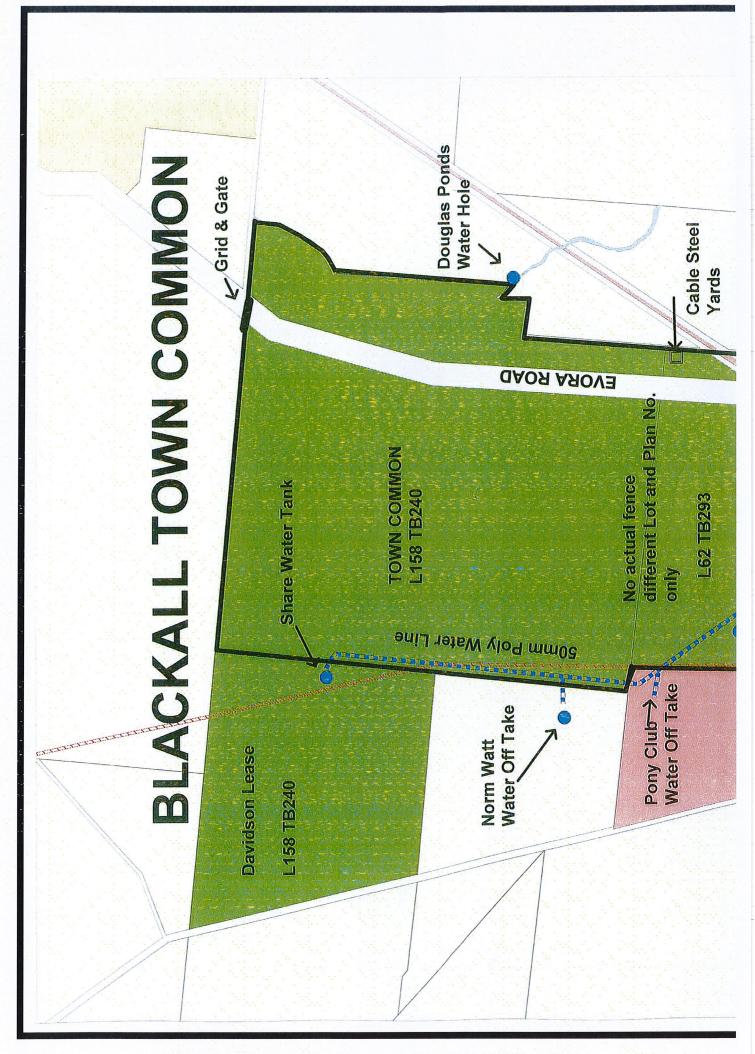
These leases include:

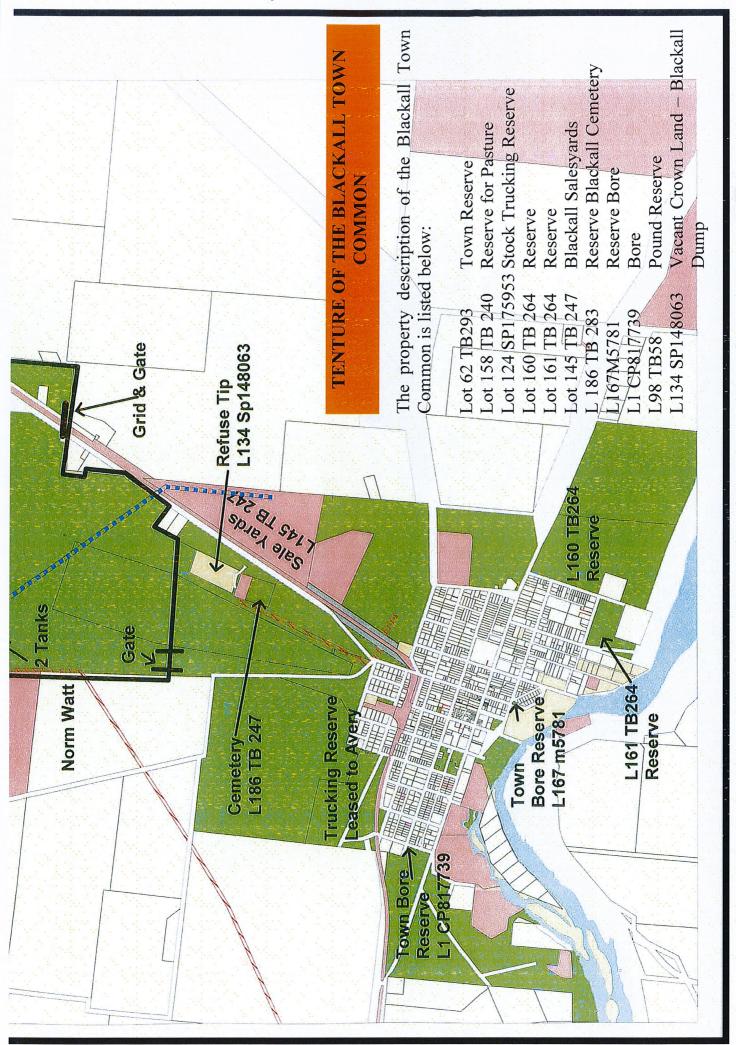
- Pasturage Reserve R.31
- Aerodrome Paddock A
- Aerodrome Paddock B
- Stock Trucking Reserve

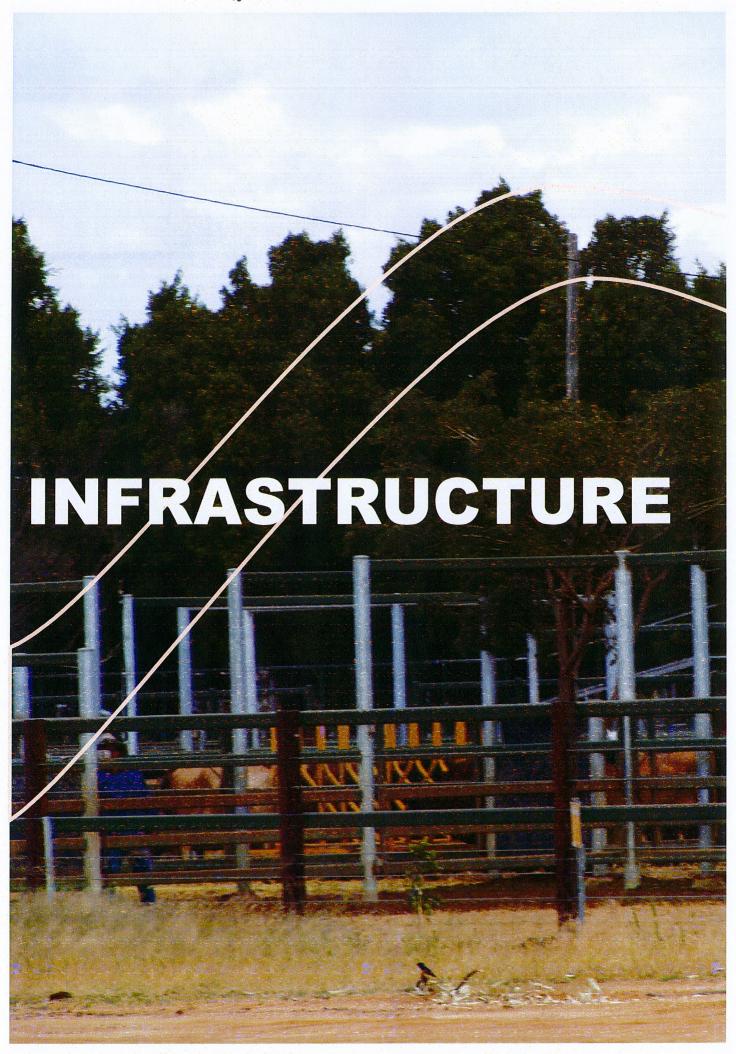
Mitchell grass and Gidgee timber can be found on the plains to the front of the Common with buffel grass, Box, Coolibah and Gidgee timber to the back.

Generations of townspeople living in the community of Blackall have enjoyed the opportunity of agisting stock on the Town Common.

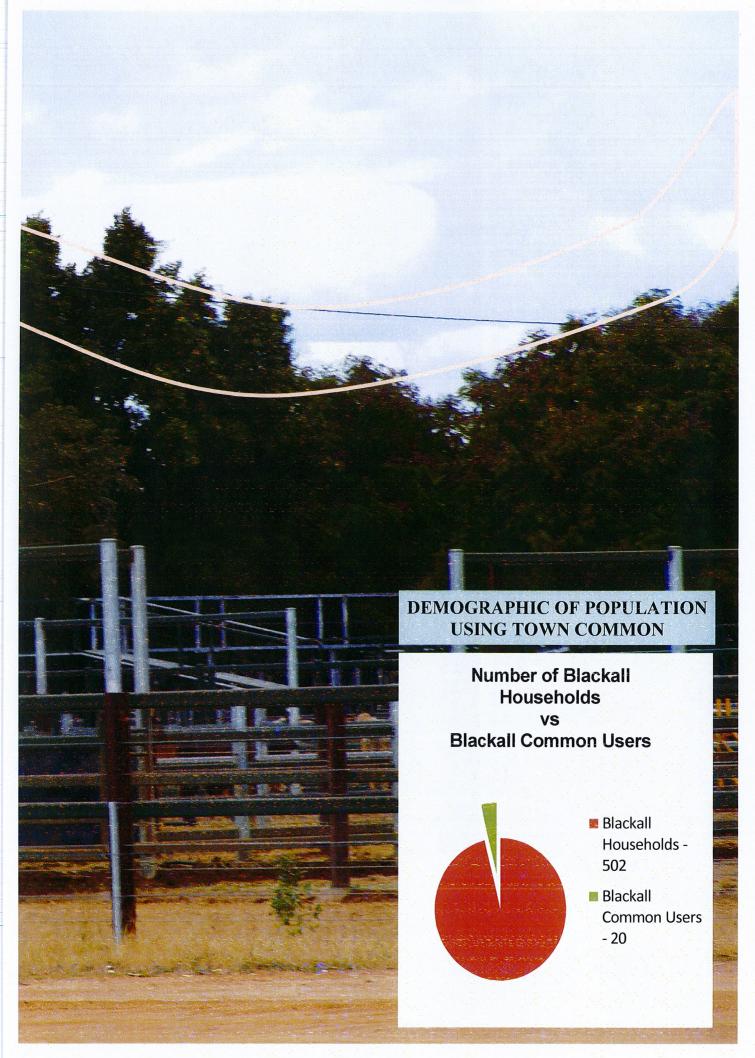
In partnership with Council they participate and assist in best practice management of the environment, fodder, infrastructure, resources and advise on the day to day management. This engagement ensures positive outcomes and legacy left for future generations.







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WATER INFRASTRUCTURE/FACILITIES

This section provides a snapshot of existing infrastructure on the Blackall Town Common, providing an analysis of their current status and location.

Generally, the infrastructure is in good condition. A planned, budgeted and documented maintenance plan will be developed in consultation with the Blackall Town Common Advisory Committee.

Water infrastructure and facilities consist of:

- town water
- 5.5 km of 50mm poly pipe
- three cup and saucer concrete tanks (3,500 gallons) I cup and saucer shared with Butcher Paddock
- 1 water hole
- and Douglas Ponds

These facilities replaced an open bore drain in approximately 1996.

Water is supplied via this infrastructure to the following users:

- Common livestock
- Native fauna
- Travelling livestock
- Blackall community for leisure activities
- Blackall-Tambo Regional Council

There are two water agreements associated with the Town Common:

- Blackall Pony Club
- N & C Watt

BLACKALL SALEYARDS

The Blackall Saleyards are used as holding yards for the bi annual muster of the Town Common.

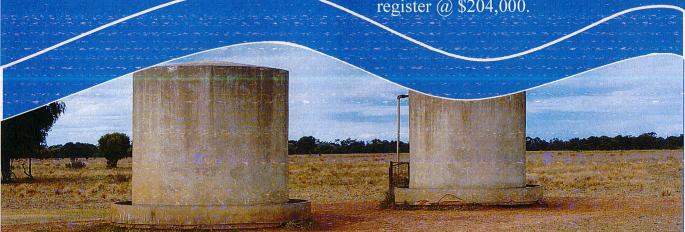
A significant advantage identified by all stakeholders is that the facilities are excellent.

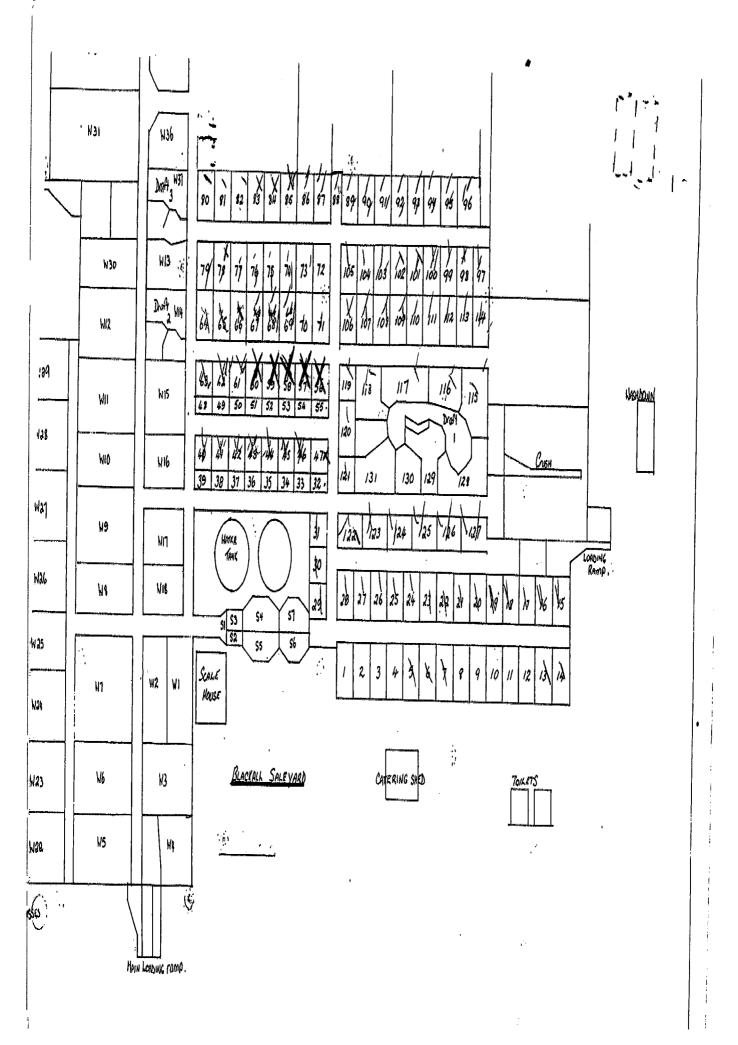
This statement includes:

- the shade that is available for both stock and patrons;
- the continuous upgrading of pens and other facilities such as the canteen;
- the overall management and handling of stock around the facility.

Council continues to demonstrate its commitment to the facilities through annual upgrading and maintenance programs. The facility is a significant asset for Council and the community.

This asset is valued on the BTRC asset register @ \$204,000.







FENCING

BTRC is responsible for maintaining a 3.5 km stock proof fence on the Blackall Town Common. As per the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002 Queensland all neighboring properties are to maintain stock proof boundary fences.

ROADS

BTRC is responsible for maintaining the following:

- 20 kms of fire breaks
- 45 kms of common roads
- 6kms Stock Routes/Council Roads

A Main Roads Department grid which is the responsibility of Council for maintenance is located on the Evora Road near the Woolscour.

VEGETATION

Timber covers 70% of the Blackall Town Common with 40% of timber being Gidgee. Box and Coolibah trees cover the remaining 30%.

Mitchell Grass is predominate on the grass plains with Buffel Grass in the timber.

Native grasses such as Button, River Couch and herbages in season are scattered on the Town Common.

All areas are well grassed with the exception of the clay pan areas which has little to no grasses.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

The Blackall-Tambo Regional Council Pest Management Plan (PMP) 2009-2014 was developed for the benefit of the whole community and is prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002 Queensland.

With the implementation of the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002 responsibilities are identified for local government and land owners. Blackall-Tambo Regional Council has recognised its responsibilities and roles within the Act and has put forward a Pest Management Plan that not only addresses current legislation, but also endeavours to raise community awareness of pest management issues.

Resourcing pest management continues to be an inhibiting factor to achieving desired goals however, it is anticipated that this plan will become an aid not only for pest management planning but for gaining external funding to achieve set objectives.

