

GUIDE TO PREPARING A REHABILITATION PLAN



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BRISBANE CITY PLAN 2014 | DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT FACT SHEET

Brisbane's bushland and other ecological areas are a major drawcard for residents and visitors. Rehabilitation plans are an important tool for ensuring ecologically sustainable development in Brisbane.

This guide outlines Brisbane City Council's expectations about the preparation and submission of rehabilitation plans and will help ensure cost-effective, sustainable outcomes for areas requiring rehabilitation.

What is a rehabilitation plan?

A rehabilitation plan is a scaled drawing of ecological rehabilitation showing the location, site context, management detail and management specifications of treatment areas. A rehabilitation plan may be required to help Council assess a development application or to comply with conditions of a development approval.

Why are rehabilitation plans required?

Rehabilitation plans provide site-specific guidance and direction on the management of an area that is retained for environmental purposes. This may sometimes be necessary to protect and enhance areas with significant ecological values and to demonstrate compliance with the Biodiversity areas overlay code, Bushfire overlay code, Waterway corridors overlay code or Wetlands overlay code. These codes are part of *Brisbane City Plan 2014*, Council's plan for the future development of Brisbane, which guides how land can be used and developed.

A well-prepared rehabilitation plan can uncover opportunities for substantial savings on labour and materials. For example, in some instances, rehabilitation can be as simple as fencing off an area to let it regenerate naturally.

Who should prepare a rehabilitation plan?

A rehabilitation plan should be prepared by a suitably qualified ecologist (with tertiary qualifications including ecology, natural resource management, environmental management or environmental science) who has experience in natural area restoration.

A competent ecologist will ensure designs include suitable treatments able to achieve sustainable ecological outcomes while minimising time and financial costs.

Who can carry out works required by a rehabilitation plan?

The effectiveness of a rehabilitation plan is dependent on implementation and maintenance being undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced ecological restoration and management contractors.

At a minimum, contractors undertaking rehabilitation works should employ operational field staff who have qualifications and experience in ecological restoration.

What does a good rehabilitation plan look like?

A rehabilitation plan should comprise drawings that will be approved by Council for implementation on the site. The plan should also be accompanied by supporting documentation such as a brief report outlining site conditions that were considered during preparation of the plan.

Drawings should be clear, concise and practical enough to be interpreted and used in a field situation by a contractor. They should also contain all practice measures and specifications that are needed to undertake the works.

Supporting documentation and drawings should include the information outlined below.

Background, objectives and rationale

Supporting documentation should clearly articulate the objectives sought through rehabilitation and include a brief description of site attributes relevant to rehabilitation works (e.g. soils, topography, drainage, aspect, site resilience and descriptions of reference communities).

Documentation should also include a brief rationale to justify rehabilitation management zones and selected treatment options. It should reference any opportunities, constraints or key management considerations (such as bushfire hazard, top soil management and significant fauna values).

If performance of the rehabilitation plan is linked to a monetary performance bond, you will also need to provide a detailed, itemised costing schedule for purposes of calculating the value of any uncompleted works or maintenance bonds.

Drawing conventions

All drawings must be uniquely referenced, show a north point, scale bar and legend. Ensure that you include a title block containing plan/drawing number, date of preparation and plan/drawing author. The scaled drawings must also clearly show the location and extent (including size in square metres) of the area to be rehabilitated and the rehabilitation management zones.

Existing and planned features and site elements

Drawings should show existing vegetation and natural features to be retained and protected (e.g. wetlands, waterways, drainage features and specific habitat values) as well as existing and future planned site elements (e.g. infrastructure, boundaries, roads, fencing, drainage lines and contours).

Treatment of management zones

Drawings should clearly depict rehabilitation management zones and describe treatments to be undertaken in each zone (for example natural regeneration, assisted natural regeneration, reconstruction or fabrication).

Drawings should include:

- site preparation details such as soil preparation and site stabilisation methods for all areas of exposed soil
- proposed plants including species, planting palette, stock size, quantities, locations and planting modules to demonstrate densities
- weed species inventory and details of proposed control techniques
- target/reference regional ecosystem for each management zone.

Rehabilitation specifications

Drawings should include:

- specification for planting methods, preparation fertilizers, plant guards and watering
- details of special habitat features to be provided for the enhancement or restoration of habitat values, including specifications for design, installation and ongoing management (e.g. wildlife movement solutions, nest boxes, ground logs and coarse woody debris)
- details of any fencing required, including design type and installation specifications.

Maintenance and monitoring

The rehabilitation plan should include clear and concise maintenance practices, schedules and responsibilities to ensure the area is properly maintained over the establishment phase and into the longer term.

Methods for monitoring, reporting and record keeping should also be outlined.

Construction and implementation

The drawings should also outline any necessary permits, licenses or qualifications required to be held by contractors who will be responsible for implementing rehabilitation works.

Submitting a rehabilitation plan

Council may require a rehabilitation plan to be submitted as part of a development application or as part of a condition of approval.

Plans required as part of a development application should be included with your application at the time of lodgement.

For reconfiguration of lot applications, plans required as a condition of approval should be submitted as an 'operational works' application at the time indicated in the conditions. For material change of use applications, please submit a Council 'compliance assessment' form at the time indicated in the conditions.

More Information

The South East Queensland Ecological Restoration Framework and Queensland Government regional ecosystem technical descriptions should be consulted for additional information and guidance. For more information about the requirements for rehabilitation plans please contact Council's Development Services, Engineering and Specialist Services team by emailing specialistservices@brisbane.qld.gov.au or calling (07) 3403 8888.



Disclaimer: The content of this information sheet is a summary and has been prepared to assist the reader to understand the City Plan. Please refer to the full City Plan document, entitled *Brisbane City Plan 2014*, on Council's website for further detail.