

Frequently Asked Questions:

ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

How will the environmental impacts of the project be managed?

Two expert ecological studies have been conducted to provide an understanding of the environmental values of Mount Glen Rock. The findings will inform decisions based on the principle of impact avoidance and minimisation through project design. The final detailed design of facilities including trails will avoid the most sensitive areas, and micro-siting of trail alignments during construction will allow further avoidance of impacts on specific features such as mature trees, hollows or boulders.

Trail construction methods that have been employed successfully in sensitive environments including National Parks will inform trail specifications.

Well-designed recreational trails can provide improved access for conservation and land management activities.

How will Aboriginal Cultural Heritage be protected?

A Cultural Heritage Assessment will be conducted in late 2024. This assessment will recommend measures required to ensure protection of identified Cultural Heritage.

How will erosion and sediment from trail construction be managed?

Proposed trails will be designed for sustainability. Trail alignments will be sympathetic to the natural topography to prevent erosion and ensure disturbance to the environment is minimised.

Trail grades and alignments will ensure that water follows the natural course of the land, not the trail. Silt control measures will be employed where necessary during construction to protect waterways.

Will trail construction involve clearing trees?

While some saplings of common species are likely to be removed during trail construction, no protected species or mature trees will be removed. Trails will be designed to carefully pass around or between mature trees, shrubs, and rocks.

Given the impact dogs have on native wildlife, particularly koalas, will dogs be permitted in the Mount Glen Rock?

The impact of dogs on wildlife and flora has been taken into account in ecological studies. A decision on whether dogs will be permitted on Mount Glen Rock will be considered in the development of a management plan for the site.

How will the development of Mount Glen Rock benefit the environment, in particular wildlife and habitat?

The development of Mount Glen Rock will benefit the environment in the following ways:

1. Identify areas of key ecological and cultural heritage values for protection
2. Reporting and responding to wildlife requiring assistance (e.g. koalas)
3. Minimise off-track activity by encouraging the use of the trail network
4. Appropriate trail provision will discourage construction of unsanctioned trails
5. Increased legitimate visitors help with passive surveillance and reporting of illegal or inappropriate behaviour
6. Encourage the community to learn about and embrace their local environment, leading to environmental stewardship and participation in environmental activities such as bushcare and revegetation
7. Improved bushfire management through the use of trails as line of defence, preventative burns and escape routes for wildlife.

Which specific areas of the project site will be disturbed?

Detailed design have not yet been finalised.

The Flora and Fauna Assessment shows survey results and makes recommendations on ways that final detailed design can minimise impacts on key environmental values. This information in conjunction with Cultural Heritage survey findings will help inform the exact location, extent and design of trails, lookouts and day use areas.

Will the flying fox colony that is located near the proposed Francis Terrace Day Use area be protected?

The Flying Fox colony has naturally dispersed and is not currently active at this site. Should the colony return it will be considered in site management plans and managed in accordance with the Qld Government's Flying Fox Roost Management Guideline.

How will weed dispersal from mountain bikes and hiking boots be managed?

The ecological studies assist Council understand what currently exists in the area and will inform management priorities. As the project progresses, a Management Plan will be developed which will include information on declared pest/disease management including inspection regimes and strategies for preventing the introduction of weeds/diseases into the area.

Will expert reports (i.e. flora, fauna, ecosystems, cultural heritage) be available to the public?

Council endeavour to provide information to the public in a timely manner, where appropriate. Council has published the *Preliminary Ecological Assessment (September 2021)* and *Flora and Fauna Assessment (February 2024)* on the Council website <https://www.somerset.qld.gov.au/mount-glen-rock>

TRAIL USE

There is a large proportion of trails for mountain bikes compared to hikers, why are there not more hiking trails?

Council has received a significant amount of feedback on the types of trails proposed and will be taking this into consideration in the detailed designs. It is important to note that the mountain bike and hiker experiences are different and take different amounts of time to enjoy or complete.

While alignments have not been finalised, mountain bike trails typically take a more circuitous route than hiking trails to reduce trail gradients and manage rider speed.

Hiking Trails typically provide access to outstanding features such as high points which provide the best views. The proposed hiking trail design will endeavour to link

the most interesting and scenic features of Mount Glen Rock and provide the best visitor experience.

There is concern that there is going to be 'adrenalin junkies' racing down the trails, can you explain the nature of the trails that are going to be constructed and who the target market is?

The majority of mountain bike trails proposed are classified as green (easy) and blue (intermediate) in line with the Australian Mountain Bike Trail Guidelines trail difficulty ratings. There are no black (difficult) or double black (extreme) trails proposed. Trail specifications will favour a one-way rolling contour design and avoid unsustainable downhill alignments. Those looking for an extreme style of mountain biking will not find satisfaction at Mount Glen Rock.

While there is a perception that mountain biking is an extreme activity the majority of riders are seeking quiet physical exercise in a natural bushland environment. Thoughtful trail design can influence the style of riding, and is an effective way to limit potential rider speeds.

In relation to hiking trails, the Sandy Creek Fire Trail is Grade 1 (suitable for people with a disability with assistance). The Summit Trail is proposed to be Class 3 (some bushwalking experience necessary) and the Ridge Trail is proposed to be Class 4 (experienced bushwalkers).

The drawcard for visitors and the local community is intended to be interaction with nature and the spectacular views rather than any extreme sports.

How is the safety of walkers on shared trails going to be ensured and the risk of collision between MTB and walkers mitigated?

The Sandy Creek Fire Break Trail is proposed to be a shared use trail and is suitable for this purpose due to its large width and mostly flat terrain. The detailed design process will favour single use trails and achieve separation between user groups wherever possible.

Will horses be able to access Mount Glen Rock?

While a management plan is yet to be developed, at this stage no horse-riding access has been planned at Mount Glen Rock. The BVRT and the Horse Bypass Trail that runs behind the caravan park and down Russell Street provide horse riding opportunities.

What is the plan for controlling noise to minimise impact on residents near the Rock?

There will be no motorised vehicles permitted (excluding wheelchairs and assisted transportation devices). The hiking and mountain bike trails proposed are singletrack. This means that the width of the track (approximately handlebar width) does not allow for bikes to ride side-by-side, avoiding the likelihood of loud conversations. While it is too early to provide specific detail on operational management, it is likely that the park will be closed at night.

What access will be made for the elderly or those with disabilities?

While the Sandy Creek Fire Break Trail is classed as Grade 1 (suitable for people with a disability with assistance), the accessibility potential of the remainder of the site is constrained by the natural terrain.

The Sandy Creek Fire Break Trail offers excellent and accessible bird watching and wildlife spotting opportunities.

How will access to the trails overnight or after severe weather events be monitored?

Access will be monitored in line with a site management plan, which will be developed as the project progresses. A mixture of surveillance, community feedback and other measures will be utilised to implement mitigation strategies to deter individuals from accessing unsafe trails.

How will unauthorised access to the trails by motorised vehicles (i.e. motocross bikes, 4WD, small vehicles) be prevented?

Fire break trails may accommodate vehicles for maintenance and emergency access purposes. Access to these trails will be restricted using appropriate means such as bollards, gates or chains.

Entry signage will clearly display activities that are permitted and prohibited.

The typical width of a mountain bike or hiking trail is typically less than 1m which makes them unusable by vehicles including 4WDs.

What will prevent members of the public from entering private property adjacent to the development?

Well designed, constructed and signposted trails will minimise the risk of members of the public entering private property. Additional signs may also be erected at/near boundaries.

Will wildlife hides/birdwatching hides be provided to encourage other types of visitors to the area?

Council will continue to consider nature-based recreational activities that complement the terrain and amenity of Mount Glen Rock. The proposed hiking trails will facilitate excellent bird-watching opportunities and Council welcomes feedback on future low-impact embellishments.

Will there be educational information, signage to inform visitors and residents of any culturally significant items/areas of interest, flora, fauna, birdlife etc.?

Interpretive signage is a proven way to enhance visitor experience and serves an important educational function. Interpretive signage will highlight species, features and points of interest found on the site, including both natural and cultural subject matter where appropriate. The provision of interpretive and trailhead signage, information, maps and wayfinding is included in the draft Master Plan.

TOWN SERVICES, PARKING AND AMENITIES

Has Council considered the impact of additional vehicles on local residents as well as access to local services?

Council is aware of the additional vehicle impacts that a project such as this may bring. Council is investigating potential additional opportunities for car parking in the township, as well as utilising existing car parking more efficiently.

Are there enough accommodation options in Esk to support this development, in particular low-cost accommodation?

There are a range of accommodation options in Esk currently that are able to cater to an increased level of recreational tourism. Council is currently investigating other suitable sites within Esk that may cater to caravans and camping at low cost.

EMERGENCIES

Have emergency services (SES, QAS, QPS, QFES, Esk Hospital) been consulted about the proposed development?

Emergency Services have been informed of the project and consultation is ongoing.

Are there sufficient resources to manage any additional pressures on the system, in particular QAS and Esk Hospital?

Council has sought feedback on this directly with the relevant stakeholders and will continue to liaise with such parties to ensure mitigation strategies are implemented.

The overall community health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor recreation are understood to outweigh the risks of occasional incidents resulting in injury.

How will bushfire risks be mitigated and what is the plan to evacuate people from the area in case of bushfire?

Hazard reduction burns are carried out on site in association with the Rural Fire Service. Council is engaged directly with the relevant stakeholders. Bushfire management, evacuation and communication plans will be incorporated into site management plans as they are drafted.

Visitors to remote bushland must also accept personal responsibility for general bushfire awareness by checking weather forecasts and current fire incidents prior to setting out. This information is readily available online from QFES.

There is limited to no mobile service on the eastern face of Mount Glen Rock, will people be able to access mobile services in an emergency?

It is not unusual for mobile coverage to be limited in areas that are popular for outdoor recreation.

In developing a management plan for the development, Council will consider emergency communications across the site, including mobile phone coverage. In some locations mobile phone coverage may not be possible. In line with industry standards, Council will provide information for users to access that clearly identify trail grades, lengths and durations so that users may adequately plan ahead and inform a responsible person of their whereabouts. As with any remote parks, visitors should never travel in remote areas on their own.

Some activities may contribute to fire ignition (i.e. smoking, use of glass), what is Council's position on smoking and use of glass on Mount Glen Rock?

In due course, Council will develop a management plan which will be informed by the guidelines established for parks and forests by the Queensland Department of Environment and Science - Parks and Forests group. In line with Queensland Health laws, smoking will be prohibited within 10 metres of most visitor facilities, including picnic tables, barbecues, shelter shed and toilets.

MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT

How will unsanctioned trails be managed?

The implementation of a well-planned trail network from the outset is an effective measure to meet demand and deter individuals from creating unsanctioned trails.

Council will develop a long-term management plan of the site in due course. The management plan will incorporate the surveillance, monitoring, disruption and rehabilitation of unsanctioned trails.

How is Mount Glen Rock going to be maintained to retain the natural landscape and mitigate against damage from weather, littering and overuse?

It is too early to provide specifics on a detailed management plan for Mount Glen Rock. This will be developed as the project progresses similar to any new community park, sporting or recreation facility. Adequate toilet amenities are proposed to be constructed at Lions Park and Francis Terrace with existing amenities available for use at Pipeliner Park, Esk.

Council has shown a commitment to protecting park facilities and other natural environments as demonstrated by the recent management of sites around the mid-Brisbane River.

Comparison with similar recreational trail networks in National Parks shows that the majority of visitors respect and value the areas they visit. Advice on appropriate behaviours and a "leave no trace" ethic will be included in a visitor code of conduct that will be promoted on site signage and across Council promotional platforms.

How will the installation and maintenance of rock climbing bolts be managed?
Will any climber be able to install bolts?

Somerset Regional Council will be responsible for installing and maintaining all bolts on any climbing routes that might be established. This is to ensure the safety of both the rock face and the climber. Climbers will not be permitted to install/remove bolts in the rock face. Any identified unauthorised bolts will be removed.

How will council manage unauthorised use of the day use areas, such as overnight camping, consumption of alcohol, night-time hang out etc?

Illegal activity will be reported to the Queensland Police Service.

Council will develop a long-term plan for the sustainable management of the facility. As outlined in the draft Master Plan, a visitor code of conduct will be in place similar to that adopted in Queensland Parks and Forests. At this stage, camping will not be permitted on Mount Glen Rock.