

**The Mount
Gibraltar
Landcare
Bushcare
Group has
continually
cared for
this reserve
since 1993!**

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Fact Sheet: Mount Gibraltar Heritage Reserve and Plan of Management



Mt Gibraltar Forest by Ford Kristo

**The reserve
has
important
cultural
heritage**

**The reserve
contains
both
community
and Crown
Land
managed by
Council**

The Mount Gibraltar Heritage Reserve is a landmark and significant landform in the local district that is visible from most parts of the shire. People are drawn to this place for the views, bush walking, heritage walks and interpretive signage, appreciation of the natural environment and for picnics, photography and birdwatching. It is a location for ecological surveys, science and biodiversity protection and education. It is situated within Bowral and Mittagong with spectacular lookouts and scenic bush walks. It provides a sanctuary for wildlife including a small population of Southern Greater Glider. The reserve has rare and threatened plants and threatened ecological communities. It is a stepping stone to other publicly reserved land and extant native vegetation on private land. The entire reserve is State Heritage in part due to the interesting 100-year history of Bowral Trachyte (microsyenite) mining for use in many iconic Sydney and Bowral buildings, for road drainage and use in other locations (mining ceased in 1986).

The headwaters of Chinaman's Creek flow through this reserve into the Nattai River

The reserve is zoned C2 – Environmental Conservation.

The headwaters of Chinaman's Creek are located in Mount Gibraltar Heritage Reserve. Most of the reserve supports priority koala habitat.

Fortunately, the reserve was not impacted by the Black Summer 2019-2020 Bushfires. It remains an important refuge for wildlife and source of wildlife for re-wilding of these severely impacted areas.

The reserve has six different Plant Community Types

The reserve contains threatened plant and animal species including:

- Koala
- Southern Greater Glider
- Powerful Owl
- Helichrysum calvertianum (Rocky Heath Daisy)

and Threatened Ecological Communities (TEC)¹, including:

- Mount Gibraltar Forest
- Southern Highlands Shale Woodland
- Robertson Basalt Tall Open Forest

The reserve contains pockets of wet and dry sclerophyll forest and rocky heath

There are six different Plant Community Types (PCTs)² found in the reserve.

The PCTs found within the reserve are listed below:

- Southern Highlands Shale Margins Forest (PCT ID 3222)
- Southern Highlands Shale-Basalt Wet Forest (PCT ID 3223)
- Blue Mountains Rocky Mallee Heath (PCT ID 3857)
- Southern Highlands Sandstone Peppermint Forest (PCT ID 3614)
- Southern Highlands Enriched Sandstone Forest (PCT ID 3667)
- Southern Tableland Swamp Flats Shrub Woodland (PCT ID 3304)

The reserve has several threatened plant and

Two fire trails, Mount Gib West (proposed cycleway) and Mount Gib East, along with several asset protection zones and multiple fire management units (FMUs) (including Strategic Fire Advantage Zones - SFAZ) are located within the reserve. The Fire Management Plan will be updated following the adoption of the new generation Wollondilly Wingecarribee Bush Fire Risk Management Plan.

¹ A Threatened Ecological Community is a naturally occurring group of native plants, animals and other organisms living in a unique habitat that has been degraded by habitat loss and fragmentation, invasive weeds and vertebrate pests.

² PCTs are the finest level in the **NSW vegetation classification hierarchy**. They identify and describe recurring patterns of native plant species assemblages in relation to environmental conditions (soil, temperature, moisture and other factors). The floristic composition of PCTs is characterised by frequently co-occurring species, including combinations of trees, shrubs and/or ground cover plants.

animal species

The key threats to the reserve include:

1. Unauthorised damage and use (4WD, trail bikes, unauthorised mountain bike track creation, firewood collection and rubbish dumping).
2. Invasive weeds and vertebrate pests including rabbits; and
3. Climate change

The reserve contains popular walking tracks including:

- Bowral Lookout Trail
- Rim Track
- Reservoir Ravine Track
- Heritage Quarries Track

The reserve has important recreational values

Site specific Plan of Management

A site specific plan of management has been prepared for the whole of the Mount Gibraltar Heritage Reserve which comprises Crown land (which Council manages on behalf of the Crown) and Council owned community land.

A site specific plan of management is required to protect the biodiversity (both plant and animal), landform/landscape and cultural heritage of the reserve and ensure appropriate management into the future.

This site specific plan of management has assigned one category to the whole of the Reserve to conform with the legislative requirements of the Local Government Act and Crown Land Management Act and ensure consistency in management and use. It also reflects the core vegetation on the land which supports a diversity of wildlife and plant species and will protect soils, rocky outcrops and watercourses.

Why a public hearing?

A public hearing is required under the Local Government Act when changing or applying a category to community land that is council owned. Council has prepared the Mount Gibraltar Heritage Reserve Plan of Management and applied a Natural Area Bushland category to all the land within the reserve. The hearing on 6 February 2024 is an opportunity to discuss the category assigned and to make a submission (verbal or written) in relation to the category.

Key Threatening Processes such as grazing of vegetation by rabbits and invasive weed species are monitored and controlled within the reserve



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