



Partnership paves way for protection

A grazing family and Traditional Owners are working together to manage and protect the future of numerous significant Aboriginal cultural heritage sites found on an historic property in southern Queensland.

The property 'Ballancar' is owned by Peter and Rochelle Jesser and was the subject of an archaeological study QMDC commissioned, identifying at least nine Aboriginal cultural heritage sites including scar trees, earth ovens, grinding stones and scatters of stone tools and flakes. Positioned between Leyburn and Inglewood, 'Ballancar' spans 2,300 hectares and was once a camping ground for Aboriginal people as they travelled through the region en route to important cultural gatherings and ceremonies in the Bunya Mountains.

First approach

QMDC Aboriginal Programs Team Leader Tim Knox said the Jessers first approached him four years ago with photos of artefacts found on 'Ballancar'. The couple asked whether QMDC could help them work with the Kambuwal people to identify what they believed were important discoveries on their property. "It was fantastic to have a landholder come to us with such an extensive amount of undisturbed Aboriginal cultural heritage on their property and with a desire to preserve and protect it," Mr Knox said.

From survey to public

With an archaeological survey completed in 2011, the Jessers are now working towards opening 'Ballancar' to the community and school groups for cultural tours while continuing to manage its beef and sheep production. "Working with the Kambuwal people, we would like to use 'Ballancar' to educate people about the region's cultural heritage as well as provide an environmental experience," Mr Jesser said. "But first we need to address a number of issues including restricting stock access to certain areas, controlling the impact of



pest animals, erosion and the reintroduction of a fire regime," he said.

The future

Mr Knox said QMDC would continue to work with the Jesser family and the Kambuwal people on Ballancar's management options. "This is a test case for us to work together on grazing production and cultural heritage; it belongs to the Kambuwal, it belongs to everyone, and we want to protect its values into the future," he said.



Image: Peter and Rochelle Jesser with QMDC's Tim Knox.

The Ballancar Cultural Heritage survey was conducted jointly by the QMDC Aboriginal Program's Aboriginal Rangers, the Kambuwal Traditional Owners, CHMA and Peter and Rochelle Jesser. The assessment was funded from the QMDC Aboriginal Rangers "Working on Country" program. The QMDC Aboriginal Rangers program is an activity of the QMDC in partnership with the Federal Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, involving Aboriginal Rangers delivering environmental outcomes as part of the Working on Country Regional program.



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