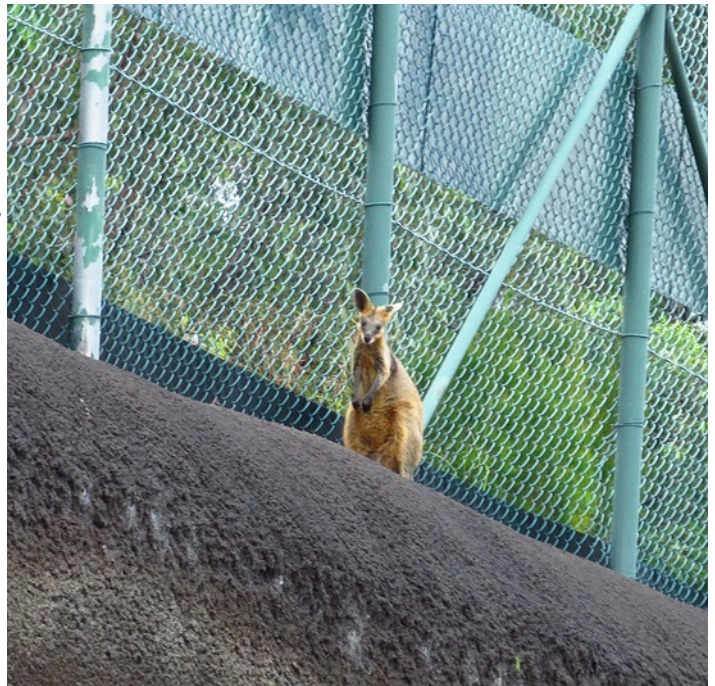


## Hamilton Rd McDowall 28-30/Jan/2022 Wallaby Stuck Outside Reserve Fence

On the afternoon of Sat 29/Jan/2022 I noticed an RSPCA van parked beside Hamilton Rd, McDowall between Paramount Circuit and Trouts Rd, on the southern side of Chermside Hills Reserve. I stopped to find that a wallaby was on top of the retaining wall, approximately 10 metres up vertically, and unwilling to come down by moving far enough east or west. The RSPCA person decided to leave it overnight in the hope that it would find its way to safety.



Next morning, Sunday 30/Jan/2022, it was reported on a local facebook page to still be there, and that it had been there since the previous Friday. I went to have a look. Another RSPCA rescuer and a member of Wildcare were there. I tied open the wildlife gates at the south west corner of Chermside Hills Reserve, but the wallaby loitered about 400 metres away to the east and was only moving east or west for approximately 100 metres each way. It was showing signs of dehydration, confusion, stress and Myopathy.

I returned home and rang local wildlife rescuer Mike Fowler. He expressed the opinion that a hatch needed to be cut in the fence by BCC. I rang BCC on 34038888 and was told that BCC couldn't help in any way, and that I should ring the Qld Police. BCC didn't give me a reference as it was only an enquiry. I rang Qld Police and they said they couldn't help and I should ring BCC.



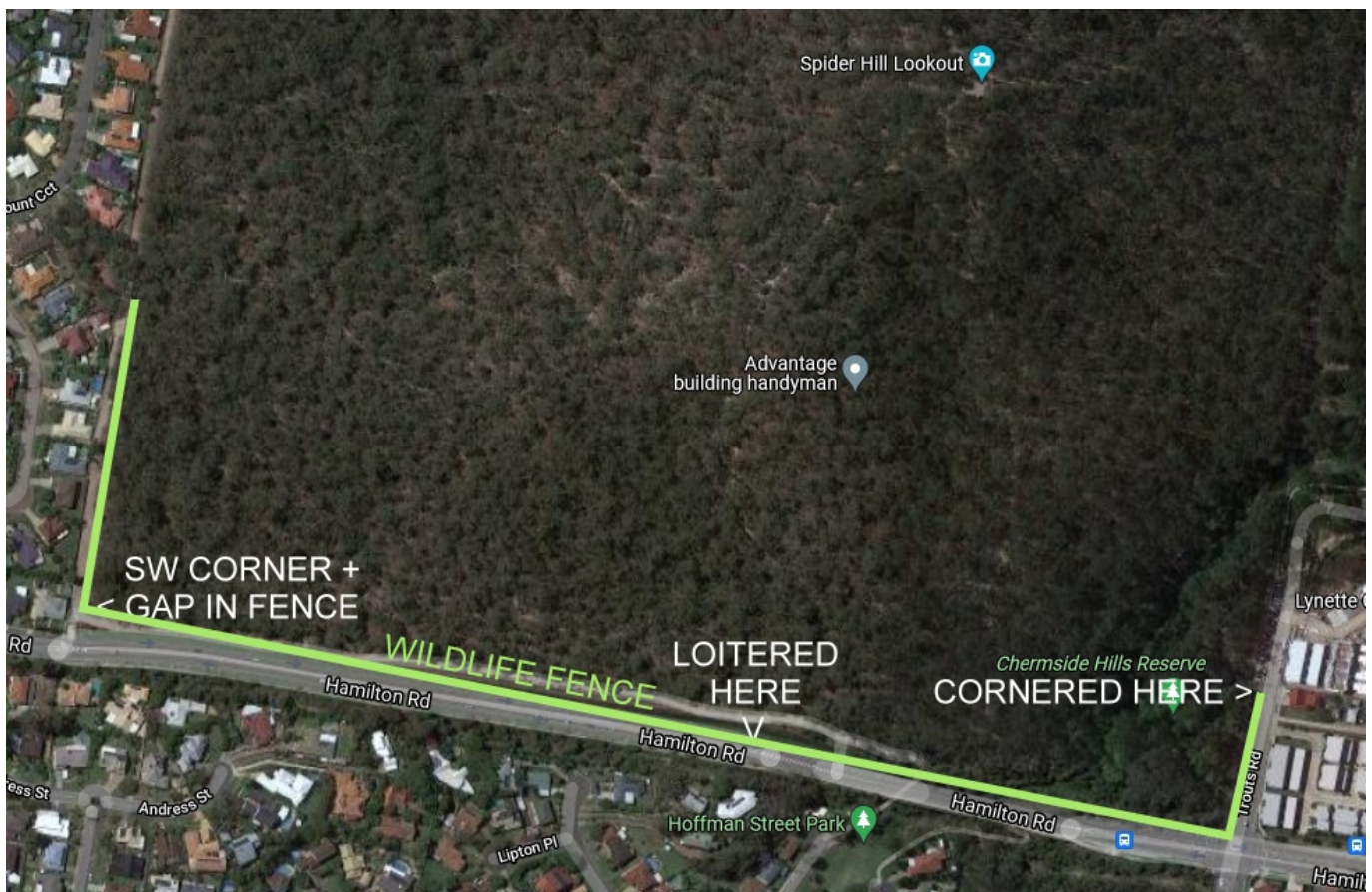
I rang Mike Fowler back and he said he would make a call. That proved successful (BCC ref 14749445) and within an hour, after I went back to Hamilton Rd, Mike arrived. Then a BCC staff member arrived. It was decided that cutting a one metre square hatch in the fence was likely to have the wallaby back into the reserve area. The BCC staff member was excellent and immediately agreed to cut the hatch.

The RSPCA rescuer made her way through a now-open nearby gate with a dart gun hoping to dart the wallaby as it went through the hatch. Within minutes the wallaby went east straight past the hatch in the fence, along Hamilton Rd then left into Trouts Rd. It was then cornered and darted, then taken to RSPCA at Wacol where it was euthenaised next day due to the Myopathy.



It was also reported on a local facebook page that a wallaby had found itself in the same predicament a few months earlier.

I inspected the wildlife fence at the south west corner of the reserve. A gap between the east-west wildlife fence and the side fence of 967 Hamilton Rd showed signs of wallabies getting onto the road reserve at this point. Locals had been attempting to block this gap with sticks, but it looked like the wallabies had been pushing through, also leaving a well-worn path as evidence. The gap was shored up again by a local.



## Cairns City Council's Strategy

For some years Cairns City Council have been having success with top-hinged one-way wallaby escape gates, allowing trapped wayward wallabies out of an area but not onto it.

I am firmly of the belief that one or two gates such as this, retrofitted to the wildlife fence between Hamilton Rd and Chermside Hills Reserve, might easily have prevented the weekend's situation detailed above.



The fact that the wallaby didn't go through the hatch cut in the fence is easily attributed to the wallaby suffering dehydration, confusion, stress and Myopathy. If the wallaby had found itself on the wrong side of the fence after just one night, it would have been much more capable of finding its way back into the reserve via a one-way escape gate.

These gates also work for other species such as koalas, echidnas etc which are known to live in Chermside Hills.

Where the wallaby found itself at the weekend was about the middle of a one kilometre stretch of wildlife fence running from Paramount Circuit, beside Hamilton Rd and around to the Trouts Rd Picnic area. The Hamilton Rd area is the most dangerous for wallabies.

The weekend situation involved five people including a paid BCC employee on a Sunday. The cost to humans is also important to take into account as wallabies on the road are a traffic hazard. One-way escape gates could prove to be good value overall for BCC alone. Estimates/quotes are being sought.

### Further Information

<https://www.conservationevidence.com/actions/2558>

[https://www.ils.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/1253705/Integrated-Kangaroo-Management\\_web.pdf](https://www.ils.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/1253705/Integrated-Kangaroo-Management_web.pdf) (Page 34)

[https://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/docs/NCHRP25-25\(84\)\\_FR.pdf](https://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/docs/NCHRP25-25(84)_FR.pdf) (Page 31)

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Northern Catchments  
2/Feb/2022