



LITTLE MULGRAVE



PLAN

RURAL LAND STUDY

2020

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A PROJECT CONTACT DETAILS

Company	wildPLAN Pty Ltd
Representative	Dominic Hammersley
Title	Director, Principal Planner
Phone	0487 967 533
Address	PO Box 8028, Cairns QLD
Email	dominic@wildplan.com.au
Web	www.wildplan.com.au

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Little Mulgrave Rural Land Study ('Rural Land Study') was commissioned by Cairns Regional Council in late 2019 to *'undertake a review of the current uses in the Little Mulgrave area and investigate whether the uses align with the purpose of the Rural Zone and whether the Rural zone is the most suitable zone to reflect the long term planning intent for the area'*, in response to *'a number of applications and enquiries regarding the subdivision of rural land within the Little Mulgrave area, for largely rural residential purposes'* (Cairns Regional Council, 2019).

The Rural Land Study area comprises the Little Mulgrave Statistical Local Area (SLA), which is a rural valley situated between Gordonvale and the foothills of the Gillies Range.

The Rural Land Study comprises a comprehensive review of the Rural Land Study area, including:

- A description of the State and Local statutory planning context relevant to the Study area
- the population growth pressures facing Little Mulgrave and an investigation of the capacity of Little Mulgrave to accommodate population growth
- an analysis of the types of development applications lodged with Cairns Regional Council in the Rural Land Study area since commencement of the CairnsPlan 2016, in seeking to understand local development intent (as expressed via development applications) and emergent trends
- an assessment of the land uses, and describes the infrastructure (including its capacity) that exists in the Rural Land Study area
- an evaluation of the Rural Land Study area's potential to accommodate rural residential development through a Phase 1 – Spatial Analysis and

Phase 2 - Multi-Criteria Analysis in the identification of land considered suitable for broadscale re-zoning to Rural Residential Zone¹.

The Phase 1 – Spatial Analysis identified that the Rural Land Study area is unsuitable for rural residential development, due to an insufficient area of consolidated land free of primary constraints.

The Phase 2 – Multi-Criteria Analysis involved a qualitative analysis of the suitability of the Rural Land Study area for broadscale rural residential development; however, a score of 1.85 out of 5 was achieved, which is below the benchmark of 3.5 considered necessary to qualify land for potential Rural Residential re-zoning. The Multi-Criteria Analysis highlighted a need to undertake a range of further detailed studies that would need to be undertaken prior to any re-zoning.

Therefore, the Rural Land Study concludes that the Rural Zone is considered the most suitable zone to reflect the long-term planning intent for the area, to the exclusion of rural residential development, except for lots identified in **Part 8** that are recommended for inclusion in the Environmental Management Zone, due to the presence of natural values and the absence of identified Agricultural Land Class A and B.

Part 8 identifies a suite of recommendations arising from the Rural Land Study.

¹ Multi-Criteria Spatial Analysis criteria defined in association with Cairns Regional Council as part of the Rural Land Study.

CONTENTS



CONTENTS

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
Contents	5
1 ABOUT THE LITTLE MULGRAVE RURAL LAND STUDY	8
1.1 Introduction	9
1.1.1 Purpose	9
1.1.2 Background	9
1.1.3 Report Structure	10
2 STATUTORY PLANNING CONTEXT.....	11
2.1 Introduction	12
2.2 State Planning Matters	12
2.2.1 Planning Act 2016	12
2.2.1.1 Making or Amending a Planning Scheme	13
2.2.2 Planning Regulation 2017	13
2.2.3 State Planning Policy.....	13
2.2.4 Far North Queensland Regional Plan.....	14
2.2.4.1 Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area	14
2.2.4.2 Rural Subdivision.....	16
2.2.4.3 Rural Living Area	16
2.2.4.4 Rural Residential Development	17
2.2.5 Summary	17
2.3 Local Planning Matters.....	18
2.3.1 Strategic Framework.....	18
2.3.2 Zones	19
2.3.2.1 Regulated requirements – Rural Zone	20
2.3.3 Tables of Assessment	21
2.3.4 Overlays.....	21
2.3.5 Local Government Infrastructure Planning.....	23
2.3.6 Summary	25
3 FUTURE PLANNING.....	26
3.1 Introduction	27
3.2 Population Growth.....	27
3.3 Housing Choice and Diversity.....	27
3.4 Summary	28
4 DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION ACTIVITY ASSESSMENT.....	29
4.1 Introduction	30
4.2 Review	30
4.3 Analysis.....	30
4.4 Rural Zone Alignment.....	31
4.5 Summary	31
5 EXISTING LAND USE ASSESSMENT	33
5.1 Introduction	34
5.2 Description of Existing Land Uses	34
5.2.1 Methodology.....	34
5.2.2 Findings	34
5.2.2.1 Rural Land Uses	35

5.2.2.2	Natural Areas	36	7	CONCLUSION.....	56
5.2.2.3	Accommodation Activities	36	8	RECOMMENDATIONS	60
5.2.2.4	Extractive industry	37	9	SCHEDULES	64
5.2.2.5	Tourism, Outdoor Sport and recreation activities	37		Schedule 1 – Little Mulgrave Rural Land Study Area	
5.2.2.6	Community Infrastructure	37		Schedule 2 – Little Mulgrave Zone Map	
5.3	Services and Infrastructure	38		Schedule 3 – Overlay Maps	
5.3.1	Waste Water	38		Schedule 4 – Statements of Cultural Significance	
5.3.2	Water Supply.....	38		Schedule 5 – LGIP Mapping	
5.3.3	Stormwater and Drainage.....	40		Schedule 6 – Little Mulgrave Development Application Activity	
5.3.4	Roads.....	40		Schedule 7 – Little Mulgrave Land Use Assessment	
5.3.5	Waste Services	41		Schedule 8 – Little Mulgrave Spatial Analysis	
5.3.6	Open Space Infrastructure	41			
5.4	Summary	41			
6	RURAL RESIDENTIAL SUITABILITY ANALYSIS.....	43			
6.1	Introduction	44			
6.2	Methodology.....	44			
6.2.1	Phase 1 - Spatial Analysis	44			
6.2.2	Phase 2 - Multi-Criteria Analysis	45			
6.3	Phase 1 - Spatial Analysis Findings.....	46			
6.4	Phase 2 - Multi-Criteria Analysis Findings.....	46			
6.5	Summary	47			

1 ABOUT THE LITTLE MULGRAVE RURAL LAND STUDY



PART 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Little Mulgrave Rural Land Study ('Rural Land Study') was commissioned by Cairns Regional Council in late 2019.

The Rural Land Study area comprises the Little Mulgrave Statistical Local Area (SLA). The study area is described in **Figure 1.1** (refer **Plan 1** in **Schedule 1** for detail).

1.1.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Rural Land Study is to 'undertake a review of the current uses in the Little Mulgrave area and investigate whether the uses align with the purpose of the Rural Zone and whether the Rural zone is the most suitable zone to reflect the long term planning intent for the area' (Cairns Regional Council, 2019).

1.1.2 BACKGROUND

'Little Mulgrave is a rural locality in the Cairns Region, situated in the valley of the Little Mulgrave River on the Gillies Range Road. Developed land is used primarily for agricultural purposes (sugar cane, turf farm etc.). Some non-agricultural uses exist in the area (residential dwellings, tourism activities, for example).

Council's planning scheme (CairnsPlan 2016) was first adopted on 24 February 2016 and commenced on 1 March 2016. The current version of CairnsPlan 2016 is version 2.1, which commenced 11 November 2019.

The CairnsPlan 2016 was prepared using zoning that was largely carried forward from the 2009 version of CairnsPlan which was translated into Queensland Planning Provisions compliant zones. However, the zoning of some properties [was] changed as a result of a change in the intended land use, to reflect development approvals, to align with infrastructure capacity and as a result of submissions received during consultation. Developed land in the Little Mulgrave area is located within the Rural zone under CairnsPlan 2016.

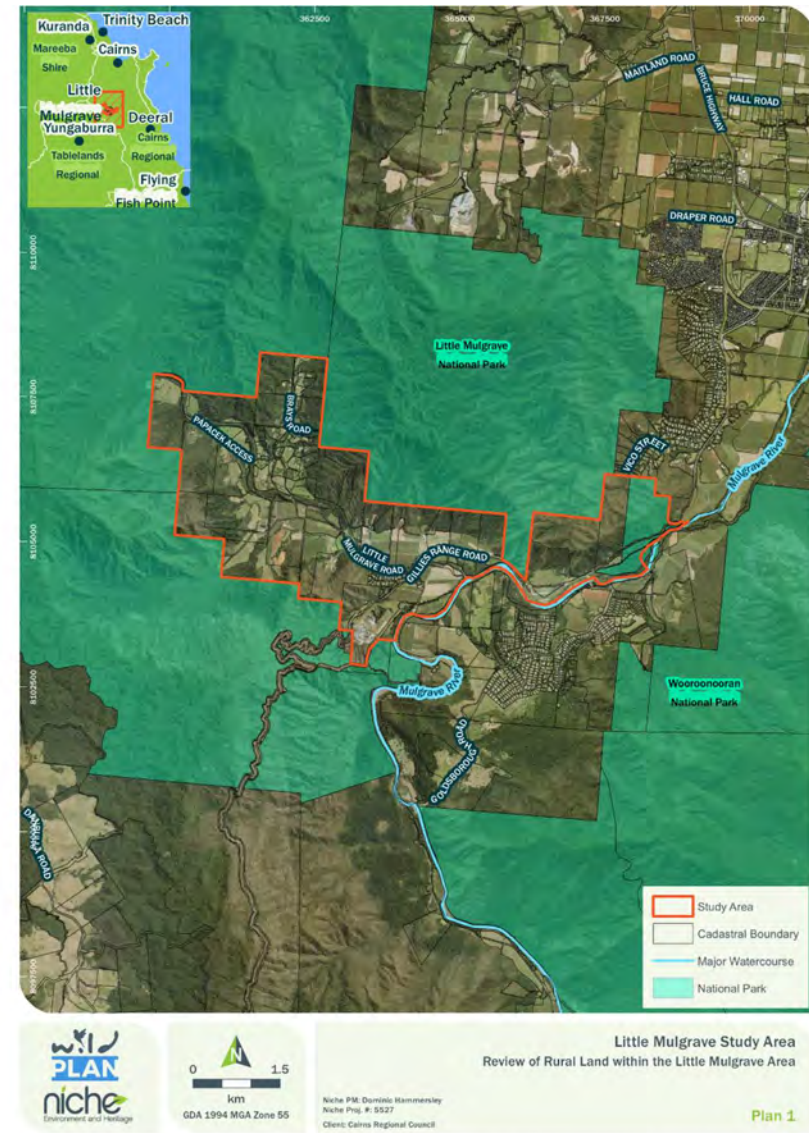


FIGURE 1.1 LITTLE MULGRAVE RURAL LAND STUDY AREA

The CairnsPlan 2016 was prepared to reflect the Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031 (the Regional Plan) and the State Planning Policy (excluding erosion prone areas). Both of these [statutory planning] instruments provide strong policy direction in relation to the protection of agricultural and rural land. The Regional Plan seeks to limit further rural residential development to avoid further fragmentation of rural land. The strategic framework - settlement pattern theme contained in the CairnsPlan 2016, states that new rural residential areas are not established and existing rural residential areas are protected from further incremental subdivision. The strategic framework also refers to the contribution that Rural zone makes to the scenic amenity of the region. The CairnsPlan 2016, zoning and codes reinforces the policy position set out in these two instruments.

Council has recently received a number of applications and enquiries regarding the subdivision of rural land within the Little Mulgrave area, for largely rural residential purposes.

As a result of these applications and enquiries, it is considered appropriate to undertake a review of the current uses in the Little Mulgrave area and investigate whether the uses align with the purpose of the Rural zone and whether the Rural zone is the most suitable zone to reflect the long term planning intent for the area.'

(Cairns Regional Council, 2019)

1.1.3 REPORT STRUCTURE

This Report is set out over eight parts as follows:

- **Part 1** – establishes the context and purpose of the Rural Land Study
- **Part 2** – sets out the State and Local statutory planning context relevant to the Study area

- **Part 3** – identifies the population growth pressures facing Little Mulgrave and investigates the capacity of Little Mulgrave to accommodate population growth.
- **Part 4** – provides an analysis of the types of development applications lodged with Cairns Regional Council in the Little Mulgrave SLA since commencement of the CairnsPlan 2016, in seeking to understand local development intent (as expressed via development applications) and emergent trends. The alignment of local development intent with the Rural zoning of the land is also analysed in Part 4.
- **Part 5** – provides an assessment of the land uses, and describes the infrastructure (including its capacity) that exists in the Rural Land Study area
- **Part 6** – describes the methodology and findings in respect to a Phase 1 – Spatial Analysis and Phase 2 - Multi-Criteria Analysis undertaken within the Rural Land Study Area in the identification of land considered suitable for broadscale re-zoning to Rural Residential Zone ²
- **Part 7** – provides concluding statements in respect to the Rural Land Study
- **Part 8** – includes recommendations for possible future amendments to CairnsPlan 2016.

This Report also includes Schedules that contain Plans and other material relevant to the Rural Land Study.

² Multi-Criteria Spatial Analysis criteria defined in association with Cairns Regional Council as part of the Rural Land Study.

2 STATUTORY PLANNING CONTEXT



PART 2

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Part 2 identifies the State Planning matters and Local Planning matters as relevant to the statutory benchmarks that apply to the assessment of development in the Rural Land Study area.

2.2 STATE PLANNING MATTERS

The State Planning Framework establishes the broader planning framework in which the Local Planning Framework must operate within.

The following sections of the Report contextualise the State Planning Framework as relevant to the Rural Land Study area.

2.2.1 PLANNING ACT 2016

The current version of the *Planning Act 2016* is 1 July 2019.

The purpose of the *Planning Act 2016* is ‘to establish an efficient, effective, transparent, integrated, coordinated, and accountable system of land use planning (planning), development assessment and related matters that facilitates the achievement of ecological sustainability.’ (Chapter 1, section 3)

Chapter 1, section 5 of the *Planning Act 2016* states that an entity (such as Local Government) that performs a function under the *Planning Act 2016* ‘must perform the function in a way that advances the purpose’ of the *Planning Act 2016*.

Advancing the purpose of the *Planning Act 2016* includes (Chapter 1, section 5 (2)):

- (a) following ethical decision-making processes that—
 - (i) take account of short and long-term environmental effects of development at local, regional, State and wider levels; and

- (ii) apply the precautionary principle, namely that the lack of full scientific certainty is not a reason for delaying taking a measure to prevent degradation of the environment if there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage; and

- (iii) seek to provide for equity between present and future generations; and

- (b) providing opportunities for the community to be involved in making decisions; and

- (c) promoting the sustainable use of renewable and non-renewable natural resources, including biological, energy, extractive, land and water resources that contribute to economic development through employment creation and wealth generation; and

- (d) valuing, protecting and promoting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge, culture and tradition; and

- (e) conserving places of cultural heritage significance; and

- (f) providing for housing choice, diversity and affordability; and

- (g) encouraging investment, economic resilience and economic diversity; and

- (h) supplying infrastructure in a coordinated, efficient and orderly way; and

- (i) applying amenity, conservation, energy use, health and safety in the built environment in ways that are cost-effective and of public benefit; and

- (j) avoiding, if practicable, or otherwise minimising the adverse environmental effects of development (climate change, urban congestion or declining human health, for example).

2.2.1.1 MAKING OR AMENDING A PLANNING SCHEME

Chapter 2, section 18 of the *Planning Act 2016* applies to any recommendations of the Rural Land Study that Cairns Regional Council ('Council') decide to take forward as an amendment to the CairnsPlan 2016.

Chapter 2 of the Minister's Guidelines and Rules (July 2017) provides more detailed guidance in respect to planning scheme amendment processes.

2.2.2 PLANNING REGULATION 2017

The current version of the *Planning Regulation 2017* ('the Regulation') is 13 December 2019.

The Regulation establishes the regulated requirements for a planning scheme, including the zones and use terms that may be adopted in a local planning instrument (including any future amendments to CairnsPlan 2016).

Relevantly, pursuant to section 16 of the *Planning Act 2016*, the contents prescribed by regulation apply instead of a local planning instrument, to the extent of any inconsistency. Further discussion regarding the effect of this provision on the CairnsPlan 2016 is provided in section 2.2 of this report.

2.2.3 STATE PLANNING POLICY

The current version of the State Planning Policy (SPP) is July 2017.

Under the Planning Act, each local governments planning scheme needs to integrate the state planning policies for an entire local government area.

The CairnsPlan 2016 is identified by the then Minister to appropriately reflect the July 2014 version of the SPP, for all State Interests except for Natural hazards, risk and resilience (for coastal hazards – erosion prone areas).

The SPP includes 17 state interests in respect to land use planning and development. The following state interests, and associated statements are considered relevant to the Rural Land Study:

- **Agriculture** - *The resources that agriculture depends on are protected to support the long-term viability and growth of the agricultural sector.*
- **Biodiversity** - *Matters of environmental significance are valued and protected, and the health and resilience of biodiversity is maintained or enhanced to support ecological processes.*
- **Housing supply and diversity** - *Diverse, accessible and well-serviced housing, and land for housing, is provided and supports affordable housing outcomes.*
- **Mining and extractive resources** - *Extractive resources are protected and mineral, coal, petroleum and gas resources are appropriately considered to support the productive use of resources, a strong mining and resource industry, economical supply of construction materials, and avoid land use conflicts where possible.*
- **Tourism** - *Tourism planning and development opportunities that are appropriate and sustainable are supported, and the social, cultural and natural values underpinning tourism developments are protected.*
- **Water quality** - *The environmental values and quality of Queensland waters are protected and enhanced.*
- **Natural hazards, risk and resilience** - *The risks associated with natural hazards, including the projected impacts of climate change, are avoided or mitigated to protect people and property and enhance the community's resilience to natural hazards.*
- **Energy and water supply** - *The timely, safe, affordable and reliable provision and operation of electricity and water supply infrastructure is supported and renewable energy development is enabled.*
- **Infrastructure integration** - *The benefits of past and ongoing investment in infrastructure and facilities are maximised through integrated land use planning.*

- **Transport infrastructure** - The safe and efficient movement of people and goods is enabled, and land use patterns that encourage sustainable transport are supported.
- **Cultural heritage** - The cultural heritage significance of heritage places and heritage areas, including places of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage, is conserved for the benefit of the community and future generations.

The SPP applies when making or amending a planning scheme.

2.2.4 FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND REGIONAL PLAN

The Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009–2031 (‘the Regional Plan’) is relevant to the Rural Land Study area.

The Minister has identified that the Planning Scheme, specifically the strategic framework, appropriately advances the Regional Plan, as it applies in the planning scheme area.

The Regional Plan applies when making or amending a planning scheme.

2.2.4.1 REGIONAL LANDSCAPE AND RURAL PRODUCTION AREA

In the Regional Plan, the Rural Land Study area is predominantly identified as Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area (RLRPA).

The Regional Plan states the intent of the RLRPA as follows:

‘The regional landscape and rural production area (RLRPA) includes lands that have regional landscape, rural production or other non-urban values, and protects these areas from encroachment by inappropriate development, particularly urban or rural residential development.’

The Regional Plan goes on further to say that the RLRPA includes land with one or more of the following values, as relevant to the Rural Land Study area:

- *good quality agricultural land and other productive rural areas*

- *natural resources such as ... extractive resources and native forests*
- *water catchment and groundwater areas*
- *areas of ecological significance, including endangered and of concern regional ecosystems*
- *Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and protected area tenures*
- *essential wildlife habitat of the southern cassowary...*

In consideration of the above matters, the following is noted in respect to the Rural Land Study area:

- Areas within the Rural Land Study area, including an estimated 95% of all existing cleared areas, are identified as Agricultural Land Class A (refer **Figure 2.1**).

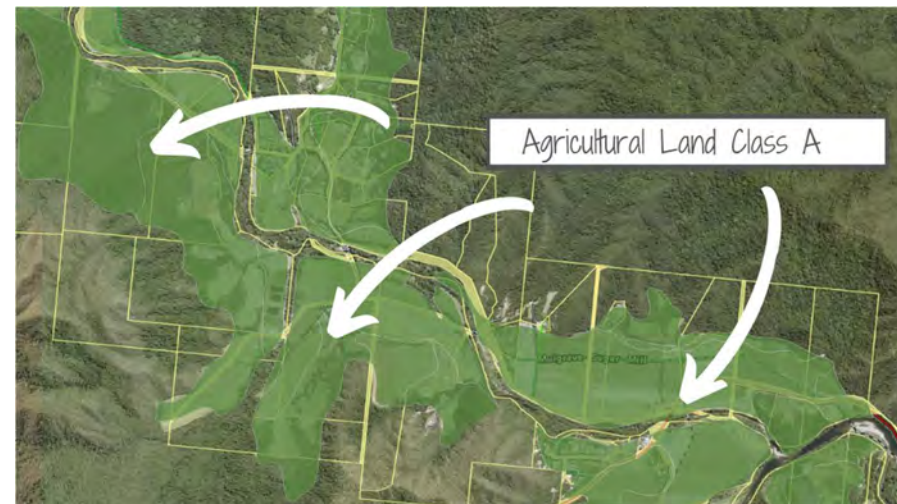


FIGURE 2.1 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASS A
SOURCE: QUEENSLAND GLOBE

- An extractive resource area exists within the Rural Land Study area (refer **Part 5** of this Report for further information)
- Little Mulgrave water supply is supplemented by groundwater extraction for some landholders (refer **Part 5** of this Report for further information)
- Endangered and Of-Concern Regional Ecosystems exist within the Rural Land Study area, with Endangered Regional Ecosystems occurring along the Little Mulgrave River (refer **Figure 2.2**)

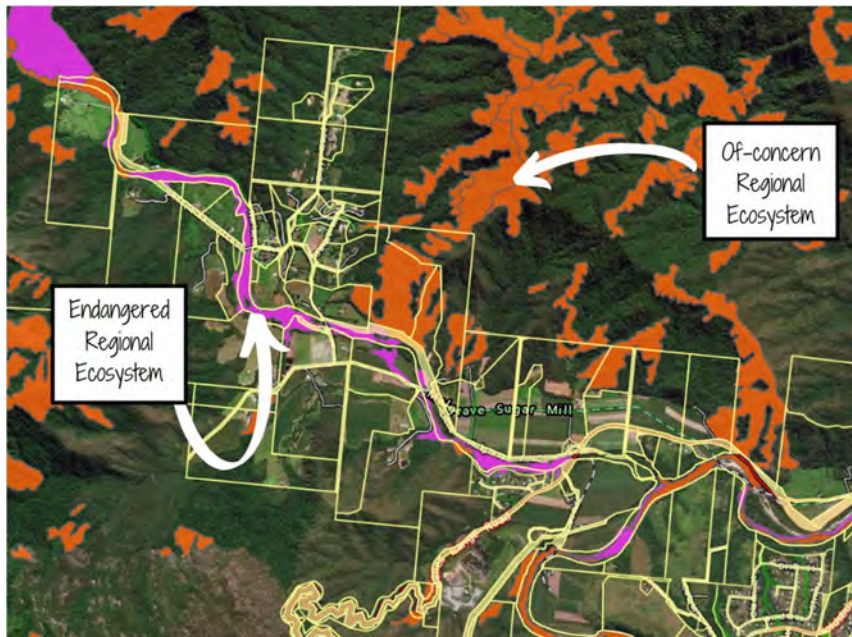


FIGURE 2.2 ENDANGERED AND OF-CONCERN REGIONAL ECOSYSTEMS
SOURCE: QUEENSLAND GLOBE

- The Rural Land Study area is bound to the north, west and south by Little Mulgrave National Park (refer **Plan 1** in **Schedule 1** for detail), which generally coincides with the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (refer **Figure 2.3**)

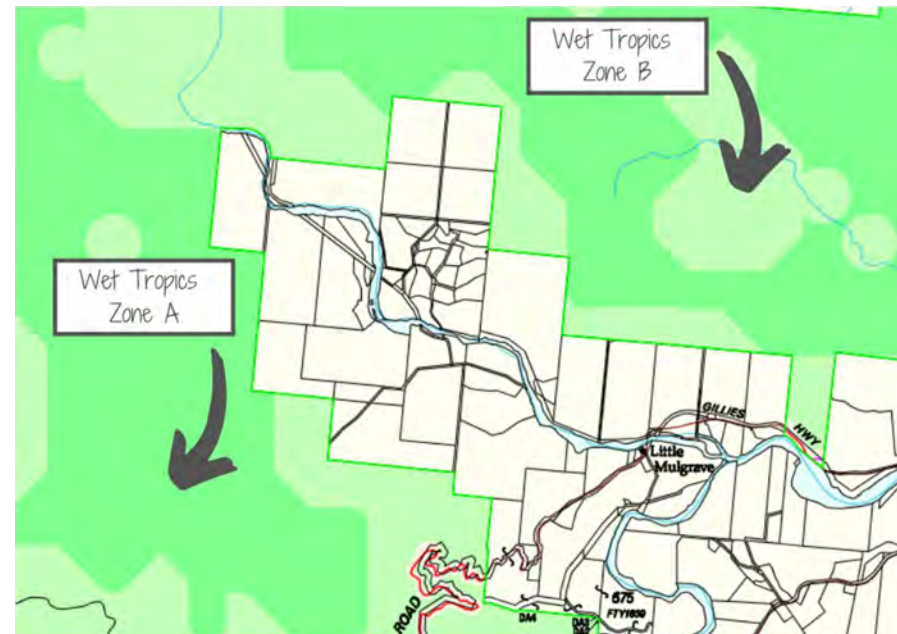


FIGURE 2.3 WET TROPICS WORLD HERITAGE AREA ZONE MAP EXTRACT
SOURCE: WET TROPICS MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY (1998) WTP1 SH12 TINAROO SPECIAL

- Essential Habitat for the Southern Cassowary exists within the Rural Land Study area (refer **Figure 2.4**)

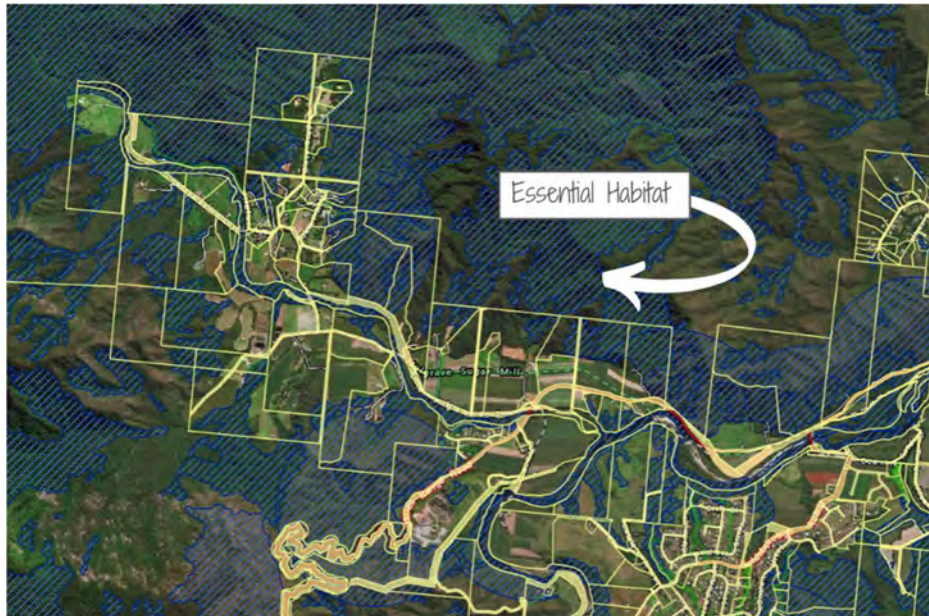


FIGURE 2.4 ESSENTIAL HABITAT (SOUTHERN CASSOWARY)
SOURCE: QUEENSLAND GLOBE

2.2.4.2 RURAL SUBDIVISION

The Regional Plan includes the following objective in respect to rural subdivision (p.56):

‘The region’s rural production areas and natural resources are protected by limiting land fragmentation.’

In achieving the stated objective, the Regional Plan identifies the following land use policies (p.56):

- 2.6.1 Further fragmentation of agricultural land in the regional landscape and rural production area is avoided to maintain economically viable farm lot sizes.

- 2.6.2 Boundary realignments are only permitted in the regional landscape and rural production area where it can be demonstrated that a realignment of the property boundaries would
 - a) improve agricultural efficiency
 - b) facilitate agricultural activity or conservation outcomes or
 - c) resolve boundary issues...’

2.2.4.3 RURAL LIVING AREA

A pocket of land, comprising rural residential development and serviced by Appaloosa Street is included in the Rural Living Area (refer **Figure 2.5**).



FIGURE 2.5 RURAL LIVING AREA IN RURAL LAND STUDY AREA
SOURCE: QUEENSLAND GLOBE

The Regional Plan states the intent of the Rural Living Area as follows:

'The rural living area comprises locations currently designated for rural residential development in local government planning schemes where further rural residential development is permitted under the regional plan.'

2.2.4.4 RURAL RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Regional Plan includes the following objective in respect to rural residential development (p.88):

'Manage rural residential development to prevent fragmentation and alienation of agricultural land and loss or degradation of areas of high ecological significance and ensure efficient use of land and cost-effective delivery of services and infrastructure.'

In achieving the stated objective, the Regional Plan identifies the following land use policies (p.88):

- 4.6.1 *New rural residential development is located in rural living areas.*
- 4.6.2 *Future demand for rural residential housing is provided from within the existing stock of land zoned for this purpose.*
- 4.6.3 *Construction of residential dwellings and ancillary structures within rural residential zoned land is confined to a building footprint which reduces the exposure to natural hazards and avoids and minimises the loss of native vegetation through locating structures in existing cleared areas and co-locating service corridors.*
- 4.6.4 *Rural residential subdivision along watercourses should be designed to minimise the impact of rural residential water use on current and future water resources.'*

The Rural Living Area designation correlates with CairnsPlan 2016 zoning of Rural Residential (refer **section 2.3.2** of the Report for further information).

2.2.5 SUMMARY

The majority of the Rural Land Study area is located within the RLRPA of the Regional Plan, which is an area intended to conserve the land for a range of purposes including rural production and biodiversity protection.

The Rural Land Study area presents many of the attributes of the RLRPA, including the widespread classification of Agricultural Land Class A and the presence of Essential Habitat for the Southern Cassowary.

The Regional Plan seeks to limit development that serves to fragment or permanently alienate high quality agricultural land, with few exceptions. The Regional Plan is averse to the occurrence of rural residential development in the RLRPA due to its high environmental costs and seeks to limit rural residential development to within Rural Living Areas only.

The mapped values of the Rural Land Study area, together with the State Interests in the SPP and the Regional Policies in the Regional Plan support the broadscale categorisation of the Rural Land Study area as Rural zone in the CairnsPlan 2016.

Any amendments to the CairnsPlan 2016 arising from the Rural Land Study must follow the process under the *Planning Act 2016* and will be required to appropriately reflect the State Interests identified in the SPP and the Regional Plan.

2.3 LOCAL PLANNING MATTERS

The CairnsPlan 2016 is the current in force local planning instrument within the Cairns Region.

The current version of the CairnsPlan 2016 is version 2.1, which commenced 11 November 2019.

2.3.1 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The Strategic Framework sets the policy direction for the CairnsPlan 2016.

The Strategic Intent (section 3.2 of CairnsPlan 2016) is a vision statement for Cairns in 2031 and, relevant to the Rural Land Study, describes that (p.13):

- *... the Cairns region is internationally renowned for its natural beauty, outstanding biodiversity values and unique tropical lifestyle*
- *The expected population growth for the region is accommodated through the redevelopment of existing urban areas and the expansion into the future urban area of the Southern Growth Corridor.*
- *Rural land has been protected and is used for rural purposes.*
- *The hillslopes, waterways, natural areas and rural surrounds ... are protected and enjoyed by the community for their character and identity, landscape value and contribution to the local economy. Natural resources are managed in an ecologically sustainable manner.*
- *The region offers a range of housing styles and living options that provide for the varying needs and life stages of the community.*

The Strategic Framework is organised into themes, including:

- settlement pattern theme;
- natural areas and features theme;
- economy theme; and

- infrastructure theme.

The settlement pattern theme is the primary guidance for the spatial distribution of zones in the Cairns Region. The Strategic Outcomes for the settlement pattern theme (section 3.3.1 of CairnsPlan 2016) include that the region evolves in a way that (p.14):

- *(c) provides a range of housing choices;*
- *(f) avoids putting people and property at risk from natural hazards;*
- *(h) conserves the natural environment, ecological processes and biodiversity values;*
- *(i) retains rural land for agricultural uses;*
- *(j) supports the timely, cost effective and efficient provision of infrastructure;*
- *(m) maintains and enhances the scenic amenity, tropical character and identity of the region.*

The Rural Land Study area is not identified as having ‘urban’, future urban’ or ‘rural residential’ settlement pattern attributes in the Strategic Framework maps.

Section 3.3.6 (Element – rural areas) of the Strategic Framework includes the following specific outcomes for rural areas:

- *(1) Rural areas are used for agricultural purposes.*
- *(2) Land uses that have the potential to conflict with agricultural uses are not established.*
- *(3) Rural areas contain a range of rural activities of varying scale depending on land suitability and access to infrastructure.*
- *(4) Rural areas that provide an inter-urban break or have scenic landscape value are retained in their form for that purpose.*

- (5) Residential uses within rural areas are of a scale and density that is consistent with the level of infrastructure provided and the rural character of the area.
- (6) Subdivision does not result in further fragmentation of rural land.
- (7) Boundary realignments occur only in rural areas where improved agricultural production or environmental protection outcomes are demonstrated or to resolve building encroachment issues.

Section 3.3.5.1 (9) of the settlement pattern theme also states that: ‘New rural residential areas are not established....’

2.3.2 ZONES

The Rural Land Study area is predominately zoned Rural.

Additionally, a pocket of Rural Residential zoned land and associated Open Space Zone is located within the area as well as two areas of Conservation Zone³ in the eastern and western parts of the Rural Land Study area (refer **Figure 2.6** (refer **Plan 2** in **Schedule 2** for detail)).⁴

The purpose of the Rural Zone (section 6.2.19.2 of CairnsPlan 2016) is to (p.178):

- (a) provide for rural uses including cropping, intensive horticulture, intensive animal industries, animal husbandry, animal keeping, extractive industries and other primary production activities;
- (b) provide opportunities for non-rural uses that are compatible with agriculture, the environmental features, and landscape character of the rural area where the uses do not compromise the long-term use of the land for rural purposes;

³ Owned by the Queensland State Government.



FIGURE 2.6 CAIRNSPLAN 2016 ZONING

SOURCE: CAIRNS REGIONAL COUNCIL

- (c) protect areas of Agricultural Land Classification Class A and Class B for agricultural use by avoiding fragmentation and locating non-agricultural development on or adjacent to Rural zoned land;
- (d) protect or manage significant natural resources and processes to maintain the capacity for primary production.

⁴ Further consideration of the Rural Residential Zone and Conservation Zone is not provided herein, not being relevant to the Rural Land Study.

The local government purpose of the code is to (p.178):

- *(a) recognise the primacy of rural production and farming practices in rural areas;*
- *(b) recognise existing extractive resource / processing areas in rural areas;*
- *(c) provide protection to areas of environmental and scenic significance.*

The following overall outcomes are nominated in achieving the purpose of the Rural Zone code (p.178):

'(a) areas for use for primary production are conserved and fragmentation is avoided;

(b) uses that require isolation from urban areas as a consequence of their impacts, such as lighting, noise, dust or odour, may be appropriate where land-use conflicts are minimised;

(c) rural lots are consolidated to reduce fragmentation to maintain the predominant form of rural use in the area;

(d) development reflects and responds to the natural features and constraints of the land;

(e) development other than a rural use is directly associated with the rural character of the zone;

(f) development is separated from natural features such as creeks, gullies, waterways, wetlands and areas of bushland are retained, managed, enhanced and separated from development where possible;

(g) adverse impacts of land use, both on-site and on adjoining areas, are avoided and any unavoidable impacts are minimised through location, design, operation and management;

(h) existing and future rural uses and activities are protected from the intrusion of incompatible uses.'

2.3.2.1 REGULATED REQUIREMENTS - RURAL ZONE

Part 2, Division 2, Subdivision 1 (Section 6) of the Regulation prescribes zones that may be adopted in a local planning instrument. As detailed in section 2.1.2 of this report, section 16(3) of the *Planning Act 2016* provides that the contents prescribed by regulation apply instead of a local planning instrument, to the extent of any inconsistency.

Relevantly, if a local planning instrument includes land in a zone stated in schedule 2, column 1 of the Regulation, section 6(2)(a) provides that the instrument must include the purpose statement stated opposite the zone in column 2.

The prescribed purpose statement for the Rural Zone is to –

- *(a) provide for rural uses and activities; and*
- *(b) provide for other uses and activities that are compatible with—*
 - *(i) existing and future rural uses and activities; and*
 - *(ii) the character and environmental features of the zone; and*
- *(c) maintain the capacity of land for rural uses and activities by protecting and managing significant natural resources and processes.*

Amongst other refinements, the prescribed purpose statement is noted to remove the 'fragmentation' of Agricultural Land Classification Class A and B as an assessment benchmark.

2.3.3 TABLES OF ASSESSMENT

The types of Material Change of Use development that are self or code assessable in the Rural Zone include⁵:

- Animal husbandry (e.g. grazing)
- Animal Keeping (e.g. aviaries, catteries, kennels, stables)
- Aquaculture
- Cropping
- Intensive horticulture
- Caretaker’s accommodation
- Community residence
- Dwelling house
- Home based business
- Rural workers accommodation
- Environment facility
- Extractive Industry (**IF** within a Resource processing area within the Extractive resources overlay)
- High Impact Industry (**IF** for a concrete batching plant within an Extractive resource processing area within the Extractive resources overlay)
- Roadside Stall
- Rural Industry
- Telecommunications Facility

All other material change of use development is impact assessable and requires public notification. Notably, the *Planning Regulation 2017* also prescribes the Regional Plan as an assessment benchmark for impact assessable development.

Reconfiguring a Lot (subdivision) development in the Rural Zone is code assessable. The Reconfiguring a lot code is an assessment benchmark for the assessment of Reconfiguring a Lot development. The Reconfiguring a lot code

⁵ Not in all circumstances.

identifies that the acceptable outcome for minimum lot size in the Rural Zone is 40 hectares, unless (p.490):

- (a) *The reconfiguration results in no additional lots (e.g. amalgamation, boundary realignments to resolve encroachments); or*
- (b) *The reconfiguration is limited to one additional lot created to accommodate:*
 - (i) *an emergency services facility; or*
 - (ii) *water cycle management infrastructure; or*
 - (iii) *waste management facility; or*
 - (iv) *telecommunications infrastructure.*

The level of assessment remains code assessment whether or not the proposed development involves the creation of one or more lots of less than 40 hectares.

2.3.4 OVERLAYS

The Rural Land Study area is affected by the following overlays in the CairnsPlan 2016 (refer overlay mapping in **Schedule 3**):

- **Extractive Resources Overlay** – identifies a ‘Resource / processing area’ and ‘separation area’ to the immediate south of land zoned Rural Residential.
- **Flood and Inundation Hazard Overlay** – identifies a considerable area of the Rural Land Study area as being within a ‘Floodplain assessment trigger area’ within the environs of the Little Mulgrave River.

In the context of the Rural Land Study area, the function of the overlay is to ensure the safety of people and to protect development and the environment from the impacts of flood, as well as to protect the hydraulic function of the drainage catchment.

The Flood and Inundation Hazard Overlay code seeks that development avoid flood affected areas or is designed to be compatible with the flood

event. The Flood and Inundation Hazard Overlay Code also seeks to avoid the cumulative impacts of flood through incremental development which removes floodplain storage or causes impacts through upstream or downstream afflux.

Of particular relevance to the Rural Land Study, the Flood and Inundation Hazard Overlay Code requires that development in the Rural Zone can be safely evacuated and/or is accessible by emergency services. Gillies Range Road, which provides the only vehicular access to the Rural Land Study area, is located within the ‘Floodplain assessment trigger area’ and Council engineers advise that parts of the road network within the Rural Land Study area have low flood immunity.

- **Bushfire Hazard Overlay** – identifies vegetated hillslopes throughout the Rural Land Study area as being impacted by Medium, High and Very High Bushfire Hazard (and associated ‘Bushfire potential impact buffer’ area).

The function of the overlay is to protect people and property from the adverse impacts of bushfire primarily via avoiding development in Medium, High or Very High bushfire hazard areas, and secondarily through risk mitigation measures including firebreaks, setbacks to vegetation and providing fire-fighting infrastructure.

Critically, the Gillies Range Road, both to the east and west of the Rural Land Study area is impacted by bushfire hazard. Therefore, access to the Rural Land Study area and the population capacity of the area are key considerations in respect to the suitability (or otherwise) of the Rural Zone from the perspective of bushfire hazard.

- **Places of Significance Overlay** – identifies two places of ‘Local Significance’ in the Rural Land Study area, including:
 - **Mountain View Hotel** located on the Gillies Highway, which is considered to be a hotel of local historic and aesthetic significance.

- **Anderlini (assumed to be Leoni Barracks)** located on Irvin Access. The building is an example of sugar industry labour accommodation. The Local Significance designation includes the barracks structure and a 5 metre buffer area surrounding the building.

Refer **Schedule 4** for the respective statements of cultural significance for each of the places of Local Significance.

- **Potential Landslip Hazard Overlay** – identifies land with a slope of in excess of 25%, which is predominantly located in the hillslope areas within the Rural Land Study area.

The function of the overlay is to ensure the safety of people and property by avoiding or mitigating landslide risk. Risk mitigation measures include limitations on earthworks and vegetation clearing as well as engineering solutions in areas considered to be at risk of landslide.

- **Landscape Values Overlay** – identifies that the majority of the Rural Land Study area is having a Medium Landscape Value or High Landscape Value.

The purpose of the overlay is to protect, maintain and enhance the landscape values of the Cairns Region. The purpose of the overlay is achieved through several overall outcomes, including overall outcome (f)(iii) that relates to rural character (p.308): *‘the rural character of can[e]fields, grassy hillsides and lowlands landscape character types which are predominantly rural or natural in appearance are maintained’*.

Relevant to the Rural Land Study, context provided as extrinsic material to the Landscape values overlay code describes that *‘the Cairns region is internationally recognised for its outstanding scenery, from.... the Wet Tropics World Heritage Areas to the forested hillslopes, rainforests... freshwater scenery and canefields’*, all values that are present in or adjoining the Rural Land Study area. The context further describes that

‘[p]opulation growth pressures present a challenge to maintain the landscape values that underpin the livability, cultural significance, tourist image and prosperity of the Cairns region.’

The Landscape values overlay code achieves its purpose by ensuring that the scale and appearance of development is complementary to the landscape values by maintaining a low-rise built form, screening development from public roads and public places, the use of unobtrusive colour schemes and limiting the occurrence of vegetation clearing on hillslopes and ridgelines.

- **Hillslopes Overlay** – identifies the areas of hillslope within the Rural Land Study area.

The purpose of the Hillslopes Overlay Code is to ‘ensure that development on hillslopes maintains the scenic backdrop to the region and ensures the safety of people, property and the environment’.

The function of the Hillslopes Overlay Code is similar to the combined functions of the Landscape values overlay and the Potential landslip hazard overlay, in seeking to limit de-stabilisation of sloping land and to maintain the scenic amenity value of hillslopes through development controls.

- **Natural Areas Overlay** – identifies the majority of the Rural Land Study area as containing ‘Biodiversity areas’ and/or ‘Non-urban waterway trigger area’.

Relevant to the Rural Land Study area, the Natural Areas Overlay Code seeks to protect the natural areas of the Cairns region through *‘avoiding development within biodiversity areas, waterways and waterway corridors’*.

The Natural Areas Overlay achieves its purpose by the exclusion of development from natural areas, or by requiring ecological assessments that demonstrate that the development will not have adverse impacts on biodiversity values or water quality.

The context of the Rural Land Study area is also an important consideration with respect to the Natural areas overlay, in that the ‘Biodiversity areas’ provide a buffer to the surrounding Wet Tropics World Heritage Area / Little Mulgrave National Park.

2.3.5 LOCAL GOVERNMENT INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

The Local Government Infrastructure Plan (LGIP) is included as Part 4 of the current version of the CairnsPlan 2016.

The purpose of the LGIP is to:

‘(a) integrate infrastructure planning with the land-use planning identified in the planning scheme;

(b) provide transparency regarding a local government’s intentions for the provision of trunk infrastructure;

(c) enable a local government to estimate the cost of infrastructure provision to assist its long-term financial planning;

(d) ensure that trunk infrastructure is planned and provided in an efficient and orderly manner;

(e) provide a basis for the imposition of conditions about infrastructure on development approvals.’

The LGIP identifies existing and future trunk infrastructure within the following networks only:

- water supply
- wastewater
- stormwater
- transport (roads)

- transport (pedestrian and cycle movement)
- parks and land for community facilities.

The *Planning Act 2016* defines trunk infrastructure as follows:

trunk infrastructure, for a local government, means—

- (a) development infrastructure identified in a LGIP as trunk infrastructure; or*
- (b) development infrastructure that, because of a conversion application, becomes trunk infrastructure; or*
- (c) development infrastructure that is required to be provided under a condition under section 128(3).*

The LGIP identifies Bronco Place Park (OSE163) as a District Recreation Park, that also functions as a drainage reserve (refer **Figure 2.7** (refer **Schedule 5** for detail)).

There is no other identified existing or future trunk infrastructure in the Rural Land Study area.

Refer to **section 5.2** of this Report, for further information on infrastructure.



FIGURE 2.7 PARK TRUNK INFRASTRUCTURE
SOURCE: CAIRNS REGIONAL COUNCIL

2.3.6 SUMMARY

The local planning framework for the Rural Land Study identifies an area of significant constraint, with an appropriate bias toward protecting the natural and other values that exist in the Rural Land Study area, as well as protecting the interests of people and property against natural hazards.

The predominance of the Rural Zone in the Rural Land Study area also lends to the encouragement of development related to agriculture, with a clear bias against urban and rural residential development.

A number of overlays affect the Rural Land Study, with low lying areas affected by flood hazard associated with the Little Mulgrave River, and vegetated hillslopes affected by potential bushfire hazard. Both flood and bushfire hazard also pose risks to the evacuation of persons from the Rural Land Study area and the ability for emergency services to access the area.

The widespread distribution of 'Biodiversity areas' in the Natural Areas Overlay, together with the identified amenity values in the Landscape Values Overlay and the Hillslopes Overlay, are noted to be in potential discord with the rural zoning of the land in-so-much as the Rural Zone may not be the most appropriate zone in consideration of the overlay restrictions, despite that the Rural Zone local government purpose of the code also seeks to provide protection to areas of environmental and scenic significance.

This is particularly the case in the uplands of the Rural Land Study area, where the potential for rural activities facilitated by the zone is unlikely to be achieved given the overlay constraints. Moreover, the purpose and overall outcomes of the Rural Zone do not adequately address ecological values, and where significant ecological values are present, the Environmental Management Zone or Conservation Zone may afford greater protection to such values, and therefore be a more suitable zone.

The Rural Land Study area is absent trunk infrastructure, with the exception of Bronco Place Park and there are no plans to provide future trunk infrastructure.

The Strategic Framework requires the protection of rural land for rural purposes, and the Rural Zone delivers this policy direction by limiting the potential for urban development and by limiting subdivision, in seeking that rural land is not permanently alienated or fragmented by development not consistent with the intent of the Rural zone. However, the Queensland State Government's decision to amend the Rural Zone to remove the 'fragmentation' of Agricultural Land Classification Class A and B as an assessment benchmark potentially undermines the outcomes sought by the Strategic Framework. Accordingly, it is recommended that Council consider amendments to the Local Government Purpose of the Rural Zone to directly address the fragmentation of Agricultural Land Classification Class A and B.

3 FUTURE PLANNING

A close-up photograph of a vibrant green fern frond, showing its intricate, feathery structure. The frond is the central focus, set against a blurred background of forest floor debris, including rocks and fallen leaves. The lighting is natural, highlighting the texture and color of the fern.

PART 3

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Part 3 identifies the population growth pressures facing Little Mulgrave and investigates the capacity of Little Mulgrave to accommodate future population growth. **Part 3** also details the future planning intent for Little Mulgrave.

3.2 POPULATION GROWTH

The Cairns Statistical Area Level 4 had a population of 247,7626 in the year that the CairnsPlan 2016 commenced. CairnsPlan 2016 has a planning horizon of 20 years; however, is subject to major review in 2026.

In 2026 the Cairns Statistical Area Level 4 is anticipated to accommodate an additional 23,951 persons under a Low Series population projection⁷. This equates to a population increase of 9.67% over the first ten years of the CairnsPlan 2016.

In the 2016 Census, the Little Mulgrave Statistical Area was identified as having a population of 249 persons. Therefore, at 9.67% growth over ten years Little Mulgrave is anticipated to grow by an additional 24 persons and have a total population of 273 persons in 2026. The average number of people per household in the Little Mulgrave Statistical Area in 2016 was 2.4, and therefore population growth to 2026 is estimated to create demand for an additional 10 dwellings.⁸

It is not expected that any of the regional population growth is likely to be accommodated in Little Mulgrave, which is considered near its ultimate population capacity. The extent of existing residential / dwelling development is discussed in Section 5.2.2.3. However, generally there is limited opportunity to

⁶ Queensland Government population projections (2018); Australian Bureau of Statistics, Population by age and sex, regions of Australia, 2016 (Cat no. 3235.0)

⁷ A Low Series has been adopted consistent with the Low Series projections adopted for the Local Government Infrastructure Plan, which relied on the Queensland Government Statisticians Office (QGSO) 2015 edition population projections.

accommodate future population growth within the Little Mulgrave area on the basis that:

- Only two (2) vacant lots currently exist in the Appaloosa Street Rural Residential subdivision; and
- In the Rural Zone only 15 lots (approximately) exist that are not improved with a dwelling, some of which:
 - may not be capable of supporting a dwelling due to existing constraints; or
 - include landholdings with more than one (1) lot under the same ownership; or
 - Include an accommodation activity other than a Dwelling house e.g. Caretaker's accommodation.

3.3 HOUSING CHOICE AND DIVERSITY

Within the 'Settlement pattern theme' of the Strategic Framework of the CairnsPlan, section 3.3 states that '[t]he region grows and evolves in a way that... (c) provides a range of housing choices', however the Strategic Framework relies on the nominated range and spatial extent of zones to deliver housing choice.

The CairnsPlan 2016 Strategic Framework does not identify Little Mulgrave as a future location for urban development or rural residential development and does not otherwise define a strategic vision or characterisation of the area that distinguishes it from other Rural Zoned land.

The Strategic Framework states in section 3.3.5 (9) that '[n]ew rural residential areas are not established', Council has however recently received a number of

⁸ 2016 QuickStats: https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/SSC31683. Accessed January 2020

applications and enquiries regarding the subdivision of rural land within the Little Mulgrave area, for largely rural residential purposes.

The Cairns Region includes areas of Rural Residential zoned land in the following locations:

- Goldsborough
- Clifton Beach
- Kewarra Beach
- Trinity Beach
- Smithfield
- Redlynch
- White Rock
- Edmonton
- Gordonvale
- Fishery Falls
- Babinda
- Deeral
- Bramston Beach

In consideration of the development potential of existing Rural Residential zoned land, Goldsborough has the highest potential for further rural residential subdivision development, with a potential capacity to accommodate up to an additional 250 lots (approximately), with in the order of 176 lots the subject of development assessment as at January 2020.

The potential for further Rural Residential subdivision development in Rural Residential zoned land other than Goldsborough is considered limited. In November 2018, Cairns Regional Council identified that:

- in the order of 370 lots in the Rural Residential Zone could potentially be capable of further subdivision; however, it is likely that in the order of only 160 of these could be realised given overlay constraints.; and
- approximately 107 lots in the Rural Residential Zone were vacant.

It is estimated that existing Rural Residential zoned land in the Cairns Region could not support more than 425 additional lots, with approximately 250 of those lots to occur in Goldsborough. Consequently, it is considered that the available Rural Residential zoned land supply in Goldsborough is more than sufficient to meet the population growth demands created by Little Mulgrave. Notwithstanding, the future demand for Rural Residential zoned land across the Cairns Region requires further analysis to understand what, if any, planning response is required in the major review of CairnsPlan 2016 or future planning schemes.

3.4 SUMMARY

Little Mulgrave has a very small resident population and is unlikely to have the capacity to accommodate the expected population growth to 2026.

However, the demand for rural residential housing choice in Little Mulgrave is considered to be capable of being met by existing Rural Residential zoned land in the Region. Goldsborough is considered to be the likely and preferred location to accommodate demand for rural residential housing choice, which has an abundant land supply and is located within proximity to Little Mulgrave.

The CairnsPlan 2016 Strategic Framework does not identify Little Mulgrave as a future location for urban development or rural residential development and does not otherwise define a strategic vision or characterisation of the area that distinguishes it from other Rural Zoned land.

Notwithstanding that demand for Rural Residential housing choice in the Little Mulgrave area can be supplied locally in Goldsborough, the limited potential to accommodate Rural Residential development in other parts of the Cairns Region is recommended as a subject for further analysis.

Refer **Part 8 – Recommendations** for further discussion.

4 DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION ACTIVITY ASSESSMENT



PART 4

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Part 4 provides an analysis of the types of development applications lodged with Cairns Regional Council in the Little Mulgrave Statistical Area since commencement of the CairnsPlan 2016, in seeking to understand emergent development trends and the compatibility of these trends with the Rural Zone.

4.2 REVIEW

The review of development application activity identified that seven (7) applications were lodged during the specified period (spanning March 2016 – December 2019), and included both Material Change of Use and Reconfiguring a Lot development, excluding applications for Building Work, Operational Work and Material Change of Use for Dwelling Houses

Development applications for Material Change of Use development involved the following land uses (refer also to **Plan 3 – Development Application Activity Plan in Schedule 6**):

- Outdoor sport and recreation (i.e. Mountain bike paths, trail tours) – involving 2 development applications, approved by Council
- Emergency Services (i.e. Rural Fire Brigade) – involving 1 development application, approved by Council
 - Tourist park / Caretaker’s Accommodation – involving 1 development application, the application was withdrawn prior to a decision being made

Development applications for Reconfiguring a Lot development included the following (refer also to **Plan 3 – Development Application Activity Plan in Schedule 6**):

- rearranging the boundaries of lots (involving 1 development application), approved by Council

- ‘one-into-two-lot’ subdivisions (involving 2 development applications).

It is relevant to note that in respect to the 2 development applications for ‘one-into-two-lot’ subdivisions:

- Both development applications were of a scale more suitable for rural residential subdivision
- One (1) was withdrawn prior to a decision being made by Council
- One (1) was yet to be decided at the time of preparing the Rural Land Study.

Refer to **Table 4.1** for further detail in respect to the abovementioned development applications.

4.3 ANALYSIS

Development application activity is considered low, with an average of less than 2 development applications per year since commencement of CairnsPlan 2016.

Of the development applications lodged, the review identified that there was a marginally higher incidence of applications for Material Change of Use development (representing 57% of applications lodged).

Material Change of Use development primarily had regard to outdoor sport and recreation / tourism activities (including accommodation) that are complementary to the rural and/or natural character and amenity of Little Mulgrave. However, it is relevant to note that Material Change of Use development detailed above is not representative of all Material Change of Use development activity for the locality since commencement of the CairnsPlan 2016; noting that Animal Husbandry, Community Residence, Cropping, Dwelling House, Environment Facility and Home-based Business are self-assessable in the Rural Zone.

Applications for Reconfiguring a Lot development represented 43% of applications lodged and involved only minor subdivision development, with no indication of a broader appetite for more intensive or broadscale subdivision.

More broadly, the low level of development activity and the scale of development proposed since 2016 may reflect that:

- The demand for more intensive or broadscale subdivision development in the Rural Land study area is potentially offset by rural residential subdivision in Goldsborough; and/or
- the environmental and infrastructure constraints make Little Mulgrave unsuitable (including from an economic perspective) for more intensive development; and/or
- the planning framework is necessarily limiting, in reinforcement of the purpose of the Rural Zone (i.e. rural residential development is not supported within the Rural Zone); and/or
- the land use make-up of Little Mulgrave is undergoing a renaissance of sorts, diversifying with value-ad enterprise that capitalise on tourism (including domestic tourism) including, for example nature-based tourism, and events-based activities in rural settings

4.4 RURAL ZONE ALIGNMENT

On review, it is evident that recent Material Change of Use development activity is generally compatible with existing and future rural uses and activities, and the character and environmental features of the Rural Zone. Therefore, recent Material Change of Use development activity is considered to be largely consistent with the purpose of the Rural Zone (as regulated).

One (1) application for Reconfiguring a Lot had regard to rearranging the boundaries of a lot, which is deemed to be consistent with the purpose of the Rural Zone, by virtue of compliance with applicable assessment benchmarks. However, Reconfiguring a Lot development seeking to create additional lots with

areas less than the minimum lot size prescribed by the Rural Zone Code is considered, by and large, to be inconsistent with the Rural Zone.

4.5 SUMMARY

Notwithstanding that development application activity was limited within the period since commencement of CairnsPlan 2016, development application activity indicates a clear direction toward tourism-related development that is complementary to the rural character and landscape values of Little Mulgrave, and provides for the diversification of the predominantly rural economy.

Such development is considered to be largely consistent with the purpose of the Rural Zone (as regulated).

Applications for Reconfiguring a Lot development sought approval for minor subdivision only; it is not evident that demand for higher yielding subdivisional development exists within Little Mulgrave.

A review of recent development application activity indicates that the current zoning of the land is appropriate, in the context of recent development application activity.

Refer **Part 8 – Recommendations** for further discussion.

TABLE 4.1 DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Date Lodged	Site (Lot / Plan)	Council Reference	Development Type	Level of Assessment	Description	Decision
18/07/2016	1SP276701	8/35/116	MCU	Self Assessment	Superseded Planning Scheme Request Public Utility (Rural Fire Brigade)	Superseded Planning Scheme Request Approved (Exempt Development)
14/10/2016	1SP117594	8/8/192	MCU	Impact Assessment	Request to Change Approval Request (Material Change of Use for Outdoor Entertainment (Mountain Bike Path))	Approved subject to conditions
13/12/2016	35RP835591	8/35/122	MCU	Code Assessment	Superseded Planning Scheme Request Material Change of Use Outdoor Sport & Entertainment (trail tours)	Approved subject to conditions
19/12/2017	2RP707325	8/8/1493	MCU	Impact Assessment	Material Change of Use Tourist park and Caretaker's accommodation	Application withdrawn prior to a decision being made
27/06/2019	6RP818030	8/13/2240	RAL	Code Assessment	Reconfiguring a Lot (1 Lot into 2 Lots)	Application withdrawn prior to a decision being made
26/06/2019	1RP748417	8/13/2239	RAL	Code Assessment	Reconfiguring a Lot (1 Lot into 2 Lots)	Not determined at the date of completion of the Rural Land Study
23/09/2019	1RP738503	8/13/2258	RAL	Code	Reconfiguring a Lot - Boundary Realignment	Approved subject to conditions

5 EXISTING LAND USE ASSESSMENT



PART 5

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Part 5 provides an assessment of the land uses and describes the infrastructure (including its capacity) that exists in the Rural Land Study area.

5.2 DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING LAND USES

A desktop review of available information⁹ was undertaken in order to identify existing land uses within Little Mulgrave.

5.2.1 METHODOLOGY

The following methodology was adopted in seeking to define “broad-scale land uses” into one of either rural land uses, extractive industry or natural areas:

- **Natural Areas** – derived from Regulated Vegetation mapping on Queensland Globe, Natural Areas were identified spatially where comprising one or more of the following attributes:
 - RVM category A - vegetation offsets, compliance notices and voluntary declarations under the *Vegetation Management Act 1999*
 - RVM category B - remnant vegetation
 - RVM category C - high-value regrowth vegetation
 - RVM category R - reef-regrowth watercourse vegetation
- **Rural Land Uses** – derived from Queensland Globe, Rural Land Uses were identified spatially where comprising:
 - Category X; and

- Agricultural land class A or B

- **Extractive Industry** – derived from aerial photography, Extractive Industry was mapped spatially to include the cleared extent of the lot that included the extractive pit and stockpiles.

The resultant plan identified approximately 95% of land within the Study Area in one of the three categories. The remaining areas were further categorised through detailed analysis of aerial photography as follows:

- Where cleared, the land was included in the Rural Land Use Category
- Where vegetated, the land was included in the Natural Areas Category.

The desktop analysis also included the following actions:

- Council rates information was used to identify each lot that was improved with a Dwelling House
- All lots in a Rural Residential Zone designation were identified as ‘Rural Residential Lots’.

A field inspection was undertaken in January 2020 to further refine and ground-truth desktop findings.

5.2.2 FINDINGS

Generally, land uses established within Little Mulgrave were noted to include the following:

- Rural land uses (i.e. cropping, horticulture, aquaculture, animal keeping and animal husbandry)
- Natural areas (i.e. waterways and undisturbed areas of native vegetation)

⁹ Including CairnsPlan 2016 zoning mapping, aerial imagery (sourced from Queensland Globe) and Queensland Spatial data (Regulated Vegetation and Agricultural Activity).

- Accommodation activities (i.e. Dwelling houses and rural residential development)
- Extractive industry
- Tourism / recreation activities (including outdoor sport and recreation, wedding venues and nature-based tours)
- Community Infrastructure
- Commercial / retail activities (i.e. Mountain View Hotel)
- Infrastructure (including water supply infrastructure)

The spatial distribution of established land uses is reflected on **Plan 4 – Land Use Identification Plan** in **Schedule 7**.

Further discussion regarding existing land uses established within Little Mulgrave is provided in the following sub-sections.

5.2.2.1 RURAL LAND USES

Rural land uses were identified to be the dominant land use within Little Mulgrave (excluding consideration of ‘natural areas’). Notable rural land uses included turf production, cane farming (served by MSF Sugar-maintained cane rail), plant nurseries, livestock grazing (primarily cattle and horses) and animal keeping (including stables) and aquaculture.

Turf production is established over numerous land holdings in the Rural Land Study area; accordingly, cropping (including also cane farming) is potentially the most dominant agricultural activity occurring in the Rural Land Study area.

Refer to **Plan 4 – Land Use Identification Plan** in **Schedule 7**, which identifies lots the subject of turf production (at the time of the January 2020 field inspection).

Top Right: Animal Keeping (Gallet Road, Little Mulgrave)

Bottom Right: Turf production (Little Mulgrave Road, Little Mulgrave)



Various other niche or specialist agricultural activities were identified during the January 2020 field inspection and included a lychee orchard, vanilla plantation, aquaculture and aquaponics enterprises.

Refer to the identified ‘Rural Land Use[s]’ on **Plan 4 – Land Use Identification Plan** in **Schedule 7**.

5.2.2.2 NATURAL AREAS

The Rural Land Study area is centred around Little Mulgrave River, with lesser waterways occurring throughout the valley. The catchment for the Little Mulgrave River comprises Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and vegetated hillsides throughout the valley. The southern boundary of the Rural Land Study area is the Mulgrave River, to which the Little Mulgrave River discharges.



Bottom Left: Waterway (Brays Road, Little Mulgrave)

5.2.2.3 ACCOMMODATION ACTIVITIES

Dwelling Houses are the predominant dwelling type within Little Mulgrave. Dwelling houses are established on the majority of lots in the Rural Study area.

There are 26 lots with a Rural Residential Zone designation and 24 Dwelling Houses are established on 24 of these lots. Rural residential lots (which represent approximately 20% of lots within Little Mulgrave) are restricted to a discrete pocket accessed via Appaloosa Street, and proximate to Mountain View Hotel.

Council rates information confirms that additional accommodation activities (including caretaker’s accommodation, secondary dwellings and multiple dwellings) are established on seven (7) lots within the locality.



Bottom Right: Rural residential development (Appaloosa Street, Little Mulgrave)

5.2.2.4 EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRY

The Holcim Mountain View Quarry is established on a large land holding located on Roos Road, Little Mulgrave. The Extractive industry operation is however accessed directly off the Gillies Range Road.

Refer to the identified ‘Extractive Industry Activity’ on **Plan 4 – Land Use Identification Plan** in **Schedule 7**.

The site is identified in the Extractive Resources Overlay of the CairnsPlan 2016 (refer **section 2.2.4** for further discussion).

5.2.2.5 TOURISM, OUTDOOR SPORT AND RECREATION ACTIVITIES

Tourism and recreational land uses are located throughout Little Mulgrave, including:

- Catch-a-Barra (Nielsen Road), which is an aquaculture facility that is open to the public for recreational fishing and also provides powered and unpowered sites (for camping) and hot / cold water amenities;
- Outdoor Sport and Recreation enterprises, including Mount 'n' Ride Adventures, which operates scenic horse trail rides from its facility on Irvin Access; and mountain bike riding adventures operated from Beryl Ann Drive;
- Bed and Breakfast accommodation (Beryl Ann Drive);
- Function facilities, including wedding venues on Roos Road and Little Mulgrave Road; and
- Mountain View Hotel on Gillies Range Road, which is a Hotel, with a tourism focus given its local heritage significance.

Refer to the identified ‘Tourism, Outdoor Sport and Recreation Activities’ on **Plan 4 – Land Use Identification Plan** in **Schedule 7**.

Note - Where a ‘Tourism, Outdoor Sport and Recreation Activity’ was considered to be dominant over its underlying Rural Land Use or Natural Area characterisation (i.e. the activity did not rely on its rural or natural setting to undertake the activity), it was also characterised as an ‘Other Land Use’ on **Plan 4 – Land Use Identification Plan** in **Schedule 7**.

5.2.2.6 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

A rural fire brigade facility (Community Infrastructure (Emergency Services)) is located on Little Mulgrave Road.

Refer to the identified ‘Community Infrastructure’ on **Plan 4 – Land Use Identification Plan** in **Schedule 7**.



Bottom Right: Little Mulgrave Rural Fire Brigade (Little Mulgrave Road, Little Mulgrave)

5.3 SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Little Mulgrave is supported by a range of limited infrastructure and services, as described in the following sub-sections.

5.3.1 WASTE WATER

Little Mulgrave is not serviced by a Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and therefore all development in the Rural Land Study area must provide on-site wastewater services.

Council currently has no plans for a Little Mulgrave WWTP or associated reticulated waste-water network.

As identified in **section 2.2.5** there is no waste-water Trunk Infrastructure in the Rural Land Study Area.

The Gordonvale WWTP is the nearest WWTP.

5.3.2 WATER SUPPLY

The Rural Land Study area has two (2) limited water supply schemes, including the Mountain View and Orchid Valley Drinking Water Supply Systems. Both water supply schemes rely on the extraction of water from the Little Mulgrave River.

The Orchid Valley water supply scheme has an extraction point at the location of Allan Peever Bridge on Papacek Access. The scheme provides a multi-barrier approach to water treatment involving Ultra Violet (UV) and chlorination. The scheme includes a 90KL water reservoir accessed via Gallet Road and the network distributes drinking water to land on Garret Road, Beryl Ann Drive and parts of Little Mulgrave Road and Nielsen Road. Water pressure is not consistent within the Orchid Valley water supply scheme, with pressure pumps supplied by individual land-owners to achieve pressures suitable for domestic supply. Where water supply from the Orchid Valley water supply scheme is insufficient or unavailable, domestic supply in the form of rainwater harvesting, dams or bores is established by individual land-owners.



Top Right: Water Treatment Plant (Papacek Access, Little Mulgrave)

Council has undertaken a preliminary assessment of the capacity of the Orchid Valley water supply scheme and it was identified that the reservoir (with a total storage volume of 0.09 ML) is the limiting component of the water supply scheme; in that it does not have sufficient spare capacity to accommodate additional demand (Cairns Regional Council *pers comm* 2019).

The Mountain View water supply scheme has an extraction point adjacent Bronco Place Park, which is the drainage reserve to the immediate north of Rural Residential zoned land serviced by Appaloosa Street. The scheme provides a multi-barrier approach to water treatment involving Ultra Violet (UV) and chlorination. The scheme includes a 180KL water reservoir accessed off Appaloosa Street and the network distributes drinking water to Rural Residential zoned land only. Mountain View Hotel is not connected to the Mountain View water supply scheme.

Council has undertaken a preliminary assessment of the capacity of the Orchid Valley water supply scheme and it was identified that the reservoir (with a total storage volume of 0.18ML) has available capacity to accommodate additional demand, equating to approximately 11 additional dwellings. The preliminary assessment identified further that if, due to the elevation of the additional lots, supply from the high-level pressure zone was required, then further assessment of the high-level storage (0.01ML) and pump system would be required. The likely outcome is that a capacity upgrade would be required to supply additional demand (Cairns Regional Council *pers comm* 2019).

With respect to the reliance of the water supply schemes on the Little Mulgrave River as a water source, the following is of relevance:

- The Orchid Valley scheme is subject to a nominal water entitlement (licence) of 30ML per annum and the annual take over the last 5 years has been between 25% and 50% of that allocation (approximately) (Cairns Regional Council *pers comm* 2019)
- The Mountain View scheme is subject to a nominal water entitlement (licence) of 23ML per annum and the annual take over the last 5 years has been between 30% and 65% of that allocation (approximately) (Cairns Regional Council *pers comm* 2019)
- Both schemes are operating with a daily take that is significantly less than the maximum daily limit of the respective water licences (Cairns Regional Council *pers comm* 2019)
- Any increase in annual take to support additional demand, while being less than the nominal entitlement, would need to consider the reliability and performance of the water supply. Further hydrological assessment is recommended in the circumstance that additional demand for non-Rural land uses is proposed from the Little Mulgrave River (Cairns Regional Council *pers comm* 2019).

Both water supply schemes were designed to the standards relevant at the time and were not designed for any expansion (Cairns Regional Council *pers comm* 2019).

Council currently has no plans to upgrade either water supply scheme in the Rural Land Study area. Council only undertakes maintenance of the two water supply schemes to ensure the continued safe supply of water (Cairns Regional Council *pers comm* 2019).

As identified in **section 2.3.5** there is no existing or future water supply Trunk Infrastructure in the Rural Land Study Area.

The CairnsPlan 2016 allows for rural and rural residential development to provide an on-site water storage with a minimum capacity of 30,000 litres in lieu of connection to a Council reticulated water supply network. Notwithstanding, the CairnsPlan 2016 requirements in respect to water supply were established on the basis that all significant areas of Rural Residential Zoned land were located within a water supply catchment area.

Therefore, for any intensification of development in the Rural Land Study area (including for example any increased rural residential development), a sustainable water supply network would be required, with consideration given to adequate water pressure for fire-fighting purposes (Cairns Regional Council *pers comm* 2019). The scale of the water supply scheme (including Water Treatment Plant (WTP) and associated water supply network, including a network of reservoirs and pump stations) would be dependent on the extent of intensification of development. A hydrological assessment would be required, including:

- an assessment of the reliability of Little Mulgrave River in providing sufficient supply in consideration of the availability of water allocations; and
- consideration of the cost to Council to provide new or additional water supply infrastructure.

5.3.3 STORMWATER AND DRAINAGE

Stormwater infrastructure in the Rural Land Study area is limited and includes stormwater culverts at various locations on the road network and grassed swales in the road verge; however, no formalised stormwater quality treatment devices exist in the area.

Council currently has no plans to upgrade stormwater quantity or stormwater quality infrastructure in the Rural Land Study area. Council only undertakes maintenance of existing stormwater infrastructure (Cairns Regional Council *pers comm* 2019).

As identified in **section 2.2.5** there is no stormwater Trunk Infrastructure in the Rural Land Study Area.

Parts of the existing road network, particularly waterway crossings, have a low flood immunity. This may include the eastern access to Little Mulgrave on the Gillies Range Road, which may mean emergency services access in the event of a significant flood may be limited.

No specific flood study exists for the Little Mulgrave River or the Rural Land Study area.

5.3.4 ROADS

Although understood to be constructed to relevant standards at the time of construction, the majority of the road network in the Rural Land Study area is not consistent with current standards, including insufficient pavement width for safe passing in some road segments. Further, the Gillies Range Road / Little Mulgrave Road intersection is not understood to be consistent with current Department of Transport and Main Roads intersection standards.

Little Mulgrave Road has an estimated daily traffic of approximately 630 vehicle movements, based on 10 vehicle movements per day for each of the 63 Dwelling Houses recorded in the Rural Land Study area that rely on Little Mulgrave Road for access. In the instance that Little Mulgrave Road supports in excess of 999

vehicle movements per day, the relevant FNQROC road standard is a Rural Collector road.

The Rural Collector road standard has a road formation width of 10 metres, including an 8 metre seal width and 1 metre gravel shoulders. Therefore, Little Mulgrave Road is not likely to require upgrade within the life of the current CairnsPlan 2016. Little Mulgrave Road is considered of a sufficient standard to cater for the existing demands; however, would require upgrade in the event that rezoning created the opportunity for in excess of 50 (approximate) additional Dwelling Houses. Council currently has no plans to upgrade road infrastructure in the Rural Land Study area. Council only undertakes maintenance of the existing road network to maintain safety and network function. For example, Council installed guard rail on the Alan Peevers Bridge waterway crossing in 2018 (Cairns Regional Council *pers comm* 2019).

As identified in **section 2.2.5** there is no road Trunk Infrastructure in the Rural Land Study Area.



Bottom Right: Waterway crossing (Brays Road, Little Mulgrave)

5.3.5 WASTE SERVICES

Little Mulgrave is serviced by Council’s bin collection services. Gordonvale transfer station is the nearest domestic (self-hauled) waste and recycling facility.

5.3.6 OPEN SPACE INFRASTRUCTURE

Nature-based recreation is the predominant type of recreation in Little Mulgrave (e.g. swimming and canoeing), and no known open space embellishments exist in the Rural Land Study area (Cairns Regional Council *pers comm* 2019).

Bronco Place Park (refer **section 2.2.2** for further detail) and the Vico Street Reserve bushland conservation area are located in the Rural Land Study area.



Bottom Left: Bin collection day (Nielsen Road, Little Mulgrave)

5.4 SUMMARY

The Rural Land Study area is dominated by broadscale rural uses (such as cropping, animal husbandry and animal keeping) but complemented by a variety of specialist or niche agricultural activities (such as orchards, plantations and aquaculture) that contribute to the overall productive capacity of the locality. The unique range of agricultural activities differentiates Little Mulgrave from other rural areas in the Cairns Local Government area.

Low intensity tourist and outdoor recreation activities co-exist with agricultural activities and the natural areas that underpin the character and landscape features of the locality.

Dwelling Houses are the predominant dwelling type within Little Mulgrave and are established on the majority of lots in the Rural Study area. Rural residential lots within the designated rural residential zoned land represent approximately 20% of lots within Little Mulgrave.

In respect to the scale and makeup of land uses within the Rural Land Study area:

- existing high-value agricultural land uses, such as turf farming are considered to be the highest and best use of the land
- existing tourism, outdoor sport and recreation facilities are suitably located in the Rural Zone in-so-much as these land uses are complementary to the primary industry occurring in the Rural Land Study area and character and landscape features of the locality
- the planning framework (expressed in CairnsPlan 2016) does not make specific reference , or articulate a vision for Little Mulgrave that is reflective of its attributes and potential for niche or specialist agricultural activities, and the existing lot layout (comprising a range of lot sizes) and land uses do not diminish agricultural productivity, despite any perceived fragmentation.

Infrastructure within the Rural Land Study area is considered to be adequate to support existing land uses and is consistent with infrastructure standards in other

rural areas. Other than maintenance activities, Council does not have any plans for additional investment in infrastructure in the Rural Land Study area. In summary:

- The existing water supply schemes have limited capacity to service additional dwellings; and any intensification of development would necessitate a hydrological assessment to determine the capacity of the Little Mulgrave River to supply water to the scheme, as well as to determine the nature, scale and distribution network for the water supply scheme (including WTP, reservoirs and pumps)
- Any intensification of development within the Rural Land Study area would require a drainage study to determine the flood hazard presented by the Little Mulgrave River in a 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) event
- An assessment of the adequacy of existing stormwater infrastructure, in association with a stormwater quality and quantity management plan, is recommended in association with any proposed intensification of development.
- An assessment of the existing road network would be required if intensification of development in the Rural Land Study area is sought. . An assessment is likely to identify the necessary upgrade of the Little Mulgrave Road / Gillies Range Road intersection to the Department of Transport and Main Roads current standards, as well as the upgrade of Little Mulgrave Road to Rural Collector standard. An assessment of culverts and bridges at waterway crossings is also recommended to be undertaken in association with any drainage study to determine the safety of waterway crossings.

6 RURAL RESIDENTIAL SUITABILITY ANALYSIS



PART 6

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In addressing part of the purpose of the Rural Land Study, that is, to identify *‘whether the Rural Zone is the most suitable zone to reflect the long-term planning intent’* for the Rural Land Study area (Cairns Regional Council, 2019), it was necessary to develop a methodology to evaluate the extent of constraints over land in the Rural Land Study area (Phase 1 of the methodology) and assess the suitability of the Rural Zone to reflect the long-term planning intent for the Rural Land Study area, by undertaking a qualitative, multi-criteria assessment of the land’s potential to accommodate rural residential development (Phase 2 of the methodology).

Accordingly, **Part 6** describes the assessment methodology and the findings of the assessment.

6.2 METHODOLOGY

The methodology incorporates a two-phase assessment and has been designed to be applied to Rural Zone areas of interest within the Cairns Regional Council Local Government Area.

Phase 1 of the methodology involves a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) spatial analysis of the Rural Zone area of interest, in the elimination of land that is impacted by a ‘primary constraint’. For the purposes of this Rural Land Study, primary constraints are those environmental, physical, amenity or natural-hazard constraints that are considered unable to be overcome for the purposes of identifying the extent of land that could potentially accommodate rural residential development (refer **section 6.2.1** for further detail regarding the **Phase 1** methodology).

Phase 2 of the methodology involves a Multi-Criteria Analysis, which involves a subjective evaluation against a set of prescribed criteria to assess the suitability of land to accommodate rural residential development (refer **section 6.2.2** for further detail regarding the **Phase 2** methodology).

Note 1 - The methodology does not cater to the consideration of ‘back-zoning’ or for the ‘spot-zoning’ of discrete areas of land, such as to Centre Zone or Tourism Zones.

Note 2 – the methodology is not intended to overcome State Interests, but it does provide a planning basis for the consideration of re-zoning to Rural Residential Zone that can be put forward in the balancing of State or Local Government Interests with population growth pressures, should the analysis determine that the Rural Zone is not the most suitable zone to reflect the long-term planning intent.

6.2.1 PHASE 1 - SPATIAL ANALYSIS

Table 6.1 identifies the “primary constraints” to be identified through GIS analysis, in the elimination of land considered unsuitable for broadscale rural residential development

TABLE 6.1 SPATIAL ANALYSIS PRIMARY CONSTRAINTS

Primary Constraint	Threshold
Potential Landslip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land with a slope of in excess of 25% Source: derived from CairnsPlan 2016 Potential Landslip Overlay
Bushfire Hazard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land with a Bushfire Hazard category of “High” or “Very High” Source: derived from CairnsPlan 2016 Bushfire Hazard Overlay

Primary Constraint	Threshold
Flood Hazard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land within a Flood inundation area or Floodplain assessment trigger area¹⁰ <p>Source: derived from CairnsPlan 2016 Flood and Inundation Overlay</p>
Ecological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land identified as Matters of State Environmental Significance (MSES) <p>Source: derived from SPP Interactive Mapping System, Queensland State Government</p>
Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agricultural Land Class A or Class B¹¹ <p>Source: derived from SPP Interactive Mapping System, Queensland State Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land not involving Extractive Industry, including resource processing areas and separation area¹² <p>Source: derived from CairnsPlan 2016 Extractive resources overlay</p>
Coastal Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land within the Erosion Prone Area <p>Source: derived from SPP Interactive Mapping System, Queensland State Government</p>
Airport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land included in a Noise Exposure Forecast Contour of 20 ANEF or above <p>Source: derived from CairnsPlan 2016 Airport environs overlay</p>

The output of the Phase 1, Spatial Analysis is the identification of land not subject to a primary constraint that may be considered as potentially suitable for rural

¹⁰ Where the land is within a Floodplain assessment trigger area a flood impact assessment of the subject catchment is recommended to determine the nature of the flood hazard.

residential development, subject to Phase 2 – Multi-Criteria Analysis. Notwithstanding, a qualitative assessment of the Phase 1, Spatial Analysis output is required in order to determine whether the identified land is suitably contiguous and/or of sufficient area to warrant Phase 2 – Multi-Criteria Analysis.

6.2.2 PHASE 2 - MULTI-CRITERIA ANALYSIS

The Phase 2 Multi-Criteria Analysis involves a qualitative evaluation of the suitability of land not subject to primary constraints identified as part of Phase 1. The Phase 2 Multi-Criteria Analysis incorporates criteria relevant to the consideration of the suitability of the Rural Residential Zone, in the Rural Zone area of interest (refer **Table 6.2 – Multi-Criteria Analysis Tool**).

Specifically, the Multi-Criteria Analysis Tool includes 11 criteria that fall under one or more of the following categories:

- The need for additional Rural Residential or Emerging Community zoned land (based on supply and demand for rural residential / residential land)
- The ability of the population catchment to be appropriately serviced by centre activities
- The ability for the land to be sustainably and equitably serviced by key infrastructure (water supply, sewer (as applicable) and roads)
- The suitability of the location in consideration of statutory zone and Regional Plan designations, and land use efficiency
- The safety of the land in consideration of the indirect impacts of flood (including storm tide inundation) and bushfire not addressed by the

¹¹ An agricultural land assessment is recommended to be undertaken to qualify the agricultural land classification.

¹² Where the Extractive Industry has a limited life, this should be considered in respect to the timing of any potential re-zoning consideration.

Phase 1 – Spatial Analysis, including for example the potential for the land to be isolated during a natural hazard event

- The ability for the land to be serviced by core emergency services, including Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, Queensland Police and Queensland Ambulance.

The Multi-Criteria Analysis tool is not intended to be an all-encompassing assessment to the exclusion of other matters; however, is intended to build upon the Phase 1 – Spatial Analysis and further refine the suitability assessment. Further, it will always be necessary to consider the unique constraints of a particular location as part of the identification of a Rural Zone area of interest or following Phase 2 – Multi-Criteria Analysis, with consideration given to:

- the potential for biting insects
- the potential presence of Matters of National Environmental Significance, or species protected under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*
- appropriate separation from industrial areas and intensive animal industries
- the presence of contaminated land and its remediation potential (including cost).

Therefore, there will always be a need to consider a broader range of matters not necessarily set out in the Phase 1 or Phase 2 methodologies.

A total cumulative weighted score of 3.5 is the recommended benchmark in preliminarily qualifying the land for re-zoning. Further, an individual criterion score of 1 is considered to automatically disqualify consideration of the land for re-zoning (without action being undertaken to qualify the score), despite achieving a score of 3.5 or above. For example, if the total cumulative weighted score was 3.5 and a score of 1 was achieved because the land was external to the catchment of the Queensland Ambulance service, this would trigger the need for

negotiation with the Queensland Ambulance service and the State Government, in securing necessary land and community infrastructure assets and services.

6.3 PHASE 1 - SPATIAL ANALYSIS FINDINGS

A Phase 1 – Spatial Analysis was undertaken for the Rural Land Study Area in accordance with the methodology detailed above.

The findings of the Phase 1 Spatial Analysis are presented in **Schedule 8**. In eliminating land subject to primary constraints within the Rural Land Study area, the Spatial Analysis Output identified pockets of unconstrained land that upon analysis was considered to be unsuitable to accommodate broadscale rural residential development for the following reasons:

- The identified land is not sufficiently consolidated to warrant any potential broadscale rural residential zoning
- The identified land includes isolated pockets of land on the plateaus surrounding the Little Mulgrave valley, which are considered unfeasible to access and are fragmented (including by Matters of State Environmental Significance and/or land subject to landslip).

One of the primary constraints impacting the Rural Land Study area is the Floodplain Assessment Trigger area, and whilst this constraint may indicate a need to undertake a flood impact assessment to determine the extent and degree of flood hazard presented by the Little Mulgrave River, there is significant overlap between this constraint and Agricultural land class A and class B areas. Therefore, mitigating flood hazard may not improve the suitability of flood impacted, due to the presence of Agricultural land class A and class B land. .

6.4 PHASE 2 - MULTI-CRITERIA ANALYSIS FINDINGS

A Phase 2 – Multi-Criteria Analysis was undertaken for the Rural Land Study Area in accordance with the methodology detailed above, in acknowledging the

purpose and context to the Rural Land Study) i.e. the Multi-Criteria Analysis performed for the Rural Land Study area considers only the potential for rural residential development.

The findings of the Phase 2 Multi-Criteria Analysis are presented in **Table 6.3 – Multi-Criteria Analysis of the Rural Land Study Area for Rural Residential Development**.

A total score of 1.85 / 5 was achieved through a qualitative assessment of the Rural Land Study area against the criteria, which is noted to fall short of the recommended benchmark of 3.5.

Further, the Rural Land Study area was automatically disqualified for re-zoning consideration, scoring a 1 against five (5) criteria (criteria 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8), because:

- The Rural Land Study Area is not located within the Rural Living Area in the Far North Queensland Regional Plan, necessitating commencement of negotiations with the Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning in seeking the identification of additional Rural Living Areas in the Far North Queensland Regional Plan
- To re-zone any part of the Rural Land Study area to Rural Residential Zone, where within the service catchment of the Orchid Valley water supply scheme, would require a Water Treatment Plant and associated water supply scheme, which could not be considered absent a detailed water supply study
- To re-zone any part of the Rural Land Study area to Rural Residential, which would result in a potential additional 50 Dwelling Houses (or more), would necessitate the upgrade of the Little Mulgrave Road intersection with the Gillies Range Road, which is a State-controlled Road. Further, a Traffic Impact Assessment is recommended to understand the capacity and upgrade requirements of the Little Mulgrave Road

- There is a high potential for the Rural Land Study to be isolated in a flood event, necessitating a flood study to better understand the nature of the flood constraints presented by both the Little Mulgrave River and the Mulgrave River
- There is a high potential for the Rural Land Study to be isolated in a bushfire event, necessitating a bushfire study to better understand the nature of the bushfire constraints on the function and operation of the Gillies Range Road.

In addition to the above, the Multi-Criteria Analysis identified a need to:

- Undertake a demand / supply assessment of existing Rural Residential land in the Cairns Regional Council Local Government Area, to understand whether there is sufficient (or deficient) supply of Rural Residential zoned land to meet demand
- Consider an evaluation of the Centres, Employment and TOC Strategy (April 2012) relevant to ensuring that the Rural Residential Zone is appropriately serviced, whether directly in the Rural Residential Zone or indirectly by nearby activity centres.

6.5 SUMMARY

The Phase 1 – Spatial Analysis identified that the Rural Land Study area is unsuitable for rural residential development, due to an insufficient area of consolidated land free of primary constraints.

The Phase 2 – Multi-Criteria Analysis involved a qualitative analysis of the suitability of the Rural Land Study area for broadscale rural residential development; however, a score of 1.85 out of 5 was achieved, which is below the benchmark of 3.5 considered necessary to qualify land for potential Rural Residential re-zoning. The Multi-Criteria Analysis highlighted the need to undertake a range of further detailed studies that would need to be undertaken prior to any re-zoning, including the following:

- A flood study, to determine the degree and extent of flood hazard in the Rural Land Study area as well as the impacts on the surrounding road network
- A demand and supply analysis in respect to Rural Residential zoned land in the Cairns Regional Council Local Government area
- A water supply analysis, including the capacity of the Little Mulgrave River to supply water to any new water supply scheme
- A Traffic Impact Assessment, to understand the capacity and upgrade requirements of Little Mulgrave Road.

The Phase 1 – Spatial Analysis and Phase 2 – Multi-Criteria Analysis is not determinative as to whether the Rural Zone is the most suitable zone, the two-phase analysis only considers whether the land is potentially suitable for rural residential development. A conclusion is reached in respect to the suitability of the Rural Zone in Part 7, taking into consideration the full range of matters presented in the Rural Land Study.

TABLE 6.2 MULTI-CRITERIA ANALYSIS TOOL

Criteria No.	Criteria Description	Criteria Weight (%)	Score (#/5)	Weighted Score ¹³	Discussion
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Cairns Regional Council Local Government Area has an insufficient supply of Rural Residential zoned land 	20%	Note - Refer discussion (right) for scoring guidance		Scoring guidance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where there is greater than 10 years of Rural Residential zone land supply, a score of 1 should apply Where there is less than 5 years of Rural Residential or residential zone land supply (as applicable), a score of 5 should apply.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The land is serviced by a centre that provides retail, business, employment, administration, research, education, health and community services consistent with the needs of the population catchment 	15%	Note - Refer discussion (right) for scoring guidance		Scoring guidance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where the land is within a 5 kilometre catchment of a District Centre (or higher order centre) a score of 5 should apply Where the land is external to the 10 kilometre catchment of a District Centre (or higher order centre) a score of 1 should apply Where the land is within a 20 kilometre catchment of a Major Centre or Principal Centre and is serviced by a Local Centre (including proposed Local Centre) a score of 5 should apply Where the land is external to the 30 kilometre catchment of a Major Centre or Principal Centre and no supporting centre is proposed a score of 1 should apply
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The land is proximate to an existing Rural Residential zone area 	5%	Note - Refer discussion (right) for scoring guidance		Scoring guidance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where the land is contiguous with a Rural Residential zone area, a score of 5 should apply Where the land is more than 5 kilometres removed other Rural Residential zone areas by 5 kilometres or more, a score of 1 should apply
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The land is located within the Rural Living Area in the Far North Queensland Regional Plan 	5%	Note - Refer discussion (right) for		Scoring guidance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where the land is within the Rural Living Area a score of 5 should apply

¹³ The weighted score is the Score x Criteria Weight e.g. If the Criteria Weighting is 20% and the Score is 4/5 the Weighted Score equals 0.8 (20/100 x 4 = 0.8). The cumulative total Weighted Score cannot exceed 5.

Criteria No.	Criteria Description	Criteria Weight (%)	Score (#/5)	Weighted Score ¹³	Discussion
			scoring guidance		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where the land is external to the Rural Living Area a score of 1 should apply
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where for Rural Residential (minimum planned lot size 4,000m²), the land is serviced or can be serviced with a sustainable, reticulated water supply sufficient to meet the demands of the potential population catchment; AND Where for Rural Residential (minimum planned lot size of 2,000m²), the land is serviced or can be serviced with a sustainable, reticulated water supply and sewer sufficient to meet the demands of the potential population catchment <p>Note – Rural Residential with a minimum planned lot size of 4,000m² is not required to be connected to reticulated sewer</p>	20%	Note - Refer discussion (right) for scoring guidance		<p>Scoring guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where a new Water Treatment Plant or Wastewater Treatment Plant is required a score of 1 should apply, subject to consideration of the scale and expense of the infrastructure Where the land can be serviced by connecting to existing infrastructure and no headworks upgrades to the Water Treatment Plant or Wastewater Treatment Plant is required a score of 5 should apply <p>Note – consideration of water supply sustainability, must consider the scale of the potential population to be accommodated on the land and the cost of the water supply scheme</p>
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the land or can the land be serviced with a sustainable road network sufficient to provide safe and efficient transport 	10%	Note - Refer discussion (right) for scoring guidance		<p>Scoring guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where the land can be serviced by extension of the existing road network and not require Trunk Road Infrastructure, or Trunk Road Infrastructure upgrades a score of 5 should apply Where the land requires the upgrade of State Road Infrastructure to service the land a score of 1 should apply
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the event of a major flood or storm tide inundation event (e.g. 1% AEP or greater event) impacting 	10%	Note - Refer discussion (right) for		<p>Scoring guidance:</p>

Criteria No.	Criteria Description	Criteria Weight (%)	Score (#/5)	Weighted Score ¹³	Discussion
	the land, or access to the land, the land has a safe evacuation route to a District Centre, or Major Centre, or Principal Centre or Evacuation Centre		scoring guidance		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where the land has the potential to be isolated by flood, causing all roads providing access between the land and a District Centre (or higher order centre) to be untrafficable due to inundation, a score of 1 should apply Where the road network between the land and a District Centre (or higher order centre) is trafficable in the highest probable flood, a score of 5 should apply
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the event of a bushfire impacting the land, or access to the land, the land has a safe evacuation route a safe evacuation route to a District Centre, or Major Centre, or Principal Centre or Evacuation Centre 	10%	Note - Refer discussion (right) for scoring guidance		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where the land has the potential to be isolated by bushfire, causing all roads that provide access between the land and a District Centre (or higher order centre) to be untrafficable a score of 1 should apply Where the road network between the land and a District Centre (or higher order centre) is trafficable in an extreme bushfire event, a score of 5 should apply
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The land is located within the catchment of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services 	5%	Note - Refer discussion (right) for scoring guidance		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where the land is within the catchment and service capability (taking into consideration the new population) of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, a score of 5 should apply Where the land is not within the catchment of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, a score of 1 should apply
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The land is located within the catchment of Queensland Police Service 	5%	Note - Refer discussion (right) for scoring guidance		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where the land is within the catchment and service capability (taking into consideration the new population) of Queensland Police Services, a score of 5 should apply Where the land is not within the catchment of Queensland Police Services, a score of 1 should apply
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The land is located within the catchment of Queensland Ambulance 	5%	Note - Refer discussion (right) for scoring guidance		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where the land is within the catchment and service capability (taking into consideration the new population) of Queensland Ambulance services, a score of 5 should apply Where the land is not within the catchment of Queensland Ambulance services, a score of 1 should apply

TOTAL: / 5

TABLE 6.3 MULTI-CRITERIA ANALYSIS OF THE RURAL LAND STUDY AREA FOR RURAL RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Criteria No.	Criteria Description	Criteria Weight (%)	Score (#/5)	Weighted Score ¹⁴	Discussion
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Cairns Regional Council Local Government Area has an insufficient supply of Rural Residential zoned land 	20%	2	0.4	<p>There is insufficient readily available data on the availability / take-up of rural residential lots for Dwelling House development in the Cairns Regional Council Local Government Area. However, the largest undeveloped area of Rural Residential Zone land is in Goldsborough to the immediate east of the Rural Land Study area. This land is estimated to be able to accommodate up to an additional 250 lots out of a total 425 potential lots across all existing land within the Rural Residential Zone. Therefore, there is estimated to be more than 5 years supply of Rural Residential zoned land in the Cairns Regional Council Local Government area, but less than 10 years supply.</p> <p>However, given the significant local availability of Rural Residential Zone land for subdivision, the demand for Rural Residential zoned land in the Rural Land Study area is considered low.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, it is recommended that a demand/supply analysis be undertaken of existing Rural Residential zoned land in the Cairns Regional Council Local Government Area to determine the availability and take-up of rural residential lots for Dwelling House development to identify whether there is a shortfall in Rural Residential Zone land in the Cairns Region, sufficient to warrant further investigation of Rural Zone areas of interest.</p>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The land is serviced by a centre that provides retail, business, employment, administration, research, education, health and community services consistent with the needs of the population catchment 	15%	2	0.3	<p>The Rural Land Study area is partly located within the 10 kilometre catchment of the Gordonvale District Centre, but external to the 20 kilometre driving catchment of the Edmonton District Centre. There is no Local Centre or Neighbourhood Centre proximate to the Rural Land Study area. It is considered that the Rural Land Study area is not sufficiently serviced by a centre.</p>

¹⁴ The weighted score is the Score x Criteria Weight e.g. If the Criteria Weighting is 20% and the Score is 4/5 the Weighted Score equals 0.8 (20/100 x 4 = 0.8). The cumulative total Weighted Score cannot exceed 5.

Criteria No.	Criteria Description	Criteria Weight (%)	Score (#/5)	Weighted Score ¹⁴	Discussion
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The land is proximate to an existing Rural Residential zone area 	5%	5	0.25	The Rural Land Study area is contiguous with Rural Residential Zone land in Goldsborough, albeit separated by the Mulgrave River. The Rural Land Study area also includes 24 lots in the Rural Residential Zone, with 2 lots remaining vacant. The Rural Land Study area would be a logical extension of the existing Rural Residential Zone extent.
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The land is located within the Rural Living Area in the Far North Queensland Regional Plan 	5%	1	0.05	The Rural Land Study area is external to the Rural Living Area designation in the Far North Queensland Regional Plan.
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where for Rural Residential (minimum planned lot size 4,000m²), the land is serviced or can be serviced with a sustainable, reticulated water supply sufficient to meet the demands of the potential population catchment; AND Where for Rural Residential (minimum planned lot size of 2,000m²), the land is serviced or can be serviced with a sustainable, reticulated water supply and sewer sufficient to meet the demands of the potential population catchment <p>Note – Rural Residential with a minimum planned lot size of 4,000m² is not required to be connected to reticulated sewer</p>	20%	1	0.2	<p>A new Water Treatment Plant would be required to service any increase in Rural Residential Lots outside of the catchment of the Mountain View water supply scheme.</p> <p>A new Wastewater Treatment Plant is not considered to be required where the consideration of rural residential development involved lot sizes of in the order of 4,000m².</p> <p>Where rural residential development of the Rural Land Study was sought (subject to consideration of other criteria / constraints), an investigation into water supply availability as well as the scale and cost of any new water supply scheme would be required for consideration of a score other than 1.</p>
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the land or can the land be serviced with a sustainable road 	10%	1	0.1	The Rural Land Study area is likely to require the upgrade of the intersection of Little Mulgrave Road and Gillies Range Road, which is a State controlled road. Little Mulgrave Road would also likely require

Criteria No.	Criteria Description	Criteria Weight (%)	Score (#/5)	Weighted Score ¹⁴	Discussion
	network sufficient to provide safe and efficient transport				upgrade to a Rural Collector Trunk Road where Rural Residential re-zoning resulted in the potential for 50 plus additional Dwelling Houses in the Rural Land Study area.
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the event of a major flood or storm tide inundation event (e.g. 1% AEP or greater event) impacting the land, or access to the land, the land has a safe evacuation route to a District Centre, or Major Centre, or Principal Centre or Evacuation Centre 	10%	1	0.1	The Rural Land Study area is likely to be isolated by flood in a significant flood event. However, a flood study of the Rural Land Study area would be required to determine the nature of the flood hazard.
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the event of a bushfire impacting the land, or access to the land, the land has a safe evacuation route a safe evacuation route to a District Centre, or Major Centre, or Principal Centre or Evacuation Centre 	10%	1	0.1	The Rural Land Study area has the potential to be isolated by bushfire, causing the Gillies Range Road in both directions to be untrafficable, noting that “High” and “Very High” hazards are mapped on the Gillies Range Road on the Bushfire Hazard Overlay (refer Schedule 3).
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The land is located within the catchment of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services 	5%	5	0.25	<p>Consultation with the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services has not been undertaken, however, given that the Rural Land Study area is proximate to the new Queensland Fire facility on Gillies Range Road and that a Rural Fire Brigade facility is located within the Rural Land Study it is considered that the Rural Land Study area is capable of being serviced by Queensland Fire and Rescue.</p> <p>The accessibility of the Rural Land Study area in a bushfire event is separately considered at criterion 8.</p>
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The land is located within the catchment of Queensland Police Service 	5%	4	0.2	Consultation with the Queensland Police has not been undertaken; however, the Rural Land Study area is likely within the serviceable catchment of Gordonvale Police Station. Notwithstanding, the station is open only between the hours of 8am – 4pm Monday to Friday.

Criteria No.	Criteria Description	Criteria Weight (%)	Score (#/5)	Weighted Score ¹⁴	Discussion
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The land is located within the catchment of Queensland Ambulance 	5%	4	0.2	Consultation with Queensland Ambulance has not been undertaken; however, the Rural Land Study area is likely within the serviceable catchment of Gordonvale Ambulance Station. Notwithstanding, there is limited access to the Gordonvale Memorial Hospital between the hours of 8pm and 10pm, which means that emergency patients would likely be deferred Cairns Hospital.

TOTAL: 1.85 / 5

7 CONCLUSION



PART 7

The Little Mulgrave Rural Land Study ('Rural Land Study') was commissioned by Cairns Regional Council in late 2019 to *'undertake a review of the current uses in the Little Mulgrave area and investigate whether the uses align with the purpose of the Rural Zone and whether the Rural zone is the most suitable zone to reflect the long term planning intent for the area'* (Cairns Regional Council, 2019). The Rural Land Study was commissioned in response to *'a number of applications and enquiries regarding the subdivision of rural land within the Little Mulgrave area, for largely rural residential purposes'* (Cairns Regional Council, 2019).

The Rural Land Study area comprises the Little Mulgrave Statistical Local Area (SLA), which is a rural valley situated between Gordonvale and the foothills of the Gillies Range.

The Rural Land Study identified that:

- the State Planning framework, and in particular, the predominance of the Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area¹⁵ and the mapped values within the Rural Land Study area, including the presence of Agricultural Land Classification A and B, broadly identify that the Rural Zone is the most appropriate zone for the Rural Land Study area
- the Local Planning framework reinforces the State Planning framework and identifies that the Rural Land Study area:
 - is subject to significant overlay constraints and includes benchmarks for the protection of natural values and the protection of people and property against natural hazards – that, by and large, preclude the potential for development more intensive than rural activities, or land uses complementary to rural activities

- is predominantly designated Rural Zone, but includes Conservation Zone, Open Space Zone and Rural Residential Zone designations.
- the CairnsPlan 2016 is deficient in:
 - providing appropriate protections against the fragmentation of Agricultural Land Class A and B land in the Rural Zone, as a consequence of the Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning's decision to remove references that were included in the purpose of the Rural Zone that sought protection against fragmentation of Agricultural Land Class A and B land (as articulated in the November 2019 amendments to the *Planning Regulations 2017*). Further, it is relevant to note that Agricultural Land Class A and B mapping is not included in CairnsPlan 2016
 - its characterisation of the Rural Land Study area as a location for niche, specialist and high value agricultural enterprise that is viable on a range of lot sizes, including lot sizes less than the prescribed 40 hectare minimum lot size in the Rural Zone
- the projected population growth to 2026 for the Little Mulgrave Statistical Local Area (while insignificant) is unlikely to be accommodated in the Rural Land Study area due to environmental, natural hazard and resource constraints, as well as infrastructure limitations and the finite availability of vacant land
- any demand for rural residential development in the area can be reasonably met in other Rural Residential zoned land in the Region. Moreover, it is expected that demand generated in the locality is expected to be met in Goldsborough, which has the largest area of

¹⁵ Except for the Rural Living Area that correlates with the Rural Residential Zone designations on land serviced by Appaloosa Street.

undeveloped Rural Residential Zone land in the Cairns Regional Council Local Government Area

- the availability and supply of, and demand for, rural residential development as a housing choice in the Cairns Regional Council Local Government Area is an unknown and should be quantified prior to the 2026 major review of CairnsPlan 2016
- the Rural Land Study area is dominated by broadscale rural uses (such as cropping (including high value turf production), animal husbandry and animal keeping) but complemented by a variety of specialist or niche agricultural activities (such as orchards, plantations and aquaculture) that contribute to the overall productive capacity of the locality. The unique range of agricultural activities differentiates Little Mulgrave from other rural areas in the Cairns Local Government area. Moreover, the existing land uses in the Rural Land Study area align with the Rural Zone and/or are land uses that are complementary to the rural activities occurring within the valley, including nature-based tourism and outdoor sport and recreation land uses. However, the level of assessment for select rural activities such as Intensive Horticulture (Code Assessment), Animal Keeping (Code Assessment) or Aquaculture (Code Assessment) are unnecessarily limiting, particularly given that these uses exist within the Rural Land Study area and should be encouraged at appropriate scales
- any intensification of development in the Rural Land Study area (and in particular, rural residential development) would require significant upgrades to the State and Local road networks and water supply network. In particular, it is noted that the Orchid Valley water supply scheme is incapable of supporting the intensification of development in the Rural Land Study area
- development application activity was limited within the period since commencement of CairnsPlan 2016. Notwithstanding, development application activity indicates a direction toward tourism-related

development that is complementary to the rural character and landscape values of Little Mulgrave; and provides for the diversification of the predominantly rural economy. Moreover, it reinforces that the Rural Zone is, in the main, is the most appropriate zone for the Rural Land Study area.

In addressing ‘*whether the Rural Zone is the most suitable zone to reflect the long-term planning intent*’ for the Rural Land Study area (Cairns Regional Council, 2019), it was necessary to:

- (a) develop a methodology to evaluate the extent of constraints over land in the Rural Land Study area (Phase 1 of the methodology); and
- (b) assess the suitability of the Rural Zone to reflect the long-term planning intent for the Rural Land Study area, by undertaking a qualitative, multi-criteria assessment of the land’s potential to accommodate rural residential development (Phase 2 of the methodology).

The Phase 1 – Spatial Analysis identified that the Rural Land Study area is unsuitable for rural residential development, due to an insufficient area of consolidated land free of primary constraints.

The Phase 2 – Multi-Criteria Analysis involved a qualitative analysis of the suitability of the Rural Land Study area for broadscale rural residential development, using a weighted scoring system; however, a score of 1.85 out of 5 was achieved, which is below the benchmark of 3.5 considered necessary to qualify land for potential Rural Residential re-zoning. The Multi-Criteria Analysis highlighted a need to undertake a range of further detailed studies that would need to be undertaken prior to any re-zoning, including the following:

- A demand and supply analysis in respect to Rural Residential zoned land in the Cairns Regional Council Local Government area
- A flood study, to determine the degree and extent of flood hazard in the Rural Land Study area as well as the impacts on the surrounding road network

- A water supply analysis, including the capacity of the Little Mulgrave River to supply water to any new water supply scheme
- A Traffic Impact Assessment, to understand the capacity and upgrade requirements of Little Mulgrave Road.

Therefore, the Rural Zone is considered the most suitable zone to reflect the long-term planning intent for the area, to the exclusion of rural residential development, except for lots identified in **Part 8** that are recommended for inclusion in the Environmental Management Zone, due to the presence of natural values and the absence of identified Agricultural Land Class A and B.

Part 8 identifies a suite of recommendations arising from the Rural Land Study.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS



PART 8

The Little Mulgrave Rural Land Study ('Rural Land Study') identifies the following recommendations for the consideration of Cairns Regional Council ('Council'):

- That the Rural Land Study area not-be considered for future rural residential development, and that if Council sought to facilitate rural residential development in the Rural Land Study area that the following studies and actions be undertaken to resolve critical issues that prevent consideration of rural residential development:
 - A demand and supply analysis in respect to Rural Residential zoned land in the Cairns Regional Council Local Government area
 - A flood study, to determine the degree and extent of flood hazard in the Rural Land Study area as well as the impacts on the surrounding road network
 - A water supply analysis, including the capacity of the Little Mulgrave River to supply water to any new water supply scheme
 - A Traffic Impact Assessment, to understand the capacity and upgrade requirements of Little Mulgrave Road
 - Consultation with the Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning with respect to the inclusion of part of the Rural Land Study area in the Rural Living Area.
- That the CairnsPlan 2016 be amended as follows:
 - The Rural Residential Zone area in the Rural Land Study area should be mapped in the Strategic Framework Maps as 'Rural residential'
 - The Strategic Framework be amended to include a strategic intent for Little Mulgrave to assist in articulating the preferred types of development given the uniqueness of the Rural Land Study area and provide development assessment guidance¹⁶. The matters to be described in the strategic intent for Little Mulgrave should include discussion in respect to:
 - the carrying capacity of Little Mulgrave, including infrastructure limitations
 - the protection of cropping and in particular, turf production (critical to support urban growth in the southern corridor) and other niche or speciality crops such as vanilla, lychees, ginseng, bamboo and tropical flower production
 - the facilitation of high value agricultural activities, including aquaculture, intensive horticulture and animal keeping
 - the facilitation of appropriately scaled nature-based tourism and outdoor recreation activities
 - the biodiversity values of the surrounding natural environment
 - the historical importance of cane rail infrastructure to the region's development and future intent with respect to cane rail infrastructure that is no longer

¹⁶ It is acknowledged that this would have consequential impacts to the structure of the CairnsPlan 2016, necessitating strategic intent descriptions for other Rural Zone areas

- operationally required (i.e. local heritage considerations and recreational walking trail features).
- The Rural Zone code purpose at Part 6.2.19.2 (1) be amended to reflect the Rural Zone purpose as defined in the *Planning Regulations 2017*
 - The Rural Zone code local government purpose at Part 6.2.19.2 (2) be amended to include a purpose statement that protects the fragmentation of Agricultural Classification Class A and Class B
 - The Rural Zone code be amended to include Agricultural Classification Class A and Class B benchmarks, including associated mapping. Alternatively, an Agricultural Classification Class A and Class B overlay could be incorporated in CairnsPlan 2016
 - The Landscape values overlay code at Part (2)(f)(iii) be amended as follows (emphasis added): ‘the rural character of can[**e**]fields...’
 - That the following lots be reviewed for considered for re-zoning as Environmental Management Zone in recognition of the intrinsic natural values (including essential habitat for threatened species), proximity to Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and absence or near absence of Agricultural Land Classification Class A or Class B land:
 - Lot 2 on SP265035
 - Lot 3 on SP265035
 - Lot 3 on SP117594
 - Lot 2 on SP117594
 - Lot 1 on SP117594

- Lot 210 on SP146539
- Lot 1 on SP301909
- Lot 26 on NR637
- Lot 1 on RP735375.

The above recommendations address the purpose of the Rural Land Study. Council may also like to consider the following actions:

- Undertake a demand / supply assessment of existing Rural Residential zoned land in the Cairns Regional Council Local Government Area, to understand whether there is sufficient (or deficient) supply of Rural Residential zoned land to meet demand and undertake any necessary amendments to the Strategic Framework of the CairnsPlan 2016 (whether reinforcing that rural residential development as a housing choice is a finite supply, or consider the opening up of new rural residential development areas)
- Consider an evaluation of the Centres, Employment and TOC Strategy (April 2012) relevant to ensuring that the Rural Residential Zone is appropriately serviced, whether directly in the Rural Residential Zone or indirectly by nearby activity centres and undertake any necessary amendments to the Strategic Framework Element – centres and centre activities at Part 3.3.2 of the CairnsPlan 2016
- Undertake a flood study of the Little Mulgrave River to inform the appropriateness of nature-based tourism, outdoor recreation and other complementary land uses occurring in the Rural Land Study area
- Undertake a review of the Level of Assessment for rural activities and other complementary development in the Rural Land Study area, or more broadly across the Rural Zone, in seeking to encourage appropriately scaled Aquaculture, Intensive horticulture, Animal keeping and Nature-based tourism, and Outdoor recreation development, and if necessary, consider an overlay or precinct or local plan, that is intended

to support the preferred development types (if not a more broad relaxation on appropriate or appropriately scaled land uses). This review should also consider the Level of Assessment for Reconfiguring a Lot, where the creation of a new lot in the Rural Zone could be made subject to Impact Assessment where less than the minimum lot size.

9 SCHEDULES



SCHEDULES

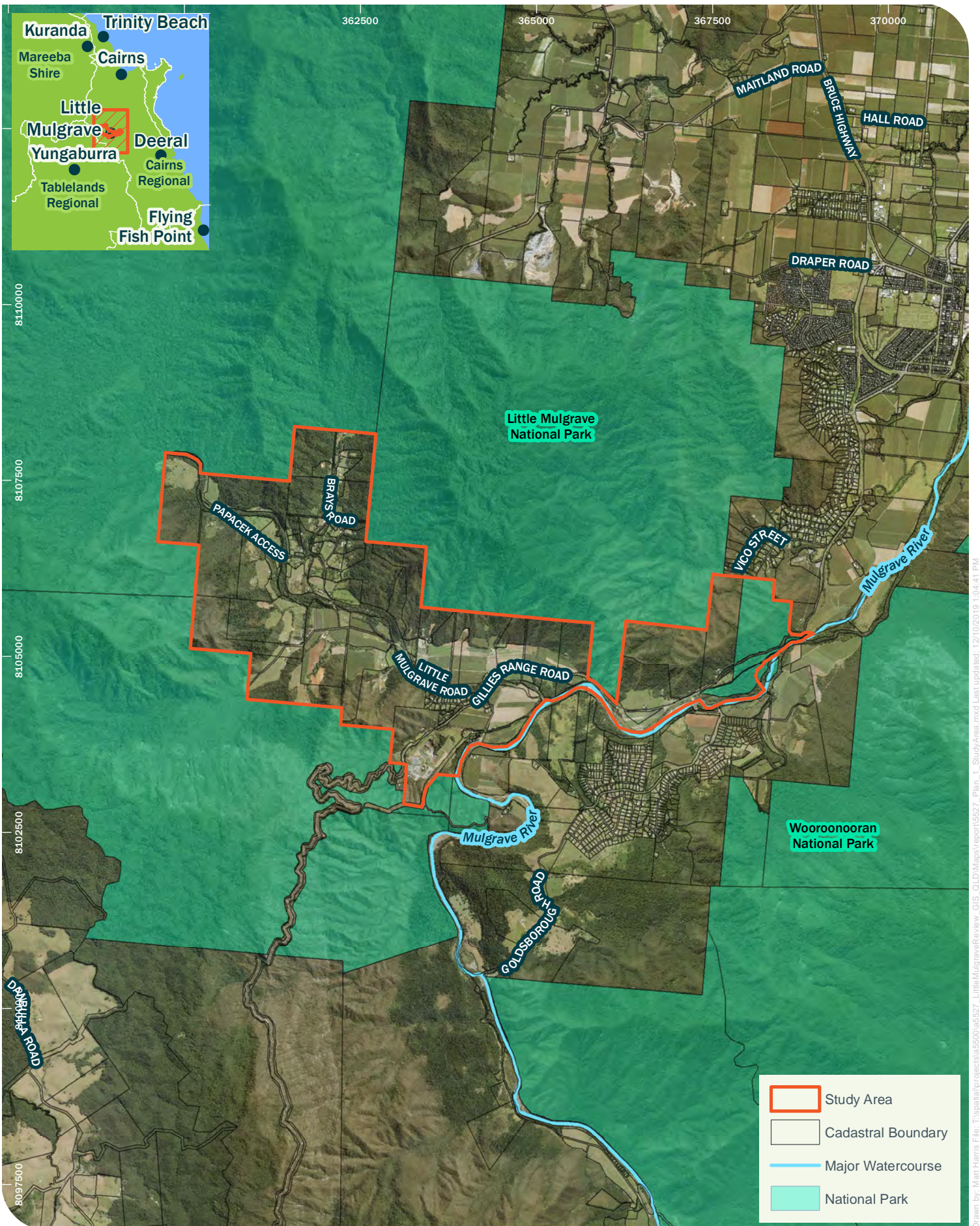
TABLE S01 LIST OF SCHEDULES

Schedule	Document Title	Document Ref.	Version	Author	Date
1	Little Mulgrave Study Area	#5527 Plan 1		Niche Environment and Heritage	11 December 2019
2	Little Mulgrave Zone Map	#5527 Plan 2		Niche Environment and Heritage	11 December 2019
3	Overlay Maps	CairnsPlan 2016	2.1	Cairns Regional Council	
4	Statements of Cultural Significance	CairnsPlan 2016	2.1	Cairns Regional Council	
5	LGIP Mapping	CairnsPlan 2016	2.1	Cairns Regional Council	
6	Development Application Activity Plan	#5527 Plan 3		Niche Environment and Heritage	24 February 2020
7	Land Use Identification Plan	#5527 Plan 4		Niche Environment and Heritage	24 February 2020
8	Little Mulgrave Spatial Analysis	#5527 Plan 5		Niche Environment and Heritage	24 February 2020





SCHEDULE 1 - LITTLE MULGRAVE RURAL LAND STUDY AREA

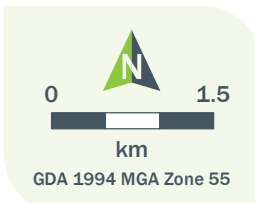
SCHEDULE 1





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	Study Area
	Cadastral Boundary
	Major Watercourse
	National Park



Little Mulgrave Study Area
Review of Rural Land within the Little Mulgrave Area

Niche PM: Dominic Hammersley
Niche Proj. #: 5527
Client: Cairns Regional Council

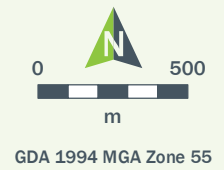
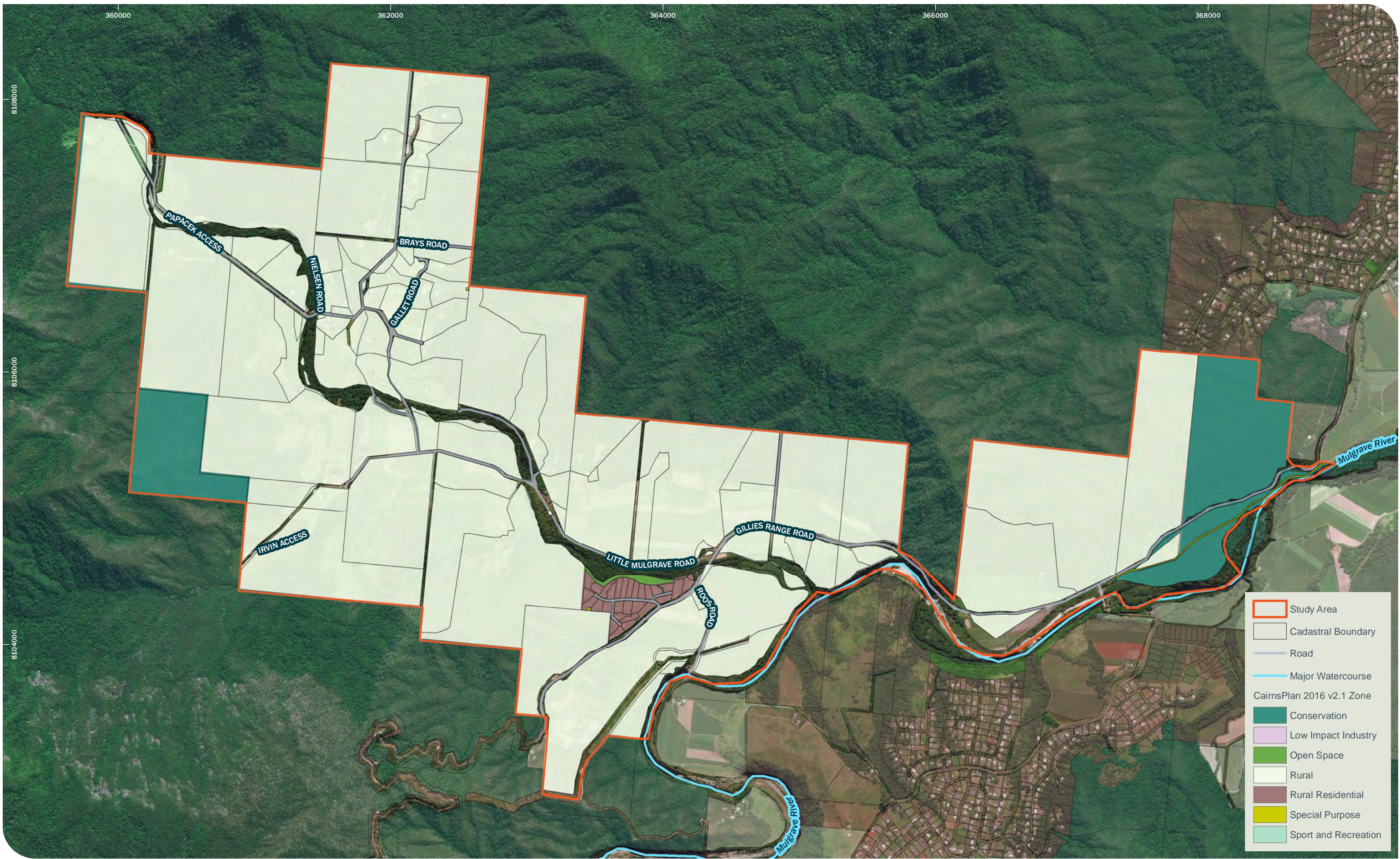
Plan 1

Imagery/qlDBase_AllUsers\ The State of Queensland, 2017. Includes material © Planet Labs Netherlands B.V. 2017, reproduced under licence from Planet and Geoplex, all rights reserved. Landsat data available from the U.S. Geological Survey. Data acquired under the Spatial Imagery Subscription Plan (SISP) and QSat initiative.

SCHEDULE 2 – LITTLE MULGRAVE ZONE MAP

SCHEDULE 2 

The text 'SCHEDULE 2' is written in a large, bold, white sans-serif font. To its right is the logo, which consists of the Arabic word 'مُلْغَرَبَة' (Mulgrave) in a stylized white font above the word 'PLAN' in a bold, white sans-serif font, all contained within a blue rectangular box.



Project Manager: Dominic Hammersley
Niche Proj. #: 5527
Client: Cairns Regional Council

Little Mulgrave Zone Map Review of Rural Land within the Little Mulgrave Area

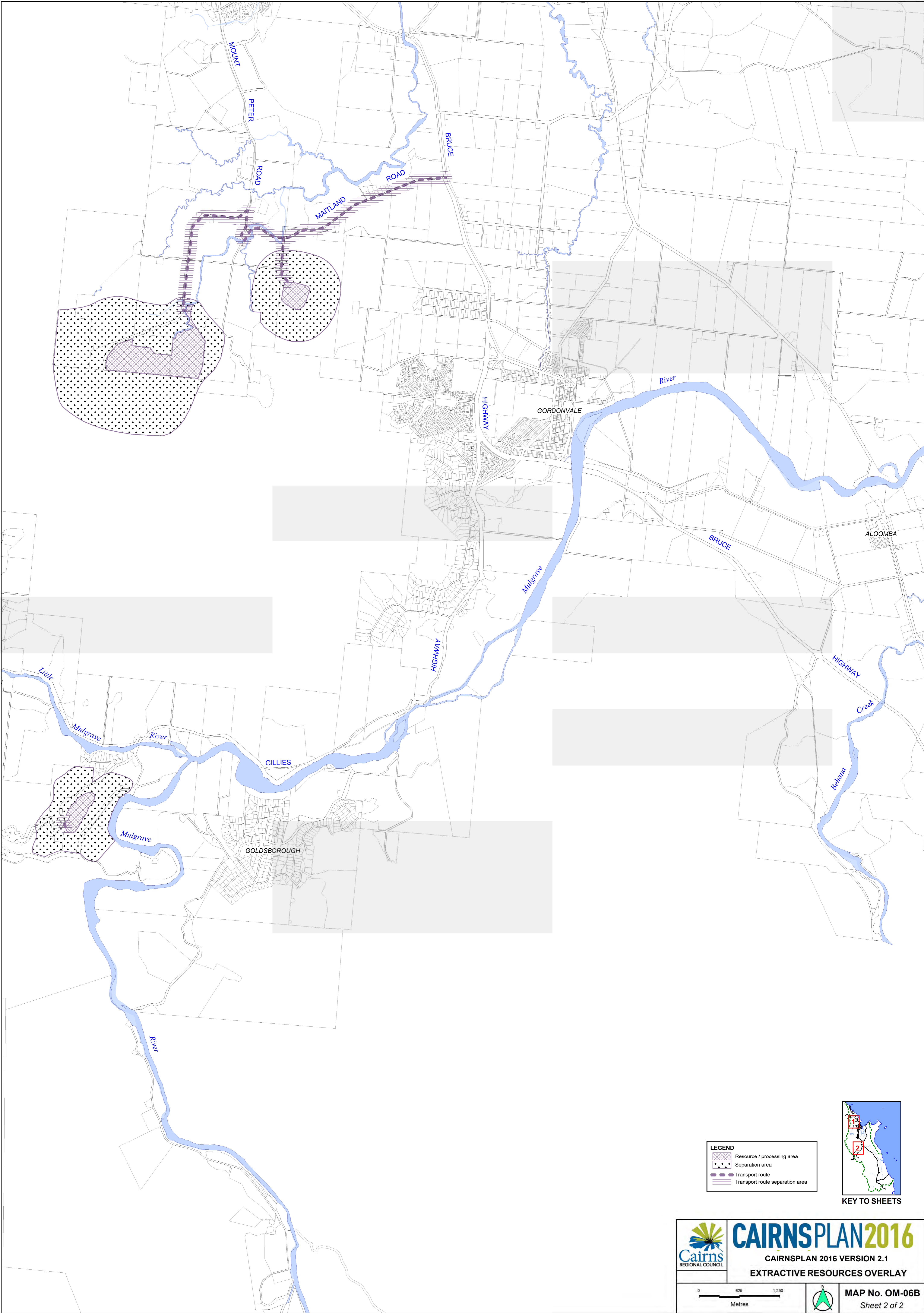
Plan 2

World Imagery: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

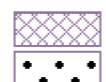

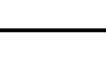
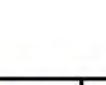
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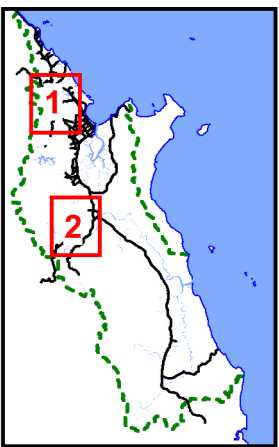
SCHEDULE 3 – OVERLAY MAPS

SCHEDULE 3




LEGEND

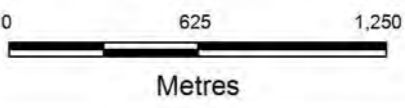
-  Resource / processing area
-  Separation area
-  Transport route
-  Transport route separation area




KEY TO SHEETS



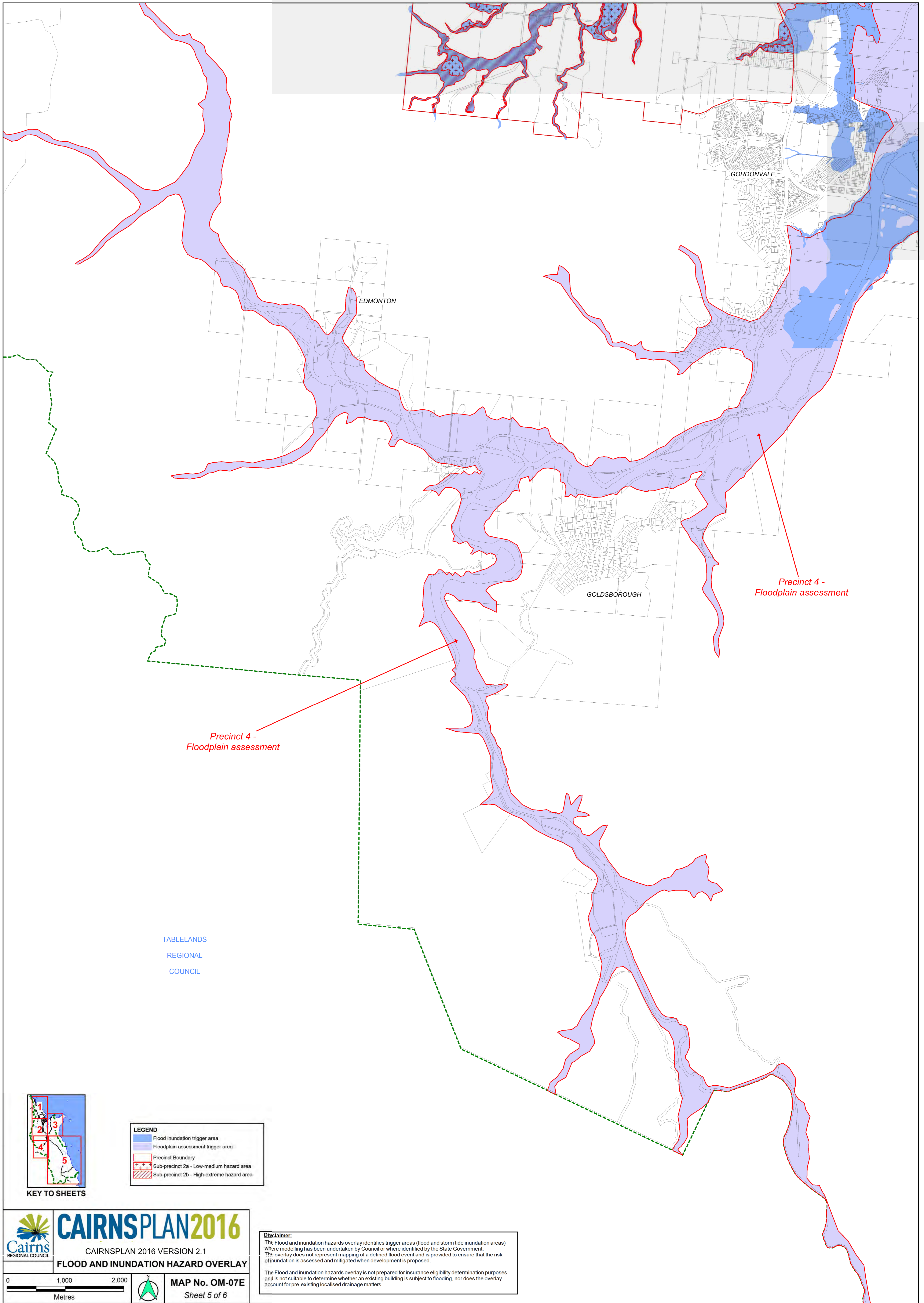
CAIRNSPLAN2016
CAIRNSPLAN 2016 VERSION 2.1
EXTRACTIVE RESOURCES OVERLAY



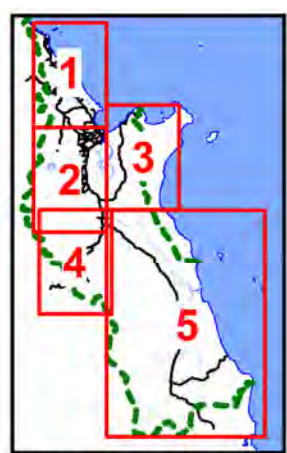
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Metres



MAP No. OM-06B
Sheet 2 of 2



TABLELANDS
REGIONAL
COUNCIL

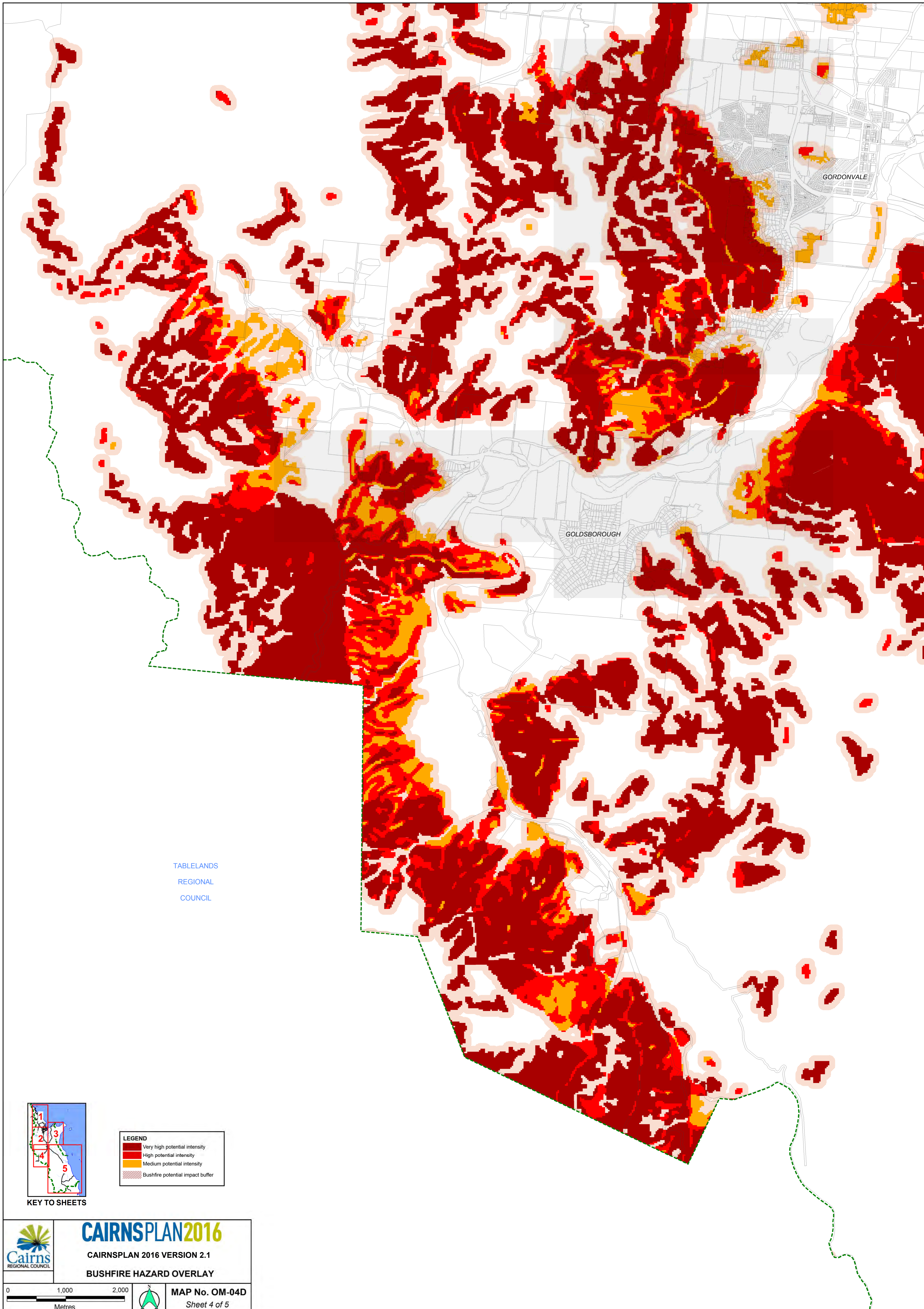


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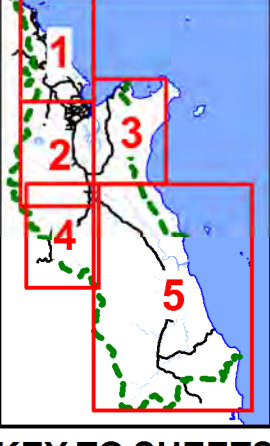
LEGEND	
	Flood inundation trigger area
	Floodplain assessment trigger area
	Precinct Boundary
	Sub-precinct 2a - Low-medium hazard area
	Sub-precinct 2b - High-extreme hazard area



Disclaimer:
 The Flood and inundation hazards overlay identifies trigger areas (flood and storm tide inundation areas) where modelling has been undertaken by Council or where identified by the State Government. The overlay does not represent mapping of a defined flood event and is provided to ensure that the risk of inundation is assessed and mitigated when development is proposed.
 The Flood and inundation hazards overlay is not prepared for insurance eligibility determination purposes and is not suitable to determine whether an existing building is subject to flooding, nor does the overlay account for pre-existing localised drainage matters.



TABLELANDS
REGIONAL
COUNCIL



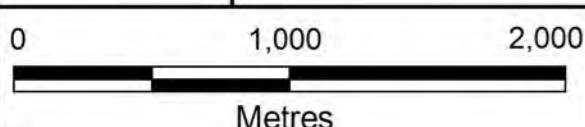
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LEGEND	
	Very high potential intensity
	High potential intensity
	Medium potential intensity
	Bushfire potential impact buffer

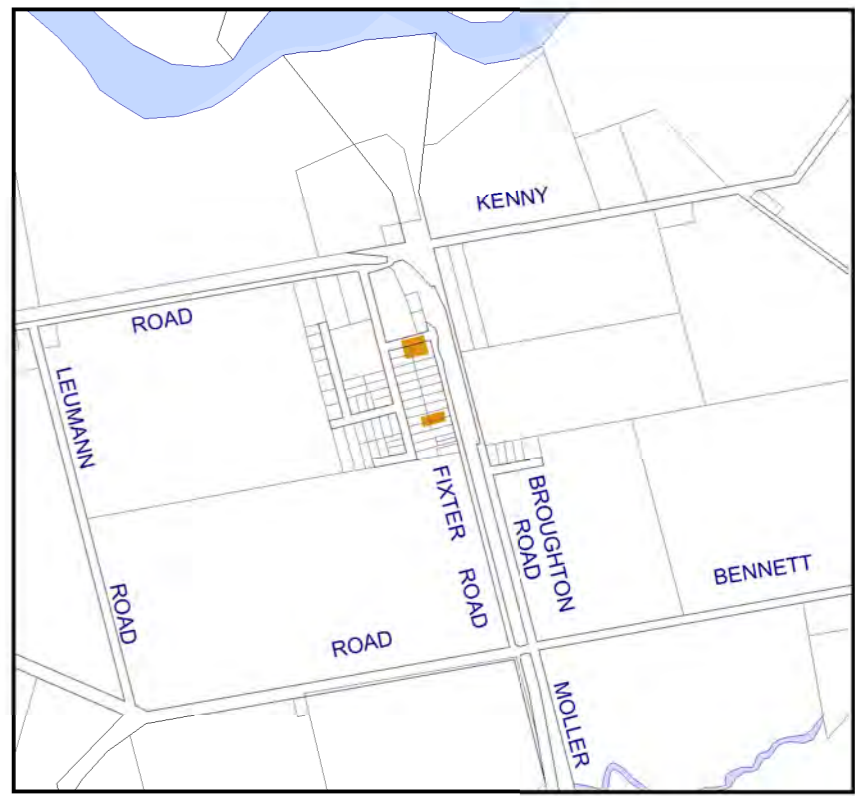
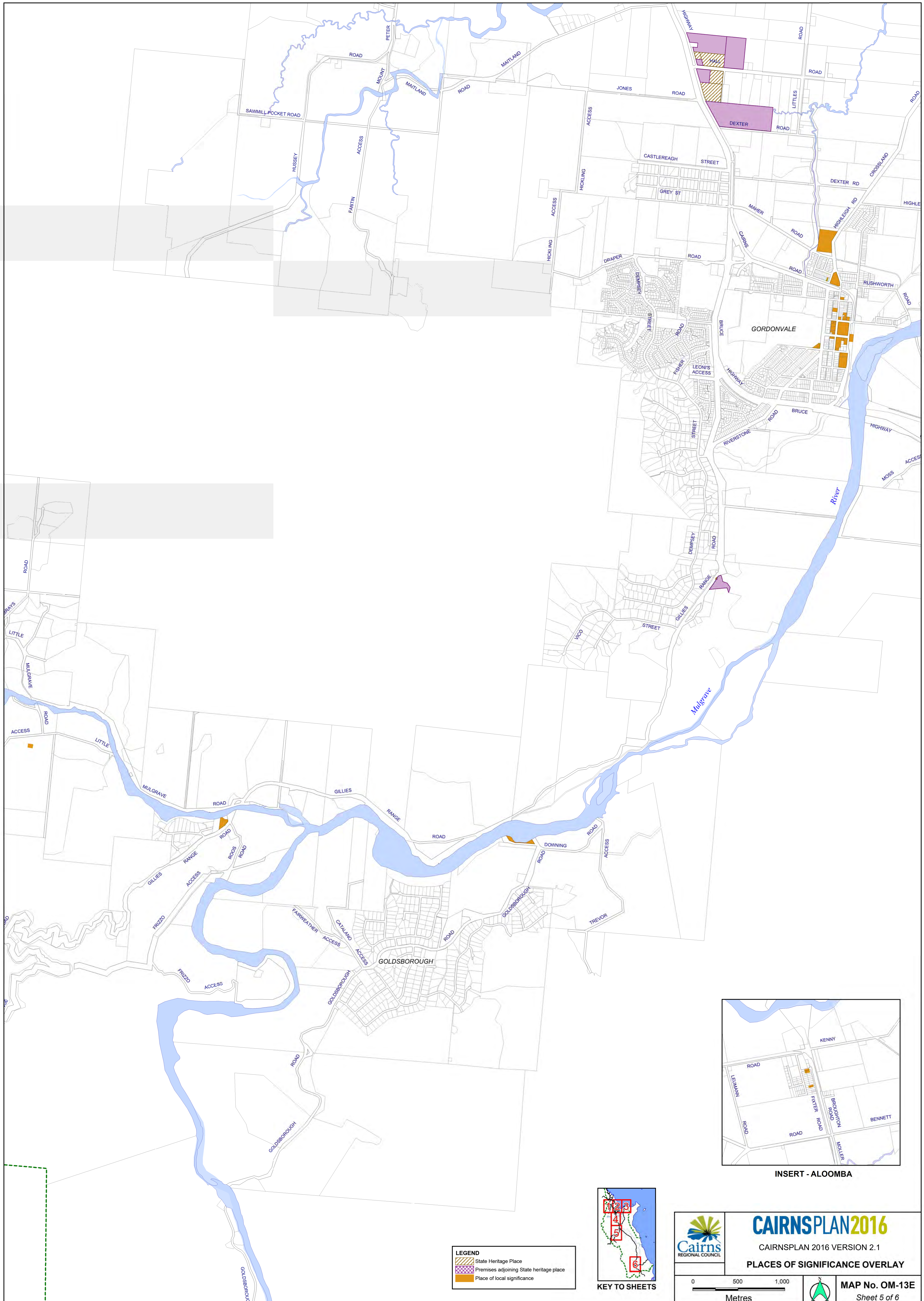


CAIRNSPLAN2016

CAIRNSPLAN 2016 VERSION 2.1
BUSHFIRE HAZARD OVERLAY

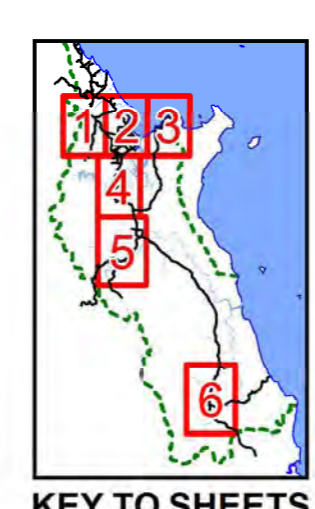


MAP No. OM-04D
Sheet 4 of 5



INSERT - ALOOMBA

LEGEND	
	State Heritage Place
	Premises adjoining State heritage place
	Place of local significance



KEY TO SHEETS

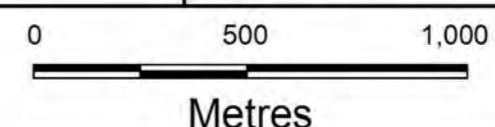


Cairns REGIONAL COUNCIL

CAIRNSPLAN2016

CAIRNSPLAN 2016 VERSION 2.1

PLACES OF SIGNIFICANCE OVERLAY

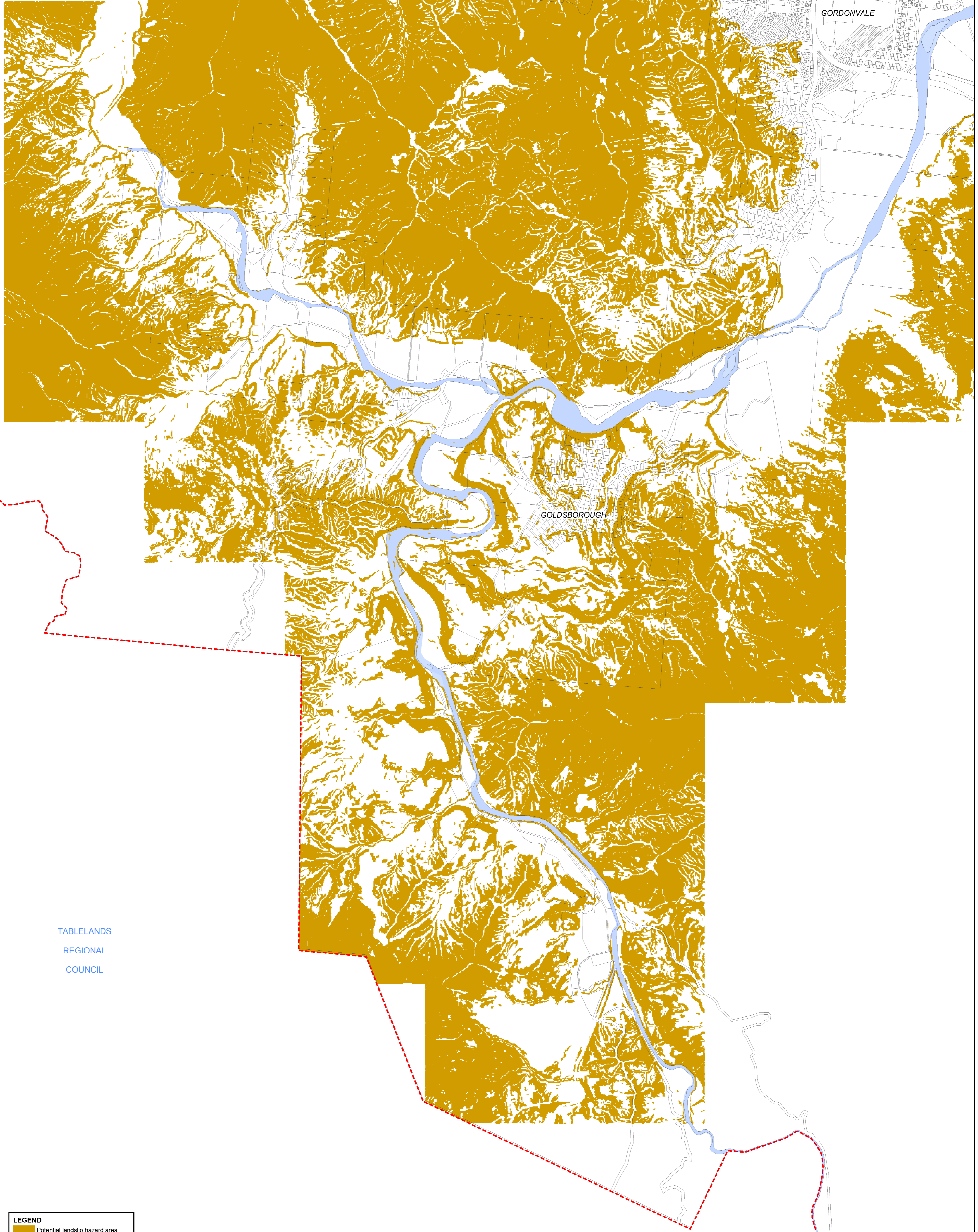


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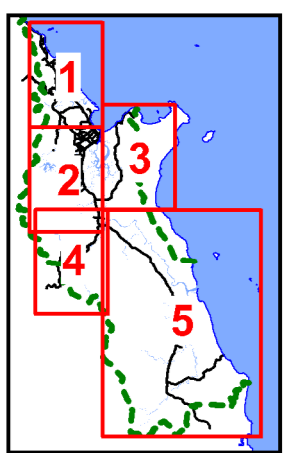


MAP No. OM-13E

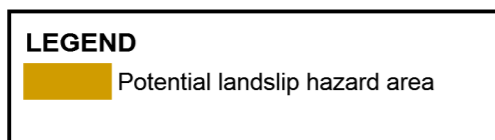
Sheet 5 of 6



TABLELANDS
REGIONAL
COUNCIL

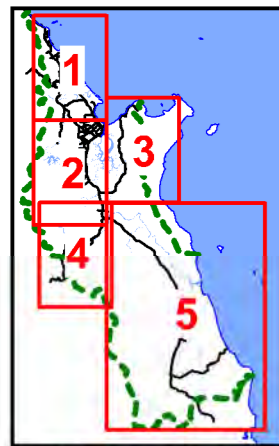


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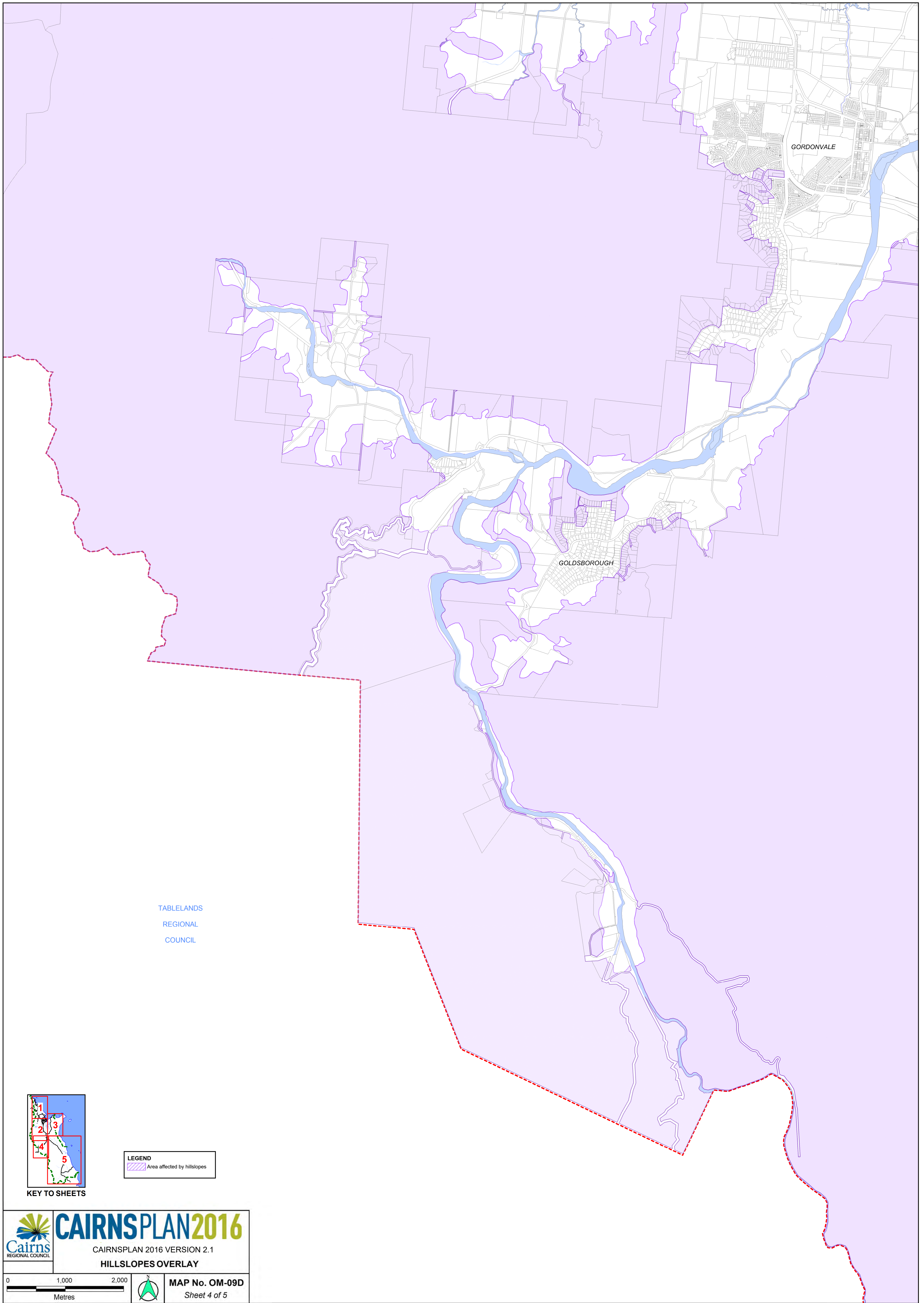
TABLELANDS
REGIONAL
COUNCIL



KEY TO SHEETS

LEGEND	
	Coastal scenery
	High landscape values
	Medium Landscape Value

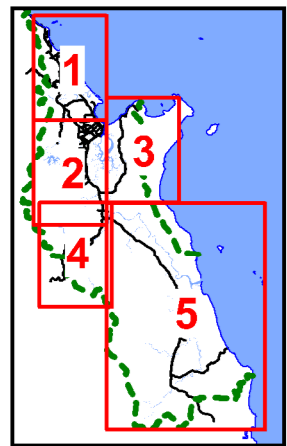
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	<p>CAIRNSPLAN 2016 VERSION 2.1 LANDSCAPE VALUES OVERLAY</p>
	<p>MAP No. OM-10D Sheet 4 of 5</p>



GORDONVALE


GOLDSBOROUGH

TABLELANDS
REGIONAL
COUNCIL




KEY TO SHEETS

LEGEND
Area affected by hillslopes

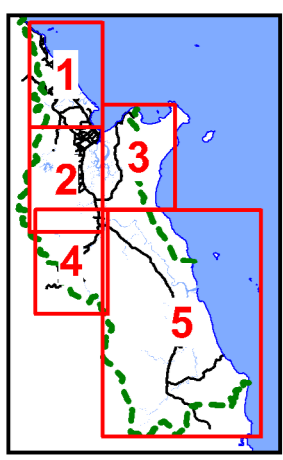
 **CAIRNSPLAN2016**
 CAIRNSPLAN 2016 VERSION 2.1
HILLSLOPES OVERLAY

0 1,000 2,000
 Metres

 **MAP No. OM-09D**
 Sheet 4 of 5



TABLELANDS
REGIONAL
COUNCIL



KEY TO SHEETS

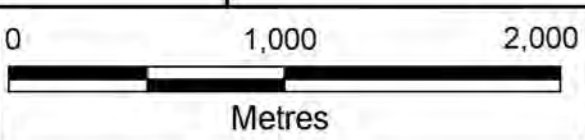
LEGEND	
	Biodiversity areas
	Urban waterway 'A' trigger area
	Urban waterway 'B' trigger area
	Non-urban waterway trigger area
	Wetland
	Wetlands trigger area
	Declared fish habitat
	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park



CAIRNSPLAN2016

CAIRNSPLAN 2016 VERSION 2.1

NATURAL AREAS OVERLAY



MAP No. OM-11D
Sheet 4 of 5

SCHEDULE 4 – STATEMENTS OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

SCHEDULE 4 PLAN

2.7.16. Little Mulgrave

Table 2.7.16.a – Statement of cultural significance – Anderlini (assumed to be Leoni Barracks)

Site Details	
Site Name	Anderlini (assumed to be Leoni Barracks)
Alternative Name	
Location	
Address	Irvin Access, Little Mulgrave
Lot/Plan	Lot 211 on RP838265
Coordinates	Easting 361984.6 Northing: 8104979.8
Heritage Boundary	All of the building and a 5m buffer zone around it
Cultural Heritage Significance	
Criterion B	<p>The barracks are significant as a now rare form of accommodation in a period in which labour for working in the sugar industry was provided by a number of nationalities and wages and conditions were basic.</p> <p>Accommodation was placed closed to the cane fields and was often very basic in terms of a kitchen and a bath area which often led to a L shaped arrangement to the building which often contained only a small number of labourers. These building have long been abandoned for accommodation and often used for other purposes (storage, spare accommodation, horse stalls and so on).</p>
History	
Historical Context	<p>In 1878, the Queensland government began selling Far North Queensland land along the Bloomfield, Daintree, Mossman, Barron, Mulgrave and Johnstone Rivers. Land had originally been reserved under regulations in the 1863 Agricultural Reserves Act for coffee and sugar plantations within 10 miles of navigable rivers and the coastline. Land was secured by small farmers and larger companies, and by 1884 the sugar industry had been established in the region. This early industry was based on the plantation model of cane farming, which relied upon the use of indentured labourers. Most of the first field labourers were Melanesian (or Kanakas / South Sea Islanders), Chinese, Javanese or Malaysian as it was believed that Europeans were not capable of working in the tropics. Cane cutting as well as associated work such as planting, hoeing and trashing was very physically demanding and these men were paid less than Europeans. Plantation owners were not legislatively obliged to provide workers with accommodation or facilities. The labourers generally built and lived in humpies or huts made from grasses and cane tops, which were susceptible to fire.</p> <p>In 1884, a fall in world sugar prices and concern about the presence of Melanesian labourers in the colony triggered a drive to regulate and Europeanise the sugar industry. A petition to the Queensland Parliament in 1885 outlined the difficulties cane farmers had in being confined to the mills of plantation owners and an interest in changing the sugar industry from one dominated by Melanesian labourers to a white industry and centralized mills. Two subsequent pieces of legislation were instrumental in beginning this transformation. The 'Pacific Island Act 1885' stipulated that importation of Pacific Islander labour was to cease in 1890 and the 'Sugar Works Guarantee Act 1893' secured the development of the central milling system.</p> <p>In 1901, two additional pieces of legislation had a significant impact on Far North Queensland's sugar industry and labour force – the 'Immigration Restriction Act' and the 'Pacific Islanders Labourers Act.' The first excluded people from immigrating on the basis of a literacy test and the second prohibited the recruitment of Melanesians to Australia after 1904. Italian, Greek, Spanish and Croatian immigrants gradually replaced the Melanesian workers and organised themselves into teams or gangs to harvest the cane. A small number of Australian and British descent labourers continued in the industry, earning money to eventually set up their own small-holdings.</p> <p>European workers demanded better working conditions than the indentured Melanesians,</p>

Chinese and Japanese labourers. In response, the Queensland government introduced the 'Sugar and Shearers' Accommodation Act 1905', which prescribed minimum standards of food and accommodation for those employed in both the mills and cane fields. This required mill owners and cane growers to build substantial accommodation for their workers. Many of these early barracks provided for large groups of between 24-50 men.

Specifications for farm workers accommodation (barracks) were expanded upon in the 'Workers Accommodation Act 1915' and subsequently the 'Workers Accommodation Act 1952'. The requirements for accommodation and sanitation included: the number of beds in rooms; spacing in bedrooms, ventilation, lighting, provision of vessels for cooking, eating and drinking, sanitary conditions and storage. Instead of providing a standard barrack design, the Act stipulated that regional inspectors would annually check for compliance with the Acts. As a result, many different types of barracks were built throughout Far North Queensland.

The simplest structure was the 'single barracks', comprising a kitchen, four bedrooms and a verandah. The intention was to accommodate a single cane cutting gang of four to twelve men. Most barracks were timber-framed and were clad with corrugated iron or asbestos cement. Later barracks, built in the late 1940s and 1950s, were built of concrete. Four major barracks styles have been identified: a linear style, an L-shaped style, a cottage style and double barracks. The legislation also stipulated that the barracks had to be located a certain distance from mills and they were often situated near a tramway or other farm buildings.

The use of seasonal labourers in the cane industry continued until the development of mechanical harvesting in the 1960s, although manual harvesting was not totally phased out until 1976. Cane barracks have not been required since this time, and as a result many have been demolished, adapted for other uses or fallen into disrepair.

The history of these barracks is unknown.

Description

Physical Description

Set within a complex of farm buildings and approximately 110m south of the access road and on a small rise above a man made cliff edge.


A double-ended barracks building clad with corrugated iron. It comprises five rooms and has a kitchen at either end. A section under the verandah has been clad and it appears as though the verandah was previously enclosed. The building has a sawn timber frame and is set on concrete stumps with a timber floor. Most of the windows are casements, but some are glass louvres with iron hinged covers. The ablution block is separate.

Images



Table 2.7.16.b – Statement of cultural significance – Mountain View Hotel

Site Details	
Site Name	Mountain View Hotel
Alternative Name	
Location	
Address	Gillies Highway, Little Mulgrave
Lot/Plan	Lot 2 on RP707325
Coordinates	Easting 364174.9 Northing: 8104433.1
Heritage Boundary	To the extent of the 1926 building and the title land
Cultural Heritage Significance	
Criterion D	The Mountain View Hotel is of local historic significance as the first (and only) hotel to be established on the newly completed Gillies Highway from Gordonvale to the top of the Range. The hotel intended to take advantage of the one way system established for motor vehicles whereby cars and their passengers often had to wait at the bottom (or top) for their chance to ascend (or descend) the range according to the times set out for the one way system which had been established because of the narrowness of the roadway and the lack of passing points. Those arriving late could be enticed to lunch or dine at the hotel while they waited for their turn on the road. Tolls were collected on the road until 1945 whereas the one way system was still in place until the late 1950s when the road was finally widened. The building is of importance providing services to the burgeoning tourist trade when erected.
Criterion E	The Mountain View Hotel has aesthetic significance as a two storey timber hotel of the mid 1920s albeit with some removal of original features.
History	
Historical Context	<p>The construction of the Tolga-Johnstone railway (a spur of the Cairns-Atherton line) was commenced in 1907 and supported the European settlement and development of the southern Atherton and Evelyn Tableland areas. The high rainfall, steep grades, and numerous creeks and rivers which required bridging, delayed the completion of the line and it was not until 1921 that it finally reached Millaa Millaa. A rail strike in 1917 revealed the Tablelands dependence on a combination of local roads and the railway to transport produce. Tableland residents lobbied for a road connection with the coast and the Gillies Highway was subsequently surveyed and planned.</p> <p>The route of the Gillies Highway was surveyed in 1922 and the road was opened in 1926. It connected Gordonvale with the Tablelands, via Yungaburra, and also supported tourism to the area. The road initially operated on a one-way system with times specified for ascent and descent. But this system was not always honoured, and gates were subsequently built at the top and bottom in 1930 and a toll imposed. The toll lasted until 1945; but the one way system last much longer with it still being noted on Royal Automobile Club maps into the 1950s. Widening work on the road commenced in 1958, and the two-way Gillies Highway was finally opened in 1959 thereby doing away with the up-down system.</p> <p>The Gillies Highway was named after William Neal “Farmer” Gillies, Secretary for Agriculture and Stock (and briefly Premier in 1925), who was instrumental in the passing of the Main Roads Act of 1920. William Reinhold, First Supervising Engineer for the Main Roads Board in North Queensland, determined the route of the Gillies Highway between Gordonvale and Yungaburra.</p> <p>The Mountain View Hotel was built in the latter part of 1925 and completed by the beginning of 1926 and served as a stop-over for those waiting for the opening of the lower gate for up traffic. The building has a dining room, bar and accommodation rooms with more recent extensions to the side and rear. The hotel was constructed by James Patterson for owner Carl Roos and when originally constructed there was a front and east side verandah with half glazed French doors and timber casement windows. The whole building was timber with exposed studwork, metal window hoods and timber louvres to</p>

	<p>the upper verandah area. The appearance of the building is shown on two photographs held by the Cairns Historical Society and these reveal that the east side has since lost its verandah and had the dining area added.</p> <p>The architect for the building was Richard Hill who had advertised for tenders in October 1925 and then had to extend the date to 28 November 1925 with work commencing immediately.</p>
<p>Description</p>	
<p>Physical Description</p>	<p>Set on the north side of the Highway atop a road cutting in a slight sweep of the road as it commences to climb the range.</p> <p>The two-storey timber hotel was built as a fully exposed frame building, although the frame is now exposed only on the ground floor frontage below the verandah. Elsewhere the building is clad in weatherboards and asbestos cement sheet. The roof has a transverse ridge with gable ventilators but is otherwise a hip structure covered in corrugated iron with the verandah roof formed off the main roof.</p> <p>The verandah retains its unenclosed timbered appearance with posts being simple squared timber running from the ground to the roof. The ground floor is now all concrete including the interior floors set at a step up level from the verandah concrete paving. The ground floor of the hotel is basically one large room (the bar room) with a small lobby for the stairs to first floor and a room to the south west with Dining Room written on the door's fanlight.</p> <p>The extension to the north east is a single storey concrete block structure on a squat squarish plan which contains the dining room and kitchen. The roof is a low angled gable covered with corrugated iron. Beyond the dining room to the north west is an area of decking covered by lightweight shade sails.</p>
<p>Images</p>	

SCHEDULE 5 – LGIP MAPPING

SCHEDULE 5

The main title 'SCHEDULE 5' is written in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. To its right is the 'Little Mulgrave Rural Land Study' logo, which consists of the Arabic word 'مزرعة' (Mulgrave) in a stylized white font above the word 'PLAN' in a bold, white, sans-serif font, all contained within a blue rectangular box.



PARKS and LAND for COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- Local Recreation Park
- District Recreation Park
- District Sports Park
- City Wide Recreation Park
- City Wide Sports Park
- Community Facility
- Other Open Space * ^
- Conservation *
- Drainage Reserve *
- Land Acquired Prior to January 1st 1990 *

GENERAL

- Public Parks and Land for Community Facilities Service Catchment
- Property Boundary
- Road (Guide Only)

* Land Contribution not included within calculation of Infrastructure Charge

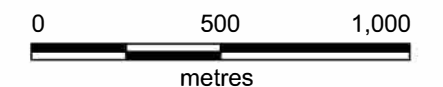
^ Includes Drainage Reserves & Open Space Buffers containing embellishments

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DATUM:
 Geocentric Datum
 of Australia 1994
 (GDA94 - Zone 55)



Scale - 1:20,000 (@ A3)



RURAL TOWNS AND VILLAGES (R 2)

GORDONVALE - GOLDSBOROUGH (S 2)

LITTLE MULGRAVE

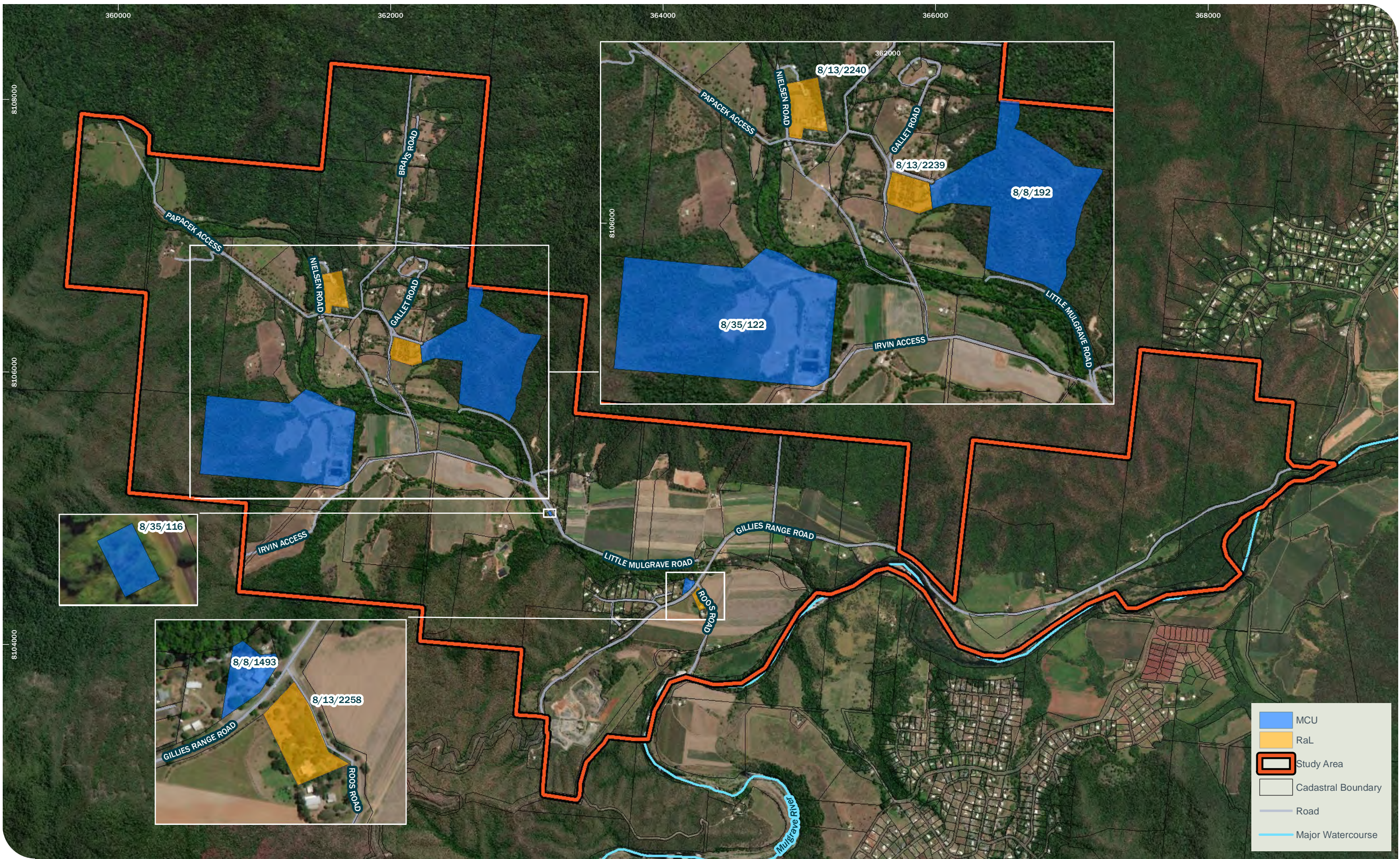
OSE163

OSE180

OSE166

SCHEDULE 6 – LITTLE MULGRAVE DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION ACTIVITY

SCHEDULE 6 



	MCU
	RaL
	Study Area
	Cadastral Boundary
	Road
	Major Watercourse



Project Manager: Dominic Hammersley
 Niche Proj. #: 5527
 Client: Cairns Regional Council

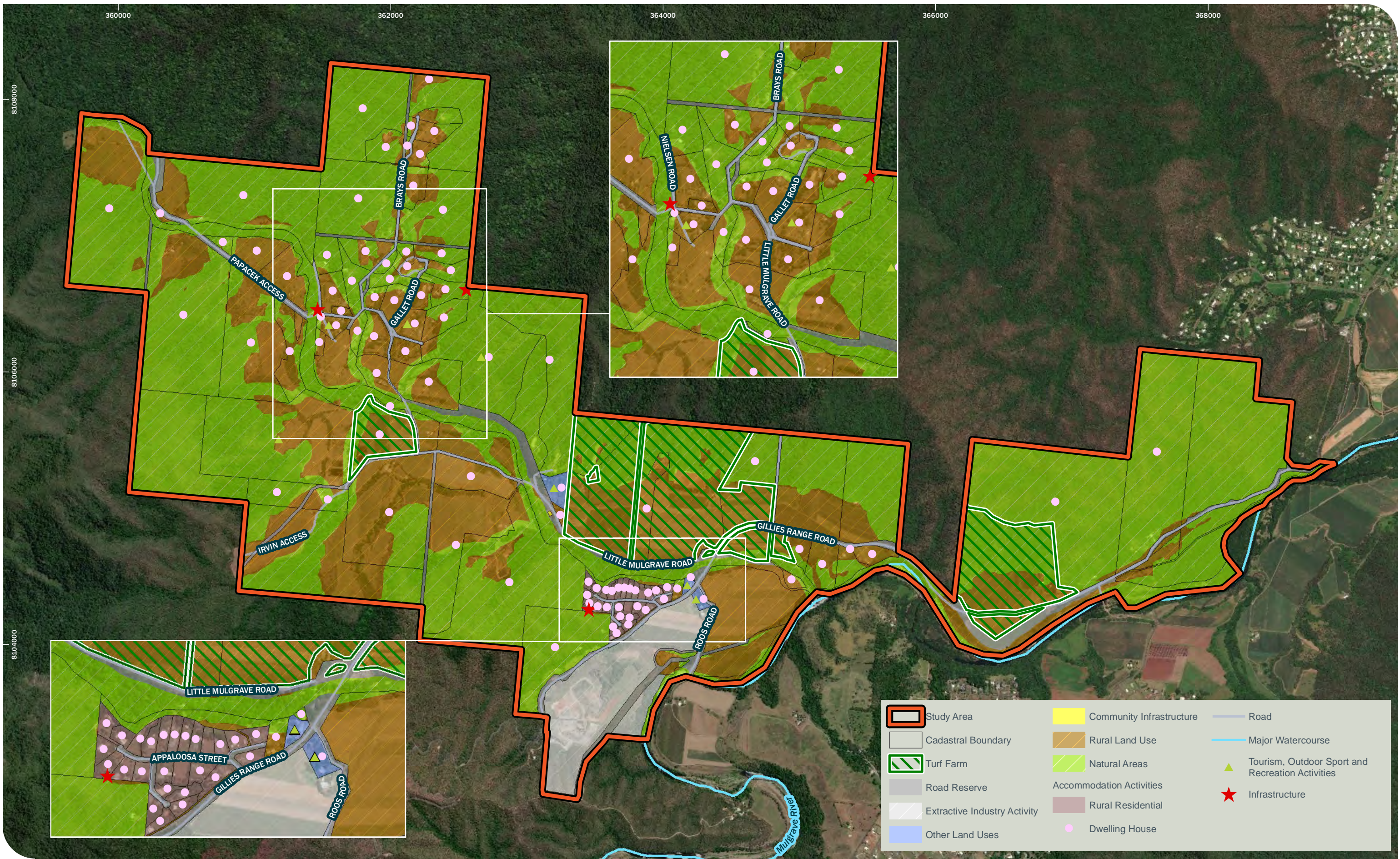
Development Application Activity Plan
 Review of Rural Land within the Little Mulgrave Area

World Imagery: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

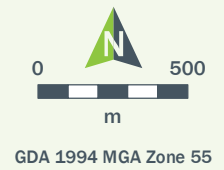
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SCHEDULE 7 – LITTLE MULGRAVE LAND USE ASSESSMENT

SCHEDULE 7



	Study Area		Community Infrastructure		Road
	Cadastral Boundary		Rural Land Use		Major Watercourse
	Turf Farm		Natural Areas		Tourism, Outdoor Sport and Recreation Activities
	Road Reserve		Accommodation Activities		Infrastructure
	Extractive Industry Activity		Rural Residential		
	Other Land Uses		Dwelling House		



Project Manager: Dominic Hammersley
 Niche Proj. #: 5527
 Client: Cairns Regional Council

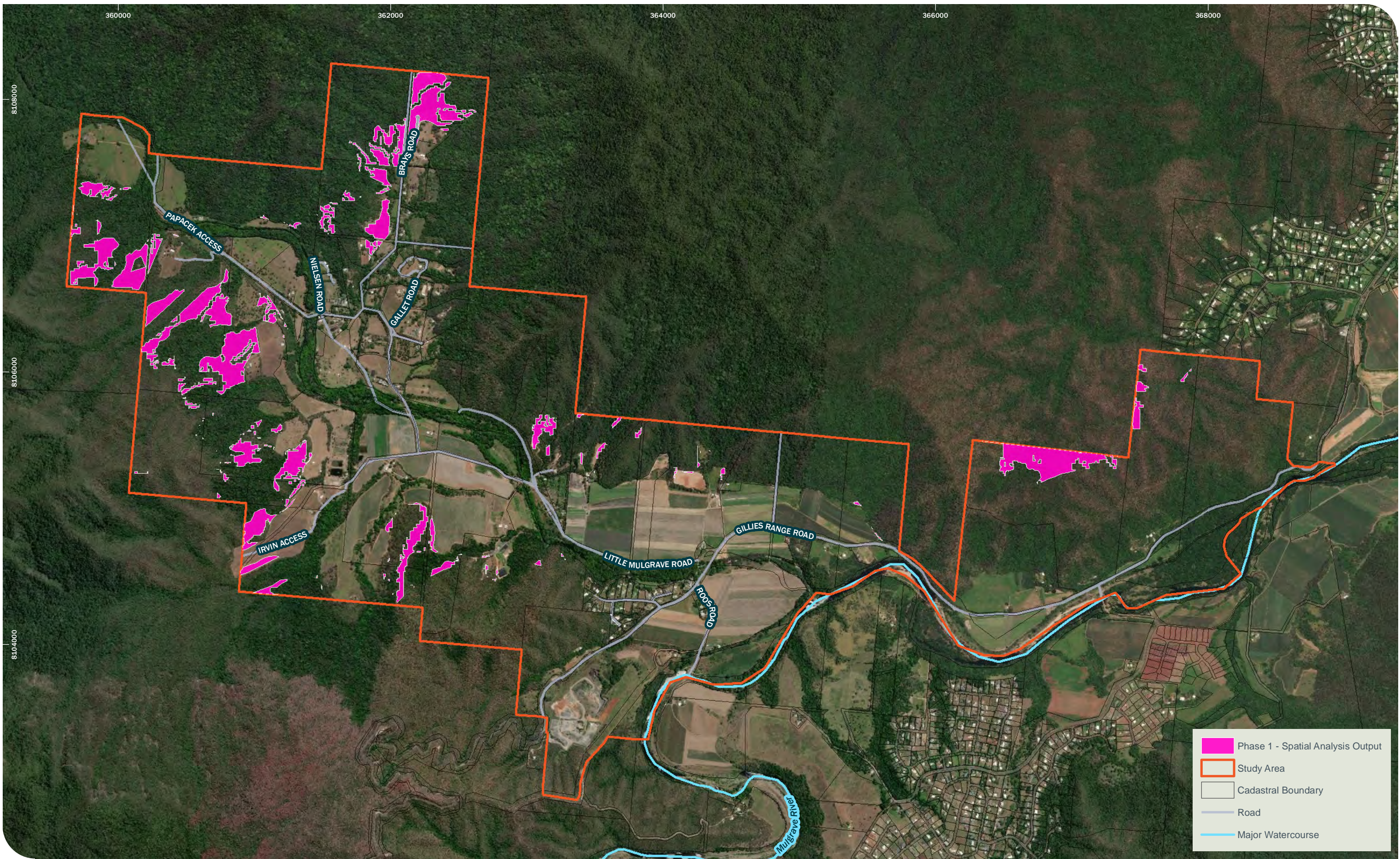
Land Use Identification Plan Review of Rural Land within the Little Mulgrave Area

World Imagery: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

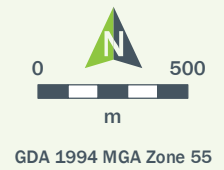
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SCHEDULE 8 – LITTLE MULGRAVE SPATIAL ANALYSIS

SCHEDULE 8 The logo features a stylized bird icon above the word "PLAN" in a blue box.



- Phase 1 - Spatial Analysis Output
- Study Area
- Cadastral Boundary
- Road
- Major Watercourse



Project Manager: Dominic Hammersley
 Niche Proj. #: 5527
 Client: Cairns Regional Council

Little Mulgrave Spatial Analysis
 Review of Rural Land within the Little Mulgrave Area

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