

Cairns Regional Council
Daintree Gateway Masterplan
Vision and Context

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1 Introduction

The Daintree Gateway project is an initiative of Cairns Regional Council (Council) to create an iconic experience in the Daintree Gateway precinct, befitting of the world heritage values of the Daintree-Cape Tribulation area. The Daintree is one of the star attractions in Tropical North Queensland and an important part of the traditional lands of the KuKu Yalanji people.

The Daintree National Park was declared in 1981 and the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area in 1988, creating a global reputation as an eco-tourism destination that has steadily grown in over the past decades. Today the Daintree River, lowlands rainforest and the picturesque beaches of Cape Tribulation attract at least 350,000 tourists each year and the region supports a number of small communities and a growing eco-tourism industry.

Currently the supporting infrastructure at the entry to the Daintree-Cape Tribulation area undersells, and even detracts from, the potential of the region. It is characterised by degraded infrastructure, poor visual amenity, inadequate interpretation and information and confusing way-finding. As a result many visitors do not fully understand the cultural and natural values of the area they are visiting, have a limited awareness of appropriate behaviour to conserve and respect these values, and do not maximise the many opportunities and experiences available to them.

Council has initiated this project to develop a comprehensive masterplan to address these issues and guide development of a world-class gateway facility. Council also intend to actively engage with the community to ensure the many project stakeholders can shape the project outcomes and set a benchmark for future projects.

This paper is the first stage in the project. The purpose of the paper is to document the information that will inform decision making about project options and outcomes. It aims to document a clear vision and guiding principles for the Daintree River Gateway Precinct that is shared by Council, the community and State Government Agencies. The paper also summarises key drivers, opportunities and challenges that the masterplan will respond to.

The paper is informed by desktop research, site investigations and preliminary consultation with a small number of representative stakeholders. This paper is intended to stimulate discussion and inform ongoing consultation. It does not purport to fully represent the views or interests of Council or any project stakeholder.

2 A Gateway to the Daintree

2.1 What is a Gateway?

A gateway by definition is a place through which people pass. It is not a destination in itself, and does not detract from the attractions to be found ‘inside the gate’. However a gateway can add to the sense of anticipation and excitement of the experiences to come. The Gateway is the first true experience of the Daintree-Cape Tribulation journey and every visitor passes this point. Therefore the Gateway can improve outcomes through building a greater understanding of the experiences and opportunities available, assisting visitors to seek out the personal experiences they particularly desire.

The Gateway should, therefore, have a physical appearance that pays homage to and builds expectations of the experience within.

2.2 What is the Daintree?

A number of places and destinations are associated with the Daintree identity. Defining which ‘Daintree’ this project relates to is critical in understanding the purpose of the Gateway and best location(s) for infrastructure. Key Daintree ‘identities’ are described below.

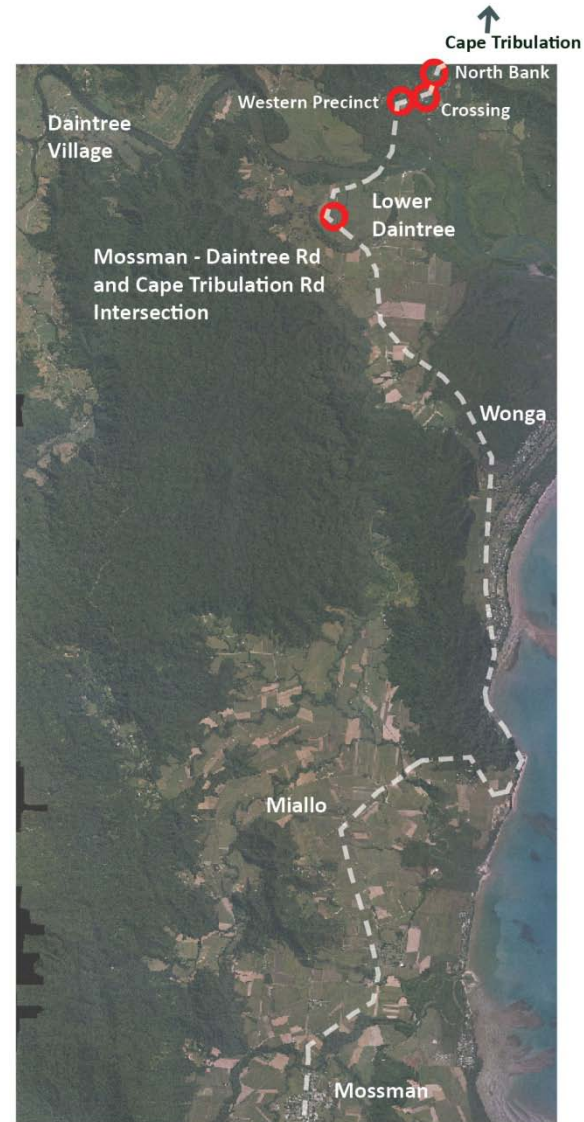
- The Eastern Kuku Yalanji lands extend from Mossman to Cooktown and include the Daintree River, rainforests and beaches.
- The Daintree National Park extends from Mossman Gorge to Cape Tribulation and includes three distinct sections, named after these iconic destinations: Daintree, Mossman Gorge and Cape Tribulation.

- The Daintree River is located to the south of the Cape Tribulation section of the National Park. It has a reputation for cruises which provide an opportunity to see crocodiles in their natural habitat. The Daintree ferry is used by the majority of visitors to the Cape Tribulation area.
- Wonga Beach is a small township located just to the south of the river mouth. Wonga businesses identify themselves as being part of the greater Daintree experience.
- Daintree Village is a small township located to the south of the River and 10 km north-west of the turn off to the Daintree River ferry. There is anecdotal evidence that many tourists arrive here accidentally whilst in search of the ferry crossing.
- Daintree rainforest/ Daintree Coast. The area north of the Daintree River and leading to Cape Tribulation is the largest remaining area of contiguous rainforest from mountain to coast. This area includes the communities of Cape Kimberley, Forest Creek, Cow Bay, Diwan, Alexander Bay, Thornton Beach and Cape Tribulation. It is within the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and includes area of the Daintree National Park. This is the area considered in the Daintree Futures Study.
- The 1983 Daintree Blockade raised the profile of the Daintree area globally. The site of the blockade was predominately north of Cape Tribulation.

This project will focus on visitors and businesses using the area immediately adjacent to the Daintree River, including Daintree Village and Wonga Beach, and travellers heading north of the river to the Cape Tribulation section of the National Park. Refer to

Figure 1. For clarity the study area will be described as the Daintree-Cape Tribulation area. Whilst it is intended to consult with proponents of the Mossman Gorge Gateway project in an effort to coordinate interpretive aspects of the projects, it is not intended that the Gateway under consideration in this project will include the Mossman region.

Figure 1: Study Area



3 Project Context

3.1 Overview

For the Kuku Yalanji people, the Daintree has long been an important source of resources and significant part of the cultural landscape. Over the past three decades the high biodiversity values and the refugial nature of the rainforest ecology have gained broader recognition and the Daintree region has earned a national and global reputation, helped along by some conflict and notoriety.

Following the controversial sub-division of land north of the river into rural residential allotments in the 1970s, the Daintree has been marked by a series of disputes over development issues including the Bloomfield Road, provision of power, a proposed bridge and most recently restrictions on development of land. Over this time the significant ecological values of the area have gained widespread recognition from community and government. Today, residents and landholders of the region clearly understand and appreciate their important role alongside the Traditional Owners as custodians of the unique environment.

The significant natural and cultural values of the region attract a steady flow of local, interstate and international visitors. Whilst twenty years ago the Daintree had the allure of an exotic and somewhat inaccessible destination, today it is an easy daytrip by conventional vehicle from Port Douglas and Cairns. Infrastructure has not kept pace with the resultant increase in visitor numbers and changing visitor demographics and expectations. In particular, the infrastructure in the study area is visually unattractive, in poor condition and not fit for purpose. In short, the area is an inadequate gateway for an environment with the significance of the Daintree.

3.2 Daintree Futures Study

In 2000 the Wet Tropics Ministerial Council commissioned the Daintree Futures Study to consider options for managing development demands and the natural values of the land north of the river. The following extract from the Vision set out in the Futures Study is directly relevant to this project.

The Daintree will still be the prime destination for rainforest tourism in Australia. The 550,000 tourists will underpin the Daintree/Port Douglas economies. Each year an increasing number of tourists will stay for several nights and have improved experiences of the rainforest. Repeat visitation will also increase. Landowners will be involved in creating forest stay and nature-based tourism experiences on their land to cater for this increase.

The ferry will remain as a gateway. It will be larger and serve residents and business needs by a priority lane. Tourists will pay a little more but they will have visitor facilities and improved interpretation services on the southern approaches with improved walking tracks and other recreation opportunities north of the Daintree River.¹

This aspect of the vision reflects outcomes from community forums conducted during the Futures Study. This outcome is summarised in the report as follows:

¹ Daintree Futures Study, Rainforest CRC with Gutteridge, Haskins and Davies and Far North Strategies, November 2000. pp 3-4

*Utilise the ferry as the gateway to the Daintree, a special area requiring awareness of particular protocols, in a manner that minimise costs and maximises return to the local community.*²

The Daintree Gateway project directly responds to this vision and seeks to advance the community benefits envisaged in the Study.

Recommendations 21 and 22 of the Study provide specific recommendations regarding the role of the ferry as gateway. (Note: the Daintree Futures Study focussed entirely on the area to the north of the River whereas this study encompasses a broader area as described in the previous section.) These recommendations are consistent with the preceding Douglas Shire Tourism Strategy, 1998, which identified the ferry precinct as the entrance to the Daintree Coast and Daintree Valley areas. This strategy introduced the concept of the precinct being a gateway not a destination.

The Daintree Futures Study also recommends the development of a comprehensive high quality website for the Daintree tourism product (Recommendation # 18). We note that whilst not within the scope of this project, a quality website is an equally important 'gateway' to the Daintree that would complement physical infrastructure recommended from this masterplan project.

3.3 Work to Date

The former Douglas Shire Council, Cairns Regional Council and many stakeholders have engaged in discussions around this issue over a number of years. It is evident there are many good ideas and strong views about the project. This paper can only begin to touch on these, which will be developed as the project progresses. However

Council staff have sought to document the project context prior to commencement of this consultancy and this paper is informed by this work. Relevant documents include:

- Guiding Principles - Daintree Gateway Masterplan
- Daintree Gateway Issues and Opportunities Paper
- Daintree Gateway Masterplan Stakeholder Reference Group Aspirations
- Project Management Plan - Daintree Gateway Masterplan

² Daintree Futures Study, Rainforest CRC with Gutteridge, Haskins and Davies and Far North Strategies, November 2000. pg 85

4 Strategic Framework

This section sets out a proposed strategic framework to guide the project. It is informed by consultation undertaken by Council and Arup, and a review of background documents.

4.1 Purpose

The Daintree Gateway has two distinct purposes:

- Improve the experience for visitors to the Daintree-Cape Tribulation area.
- Increase economic benefit from visitation for local communities and businesses.

4.2 Vision

The Gateway is an enticing landmark that welcomes visitors to the magical wilderness and cultural landscape of the Daintree River and the world's oldest rainforest.

The Gateway enhances the prosperity of the Daintree area by inspiring visitors to take more time to get to know the values and stories of this outstanding natural environment, its traditional owners and the resident communities.

4.3 Guiding Principles

Council developed a set of Guiding Principles for the project. These were summarised by Arup and then reviewed by the Project Reference Committee. The condensed list below reflects the outcome of review by Arup and the committee.

Sustainability

Sustainability will be a fundamental consideration in the development of the Daintree Gateway, clearly expressed in the design of built and natural environments. Project outcomes will demonstrate a balance between community needs, economic growth, cultural practices, environmental protection and efficient use of resources.

Cultural Association

The Daintree Gateway will celebrate the rich cultural fabric of the Daintree-Cape Tribulation area and provide opportunities for visitors to learn and interact with cultural history and contemporary practices through interpretive displays, materials, design and art. The precinct will honour the Eastern Kuku Yalanji as the traditional owners of the land and will also acknowledge the non-Indigenous history and association with the Daintree area.

Environmental Protection

The Daintree Gateway will be a celebration of the significance and natural wonder of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and Daintree National Park. Development and land uses associated with the Gateway will improve degraded area, enhance vistas and scenic amenity and do no harm to the coastal and riverine processes of the Daintree River, endemic habitats and eco systems, or the cultural landscape.

Local Economy

The Daintree Gateway will enhance the prosperity of local businesses and communities. It will contribute to greater awareness of the experiences available in the region and will promote and complement existing businesses and attractions.

Sense of Place

The Daintree Gateway will clearly mark the journey from rural landscape to wilderness environment and pay homage to the natural and cultural character of the Daintree-Cape Tribulation area. The Gateway will create a strong sense of arrival, welcome and anticipation and provide a visitor experience befitting the world class values of the area.

Character

The Gateway will reflect the tropical and natural character of the Daintree-Cape Tribulation area. The built form will be a high quality design that reflects and respects the natural areas and character of the local area. Planning of the project will enhance vistas and degraded areas and retain and increase vegetation.

Access and Mobility

The Daintree Gateway will transform the way in which people move through the entire Daintree region and the choices they make about journeys and destinations. In the immediate development area, the Gateway will rationalise the road network, parking areas and river access, creating a safe, legible and accessible environment that meets the needs of all users.

Planning

A successful Daintree Gateway project will be delivered by an integrated and collaborative planning process informed by the:

- cultural values of the landscape and precinct;
- wealth of local knowledge and ideas;
- important role of tourism in the area;
- need to make provision for adaptation and change; and
- value of good design, innovation and creativity.

5 Contextual Framework

5.1 Historical Perspective

Before European settlement, the Daintree was the province of the KuKu Yalanji, who created a network of walking tracks throughout the area. The evolution of the Daintree as a rural community and more recently a visitor destination has been shaped by a number of key events and conflicts between development and environmental protection.

Daintree Village was established in the late 1870's by timber cutters, who used the KuKu Yalanji tracks to search for, and snig out, Red Cedar. The logs were floated down the Daintree River to the coast lashed together as rafts. By the later 1800's rural settlers had followed, carving out dairy farms and then cattle grazing. More recently farming has diversified into tropical fruits, tea and coffee.

In 1968 local farmers bulldozed the KuKu Yalanji walking track in an attempt to create a coastal road to Cooktown. Whilst the track failed as a road it contributed to opening up the area as it continued being used as a walking track.

In the early 1970's the very significant, ancient environmental values of the forest began to be appreciated. The number of adventurous visitors increased on the unsealed roads and walking tracks. The coastal areas between the Daintree River and Cooktown became a popular destination for hippies or alternative life style settlers, who set up informal communities and rough accommodation. Also in the 1970's developers acquired leasehold land that they managed to convert into some 1,200 smaller lots, with no services. These were then advertised nationally as a chance to acquire a 'unique piece of paradise'.

In 1981 the 17,000 hectare Cape Tribulation National Park was gazetted, adding to the growing environmental reputation of the region.

In 1982, the then Mossman Council, supported by the Bielke-Peterson Queensland Government commenced a planned road development to upgrade the existing track to connect Cape Tribulation with Cooktown. This created an internationally reported uproar, especially since the road works were in part through the new National Park. A nationally reported blockade ensued, but the road was hastily pushed through.

Three events in 1985 cemented the Daintree brand in the global tourism market. Firstly, Rupert Russel's 'coffee table' book *Daintree, Where the Rainforest Meets the Reef* was published. It was a large format book featuring the first widely distributed stunning photographs of the Daintree. It contributed to the profile of the region, certainly nationally and perhaps internationally. Importantly it coined the phrase on which Tropical North Queensland has built its contemporary tourism industry.

Secondly, the Jungle Lodge was built in 1985. It launched the reputation of Cape Tribulation as a cheap backpacker destination. Finally, a local woman was taken by a large crocodile during an evening swim in shallow water with friends. Whilst there have been crocodile attacks before and since across Australia, this attack linked the name Daintree with crocodiles and attracted a growing market fascinated with seeing these creatures.

In 1988, the present World Heritage area was declared, adding stature to the region as an eco-tourism destination.

Around 1992, sealing of sections of the road between the ferry and Cape Tribulation commenced. In April 2002 the last section of road was sealed. The sealing delivers environmental benefit in terms of

reducing dust, erosion and sediment. It also has the effect of opening the area to conventional vehicles rather than 4WD's only which saw a significant increase in Free and Independent (FIT) visitors undertaking self-guided day trips in hire cars.

In 1995 Skyrail opened in Cairns, offering a half day rainforest experience rather than the full day required to visit the Daintree. Anecdotal evidence is that Skyrail contributed to a decline in visitor numbers to the Daintree, with an almost immediate impact on tour group numbers.

Over a period of years commencing in the mid-1990's the Bloomfield Track to Cooktown has been upgraded to make it easier to negotiate, especially on some of the steep inclines. The most significant upgrade is a high level causeway across the Bloomfield River. This obviates the need for a deep water crossing. In the dry season, locals now traverse the track in conventional vehicles. This attracts some visitors to the region as part of a Cairns-Cooktown loop.

Peak visitor numbers in the Daintree were probably reached around 1999, when it was estimated that there were 299,138 day visitors and 127,231 overnight visitors, totalling 426,369. Today visitor numbers are estimated at between 350,000 and 400,000.

Overall the history evokes turbulence, strong characters, adventure, ancient mystery and untouched timeless nature. As development has occurred the adventure of unsealed roads and powerful untouched nature has inevitably been muted. However what is adventure for some is just plain frightening for many. It is matter of striking the right balance of experiences to suit the market.

5.2 Physical Site Conditions

The Daintree Gateway comprises a number of sites which in combination create the experience of travelling to the Daintree. This section describes the nature of the journey and the specific sites which play a role in the formation of a Gateway. The journey and sites are described below and depicted visually in pages 17-26.

Journey from Mossman

The journey from Mossman to the Daintree River crossing is approximately 25km, taking around 30 minutes by car. It follows the Mossman – Daintree Road (Captain Cook Highway) which runs north and is aligned generally parallel to the ocean and the Great Dividing Range (Daintree National Park). The journey passes through large areas of productive cane land, with the forested ranges of the Mossman section of the Daintree National Park to the west and the ocean with rocky headlands and the lowland wetlands of the lower Daintree coast to the east.

The journey includes a couple of key milestones and decision points. The first of these is within Mossman itself, where signs indicate onward travel to the Daintree. North of Mossman, the road makes a series of eastward turns. The first being just 2km north of Mossman, another at Miallo approximately 7km north of Mossman, and finally 22km north of Mossman a T-junction provides a choice between continuing north-west to Daintree village or turning east to the Daintree Ferry.

Refer to Figure 2: Journey from Mossman

Intersection of Mossman-Daintree Road / Cape Tribulation Road

The intersection of the Mossman-Daintree Road and Cape Tribulation Road is poorly signed and has no distinguishing physical characteristics. The intersection is surrounded by cane fields with a number of small farm houses and farm buildings being located near to the intersection and includes driveways and farm access roads. Opposite the intersection a gravel road leads to the 'Crossroads Café' with informal parking and shady mature trees.

Views from the intersection west include the lower canelands in the foreground and the Daintree National Park and Ranges beyond. Views to the North include Thornton Peak and the Alexandra Range, with mangroves in the foreground. To the east, the Cape Tribulation Road is a two lane roadway leading towards the river, but visually, no different is scale or character to the continuing Mossman-Daintree Road.

Approximately 250m south of the intersection with Cape Tribulation Road, there is a gravel pullover where visitors can view signs identifying a range of businesses in Daintree Village and River area. This area is not clearly signed or visually appealing and has no visitor amenities.

Refer to Figure 5: Intersection, Site Conditions

Journey along Cape Tribulation Road

The journey along Cape Tribulation Road is a 3km route from the intersection to the River. Initially it travels directly north through existing cane fields, then curves anti-clockwise around an oxbow wetland, and then directly north again through fields until reaching a large gravel road reserve on the river bank, referred to as the western

precinct (Daintree River Tours area). The road then continues east parallel to the river to the Ferry Crossing Precinct.

The existence of the wetlands, surrounding the Oxbow lagoons, and the backdrop of Thornton Peak and the Alexandra Range creates a visual feature along this route. The curving of this road creates interest and slows the journey somewhat, however these features are not exploited to enhance the sense of journey and anticipation, or to provide information about or access to the wetland.

Refer to Figure 3: Journey along Cape Tribulation Road, Site Conditions and Figure 4: Journey along Cape Tribulation Road, Environmental Designations

Western Precinct

The Daintree River Western Precinct is located directly adjacent to the entry road on what is currently road reserve. It is the first point of arrival at the Daintree River – and is quite disappointing as the primary arrival point at this anticipated destination.

This area is informal in structure, as vehicles and pedestrians mix, wearing of the gravel and dirt access tracks feather the edges of the grassy roadside resulting from unfettered vehicle use. There are a few trees, but this space is largely open and hot. There is a shelter with interpretive signage that provides some basic information on the area. To the south of this area there is a spoil heap from dredging of the crossing.

A series of makeshift structures are located within this road reserve and are used to market and sell tickets for a range of private tourist river cruises. Visually the structures are unappealing and not suited to the eco-tourism character of the area. An informal pathway leads to a pontoon from which a number of tourist boats depart. There are two

portable toilets located on this pathway and no other amenities or facilities.

There is also a public boat ramp in this location. On the weekends this is heavily used and a large numbers of private vehicles and boat trailers are parked in the vicinity of the tour outlets.

The river at this point is flanked by Mangrove and other tropical riparian vegetation restricting views and access to the water. This vegetation is only broken in two locations, by the public boat ramp and tourist boat pontoon.

This area includes vegetation listed as Regional Ecosystem of Concern and Regional Ecosystem not of concern; as well as an area of Wetland Protection. They are located primarily along the river itself and include the reserve occupied by the tour concession stands, boat ramp, pontoon and access pathways, as well as the eastern most access road and areas currently used for informal car parking.

Refer to Figure 6: Western Precinct, Site Conditions and Figure 7: Western Precinct, Environmental Designations

Ferry Crossing

As the road approaches the ferry crossing from the Western Precinct, it becomes more visually enclosed by a canopy of thick riparian vegetation. This riparian vegetation restricts visual and physical access to the river but has the potential to create a strong physical character for this part of the journey, connecting to the experience over the river. However the potential is marred by a confusing procession of signs relating to the upcoming ferry journey, including road speeds, ferry prices, environmental and safety considerations and advertising.

The road leads to a ferry ticket booth which restricts access to those who have purchased a ticket to use the ferry and cross the River. Just before this booth there is a turn-around for those not wishing to use the ferry, which returns to the western precinct.

Vehicles queue for the ferry along some 130m of the road leading to the ferry on a one way loop. This loop encloses an area which includes a private residence, a toilet block and telephone box with informal parking area. Again this area is largely informal and visually unappealing with areas of planting and lawn being encroached upon by cleared areas where vehicle use has created bare areas. This land is included in the Indigenous Land Use Agreement.

The area immediately around the ferry landing has been cleared affording some views to the river. However the area is visually cluttered with further signage, operational equipment and traffic controls.

One cruise operator maintains a boat landing to the east of the ferry ramp. This area is in very poor visual and physical condition.

This area includes vegetation listed as Regional Ecosystem of Concern and Regional Ecosystem not of concern; and an area of SPP GBR Wetland Protection. They are located primarily along the river itself and cover the ferry crossing and queuing area. It also covers some areas to the east and south.

Refer to Figure 8: Crossing, Site Conditions and Figure 9: Crossing, Environmental Designations

North Bank

On the north bank the ferry is met by an asphalt turn around and the terminus of the Cape Tribulation Road. Cars queue along Cape Tribulation Road leading directly north from the ferry ramp. This

area is enclosed by tropical riparian vegetation and is reasonably compact. There is a dated shelter with bench seat and a letter box located at a bus stop adjacent to the ferry ramp.

A small ramp is located to the west of the Ferry and is used by private operators to drop passengers off to be collected by buses which parks adjacent to the ramp at the terminus of the Cape Tribulation Road. Few markings designate the road in this area resulting in an informal mixing of cars, buses and pedestrians. There is no parking for other vehicles in this area.

There is a private property located immediately to the north west of the ferry landing which has been historically cleared and is not currently developed for any particular use.

Views to the river in this area are restricted by riparian vegetation, and are limited to the areas directly surrounding the ferry ramp.

This area is protected by a number of layers ecological protection areas including: Regional Ecosystem of Concern, Regional Ecosystem not of concern; and an area of SPP GBR Wetland Protection. These areas overlap covering the entire site and will restrict the development of this area.

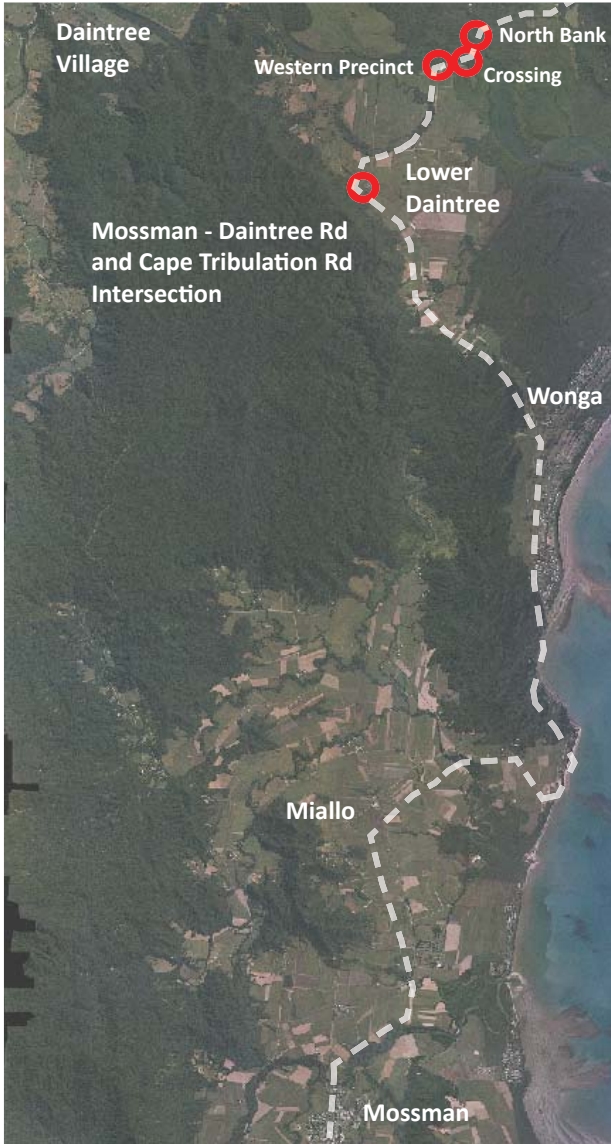
Refer to Figure 10: North Bank, Site Conditions and Figure 11: North Bank, Environmental Designations

Land Uses and Activities

There are a diverse a range of land uses and activities in and around the study areas, including rural land (cane farms), National Park, Crown land/reserves and private land uses.

In planning any works the needs and interests of land holders and requirements of different land uses must be considered. A table summarising the land uses, the potential impacts and benefits for the project is included at Appendix B. Key issues include:

- an increase in tourism numbers may impact on access to services, environmental quality and lifestyle factors for residents and increase trespass on private land or uncontrolled access to the public estate;
- on the other hand increased tourism can improve the economic viability of communities in the area and better access to information may improve the behaviour of tourists in environmentally significant areas;
- a perceived conflict could arise between existing cane farming activities and the gateway function, due to visual impact, dust or traffic.



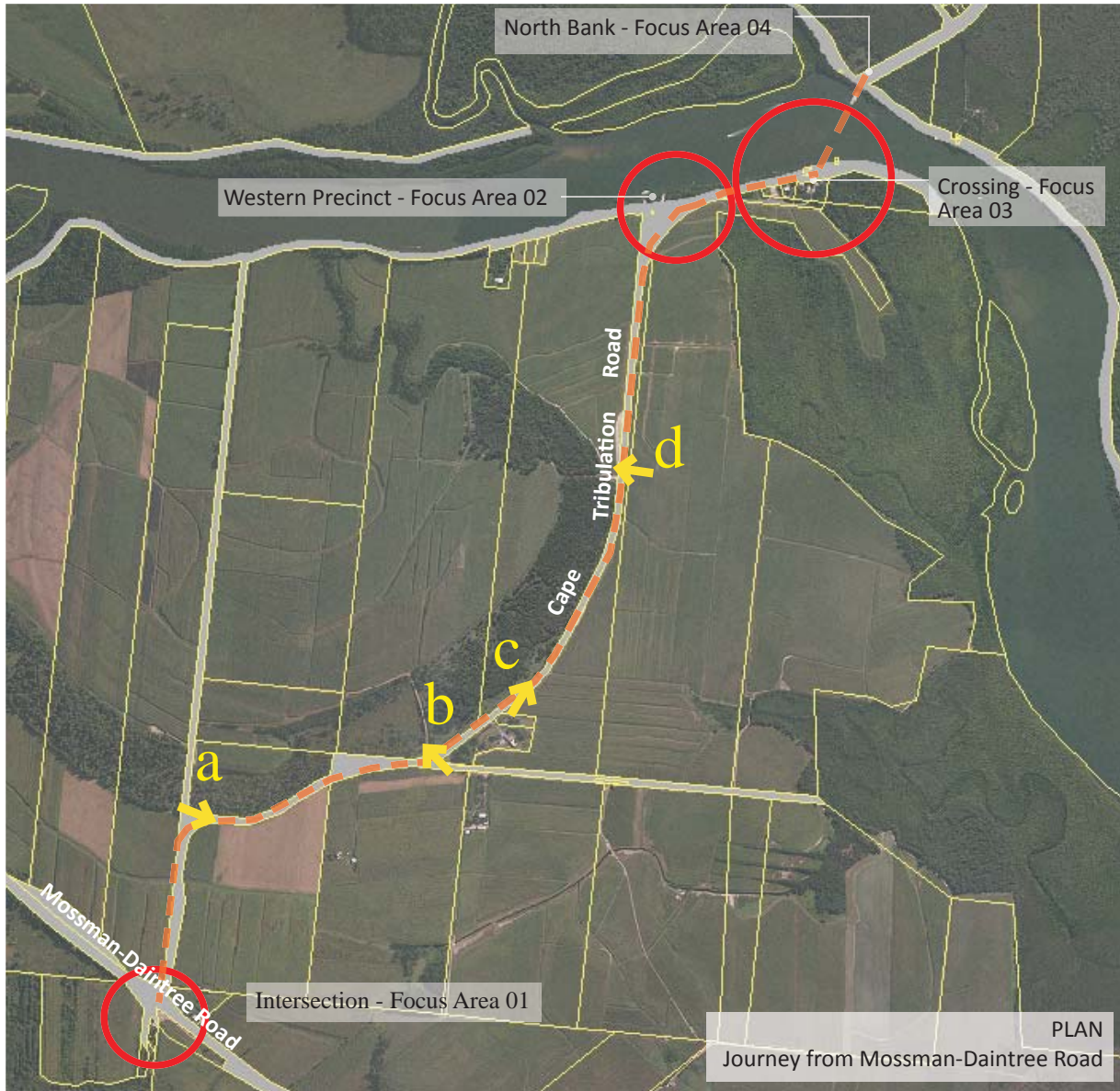
b. 7km south of Wonga Beach



c. In the vicinity of Wonga Beach



d. Approaching Lower Daintree



a



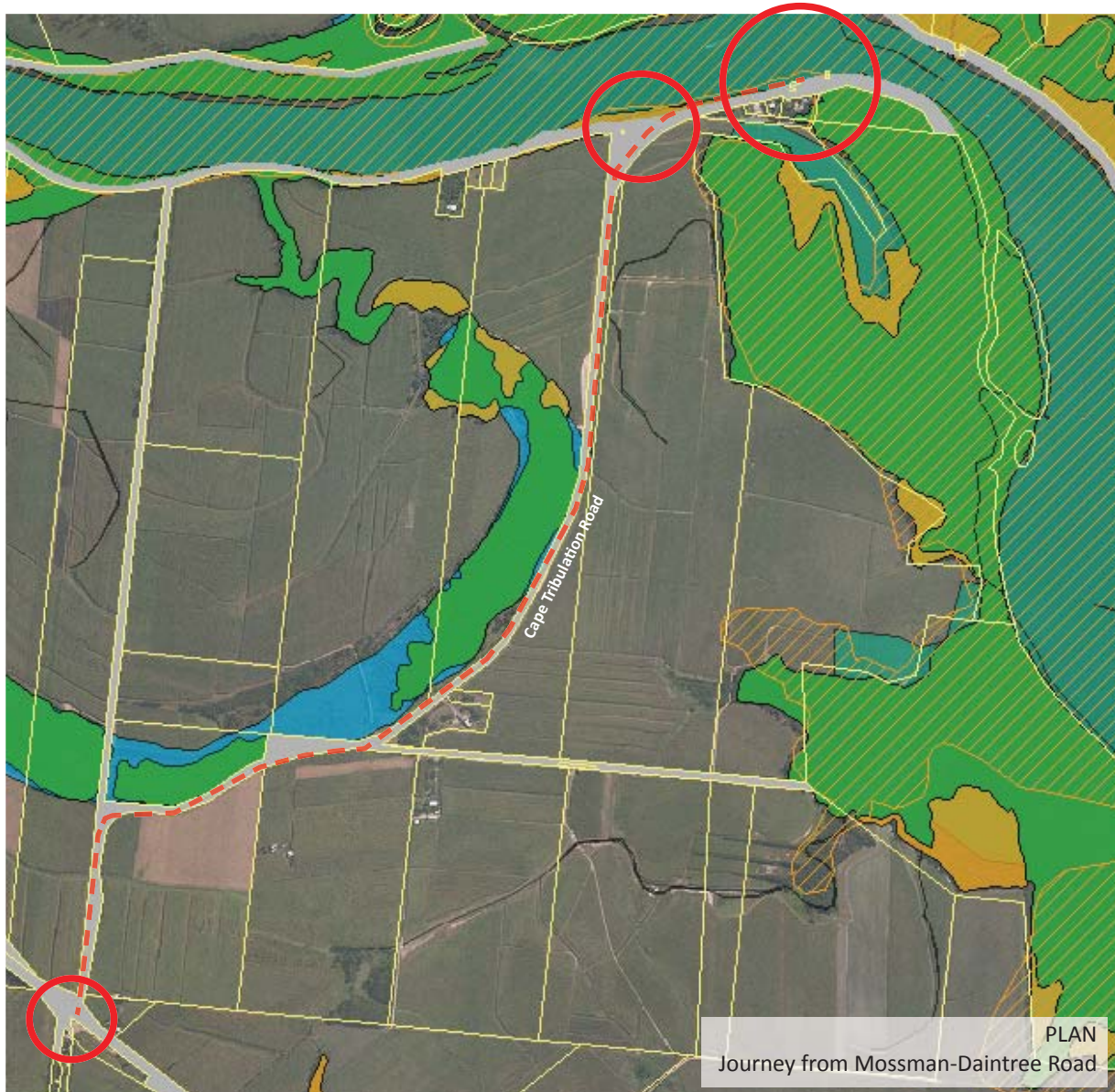
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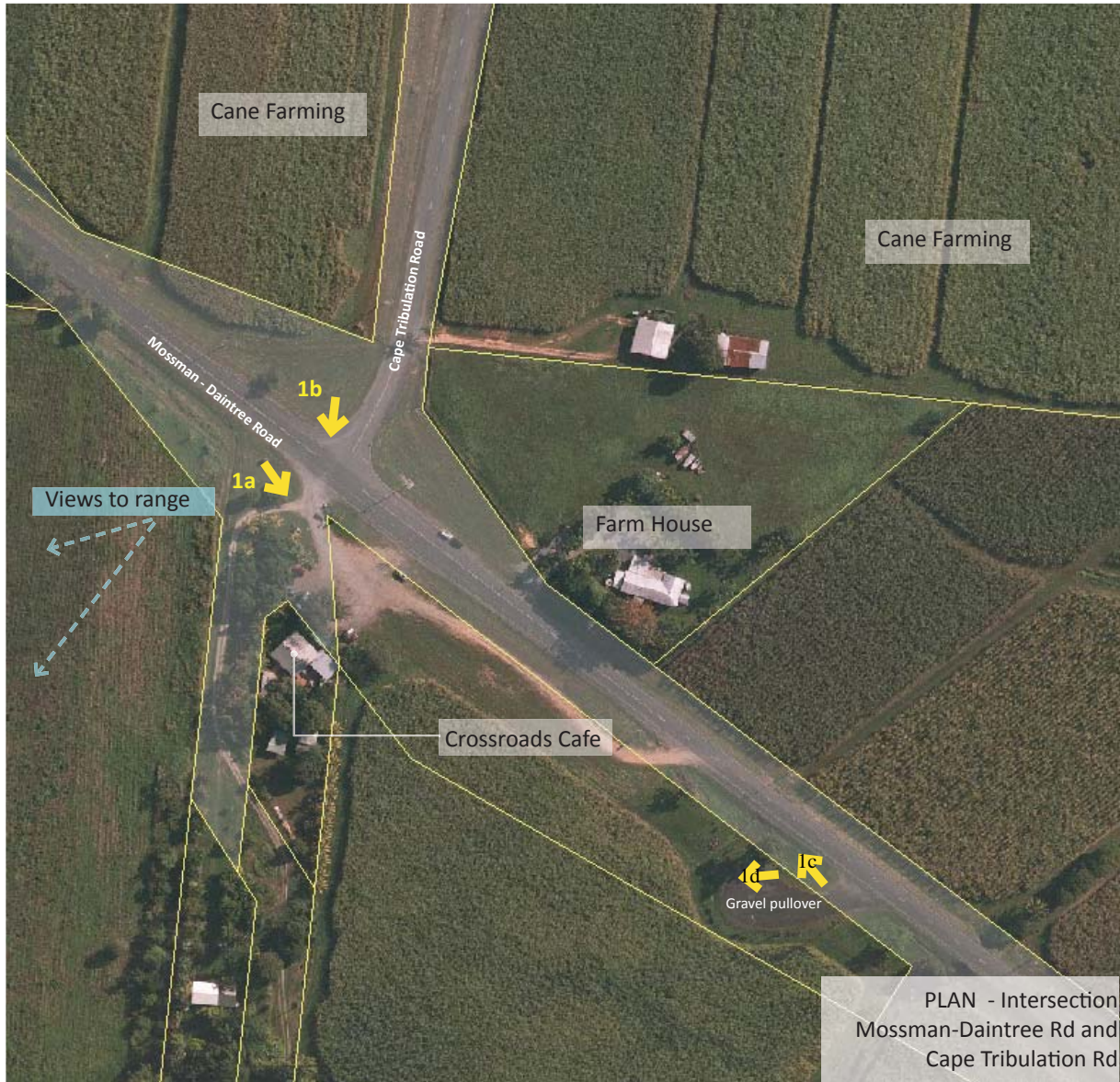
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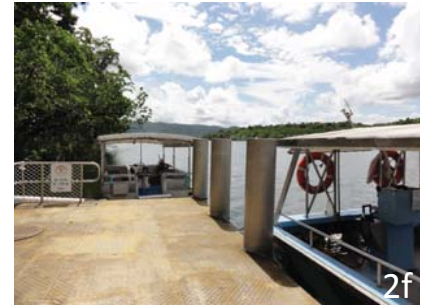
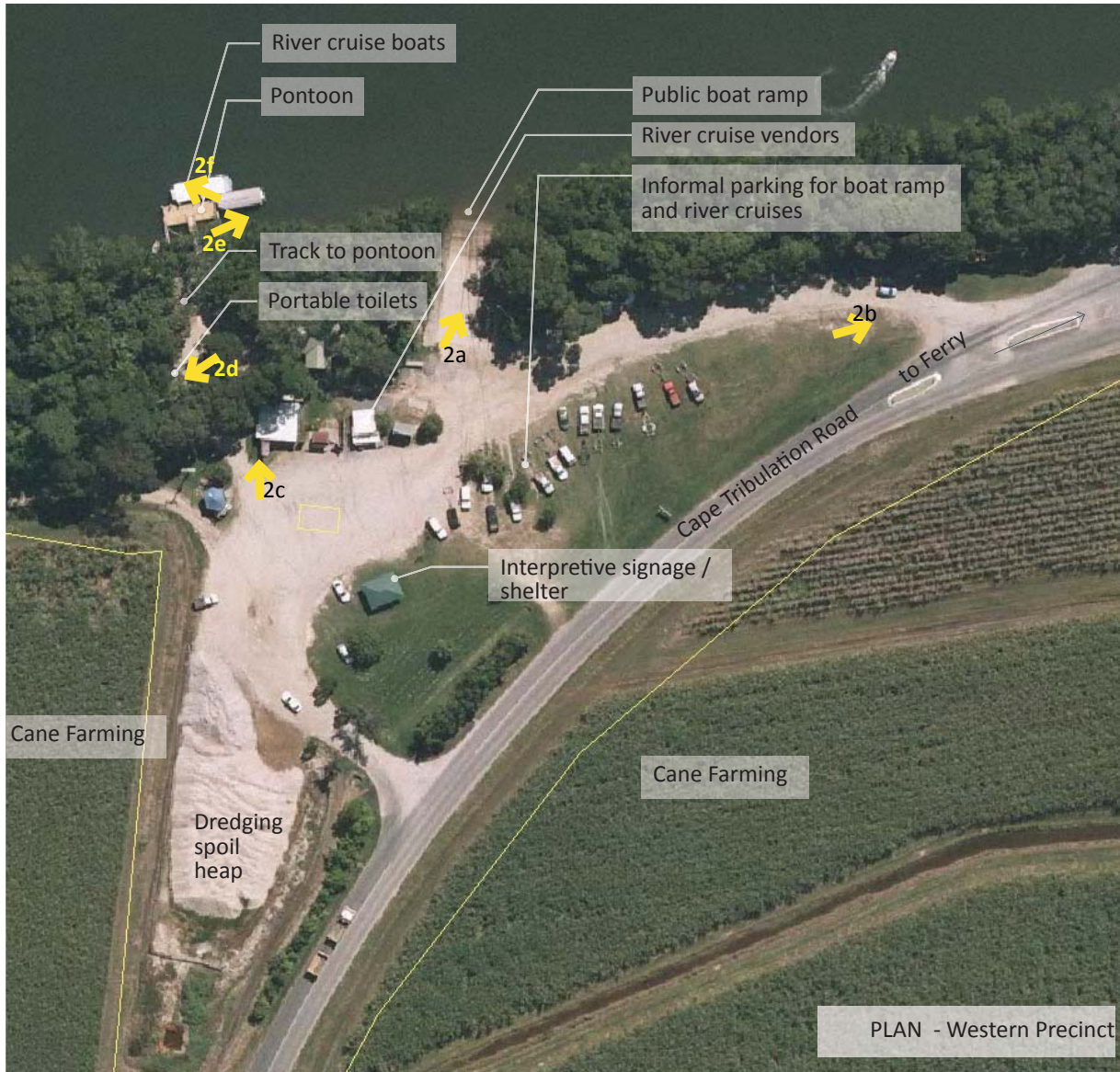


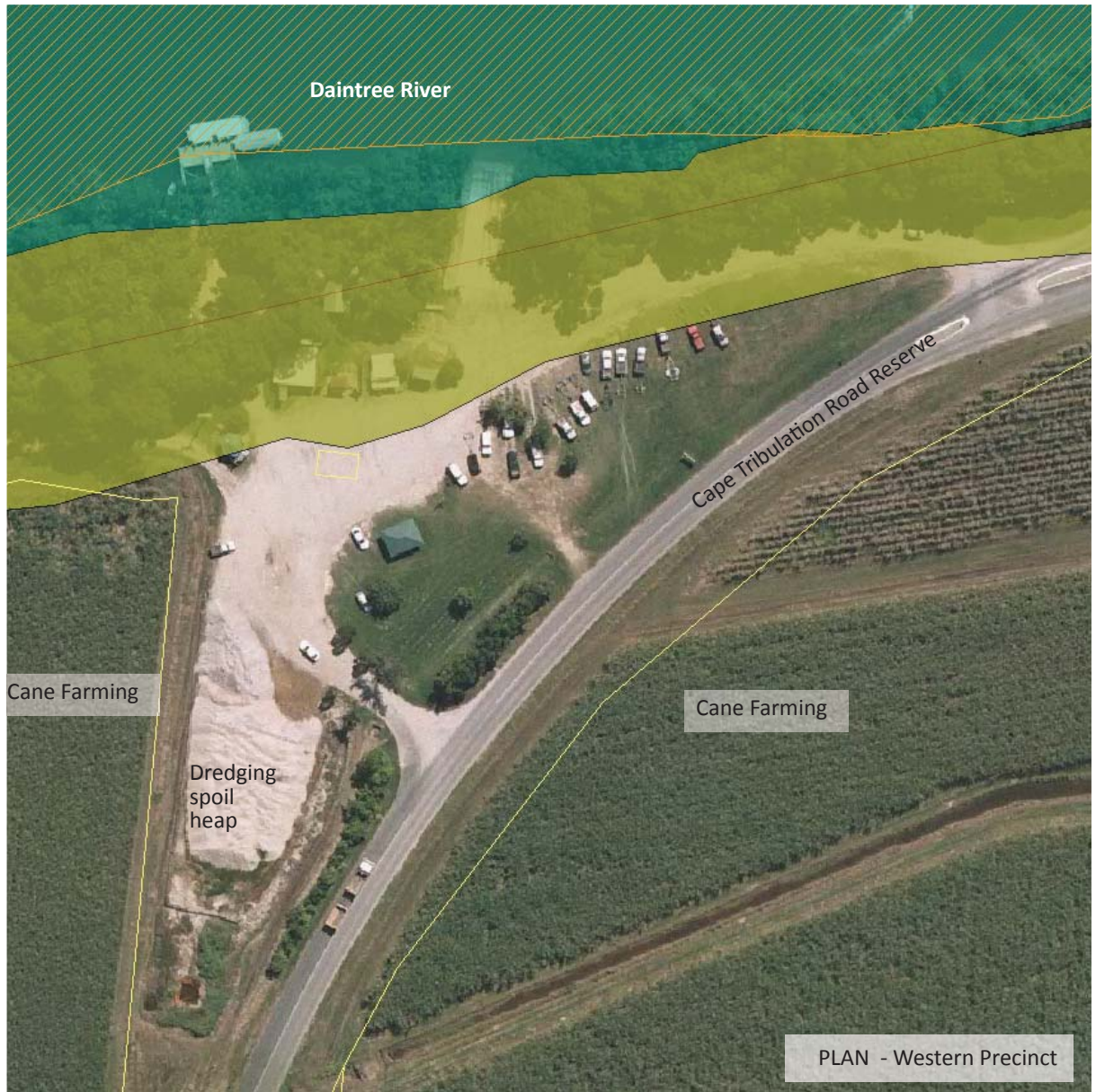
Legend

-  Road Reserve
-  Regional Ecosystem Of Concern
-  Regional Ecosystem Not of Concern
-  SPP GBR Wetland Management Area
-  Erosion Prone Area (diagonal hatch)
-  Cape Tribulation Road









Legend

- Regional Ecosystem Of Concern
- SPP GBR Wetland Management Area
- Erosion Prone Area (diagonal hatch)

Cane Farming

Dredging
spoil
heap

Cane Farming

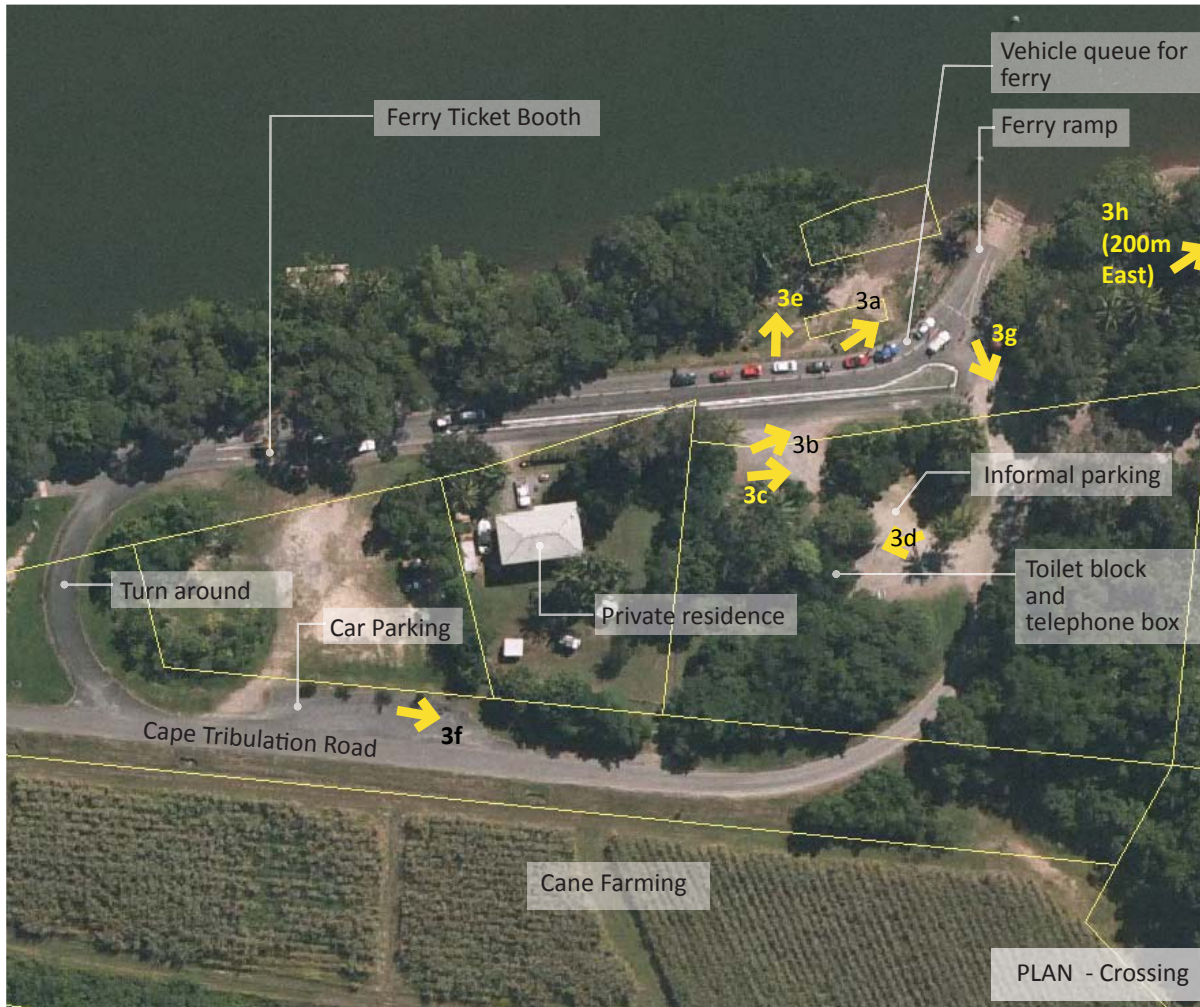
Cape Tribulation Road Reserve

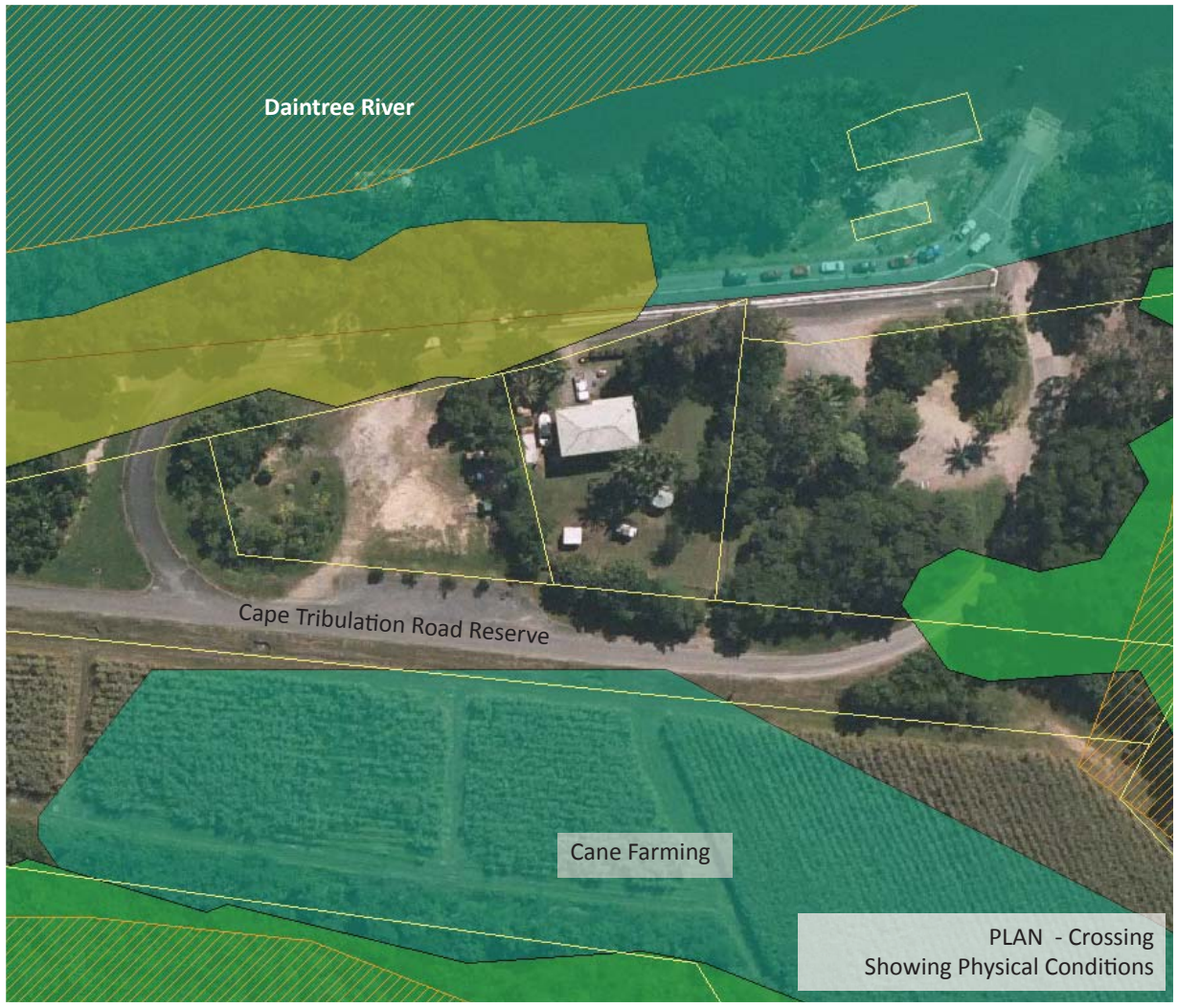
PLAN - Western Precinct



daintree gateway - draft vision paper
Figure 7: Western Precinct, Environmental Designations



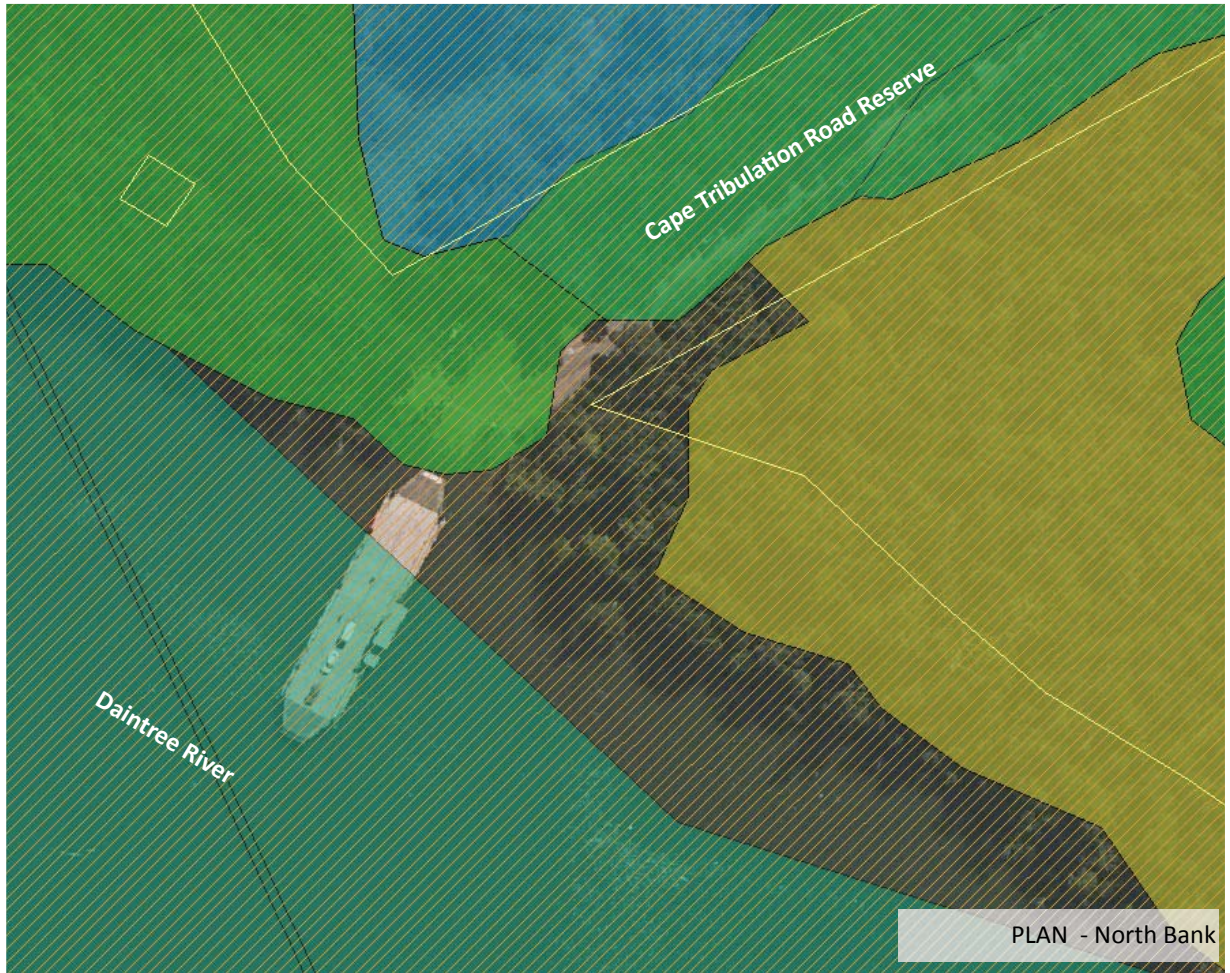




Legend

- Regional Ecosystem Of Concern
- Regional Ecosystem Not of Concern
- SPP GBR Wetland Management Area
- Erosion Prone Area (diagonal hatch)





Legend

-  SPP GBR Wetland Protection Region
-  Regional Ecosystem Of Concern
-  Regional Ecosystem Not of Concern
-  SPP GBR Wetland Management Area
-  Erosion Prone Area (diagonal hatch)

5.3 Economic Context

As described earlier the Gateway is not a destination in itself, but is the first arrival point, and therefore it does have an important role to play in creating awareness and anticipation of the experiences on offer. Exciting and informing, then delivering on the promised experiences will deliver economic outcomes through increasing willingness to pay, participation in more activities, perhaps return for another visit and word of mouth referral. This section provides the general economic context, but is framed within the context of exploring the gateway concept.

Visitor Numbers

The Daintree Ferry statistics provide the most available figures on visitors north of the river. These do not pick up those 4WD visitors who pass through Daintree Village and follow the CREB track. There have also been some inconsistencies in data collection from the ferry according to some tourism operators.

The figures are summarised in Table 5.1. The classifications were also simplified for 2010 onwards, making it more difficult to reconcile the data before 2010 with 2010 figures. Some assumptions have been made to reconcile the figures in the following table that may not be completely correct, but this will not affect overall conclusions that have been drawn.

The ferry figures, being the best available therefore provide a good guide to visitor numbers, if not taken too precisely. These show the following for past five years (for years ending June each year).

- Car and ute numbers have been more or less stable over the period, reflecting a reasonably steady state of FIT visitors, while bus numbers have declined somewhat, supporting the industry perception of continuing declines in tour numbers.
- There is reasonably heavy traffic in commercial vehicles, in part no doubt due to Council equipment movements, but also general commercial vehicles.
- Motor bike numbers fluctuate, but due to the low numbers, a small change in trips in a year by motor bike clubs and / or extended motor bike tours would easily generate these yearly differences.
- Approximately 25% of trips are recorded as being one way.

On the basis of the above, if an average of three occupants per car and seven per bus were assumed, plus motor bikes, the annual visitors numbers would be in the order of 350,000. Industry estimates have generally adopted a figure of 400,000, so the figure of 350,000 may be understated, but not by a large margin

The above numbers do not include visitors from the Douglas region, who hold concessional passes, nor residents from across the river who are issued with free passes.

No reliable figures for visitor numbers to Daintree Village, or of users of the CREB Track have been sourced to date. It is of note that the Cairns Regional Council website seems to be the only place to provide information on whether the CREB Track is open or closed at any time. This information would be difficult to find for consumers.

Table 5.1: Ferry Data Past 5 Years

Classification	2010		2009		2008		2007		2006	
	O/W	R	O/W	R	O/W	R	O/W	R	O/W	R
Car/Ute	14,344	78,821	14,581	81,030	14,491	80,447	15,468	78,694	16,033	75,123
Buses	365	9,835	395	10,500	437	11,067	548	12,445	450	12,410
Bus LPT	479	741	1,937	8	2,474	8	2,278	8	1,624	144
School Bus	307	0	3	17	0	1	0	5	0	7
Pedestrians	4,336	191	5,740	175	7,205	140	5,926	147	6,324	130
Motor Bikes	743	841	886	1,011	934	1,067	759	916	835	708
Trailers	1,826	3,017	2,064	3,310	2,647	3,468	2,004	3,187	1,810	3,053
Trucks & Machinery	44	2,699	37	2,712	48	2,458	115	2,302	131	2,428
Multi 5 Day Bks	0	358								
Totals	22,444	96,503	25,643	98,763	28,236	87,600	27,098	97,704	27,207	94,003

O/W = One way ticket; R = Return Ticket

Regional Population

The population living within the Daintree –Cape Tribulation area is heavily dependent on tourism visitors for its economic base. The region includes some farming, but elements of this are also partly oriented to tourism in tropical fruit, nursery and flower production for instance. Some residents commute to work outside the area in industries outside tourism. However many traditional service industries also rely at least in part on activity and revenue derived through visitors to the region. This includes Council and QPWS services that would not require the same workforce without regional visitors.

Available ABS statistics on the population of the Douglas Statistical area estimate a total population as 11,854 as at 30 June 2009.

Consideration of statistical collection areas within the data provide a broad estimate of the population of the Daintree region as being approximately 1700. However this estimate must be qualified as follows:

- ‘The Daintree’ is not a precisely defined area;
- the statistical collection areas do not necessarily coincide with the boundaries of ‘the Daintree’; and
- there may be some overnight visitor numbers included in the estimates.

This estimate has been determined as follows.

The statistical areas **north of the Daintree River** that might be considered to encompass ‘the Daintree’ are Cow Bay, Forest Creek, Cape Tribulation and Degarra. The Queensland Office of Economic and Statistical Research (OESR), has estimates for the population of these areas as at 2009. Table 5.2 provides these.

Table 5.2: Population data

STATISTICAL CODE	STATISTICAL SUBURB	ESTIMATED POPULATION 2009
3010802	Degarra	50
3010803	Forest Creek	298
3010808	Cow Bay	339
3010814	Cape Tribulation	85
		772

Whether or not all these areas can be considered a part of ‘the Daintree’, the majority of residents could be expected to utilise the ferry and associated areas that are the subject to this masterplan study at least occasionally. It seems reasonable to assume that for these users of the Gateway, their primary need will be efficient access, supplemented by a desire to experience a sense of pride in the area in which they live. For those engaged in tourism, they will also want the Gateway to add to the attraction of the area for visitors. (In addition there are approximately 350 residents across the Bloomfield River at Wujal Wujal who would also access the ferry at times).



Figure 12: Statistical Areas included in Census statistics for the Douglas area

The Daintree Futures Study recognised the particular access needs of residents with the following recommendation, which has been enacted by Council.

To serve residents and local business needs, the construction of a priority lane for local residential and business traffic is recommended. This would only be used at times of peak usage.³

South of the River, the 2006 Census indicated that Daintree Village and environs had a population of 79. Unofficial contemporary estimates place the population now at around 100 persons. In the case of Wonga, the 2006 Census indicated that the combination of ‘old’ and ‘new’ Wonga had a population of 917.

TNQ Tourism Market Outlook

It is common knowledge that the TNQ tourism industry has been experiencing difficult circumstances. Since 2006 – 07, there has been a general decline in visitor numbers and visitor nights across many markets, including international visitors generally and Japanese visitors in particular. By comparison, the number of domestic visitors has increased marginally, mostly bolstered by increases in business visitors. Domestic figures are clouded by the increased numbers of international visitors arriving via the domestic air terminal, which may impact on domestic visitor estimates.

There has been a decline in commercial room occupancy rates, to an average of 60%, despite a slight reduction in room numbers in recent years. However exacerbating this has been a marked shift in preferred accommodation types. For example between 2008 and 2009 demand for rented houses, apartments or units increased by

³ Rainforest CRC Cairns with Gutteridge Haskins and Davey, November 2000, Daintree Futures Study – Final Report to the Wet Tropics Ministerial Council

26% in the case of international visitors and 43% in the case of domestic visitors, according to the quarterly surveys conducted by Tourism Australia.

These figures, with the large increases in car hire in the region in recent years, support the proposition that a growing proportion of visitors are choosing Free and Independent (FIT) options.

Whilst the regional tourism industry has demonstrated its resilience over the years in coping with a series of events beyond its control, ranging from the airline pilots strike in 1989 through SARS, Bird Flu, 9/11, Asian financial meltdown, the current circumstances are certainly testing the resources and resilience of many operators.

The 2010 – 2011 Strategic Plan for Tourism Tropical North Queensland, the regional tourism body, includes detailed strategies for addressing the current situations. Significant points of relevance to this study are summarised below.

- The mining boom could lead to further opportunities for growing visitor traffic especially from hot spots such as Central Queensland, PNG and Western Australia’s North West.
- Australia’s economy is recovering with subdued growth; households are saving more and not spending after the Global Financial Crisis scare.
- New direct air services from New Zealand are a strong positive, but the exchange rate is a negative when comparing Australia with other destinations for New Zealanders.
- Japanese outbound travel has been growing over recent months and more direct flights and connections through

Guam may reverse the decline. However the high Australian dollar is a negative.

- For UK and Europe the economic situation is tenuous and the high Australian dollar is a negative. However the strong Australian economy may attract backpackers who rely on finding work during their travels.
- For the US market, the high Australian dollar is a problem and the economic outlook there is uncertain.
- China is the source of strong continuing growth, but could be reversed if the Chinese government tightens credit. However if the Chinese government allows the currency to appreciate against the US dollar, the overseas purchasing power of Chinese visitors will be enhanced.
- There has been a recent increase in both international and domestic airline seats into Cairns, reversing a general decline in the past two years, and growth of new markets. However there has also been an increase in capacity to competitive destinations such as Pacific and Asian tropical islands.

In addition to the above, the number of cruise ships visiting the ports of Cairns and Port Douglas has been increasing for some time, with some 40 visits during 2010. The Cairns Cruise Ship Terminal is now operational and it is hoped that this will support further growth in this market. The Cairns Port Authority estimates the visits already contribute over \$30 million per annum to the regional economy. However it is noted that the length of stay will generally work against cruise ship passengers being able to visit the Daintree.

Backpackers continue to be a strong market sector, with approximately 220,000 backpackers visiting annually, comprising some 34% of international visitors. The prospects of the destination

have improved with changes to the Working Holiday Visa, the Gap Year tradition and the prospect of casual jobs in the well performing Australian economy. This is a prime market for the Daintree.

The wider Cairns region population also represents a market for the Daintree. This is through recreational visits typically on fishing expeditions, as hosts for visiting friends and relatives and on day trips and short breaks as tourists themselves. The regional population is also likely to represent a major proportion of 4WD traffic through the Bloomfield Track and the CREB track. Townsville population is also relevant, being a strong source of intrastate tourism visitors to Tropical North Queensland. In the case of both regional areas, they are in the top ten of the fastest growing Local Government Areas in Queensland and have been consistently rated as such for some years.

Changing Consumer Preferences

Overall, while some target markets for TNQ remain relatively unsophisticated in the experiences they seek, the trend is for consumers globally becoming more discerning. More and more are better educated, better informed and have broader travel experiences.

An increasing proportion of consumers seek experiences they perceive as authentic, meaningful and educational in an informal sense. Due to their wider travel, they will have already been exposed to a range of tourism experiences with which they will make comparisons. This increases the need for the region to deliver memorable experiences that are truly different and/or more satisfying than what they have been exposed to previously.

In the domestic market, there are more 'fly and flop' visitors, a response to increased work and lifestyle pressures and more short breaks rather than traditional three to four week vacations. For these and repeat visitors, it is more difficult to sell tour packages. The

remarkable increase in the car rental fleet in recent years points to the increase in visitor numbers who are choosing to be independent and venture further into the region to explore.

The TTNQ Strategy previously referred to previously notes:

What is clear is that the consumer of the future will be better informed and adventurous with regards to the way they may engage with destinations. Booking patterns are changing with air travel in particular, motivated by discounted airfares being booked directly. Coupled with the growth of online research, this is resulting in a more informed and empowered consumer. Additionally, this encourages the repeat visitor, particularly in the domestic market, to be more adventurous and self sufficient with regards to making holiday and recreational choices.

While this may be good news for the Daintree, more mobile, informed consumers are also able to make more choices as to where they will travel to achieve the experiences on offer in the region. Increased awareness of other areas of Tropical North Queensland (Tablelands, Cassowary Coast, Outback, etc) will increasingly compete for their attention.

Another implication is that by the time visitors reach the Gateway, they may have already done their research, be clear on the experiences they seek and will have built up expectations around those anticipated experiences. However they may not have translated those expectations into bookings for product.

These consumers will increasingly rely on electronic media, including the internet, social networking, GPS and mobile phone applications. We note that currently the Daintree region has a

relatively low profile on key travel sites, such as Trip Advisor, that are widely used to share advice amongst travellers.

Regional Marketing Emphasis

A 2008 repositioning study essentially found that Tropical North Queensland was crowded with over 600 products competing for consumer attention and that the region had moved to a position where it was selling product more than experience. It also found the region had moved away from the key differentiators of the destination, being 'reef and rainforest'.

In response to the findings of this study, TTNQ have been reviewing regional branding and positioning. Importantly it has focussed on visitor motivations, via focussed psychological research rather than simple demographics analysis. The resultant market research has identified three key target segments for the destination in the domestic market:

- Social Fun Seekers (interstate) (25%) - The essence of their holiday is having a fun time. While they do a lot of different activities, it's sharing the experience with friends and other holidaymakers that makes the difference.
- Active Explorers (interstate) (11%) - Holidays are about pushing boundaries through challenging themselves via physical activity. They enjoy the company of others, but their focus is on exploring the extremes of their physical environment and themselves. It's about feeling alive.
- Connectors (intrastate) (32%) - They see holidays as a chance to connect with the people they care most about (families/friends). They will often compromise their own

preferences in terms of activities to ensure everyone has a good time. It's about what is real and what's important.

Overall, regional positioning is now again centred on 'nature, adventure, Great Barrier Reef and Wet Tropics Rainforest', with detailed strategies being followed to re-establish the region's connection to 'reef and rainforest'.

The Daintree region has the opportunity to position itself to benefit from this positioning. Special interest segments of particular interest to the Daintree are listed below.

Birdwatching

The TTNQ Strategy notes that the Wet Tropics region hosts 450 different types of birds, with 12 species being endemics. The strategy also notes that the region is considered a prime destination not only due to the number of total bird species but for the high standard of bird facilities and infrastructure, ease of access and attributes of being a modern and safe destination free from large animals. The main source markets for bird-watching tourism are UK, USA and domestic, with over one million active birdwatchers in the UK, a further two million in USA and 8,000 domestically.

Volunteerism

The TTNQ Strategy notes that this market is growing quickly and is thought to be an emerging driver of visitation to the region. Currently there are a small number of volunteer programmes available in the region spread across rainforest conservation, general conservation, and wildlife engagement. The exact size of the market is not known however it is estimated that approximately 10% of the youth/adventure market will engage in some type of volunteer project during their travel.

Market Competition

As visitation to the Daintree increased through the 1990's, there was increasing concern about both the impact on the environment and crowding reducing the quality of visitor experiences.

The Daintree Futures Study considered that a maximum of 550,000 visitors per annum, consisting of 420,000 day trippers and 130,000 overnight visitors stopping an average of 2.5 nights would be consistent with the tourist character and amenity of the region.

Due to the concerns as to increasing numbers, there was a push to increase awareness and access to other areas with rainforest experiences, especially the Southern Atherton Tablelands and Cassowary Coast. Subsequently there has been a steady increase in tourism related businesses in these regions, increased marketing and so higher awareness. This is coupled with more independently mobile visitors mentioned elsewhere.

Increased competition to the Daintree as the premier rainforest experience extends beyond the immediate region. Other regions in Australia saw the success of the reef meets rainforest tag and have also built imagery based around rainforest.

Internationally, there are many stunningly beautiful and often seemingly pristine areas. The internet, travel and nature shows are all increasing awareness of these. More countries and regions are recognising the value of tourism in the face of competition in their traditional industry base. Conservation efforts are encouraging tourism development as a means of creating a value for protecting ecologies and habitats. Modern travel technology is ever effecting shrinking the world, making previously remote regions more accessible.

All these factors are increasing competition for visitors who might otherwise visit the Daintree. In these circumstances, it is essential for the Daintree to present very clear, unified presentations of what makes it different and special. This is not about product, but about experiences and values. In a competitive, global environment, market fragmentation is to court failure.

5.4 Stakeholder Needs and Aspirations

As outlined above the Daintree-Cape Tribulation communities are heavily dependent on tourism. By the same token, research suggests that the tourism industry is dependent on vibrant local communities who can offer tourism the authentic experiences they seek. Community and tourism stakeholders therefore have a key interest in this project.

In recognition of this Cairns Regional Council has identified best practice engagement a key aspect of development of the masterplan. A stakeholder reference group has been established for key decision points and widespread community consultation will be undertaken during the options and masterplan development stages.

For the purposes of this paper an initial scan has been undertaken to develop the different types of stakeholder and their needs and aspirations as a group. Table 5.3 lists key stakeholder groups with a direct interest in this project and describes their key interests as documented or advised by key informants. This table does not represent a comprehensive summary of stakeholder views and will be expanded as project consultation progresses.

The summary highlights the following three key common interests amongst stakeholders.

- Protect, enhance and better promote the natural values of the area.
- Increase local benefit from tourism.
- Maintain quality of life for residents.

Early consultation with the reference Committee highlighted the following aspirations and visions for the Gateway.

- Preserved and beautiful asset, reflects the nature and significance of the rainforest and Daintree Village
- Point of arrival, world class entrance to the Daintree, exciting – WOW factor
- Welcomes visitors and guests to our area, informs and educates them
- A meeting place for locals and return visitors, somewhere you want to spend time
- Representative of the community and its abilities
- Benefits the environment, businesses and community
- Cultural awareness and employment opportunities for traditional owners
- Reviving the Daintree “brand”
- No fragmentation of the greater Daintree Region, ensuring economic sustainability for the entire Region
- Sustainable, environmentally friendly development
- Safe and efficient circulation/access

Table 5.3 – Preliminary Stakeholder Needs Analysis

Stakeholder Group	Role	Key interest/outcome sought
Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation	Established following 2007 Native Title determination as the Registered Native Title Body Corporate to look after the Native Title interests of Eastern Kuku Yalanji people and the Aboriginal Land Trust with responsibility for Aboriginal Freehold Land granted to Eastern Kuku Yalanji people under the Aboriginal Land Act (1991).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage traditional land in accordance with cultural principles • Promote greater understanding of the cultural landscape of the Daintree area • Develop economic and employment opportunities for Traditional Owner groups
Tourism Village Tourism Association / Tourism Daintree Region	Peak body representing tourism operators and related businesses in Daintree Village and locations south of the river.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal promotion of destinations south of the River • Improved economic benefit for local businesses • Protect natural values and lifestyle values
Tourism Daintree Coast	Peak body representing tour operators and related businesses from south of the river to Cape Tribulation, including tour operators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve visitor experience • Improve economic benefit/increased yield for operators specifically in Daintree area • Protect natural values and lifestyle values
Tourism Port Douglas Daintree	Peak body representing tour operators in the entire Port Douglas – Daintree region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve visitor experience • Improve economic benefit/increased yield • Protect natural values and lifestyle values
Baileys Creek Community League	Community association representing residents and business north of the River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better informed visitors • Increase interaction with tourist and benefit for local residents • Protection of natural values and lifestyle values • Improved ferry access / service

Stakeholder Group	Role	Key interest/outcome sought
Cairns Regional Council	Responsibility for providing and administering planning, infrastructure and community development services to the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect Traditional Owners • Support local businesses/community • Improve visitor experience and visual amenity • Protect natural values and iconic places status • Promote sustainable development
Douglas Shire Sustainability Group	Non-profit group established to protect the environment of Douglas Shire and promote sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect natural values and iconic places status • Sustainable design solutions
Friends of Douglas Shire	Community group seeking reversing the State Government's decision to amalgamate the Douglas Shire into the larger Cairns Regional Council and supporting initiatives to protect the natural values of the Shire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect natural values and iconic places status • Beneficial outcomes for residents of the old Douglas Shire
WTMA	Statutory authority with responsibility for administering the Wet Tropics Management Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect world heritage values • Improve visitor experience
Other Government Agencies Qld: DERM, DOT, DPIF C'wealth: DEWHA	Administration of applicable legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfaction of legislative responsibilities (refer following section)
Land owners	Freehold land owners, largely agricultural land uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain current land uses and values • Protection of natural values and lifestyle values

5.5 Regulatory Framework

A large number of local, state and federal legislation, policy and regulations are in place to maintain the environmental, cultural, and public amenity values of the Daintree region, and to protect the public against potential hazards. These regulatory instruments will govern the assessment of all future development in the region, and so an understanding of the opportunities and constraints they pose is fundamental to the Daintree Gateway Masterplan.

Cairns Regional Council has outlined in some detail the various planning legislation and policy affecting the Daintree Gateway region in the Daintree Gateway Masterplan Issues and Opportunities Discussion Paper. A summary of this work is included at Appendix C. This summary draws from the work already undertaken by Council to highlight the key regulatory opportunities, constraints and approval processes likely to impact on the Daintree Gateway Masterplan.

Key approvals that will apply to works in the Gateway are summarised below.

- The area is adjacent to the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and WTMA may therefore be a referral or concurrence agency for development applications.
- The area is likely to include 'Matters of National Environmental Significance' listed under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999, and therefore a referral to the Federal Minister may be required. (Refer Appendix D).

- Areas of mapped remnant vegetation exist within the study area and a permit will be required to clear these under the Vegetation Management Act 1999.
- The Daintree is identified as a Key Coastal Site under the Wet Tropics Coastal Management Plan, including the ferry crossing but not the western precinct. DERM may be a referral or concurrence agency for development applications under the provision of the Coastal Management Act 1995.
- The study area is within the footprint of the Eastern Kuku Yalanji Indigenous Land Use Agreement and Yalanji have specific rights and interests over land within the precinct.
- The Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031, State Planning Policies, Iconic Places legislation and Douglas Planning Scheme all have relevance to the project.
- Council's sustainability policies and activity assessment are relevant to the project.
- Works could impact on State Fisheries and may require relevant approvals.
- The Department of Transport and Main Roads will have some jurisdiction/interest in the area due to both vehicular and maritime movements.

6 Conclusion

Existing infrastructure at the entry to the Daintree-Cape Tribulation area is not meeting the expectations of the community and requires the essential facilities expected of a destination of global significance and significant natural and cultural values. It is proposed to create an iconic gateway precinct and provide a world class visitor experience at this entry. It is anticipated the Gateway will also contribute to improved economic yield for businesses and communities in the area, and accordingly the Gateway is not intended to compete with existing attractions and products but to inform visitors of the experience on offer and generate a sense of excitement and anticipation.

The Daintree Gateway Masterplan will embody seven key principles, namely:

- Sustainability,
- Environmental Protection,
- Local Economy,
- Sense of Place,
- Access and Mobility,
- Cultural Associations, and
- Sound Planning.

The tourism market in Tropical North Queensland has experienced some decline in recent years, and the Daintree has also lost market share. In a competitive and changing market, the challenge is for the Daintree community to communicate the unique attractions and

values of the area to an increasingly independent, internet connected and discerning market. Increasingly, visitors are seeking authentic experiences with an environmental and cultural focus and the Daintree is well placed to meet this demand. The Gateway project is intended to represent and promote of this market offering.

The Daintree-Cape Tribulation area is characterised by a diverse, and at time fragmented, group of stakeholders. However our initial work highlights a number of areas of common interest amongst stakeholder, namely:

- protect, enhance and better promote the natural values of the area;
- increase community benefit from visitation; and
- maintain quality of life for residents.

The Gateway project is an opportunity to meet these common interests and create a sense of common purpose amongst stakeholders in the area.

The environmental significance of the Daintree area means that any development will be heavily constrained by regulatory and legislative requirements. The Gateway project must therefore be planned and designed to have a minimal visual and environmental impact, whilst delivering the objectives of the project. A successful outcome will also require the effective collaboration of regulating authorities and other stakeholders.

This paper has established a strategic and contextual framework for the project. The next activity will be to summarise a range of options that may deliver the desired outcomes and to assess these against this framework in consultation with stakeholders.

Appendix A

Adjoining Land Uses

Land Use/Activity	Potential negative impacts of project	Potential benefits from project	Potential impacts upon project
Daintree National Park	Uncontrolled and/or significant increase in tourism could impact on values or over-stress QPWS infrastructure.	Visitors to the Park are better informed and so treat the environment more respectfully, use infrastructure more and gain more enjoyment from the Park.	Nil anticipated
Private land (uncleared)	Uncontrolled and/or significant increase in tourism may result in increased incidence of unauthorised access to private land.	Visitors are better informed and so treat the environment more respectfully. Potential commercial benefits from eco-tourism operations associated with the land.	Nil anticipated
Residential uses	Increases in traffic and visitor numbers could have some impact on amenity for residents. Disruptions to access during construction phase.	Visitors are better informed and so treat the environment more respectfully. Infrastructure and economic opportunities for residents improve.	Planning requirement that new land uses do not have detrimental impact on residential uses. Plan works to minimise disruptions.
Rural uses	Increases in traffic and visitor numbers could have some impact on amenity. Tourists may view rural uses incompatible with the natural values thus placing pressure on these activities. Disruptions to access during construction phase.	Infrastructure and economic opportunities for residents improve.	Planning requirement that new land uses do not have detrimental impact on existing rural land uses. Plan works to minimise disruptions.

Land Use/Activity	Potential negative impacts of project	Potential benefits from project	Potential impacts upon project
Tourism attractions and accommodation	Improved amenity could attract new operators thus increasing competition for market share. Works may disrupt access during construction phase.	Visitors are better informed and so seek out more experiences and potentially stay longer.	Plan works to minimise disruptions. Gateway not to compete with existing businesses.
Community facilities and infrastructure	Increasing visitor numbers may over-stress infrastructure and facilities.	Improved economic returns may generate more investment in community facilities.	Need to maintain access and function for critical infrastructure
Esplanade or road reserve	Increasing visitor numbers may over-stress road infrastructure, impacting on road safety.	Improved traffic and revenue may generate more investment in roads.	Need to maintain access and safe vehicle movement throughout works
Tours operating on crown land (permitted)	Uncontrolled and/or significant increase in tourism could over-stress attractions and infrastructure.	Visitors are better informed and so treat the environment more respectfully, gain more enjoyment and are prepared to pay higher premiums.	Nil anticipated
Camping	Uncontrolled and/or significant increase in tourism could over-stress camping infrastructure.	Increased use of camping areas generating more revenue for QPWS or private operators.	Nil anticipated

Appendix B

Summary of Regulatory Framework

Issue	Description/ Proximity to Site	Key Legislation/ Policy/ Regulations	Key Opportunities and Constraints	Approval Process
Wet Tropics World Heritage	The Daintree Gateway is adjacent to, but not within, the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993 Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land-use activities within the World Heritage Area are regulated through a zoning and permit system. Depending on the zone, certain activities are prohibited, allowed under permit, or allowed without a permit. In general, all activities which disturb vegetation, soil, water or scenic values in the World Heritage Area are likely to require a permit. Activities in land adjacent to World Heritage Areas must not impact on the values of the WHA. 	<p>Activities within the WHA: Permit applications need to be submitted to the Wet Tropics Management Authority or Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service for approval.</p> <p>Land adjacent to the WHA: WTMA is a referral or concurrence agency for development activities in land adjacent to the WHA.</p>
Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation	Two key pieces of legislation have implications for conservation and protection of biodiversity values in the Daintree Gateway.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) Nature Conservation Act 1992 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EPBC Act regulates all activities with the potential to impact on nationally significant matters (world heritage sites, national heritage places, wetlands of international importance, nationally threatened species and ecological communities, migratory species, Commonwealth marine areas, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, and nuclear actions). Due to the proximity of the Daintree Gateway to the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, important wetlands, and cultural heritage sites, and the likely presence of listed threatened or migratory species, it is anticipated that proposed development activities in the Gateway may trigger approval requirements under the EPBC. A search of the EPBC protected matters database identified the following matters of national significance in the Daintree Gateway area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 World Heritage Property – Wet Tropics of Queensland; 1 National Heritage Place - Wet Tropics of Queensland; 37 Threatened Species; and 24 Migratory Species 	There are five different levels of assessment under the EPBC, depending on the significance of the project and potential for environmental impact. Depending on the assessment level, applications require preparation and assessment of considerable technical information about the proposal. It is anticipated that, at minimum, a referral to the Minister will be required for this project.

Issue	Description/ Proximity to Site	Key Legislation/ Policy/ Regulations	Key Opportunities and Constraints	Approval Process
Vegetation Management	Large areas of remnant vegetation exist within the Daintree Gateway area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vegetation Management Act 1999. Sustainable Planning Act 2009. 	<p>A copy of the EPBC Act Protected Matters Report generated by the search is included in Appendix D.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large areas of remnant vegetation exist within the Daintree Gateway area including areas of 'remnant of concern' 'remnant endangered' vegetation (refer Figure A). As indicated in Figure A, some areas of remnant vegetation exist within the western precinct and ferry crossing. Clearing any of the identified remnant vegetation will likely require development approval. 	An application must be made to the Department of Environment and Resource Management for a development approval for vegetation clearing. The department uses regional vegetation management codes to assess applications for clearing native vegetation.
Coastal Protection and Management	The Daintree river, North Bank and ferry crossing are within the bounds of the Wet Tropical Coast Regional Coastal Management Plan (the Western Precinct and intersection are outside these bounds).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wet Tropical Coast Regional Coastal Management Plan. Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995. Queensland Coastal Plan (draft) Sustainable Planning Act 2009. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Daintree is identified as a Key Coastal Site (KCS) under the Wet Tropical Coast Regional Coastal Management Plan. The extent of the Daintree KCS is shown in Figure B. It is noted that the Western Precinct and intersection are not within the Daintree KCS extent and are therefore not directly affected by the Wet Tropical Coast Regional Coastal Management Plan. The key opportunities and constraints to the Daintree Gateway Masterplan are summarised as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There should be no new urban development with the Daintree Gateway area. No new maritime infrastructure should be constructed in the Daintree Gateway. Dredging may continue to maintain access for the ferry crossing, however further dredging is not supported. Nature-based tourism and recreational opportunities and settings are supported with emphasis on presentation of the region's coastal resources, enhancing appreciation of World Heritage Areas, maintaining opportunities for visitors to experience undeveloped areas, and supporting Indigenous 	Whilst the Wet Tropical Coast Regional Coastal Management Plan provides a planning framework for the Wet Tropical Coast region under the Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995, no approvals are required directly under the plan. However the Daintree Gateway Masterplan and any proposed development will need to be consistent with the outcomes set out in the plan for the Daintree area and DERM may be a referral/concurrence agency under the provisions of the Act. Approvals required under other regulatory instruments referred to in the plan will also have to

Issue	Description/ Proximity to Site	Key Legislation/ Policy/ Regulations	Key Opportunities and Constraints	Approval Process
			<p>Traditional Owner cultural tourism aspirations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All new facilities and infrastructure will need to respond to climate change risks including sea-level rise. • Actions to protect development within erosion prone areas should avoid adverse impacts on coastal resources and values. Relocation of development from erosion prone areas is the preferred approach. • All new facilities and infrastructure will need to respond to coastal hazards including storm tide threat. • Esplanades should remain in an undeveloped state, with the exception of low-key development to support recreational activity such as walking tracks, day-use areas, or to minimise impacts from erosion. • Disposal of treated sewage effluent should have no adverse impacts on coastal waters. Treatment technologies and management practices that minimise impacts on coastal waters, such as treated effluent re-use, are preferred. • All new development must be sympathetic to, and reflective of the high natural values of the scenic coastal landscapes. • The impacts of all new development on coastal wetlands should be mitigated. The coastal wetlands identified in the Coastal Management Plan cover the Daintree River, north bank and areas to the east of the ferry (refer Figure C). It is noted that subsequent wetland mapping has been undertaken by DERM and this will also need to be considered. • Masterplanning and development will need to be cognisant of the biodiversity outcomes for the area. • Land tenure decisions and changes will need to be informed by collaboration and consultation with state government and indigenous traditional owners. 	<p>be obtained/adhered to.</p>

Issue	Description/ Proximity to Site	Key Legislation/ Policy/ Regulations	Key Opportunities and Constraints	Approval Process
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the coastal management district, the Department of Environment and Resource Management has authority to assess certain development applications under the <i>Sustainable Planning Act 2009</i>. • The Wet Tropical Coast Regional Coastal Management Plan outlines a specific set of desired coastal outcomes for the Daintree wetland – dune complex (key coastal site 15.1) (refer Figure D). These include a range of planning requirements to maintain the environmental values of the area which will need to be considered as part of the Masterplan. • A draft Queensland Coastal Plan has also been developed following a review of the State Coastal Plan and <i>Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995</i> in 2009. The draft Queensland Coastal Plan provides policy guidance and outlines criteria for land-use planning and assessment of development to manage development in the coastal zone. As it is likely that the draft Queensland Coastal Plan will be implemented in the near future, masterplanning and development within the coastal zone (within 5km of the coast or below 10m AHD) of the Daintree Gateway will need to be cognisant of the outcomes sought by the plan. 	
Land Use Planning	The land use planning instruments affecting the Daintree Gateway are the Far North Queensland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Planning Act 2009 • Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031 • Douglas Shire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031 sets out a range of general land-use planning policies. Various policies relevant to the Daintree Gateway Masterplan are identified in Cairns Regional Council's Daintree Gateway Masterplan Issues and Opportunities Report. The key policies relevant to the Daintree Gateway are summarised below. • Under the Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031, the entire Daintree Gateway area is contained within the Regional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development within the Daintree Gateway will be approved under the Douglas Shire Planning Scheme. • In consideration applications, Council must also consider the strategic intent set out in the Regional Plan and take

Issue	Description/ Proximity to Site	Key Legislation/ Policy/ Regulations	Key Opportunities and Constraints	Approval Process
	<p>Regional Plan 2009-2031 and the Douglas Shire Planning Scheme. These apply to all development in the Daintree Gateway area. Both plans are given statutory authority under the Sustainable Planning Act 2009.</p>	<p>Planning Scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Planning Policies 	<p>Landscape and Rural Production Area (RLRPA). In the RLRPA, the following is restricted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further fragmentation of land holdings; • Urban development, except within specific urban zonings; • Residential development associated with tourist accommodation; • Expansion of rural residential development. <p>Diversification of rural economies through the following development activities is supported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small to medium scale tourist activities; • Small scale industry, business and community activities; and • Sports and recreation facilities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031 also outlines policies intended to restrict urban development within and adjacent to identified areas of ecological significance. As indicated in Figures E and F, extensive areas of ecological significance exist within the Daintree Gateway Area, and these policies will therefore apply. • The Queensland Government has developed a raft of State Planning Policies addressing matters of state-wide ecological, community and economic significance. These are generally addressed in the Regional Plan and local Planning Scheme. Matters relevant to this site include Acid Sulfate Soils (SPP2/02), Wetlands in GBR catchments (SPP1/10), and Floods Bushfire and Landslide (SPP1/103). • The Douglas Shire Planning Scheme (adopted by the former Douglas Shire Council) sets out various policies relevant to the Daintree Gateway. Whilst the Planning Scheme is the instrument used for assessment of proposals it does not have precedence over State and Federal regulation described above. 	<p>into account the advice of referral and concurrence agencies listed above.</p>

Issue	Description/ Proximity to Site	Key Legislation/ Policy/ Regulations	Key Opportunities and Constraints	Approval Process
			<p>The key planning scheme constraints to the Daintree Gateway include (Figure G):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designated planning areas which are generally rural or conservation in the Daintree Gateway area (the conservation areas are consistent with environmental protection legislation noted above); • Potential or Actual Acid Sulfate Soils defined by the region below 20m AHD, covering the vast majority of the Daintree Gateway Site; and • Local heritage and valuable sites, including the Daintree ferry. 	
Native Title	Part of the Daintree Gateway is covered by the Eastern Kuku Yalanji Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Native Title Act 1993 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ILUA recognises Native Title claim and opportunities for indigenous community development, while allowing Council to maintain community infrastructure. • Lot 359 on SP215752 is within the Gateway area and included in the ILUA. It contains Council road and public amenities infrastructure. A subdivision of the allotment has created two reserves; the western reserve for recreational purposes (Lot 359 on SP215752) and the eastern reserve for cultural and environmental purposes (Lot 67 on SP215752). • Masterplanning and development will need to be consistent with the ILUA and the aspirations of Traditional Owners. • The ILUA allows Council to continue to maintain the existing infrastructure on the site, however changing the functionality or introduction of new infrastructure would require the agreement of Traditional Owners 	Traditional Owners must be consulted (via Jabalbina Yalanji Corporation) as stakeholder in the development of the Masterplan, to ensure the intent of the ILUA is upheld and the community development aspirations of the Eastern Kuku Yalanji are considered in the outcomes.
Iconic Places	Douglas Shire is declared as an Iconic Place of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iconic Queensland Places Act 2008 (IQPA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The IQPA provides protection mechanisms for declared iconic places. The major protection components relate to planning schemes, development assessment and local laws. The IQPA modifies local government planning and development laws and 	An impact report may be required to evaluate the effect of taking proposed actions/development on the

Issue	Description/ Proximity to Site	Key Legislation/ Policy/ Regulations	Key Opportunities and Constraints	Approval Process
	Queensland under the Iconic Queensland Places Act 2008.		<p>procedures, and imposes additional requirements for making changes to particular local laws relating to the iconic values of the place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masterplanning and development in the Daintree Gateway must be consistent with the declared iconic values of Douglas. These relate to the high biodiversity, scenic and cultural values of the region. 	iconic place.
Building Codes	All buildings proposed for the Daintree Gateway.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Code of Australia (BCA) • Queensland Development Code (QDC). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All buildings proposed for the Daintree Gateway will need to comply with the Building Code of Australia, and applicable elements of the Queensland Development Code. 	Building Approval will be required for any proposed building works.
Sustainability	Daintree Gateway Masterplan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cairns Regional Council Corporate Sustainability Policy. • Cairns Regional Council Sustainability Scorecard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Daintree Gateway Masterplan will need to be consistent with the Cairns Regional Council Sustainability Policy. The extent to which this is achieved can be measured using the Sustainability Scorecard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • n/a
Climate Change Adaption	Daintree Gateway Masterplan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cairns Regional Council Climate Change Strategy 2010-2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The values of the Climate Change Strategy should be reflected in the Daintree Gateway Masterplan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • n/a

Department of Transport and Main Roads	All road and transport infrastructure including the ferry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport Infrastructure Act 1994 • Transport Planning and Coordination Act 1994 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any development activities impacting on the road/ ferry/ transport network will require consultation and approval from the Department of Transport and Main Roads. • Upgrades to road infrastructure will need to be compliant with relevant regulations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various approvals may be required in relation to the transport infrastructure depending on the nature of the development.
Fisheries	Development in areas of state land along Daintree River Esplanade/ other waterways may require fisheries approval.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fisheries Act 1994 • Sustainable Planning Act 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development activities that interfere with State fishery resources may require Fisheries approvals under the Sustainable Planning Act. • Removal, destruction or damage of marine plants from State Land in particular, is likely to require Fisheries development approval. • Areas of State land containing marine plants/ habitat exist along the Daintree River esplanade. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Integrated Development Assessment System (IDAS) application for Fisheries development approval must be submitted to Fisheries Queensland. • A resource allocation authority (RAA) must be obtained by application to Fisheries Queensland, prior to submitting IDAS application.

Figure A: Remnant Vegetation

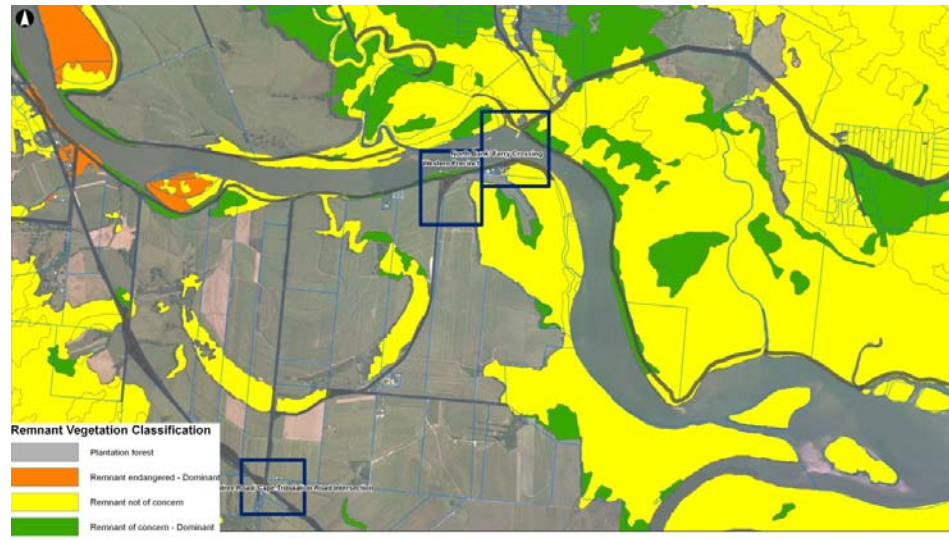
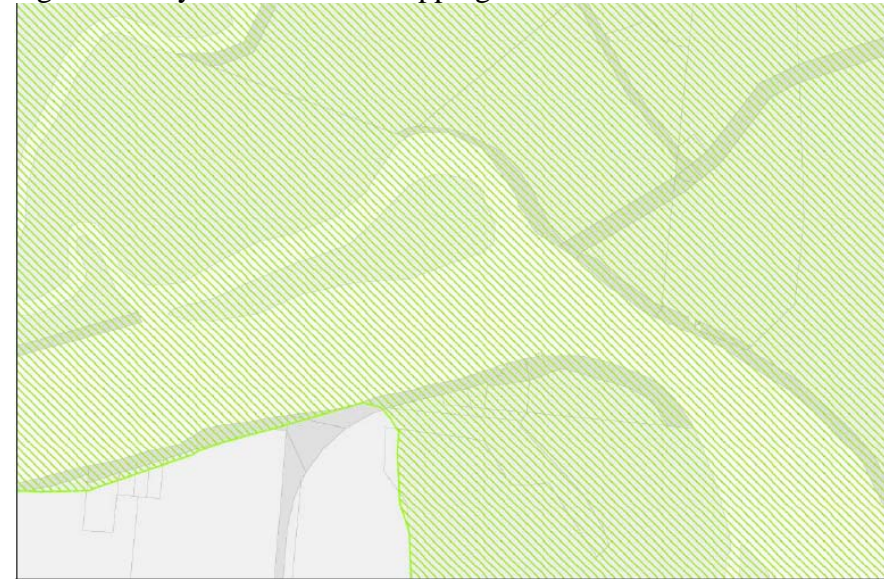


Figure B: Key Coastal Sites Mapping



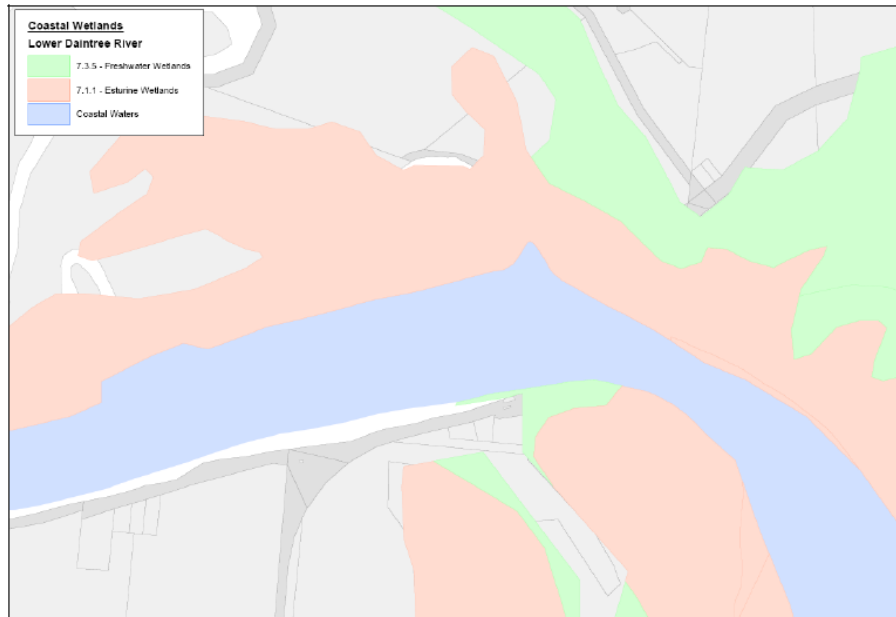


Figure C: Coastal Wetlands – Lower Daintree River (extracted from CRC, 2010)

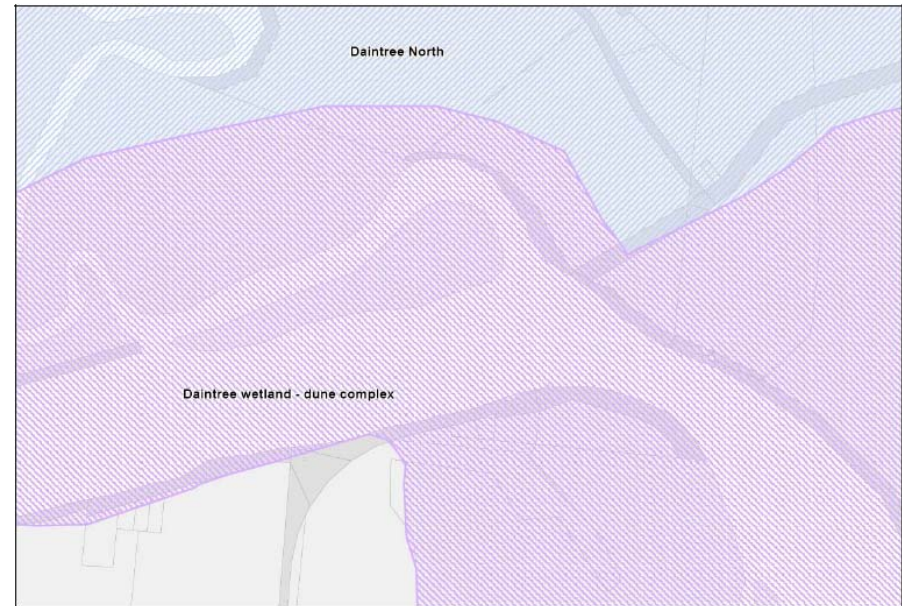


Figure D: Daintree wetland – dune complex extent (extracted from CRC, 2010)

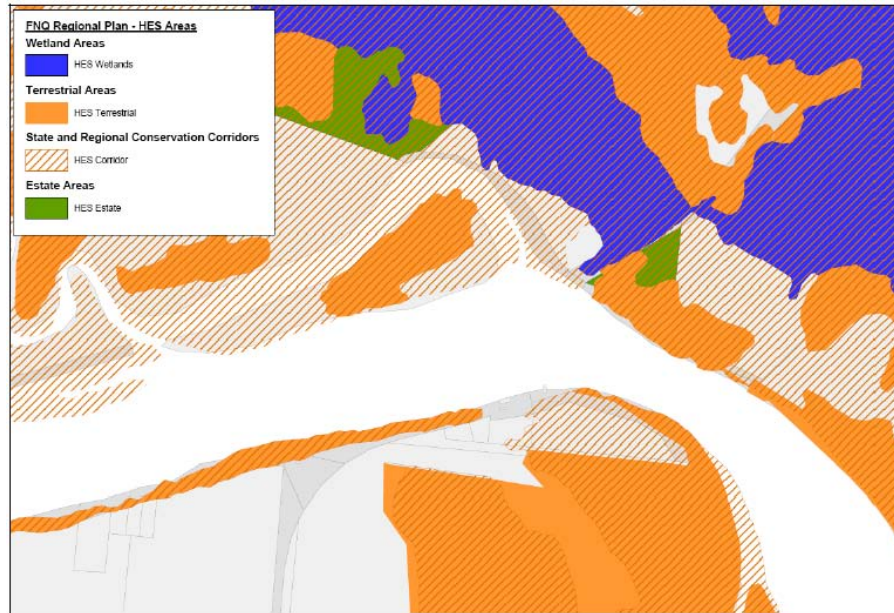


Figure E: High Ecological Significance Areas

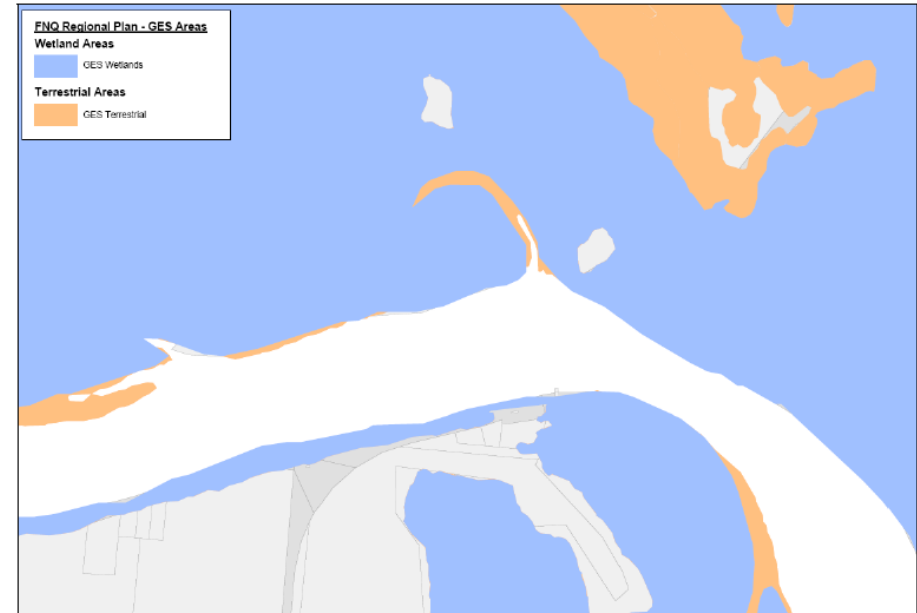


Figure F: General Ecological Significance Areas

Figure G: Douglas Shire Planning Scheme

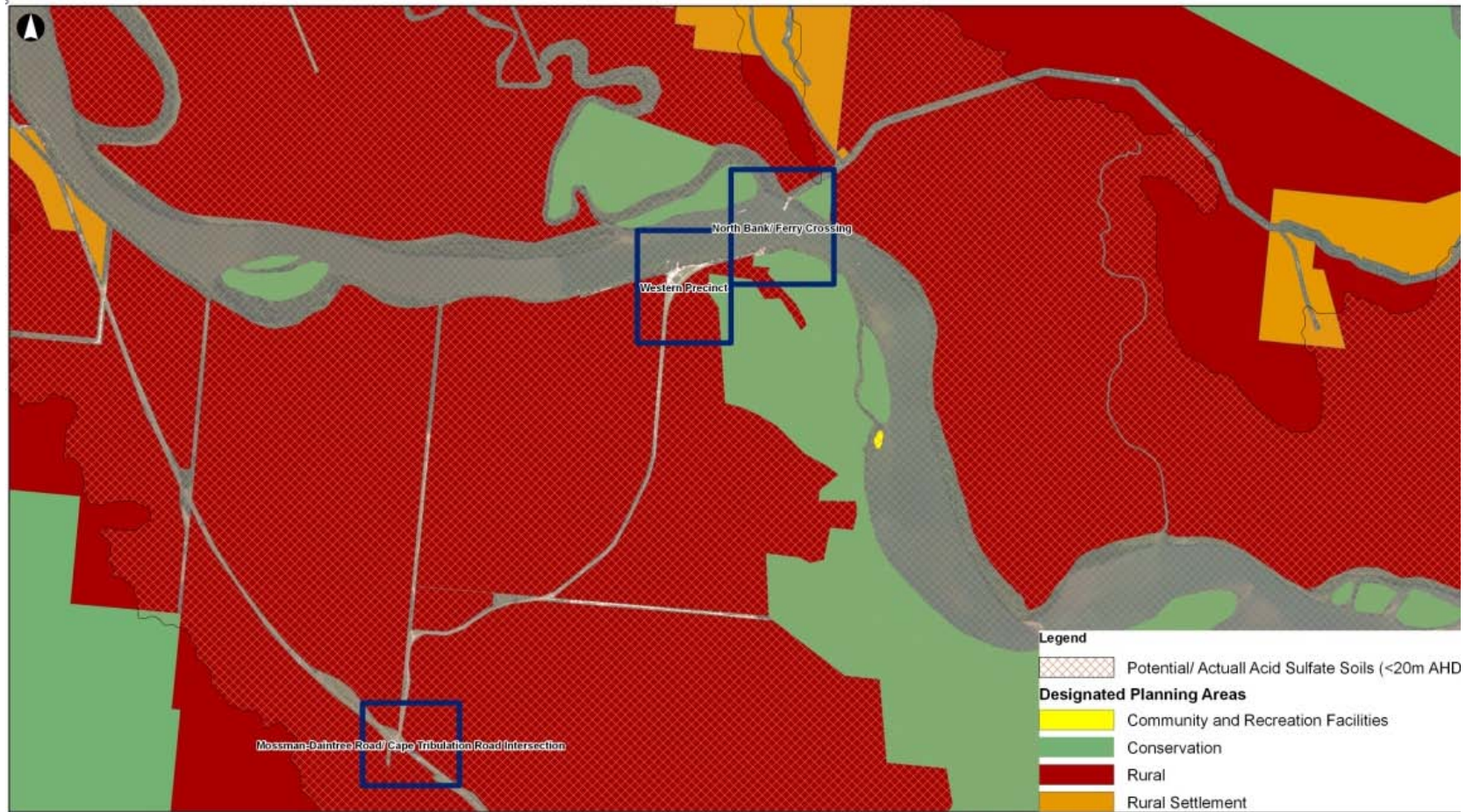
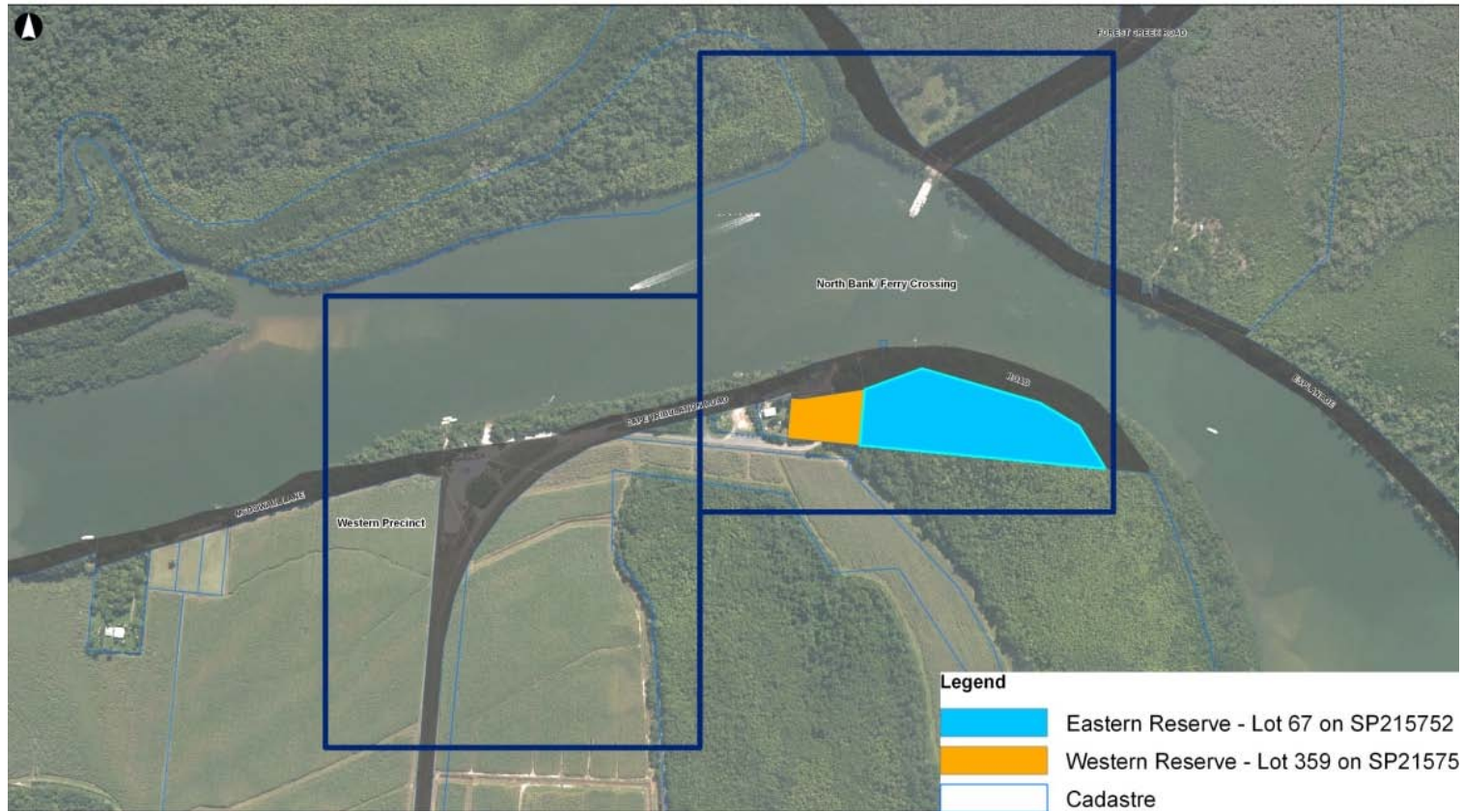


Figure H: Eastern Kuku Yalanji Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) sites



Appendix C

EPBC Act Protected Matters Report



Australian Government

Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts

Protected Matters Search Tool

You are here: [Environment Home](#) > [EPBC Act](#) > [Search](#)

9 December 2010 17:21

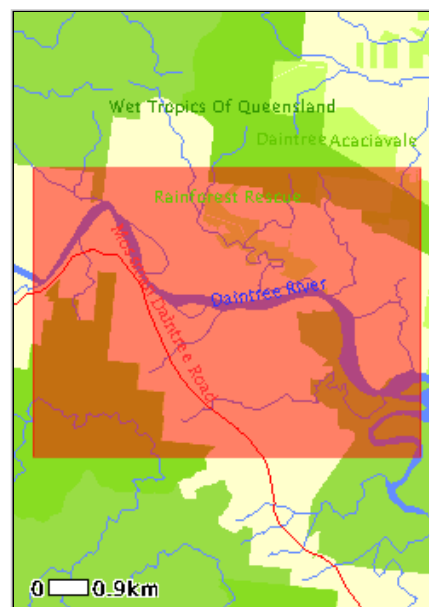
EPBC Act Protected Matters Report

This report provides general guidance on matters of national environmental significance and other matters protected by the EPBC Act in the area you have selected. Information on the coverage of this report and qualifications on data supporting this report are contained in the [caveat](#) at the end of the report.

You may wish to print this report for reference before moving to other pages or websites.

The Australian Natural Resources Atlas at <http://www.environment.gov.au/atlas> may provide further environmental information relevant to your selected area. Information about the EPBC Act including significance guidelines, forms and application process details can be found at <http://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/assessmentsapprovals/index.html>

Search Type: Area
Buffer: 0 km
Coordinates: -16.233465,145.342296, -16.291147,145.342296, -16.291147,145.419582, -16.233465,145.419582



Report Contents: [Summary](#)
[Details](#)

- [Matters of NES](#)
- [Other matters protected by the EPBC Act](#)
- [Extra Information](#)

[Caveat](#)
[Acknowledgments](#)

This map may contain data which are
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Summary

Matters of National Environmental Significance

This part of the report summarises the matters of national environmental significance that may occur in, or may relate to, the area you nominated. Further information is available in the detail part of the report, which can be accessed by scrolling or following the links below. If you are proposing to undertake an activity that may have a significant impact on one or more matters of national environmental significance then you should consider the Administrative Guidelines on Significance - see

<http://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/assessmentsapprovals/guidelines/index.html>.

World Heritage Properties:	1
National Heritage Places:	1
Wetlands of International Significance: (Ramsar Sites)	None
Commonwealth Marine Areas:	None
Threatened Ecological Communities:	None

Threatened Species:	37
Migratory Species:	24

Other Matters Protected by the EPBC Act

This part of the report summarises other matters protected under the Act that may relate to the area you nominated. Approval may be required for a proposed activity that significantly affects the environment on Commonwealth land, when the action is outside the Commonwealth land, or the environment anywhere when the action is taken on Commonwealth land. Approval may also be required for the Commonwealth or Commonwealth agencies proposing to take an action that is likely to have a significant impact on the environment anywhere.

The EPBC Act protects the environment on Commonwealth land, the environment from the actions taken on Commonwealth land, and the environment from actions taken by Commonwealth agencies. As heritage values of a place are part of the 'environment', these aspects of the EPBC Act protect the Commonwealth Heritage values of a Commonwealth Heritage place and the heritage values of a place on the Register of the National Estate. Information on the new heritage laws can be found at <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/index.html>.

Please note that the current dataset on Commonwealth land is not complete. Further information on Commonwealth land would need to be obtained from relevant sources including Commonwealth agencies, local agencies, and land tenure maps.

A permit may be required for activities in or on a Commonwealth area that may affect a member of a listed threatened species or ecological community, a member of a listed migratory species, whales and other cetaceans, or a member of a listed marine species. Information on EPBC Act permit requirements and application forms can be found at <http://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/permits/index.html>.

Commonwealth Lands:	None
Commonwealth Heritage Places:	None
Places on the RNE:	2
Listed Marine Species:	66
Whales and Other Cetaceans:	1
Critical Habitats:	None
Commonwealth Reserves:	None

Extra Information

This part of the report provides information that may also be relevant to the area you have nominated.

State and Territory Reserves:	2
Other Commonwealth Reserves:	None
Regional Forest Agreements:	None

Details

Matters of National Environmental Significance

World Heritage Properties [[Dataset Information](#)]

[Wet Tropics of Queensland QLD](#)

National Heritage Places [[Dataset Information](#)]

[Wet Tropics of Queensland QLD](#)

Threatened Species [[Dataset Information](#)]

	Status	Type of Presence
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Birds

Casuarius casuarius johnsonii Southern Cassowary (Australian), Southern Cassowary	Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area
Erythrotriorchis radiatus Red Goshawk	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area

Frogs

<i>Litoria rheocola</i> Common Mistfrog	Endangered	Species or species habitat may occur within area
<i>Nyctimystes dayi</i> Lace-eyed Tree Frog, Australian Lacelid	Endangered	Species or species habitat may occur within area
<i>Taudactylus acutirostris</i> Sharp-snouted Day Frog, Sharp-snouted Torrent Frog	Extinct	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area

Mammals

<i>Dasyurus hallucatus</i> Northern Quoll	Endangered	Species or species habitat may occur within area
<i>Hipposideros semoni</i> Semon's Leaf-nosed Bat, Greater Wart-nosed Horseshoe-bat	Endangered	Species or species habitat may occur within area
<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i> Humpback Whale	Vulnerable	Breeding known to occur within area
<i>Pteropus conspicillatus</i> Spectacled Flying-fox	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area
<i>Rhinolophus philippinensis (large form)</i> Greater Large-eared Horseshoe Bat	Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area
<i>Saccolaimus saccolaimus nudicluniatus</i> Bare-rumped Sheath-tail Bat	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat may occur within area
<i>Xeromys myoides</i> Water Mouse, False Water Rat	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area

Reptiles

<i>Caretta caretta</i> Loggerhead Turtle	Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
<i>Chelonia mydas</i> Green Turtle	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
<i>Dermodochelys coriacea</i> Leatherback Turtle, Leathery Turtle, Luth	Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i> Hawksbill Turtle	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
<i>Lepidochelys olivacea</i> Olive Ridley Turtle, Pacific Ridley Turtle	Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
<i>Natator depressus</i> Flatback Turtle	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area

Sharks

<i>Pristis clavata</i> Dwarf Sawfish, Queensland Sawfish	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area
<i>Pristis zijsron</i> Green Sawfish, Dindagubba, Narrowsnout Sawfish	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area

Plants

<i>Acriopsis javanica</i> Pale Chandelier Orchid	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
<i>Asplenium wildii</i>	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
<i>Chingia australis</i>	Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area
<i>Dendrobium superbiens</i> Curly Pinks	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
<i>Dioclea hexandra</i>	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
<i>Durabaculum mirbelianum</i> an orchid	Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
<i>Durabaculum nindii</i>	Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur

an orchid		within area
Endiandra cooperana	Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Huperzia phlegmarioides Layered Tassel-fern	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Myrmecodia beccarii	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Phaius tancarvilleae Swamp Lily, Greater Swamp-orchid	Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Phaleria biflora	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Polyscias bellendenkerensis	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Ristantia gouldii	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Taeniophyllum muelleri Minute Orchid, Ribbon-root Orchid	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Vrydagzynea paludosa (Australian population)	Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Zeuxine polygonoides	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Migratory Species [Dataset Information]	Status	Type of Presence
Migratory Terrestrial Species		
Birds		
Coracina tenuirostris melvillensis Melville Cicadabird	Migratory	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Haliaeetus leucogaster White-bellied Sea-Eagle	Migratory	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Hirundapus caudacutus White-throated Needletail	Migratory	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Hirundo rustica Barn Swallow	Migratory	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Merops ornatus Rainbow Bee-eater	Migratory	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Monarcha melanopsis Black-faced Monarch	Migratory	Breeding may occur within area
Monarcha trivirgatus Spectacled Monarch	Migratory	Breeding likely to occur within area
Myiagra cyanoleuca Satin Flycatcher	Migratory	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Rhipidura rufifrons Rufous Fantail	Migratory	Breeding may occur within area
Migratory Wetland Species		
Birds		
Ardea alba Great Egret, White Egret	Migratory	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Ardea ibis Cattle Egret	Migratory	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Gallinago hardwickii Latham's Snipe, Japanese Snipe	Migratory	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Nettapus coromandelianus albipennis Australian Cotton Pygmy-goose	Migratory	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Migratory Marine Birds		
Apus pacificus Fork-tailed Swift	Migratory	Species or species habitat may occur within area

Ardea alba Great Egret, White Egret	Migratory	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Ardea ibis Cattle Egret	Migratory	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Migratory Marine Species		
Mammals		
Megaptera novaeangliae Humpback Whale	Migratory	Breeding known to occur within area
Reptiles		
Caretta caretta Loggerhead Turtle	Migratory	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Chelonia mydas Green Turtle	Migratory	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Crocodylus porosus Salt-water Crocodile, Estuarine Crocodile	Migratory	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Dermochelys coriacea Leatherback Turtle, Leathery Turtle, Luth	Migratory	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Eretmochelys imbricata Hawksbill Turtle	Migratory	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Lepidochelys olivacea Olive Ridley Turtle, Pacific Ridley Turtle	Migratory	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Natator depressus Flatback Turtle	Migratory	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area

Other Matters Protected by the EPBC Act

Listed Marine Species [[Dataset Information](#)]

Birds

	Status	Type of Presence
Anseranas semipalmata Magpie Goose	Listed - overfly marine area	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Apus pacificus Fork-tailed Swift	Listed - overfly marine area	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Ardea alba Great Egret, White Egret	Listed - overfly marine area	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Ardea ibis Cattle Egret	Listed - overfly marine area	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Gallinago hardwickii Latham's Snipe, Japanese Snipe	Listed - overfly marine area	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Haliaeetus leucogaster White-bellied Sea-Eagle	Listed	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Hirundapus caudacutus White-throated Needletail	Listed - overfly marine area	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Hirundo rustica Barn Swallow	Listed - overfly marine area	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Merops ornatus Rainbow Bee-eater	Listed - overfly	Species or species habitat may occur within area

	marine area	
Monarcha melanopsis Black-faced Monarch	Listed - overfly marine area	Breeding may occur within area
Monarcha trivirgatus Spectacled Monarch	Listed - overfly marine area	Breeding likely to occur within area
Myiagra cyanoleuca Satin Flycatcher	Listed - overfly marine area	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Nettapus coromandelianus albigenis Australian Cotton Pygmy-goose	Listed - overfly marine area	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Rhipidura rufifrons Rufous Fantail	Listed - overfly marine area	Breeding may occur within area
Ray-finned fishes		
Acentronura tentaculata Shortpouch Pygmy Pipehorse	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Bulbonaricus davaoensis Davao Pughead Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Choeroichthys brachysoma Pacific Short-bodied Pipefish, Short-bodied Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Choeroichthys sculptus Sculptured Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Choeroichthys suillus Pig-snouted Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Corythoichthys amplexus Fijian Banded Pipefish, Brown-banded Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Corythoichthys flavofasciatus Reticulate Pipefish, Yellow-banded Pipefish, Network Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Corythoichthys intestinalis Australian Messmate Pipefish, Banded Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Corythoichthys ocellatus Orange-spotted Pipefish, Ocellated Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Corythoichthys paxtoni Paxton's Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Corythoichthys schultzi Schultz's Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Cosmocampus maxweberi Maxweber's Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Doryrhamphus dactyliophorus Banded Pipefish, Ringed Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Doryrhamphus excisus Bluestripe Pipefish, Indian Blue-stripe Pipefish, Pacific Blue-stripe Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Doryrhamphus janssi Cleaner Pipefish, Janss' Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Festucalex cinctus Girdled Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Festucalex gibbsi	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within

Gibbs' Pipefish		area
Halicampus dunckeri Red-hair Pipefish, Duncker's Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Halicampus grayi Mud Pipefish, Gray's Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Halicampus macrorhynchus Whiskered Pipefish, Ornate Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Halicampus mataafae Samoan Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Halicampus nitidus Glittering Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Halicampus spinirostris Spiny-snout Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Hippichthys cyanospilos Blue-speckled Pipefish, Blue-spotted Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Hippichthys heptagonus Madura Pipefish, Reticulated Freshwater Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Hippichthys penicillus Beady Pipefish, Steep-nosed Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Hippichthys spicifer Belly-barred Pipefish, Banded Freshwater Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Hippocampus bargibanti Pygmy Seahorse	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Hippocampus histrix Spiny Seahorse, Thorny Seahorse	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Hippocampus kuda Spotted Seahorse, Yellow Seahorse	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Hippocampus planifrons Flat-face Seahorse	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Hippocampus zebra Zebra Seahorse	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Micrognathus andersonii Anderson's Pipefish, Shortnose Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Micrognathus brevisrostris thorntail Pipefish, Thorn-tailed Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Microphis brachyurus Short-tail Pipefish, Short-tailed River Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Nannocampus pictus Painted Pipefish, Reef Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Phoxocampus diacanthus Pale-blotched Pipefish, Spined Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Siokunichthys breviceps Softcoral Pipefish, Soft-coral Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Solegnathus hardwickii Pallid Pipehorse, Hardwick's Pipehorse	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Solenostomus cyanopterus Robust Ghostpipefish, Blue-finned Ghost Pipefish,	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Solenostomus paegnius Rough-snout Ghost Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Solenostomus paradoxus Ornate Ghostpipefish, Harlequin Ghost Pipefish, Ornate Ghost Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Syngnathoides biaculeatus Double-end Pipehorse, Double-ended Pipehorse, Alligator Pipefish	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Trachyrhamphus bicoarctatus	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within

Bentstick Pipefish, Bend Stick Pipefish, Short-tailed Pipefish		area
Trachyrhamphus longirostris	Listed	Species or species habitat may occur within area
Straightstick Pipefish, Long-nosed Pipefish, Straight Stick Pipefish		
Reptiles		
Caretta caretta	Listed	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Loggerhead Turtle		
Chelonia mydas	Listed	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Green Turtle		
Crocodylus porosus	Listed	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Salt-water Crocodile, Estuarine Crocodile		
Dermochelys coriacea	Listed	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Leatherback Turtle, Leathery Turtle, Luth		
Eretmochelys imbricata	Listed	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Hawksbill Turtle		
Lepidochelys olivacea	Listed	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Olive Ridley Turtle, Pacific Ridley Turtle		
Natator depressus	Listed	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
Flatback Turtle		
Whales and Other Cetaceans [Dataset Information]	Status	Type of Presence
Megaptera novaeangliae	Cetacean	Breeding known to occur within area
Humpback Whale		

Places on the RNE [[Dataset Information](#)]
 Note that not all Indigenous sites may be listed.

Natural

[Cooktown - Daintree - Windsor Tableland Area QLD](#)

[Dagmar Range National Park \(North\) QLD](#)

Extra Information

State and Territory Reserves [[Dataset Information](#)]

Cairns Marine Park, QLD

Daintree National Park, QLD

Caveat

The information presented in this report has been provided by a range of data sources as [acknowledged](#) at the end of the report.

This report is designed to assist in identifying the locations of places which may be relevant in determining obligations under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. It holds mapped locations of World Heritage and Register of National Estate properties, Wetlands of International Importance, Commonwealth and State/Territory reserves, listed threatened, migratory and marine species and listed threatened ecological communities. Mapping of Commonwealth land is not complete at this stage. Maps have been collated from a range of sources at various resolutions.

Not all species listed under the EPBC Act have been mapped (see below) and therefore a report is a general guide only. Where available data supports mapping, the type of presence that can be determined from the data is indicated in general terms. People using this information in making a referral may need to consider the qualifications below and may need to seek and consider other information sources.

For threatened ecological communities where the distribution is well known, maps are derived from recovery plans, State vegetation maps, remote sensing imagery and other sources. Where threatened ecological community distributions are less well known, existing vegetation maps and point location data are used to produce indicative distribution maps.

For species where the distributions are well known, maps are digitised from sources such as recovery plans and detailed habitat studies. Where appropriate, core breeding, foraging and roosting areas are indicated under "type of presence". For species whose distributions are less well known, point locations are collated from government wildlife

authorities, museums, and non-government organisations; bioclimatic distribution models are generated and these validated by experts. In some cases, the distribution maps are based solely on expert knowledge.

Only selected species covered by the [migratory](#) and [marine](#) provisions of the Act have been mapped.

The following species and ecological communities have not been mapped and do not appear in reports produced from this database:

- threatened species listed as [extinct or considered as vagrants](#)
- some species and ecological communities that have only recently been listed
- [some terrestrial species](#) that overfly the Commonwealth marine area
- migratory species that are very [widespread, vagrant, or only occur in small numbers](#).

The following groups have been mapped, but may not cover the complete distribution of the species:

- non-threatened seabirds which have only been mapped for recorded breeding sites;
- seals which have only been mapped for breeding sites near the Australian continent.

Such breeding sites may be important for the protection of the Commonwealth Marine environment.

Acknowledgments

This database has been compiled from a range of data sources. The Department acknowledges the following custodians who have contributed valuable data and advice:

- [New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service](#)
- [Department of Sustainability and Environment, Victoria](#)
- [Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment, Tasmania](#)
- [Department of Environment and Heritage, South Australia Planning SA](#)
- [Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory](#)
- [Environmental Protection Agency, Queensland](#)
- [Birds Australia](#)
- [Australian Bird and Bat Banding Scheme](#)
- [Australian National Wildlife Collection](#)
- Natural history museums of Australia
- [Queensland Herbarium](#)
- [National Herbarium of NSW](#)
- [Royal Botanic Gardens and National Herbarium of Victoria](#)
- [Tasmanian Herbarium](#)
- [State Herbarium of South Australia](#)
- [Northern Territory Herbarium](#)
- [Western Australian Herbarium](#)
- [Australian National Herbarium, Atherton and Canberra](#)
- [University of New England](#)
- Other groups and individuals

[ANUCliM Version 1.8, Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies, Australian National University](#) was used extensively for the production of draft maps of species distribution. Environment Australia is extremely grateful to the many organisations and individuals who provided expert advice and information on numerous draft distributions.

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