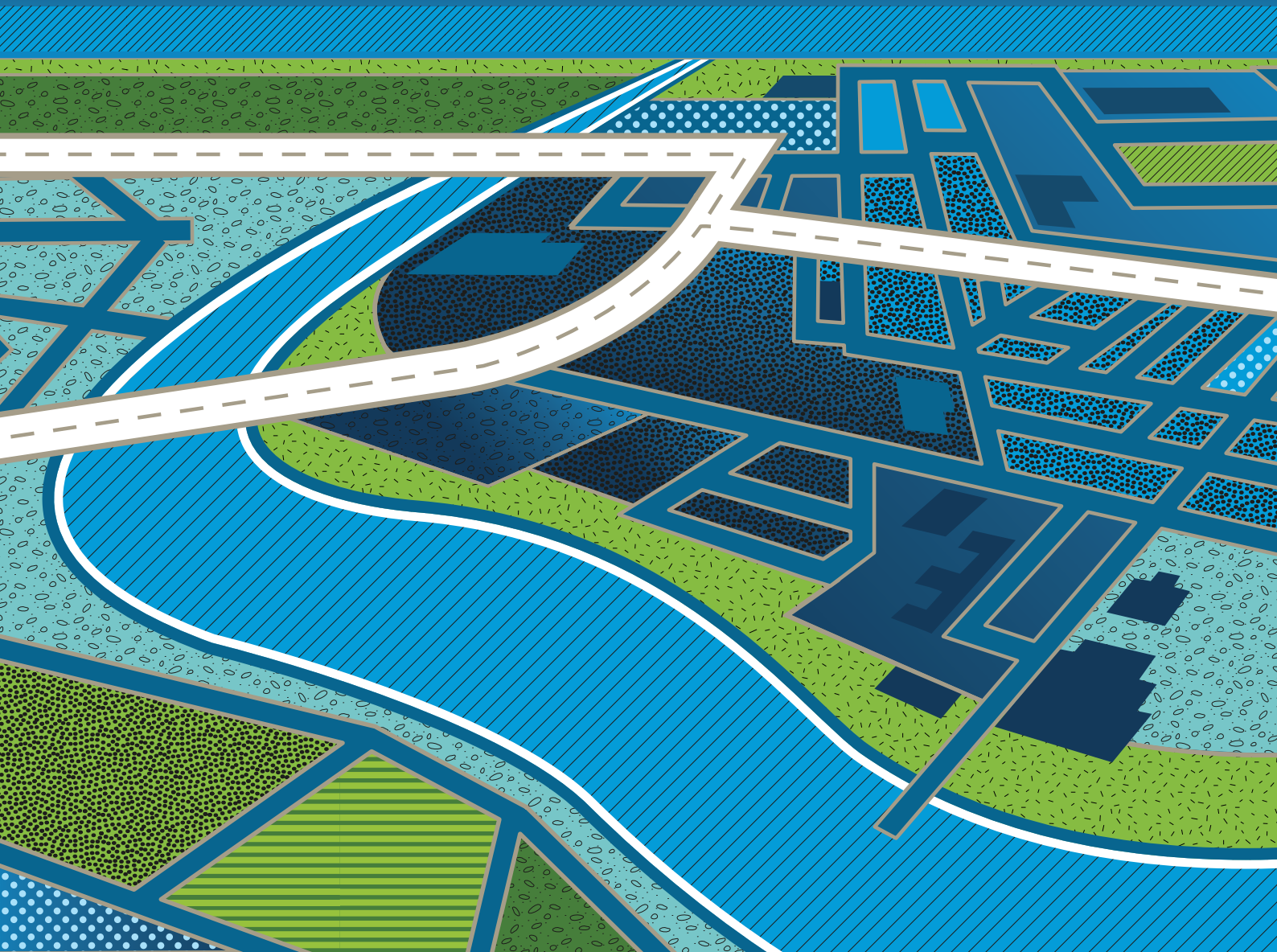


# ONE REGION, ONE VISION



## Mackay Region PLANNING SCHEME



**GREG WILLIAMSON**  
MAYOR



## MAYOR'S MESSAGE

**On behalf of elected members, the CEO and staff of Mackay Regional Council, it is a great pleasure to be able to present the first ever planning scheme for the council region created by the amalgamation of Mackay City, Sarina Shire and Mirani Shire councils in 2008.**

The **Mackay Region Planning Scheme 2017** plays a pivotal community role by promoting growth, delivering housing diversity, identifying significant amounts of land for future residential, industrial and commercial development and by informing a development future unified under a single planning framework – “One region, one vision”.

The planning scheme will make it easier to do business with Mackay Regional Council through a range of measures to streamline the application and assessment process. It provides business and investors with certainty and confidence, encouraging them to “have a go”. It is business friendly, delivering lower assessment levels, which results in reduced costs and faster assessment.

Our environment, natural resources and natural hazards are considered and managed in accordance with community expectations.

The aim is to promote our region's exceptional “livability” through the application of a living document that informs the way our region will grow. It delivers a balanced framework through to 2036 which will guide the evolution of this great community.

Thanks to the fantastic planning team who have worked so diligently for 12 months to deliver such a landmark document for our region.

Thank you to the many submitters from the public who took the time to inform council on their views for our planned future.

Finally, a special thanks to the elected members who devoted countless hours in review and instruction, consultation and debate to deliver the first ever single planning scheme for Mackay Regional Council.

**Cr Greg Williamson**  
**Mayor of Mackay Regional Council**



# A NEW FRAMEWORK SHAPING OUR FUTURE

THE MACKAY REGION IS VIBRANT, PROSPEROUS AND DIVERSE. OUR REGION OFFERS LIVEABILITY, INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY AND A UNIQUE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT TO ENJOY FROM THE BLUE WATER PIONEER RIVER TO THE NATIONAL PARK HINTERLAND AND WITH 31 PRISTINE BEACHES AND OVER 40 UNIQUE COMMUNITIES. WE VALUE OUR ENVIRONMENT, OUR COMMUNITY AND OUR RELAXED YET VIBRANT WAY OF LIFE. OUR COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORTS AN ACTIVE AND CONNECTED LIFESTYLE ACROSS OUR REGION.

The economic foundation has been built upon servicing the industries of agriculture, tourism, mining and engineering. As a region we aim to facilitate economic growth, attract further investment and deliver strategic planning that creates employment, supports diversity, protects our natural environment and provides opportunities for all in our community.

The Mackay Region Planning Scheme 2017 seeks to give effect to these aspirations and goals. The planning scheme balances an array of sometimes competing interests to map out a 20-year blueprint for our region's future.

## **The planning scheme encourages development that:**

- maintains our liveability, natural assets and natural resources
- effectively manages potential impacts from natural hazards
- can be serviced effectively and economically by infrastructure and other services

## **In our urban areas, the planning scheme seeks to facilitate:**

- sustainable growth close to existing and planned services
- mix complementary uses to minimise the number and length of trips required
- a network of vibrant, diverse and well-connected centres

- a range of housing options that meets the needs of our residents
- easy movement through and between neighbourhoods by a range of transport modes

The planning scheme will be an evolving document that will be continually refined, improved and updated to reflect latest information and planning circumstances. It is anticipated that a major review will be prepared around 2027 (10 years after the commencement of this planning scheme).



# SUPPORTING OUR STRONG ECONOMY

THE PLANNING SCHEME AIMS TO REINFORCE THE MACKAY REGION'S STRONG AND DIVERSE ECONOMY AND OUR ROLE AS CENTRAL QUEENSLAND'S PREMIER POPULATION CENTRE AND SERVICES HUB. OUR REGION'S ECONOMY IS DRIVEN BY MINING-RELATED SERVICE INDUSTRIES, AGRICULTURE, CONSTRUCTION, TOURISM AND A GROWING DEMAND FOR GOODS AND SERVICES.

In addition to providing for the continuation of industry at Paget and other industrial precincts, the planning scheme identifies almost 1200ha of land within Industry and Industry Investigation zones (an increase of more than 250ha\*).

It is widely known that Mackay is one of Australia's largest sugar producing regions. However, our region also provides strong opportunities for a range of agricultural activities given our favourable climate, soil quality and access to services and transport. Productive agricultural land and

infrastructure, such as sugar mills and rail corridors, and existing intensive agricultural activities are protected by provisions that seek to prevent encroachment of incompatible development.

Similar provisions also protect the ongoing operation of existing extractive resources and key transport corridors and ports.

The planning scheme provides opportunities for tourism development in flexible urban and rural zones and our existing resorts.

Exciting developments for CQUniversity, namely its comprehensive master plan at Orolea and acquisition of facilities in the City Centre, are supported by the planning scheme.

*\* Compared to previous Mackay City, Sarina Shire and Mirani Shire planning schemes*



## PROVIDING FOR URBAN GROWTH

**Our region experienced its highest sustained economic and population growth period from 2002 to 2013 and then experienced a period of economic adjustment. The region will continue to accommodate steady population growth for the foreseeable future, driven by the resilience and diversity of our established industries, new economic opportunities and our region's lifestyle and other advantages.**

The planning scheme adequately caters for projected growth and has additional capacity. The planning scheme is able to accommodate 55,000 people in new development areas and on "infill" development sites in existing neighbourhoods. The planning scheme can accommodate more than 23,000 new houses across the region's key urban areas (Mackay, Sarina, Walkerston, Marian and Mirani).

Based on current growth projections, the planning scheme provides more than 20 years of land supply for residential development. This figure will increase if opportunities for higher density development are utilised.

It is important that growth in our region is accommodated in a sustainable way - that is, in developments that are well located, designed and sequenced to minimise costs to the community and our ratepayers and to maximise liveability outcomes for new residents. Reflecting this, the planning scheme clearly defines intended urban footprints so that new development can be located within or adjoining areas already serviced by utility and social infrastructure.

## VIBRANT, DIVERSE & CONNECTED CENTRES

**Our region's centres will continue to evolve into interesting, vibrant and attractive neighbourhood hubs that people are proud of and want to gather in for a variety of reasons. Centres are not intended to be just competing shopping centres or office parks. Rather, they will be the right size to serve their catchment, contain a diverse mix of land uses and be well designed and highly accessible.**

Our high-order centres will ultimately provide a variety of living, employment and recreation opportunities, high-quality pedestrian environments and strong transport linkages (including public and active transport) to other centres.

### **Planning scheme zones and accompanying provisions set out the intended network of centres:**

- Principal centre - Mackay City Centre - largest and most diverse centre in the region
- Major centres - Mount Pleasant, Rural View and Sarina - large and diverse centres servicing sub-regional catchments
- District centres - North Mackay, Andergrove, West Mackay, Walkerston and Marian - generally includes a full sized supermarket and a range of other uses servicing surrounding suburbs
- Local centres - convenience retail and other uses servicing the surrounding local area
- Neighbourhood centres - small convenience retail and other uses servicing the immediate neighbourhood
- Specialised centres - Richmond and Ooralea - large bulky goods showrooms and hardware stores.



## HERITAGE AND NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER

**Our region boasts a large number of heritage places and our oldest neighbourhoods contain many traditional character buildings. Sensitive management of our heritage and character is imperative to maintain both our sense of history and sense of identity.**

The planning scheme identifies heritage places of state (36 places) and local (103 places) significance. While State legislation applies to state heritage places, scheme provisions specific to local heritage places will ensure that any proposed demolition or new building work and any new development on adjoining sites retain and/or respect heritage values.

The planning scheme also identifies “neighbourhood character areas” - that is, precincts exhibiting strong “timber and tin” character owing to a prevalence of traditional cottages, bungalows and Queenslander-style houses. Complete replication of traditional styles is not expected. However, new buildings, including houses, and some building extensions will be required to adopt elements of the prevailing traditional character.

Former “corner shop” buildings are also considered to make a substantial contribution to neighbourhood character. Many of these buildings are within residential zones. However, the planning scheme introduces new provisions that allow the reinstatement of certain non-residential uses without having to apply to council. This is expected to encourage retention of these important character buildings.

## MANAGING NATURAL HAZARDS

**Our region’s tropical climate and natural environment provide an idyllic living environment and lifestyle opportunities. The price we pay for living in a tropical paradise, however, is that we are subjected to a range of natural hazards.**

The planning scheme contains a variety of measures to manage the impacts of natural hazards on new development and, therefore, contribute to the resilience of our communities.

The region can experience substantial rainfall and cyclonic activity between November and May. Riverine flooding can significantly impact our urban areas with management measures identified in the Flood and Coastal Hazards Overlay.

The planning scheme draws upon detailed flood studies to:

- provide mapping identifying land affected by large uncommon flood events
- prevent development in the worst affected areas through zoning
- set appropriate floor levels and design requirements

The planning scheme also identifies areas potentially affected by storm surge, coastal erosion, landslide and bushfire. Within these areas, new development is required to be located, designed and constructed to minimise risk and not worsen impacts on adjoining and nearby sites.



# HEALTHY NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Our region has a unique, diverse and beautiful natural environment. Our natural areas include rainforest-clad mountains, open forests, riparian environments, wetlands, a diverse and dynamic coastal zone, islands and marine environments. A key aim of the planning scheme is to ensure that our region's natural values are maintained and continue to sustain high levels of biodiversity for current and future generations.

Although several pieces of state and federal legislation regulate environmental matters (and duplication of these in the planning scheme is avoided), provisions aiming to maintain a healthy natural environment are embedded throughout the planning scheme. The following elements of the planning scheme specifically address environmental matters:

- Conservation zone - covers land with declared conservation status - national parks, state forests, conservation parks, nature/ environmental reserves, land protected land under the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and council land purchased under the Natural Environment Levy
- Biodiversity overlay - requires new development to maintain values in identified environmentally significant vegetation areas, wildlife habitat areas, natural waterways and natural wetlands
- Healthy waters code - seeks to ensure that large new developments effectively manage the quality of stormwater and wastewater discharge in order to maintain the health of our creeks, rivers and marine environments
- Open space requires management of natural assets where applicable





## HOUSING DIVERSITY

THE PLANNING SCHEME PROVIDES FOR A RANGE OF HOUSING OPTIONS AND PRODUCTS IN OUR REGION. THE PLANNING SCHEME RESPECTS THE DESIRABILITY OF DETACHED DWELLING HOUSES ON URBAN LOTS, AND IT IS ENVISAGED THAT THIS FORM OF HOUSING WILL ACCOMMODATE A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF OUR REGION'S RESIDENTS INTO THE FUTURE.



In future residential subdivisions, it is anticipated that detached dwellings will continue to account for much of the new dwelling stock. In existing neighbourhoods, the minimum lot size has increased from 300m<sup>2</sup> to 400m<sup>2</sup> in the Low Density Residential Zone to better maintain established low density character.

However, our demographics are changing and it is important that we provide a variety of housing types to suit a variety of lifestyle needs. It is also important that we limit urban sprawl into our agricultural land and environmental areas and maximise the efficiency of our infrastructure.

The planning scheme aims to meet these challenges by accommodating more well-designed medium and high density housing in suitable locations.

### **To help facilitate this:**

- medium and high-density residential zone has been expanded (total area 515ha)
- multiple dwellings are now provided for in higher order centres and new mixed use zones
- minimum density requirements in strategically important areas have been set
- minimum average density requirements in new development areas are identified





SCHEME DRAFTING  
COMMENCED  
JUNE 2011

STATE  
GOVERNMENT  
INTEREST REVIEW  
APRIL 2012 -  
FEB 2013

PUBLIC  
CONSULTATION  
MAY-AUG 2013  
OCT-DEC 2014  
OCT-DEC 2016

MINISTER'S  
APPROVAL  
JUNE 2017

SCHEME ADOPTED  
JUNE 28, 2017  
COMMENCED  
JULY 24, 2017

## THE PREPARATION PROCESS

THE PLANNING SCHEME WAS ADOPTED ON JUNE 28, 2017, AND CAME INTO EFFECT ON JULY 24, 2017.

The planning scheme is the culmination of a comprehensive preparation process which involved extensive investigations, analysis and stakeholder engagement. The planning scheme is supported by an extensive range of supporting studies, a number of which included their own engagement processes.

### Key supporting studies include:

- Population modelling
- Centres Strategy
- Residential Densities Strategy
- Rural and Rural Residential Review
- Local area planning exercises
- Flood studies
- State Planning Policy compliance study
- Development Feasibility Review

Council has worked closely with relevant State Government agencies throughout the process to ensure that regional and state interests have been addressed.

Drafting the planning scheme commenced in June 2011. With significant consultation in 2013, 2014 and 2016, the planning scheme has had the largest public consultation ever undertaken by council.

### This involved:

- material displayed - customer service centres, libraries and website
- letters sent - landowners of properties with a proposed zone change, key stakeholders and all ratepayers
- community and stakeholder specific information sessions
- display stalls at community events
- awareness - newsletters, media adverts, media articles, social media, council call centre hold messages and e-mail signatures, community noticeboards, bus adverts etc.

Detailed consideration was given to every issue raised in submissions. Over half of the issues raised either supported aspects of the draft planning scheme or prompted changes.



## A BETTER PLAN FOR OUR REGION

THE PLANNING SCHEME HERALDS A NEW CHAPTER IN THE REGION'S EVOLUTION AND, IN COMPARISON TO THE FORMER PLANNING SCHEMES, INCLUDES A HOST OF BENEFITS AND ADVANTAGES.

**Key benefits and advantages are summarised as follows:**

- **One planning scheme for the region**  
A single coherent planning framework for the region with a flat and logical structure and clear provisions. This replaces an unavoidably complex and uncoordinated planning system under three separate planning schemes.
- **Contemporary**  
The former planning schemes were drafted under superseded legislation and based on supporting studies prepared up to 15 years ago. The new planning scheme complies with current legislation, uses best practice drafting techniques and is informed by contemporary supporting information.
- **Comprehensive forward planning**  
The planning scheme includes a comprehensive strategic plan detailing the vision for our region over the next 20 plus years. This level of forward planning was absent from the former schemes.
- **Investigation areas**  
Large areas considered potentially suitable for future development (subject to investigation and demand) have been identified for the first time at Ooralea, Richmond, Rosella and Sarina East.
- **Accommodating growth**  
The planning scheme identifies land not previously identified for future residential residential (new areas zoned Emerging community), industrial (new areas zoned Industry investigation) and commercial (new areas in Centre zones and significant increases in maximum gross floor area) development. These allocations will be more than adequate to accommodate projected growth over the next 20 years.
- **Infill development and intensification -**  
The amount of land zoned for higher density residential development under the planning scheme has more than doubled (234ha to 515ha) in addition to new opportunities in centres and greenfield development areas. Maximum building heights in Mackay City Centre and at a range of suburban locations have also increased. These bold and exciting changes are part of council's vision to facilitate a more sophisticated multi-nodal settlement pattern supported by a diverse range of housing.
- **Reduced levels of assessment -**  
The planning scheme has clear provisions managing the impacts of development. However, the planning scheme also adopts a more risk tolerant approach where impacts are minimal. Reflecting this, the level of assessment for several types of development has been lowered, and in many cases a development application to council is no longer required. Examples include new uses in existing buildings in centres, houses in flood and landslide areas, multiple dwellings in centres and residential areas, child care centres and development in the Emerging community zone.
- **More responsive and flexible zones -**  
The planning scheme introduces a number of new zones that are more relevant to existing conditions and / or provide more guidance / flexibility for potential development outcomes. Key examples are providing for tourism accommodation in urban areas, the Fringe commercial precinct and the Neighbourhood centre zone.



THIS STREAMLINING OF PROVISIONS WILL DELIVER CONFIDENCE AND FLEXIBILITY FOR DEVELOPERS. THE REDUCED LEVELS OF ASSESSMENT FOR SOME ZONES ARE QUANTIFIED BELOW:

**ZONES:** FORMER PLANNING SCHEME TO NEW PLANNING SCHEME

Zone	Reduction from impact to code	Reduction from code to self
Low density residential	11%	7%
Medium density residential (compared to urban residential)	26%	7%
Medium density residential (compared to City Centre Higher density)	20%	3%
District centre	31%	33%
Local centre	31%	37%
High impact industry	46%	0%
Emerging community zone	74%	2%
Rural zone	16%	21%

## FIND OUT MORE

USER GUIDES ON THE MACKAY REGION PLANNING SCHEME AVAILABLE ONLINE INCLUDE:

**General - using the planning scheme and development process:**

1. Using the planning scheme
2. What is my zone?
3. Do I need to lodge a Development Application?
4. Pre-lodgement processes
5. How to make a development application
6. The development assessment process
7. Having your say on a development application
8. After a development approval is issued

**Specific - development types/issues/locality:**

9. Dwelling houses
10. Sheds
11. Dual occupancies
12. Multiple dwellings
13. Home based business
14. Commercial development
15. Mackay City Centre
16. Residential subdivision - urban areas
17. Residential subdivision - non-urban areas
18. Industrial development
19. Development framework plans
20. Infrastructure contributions
21. Flood hazard area requirements
22. Heritage and neighbourhood character requirements
23. Driveways and works in road reserves
24. Signs
25. Bee-keeping

THE MACKAY REGION PLANNING SCHEME CAN BE VIEWED ONLINE - [MACKAY.QLD.GOV.AU/PLANNINGScheme](http://MACKAY.QLD.GOV.AU/PLANNINGScheme)



### TO LODGE AN ONLINE ENQUIRY:

- > [MACKAY.QLD.GOV.AU](http://MACKAY.QLD.GOV.AU)
- > SERVICES
- > ONLINE
- > PROPERTY AND DEVELOPMENT
- > DUTY PLANNER ENQUIRIES

**PHONE** 1300 MACKAY (1300 622 529)

### VIEW THE PLANNING SCHEME:

[MACKAY.QLD.GOV.AU/PLANNINGScheme](http://MACKAY.QLD.GOV.AU/PLANNINGScheme)

## Mackay Region

**PLANNING SCHEME**

#### DISCLAIMER

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