Regional vision

The Wide Bay Burnett region has a distinct identity and strong sense of community, achieved through a balanced lifestyle that respects cultural values and provides diverse employment and recreation opportunities. It has a robust regional economy supported by a well-managed and high value natural environment, plentiful natural resources and a strong agricultural base. This in turn provides accessible community services, infrastructure and affordable housing choices that support the region's liveability and sustainability.

The regional vision is the foundation of the regional plan. It defines the community's long-term aspirations for the region, and presents a view of what the region values now and how it would like to be in the future. It seeks to balance the recognised 'lifestyle' values of the region with the establishment of a strong economy, while recognising that the long-term prosperity of the region is reliant on sound management of the region's natural resources and ongoing viability of the agricultural sector.

In seeking a liveable and sustainable region, the regional plan will support:

- a balanced lifestyle with diverse housing, employment and recreation opportunities
- a distinct character and sense of community based on its people and their culture
- the retention of the regionally unique built and natural environments
- a robust economy built on the foundations of its natural and human resources that takes opportunities to build diversity and resilience to change
- infrastructure and services that meet the region's need to support the economy, accessibility and healthy, active communities.

The regional vision was developed in consultation with the Wide Bay Burnett Regional Planning Committee, and reflects the aspirations of regional communities, as well as key regional networks and industry sectors.

The vision is consistent with the Queensland Government's 2020 vision (Toward Q2: Tomorrow’s Queensland), which sets out targets around five ambitions for communities in every Queensland region:

- Strong: Create a diverse economy powered by bright ideas
- Green: Protect our lifestyle and environment
- Smart: Deliver world-class education and training
- Healthy: Make Queenslanders Australia’s healthiest people
- Fair: Support a safe and caring community.

The regional framework establishes the direction for how the regional plan seeks to achieve the vision and includes the following components:

- The strategic directions further express regional vision while describing the current situation and the desired outcomes for the region.
- The regional settlement pattern narrative describes how the region will grow and develop. It tells the historical story of the region, and expresses the features of the settlement pattern that will contribute to the achievement of the regional vision.
- The subregional narratives apply the features of the settlement pattern and the desired regional outcomes to each local government area that makes up the region, describing each subregion's historical context and role in advancing toward the regional vision.

Strategic directions

The strategic directions set down the broad policy framework for the region. They identify the important aspects involved in planning for the region's long-term development into a connected and accessible network of vibrant, healthy communities. These healthy communities will be achieved through appropriate management of the region's natural resources and environmental assets, and mechanisms that support a bustling economy.
The following strategic directions support the regional vision and inform the principles and policies identified in the desired regional outcomes.

**Sustainability, climate change and natural hazards**

The region is to be managed in a sustainable way by containing and consolidating the region's ecological footprint, while enhancing its economy and residents' quality of life.

The regional plan aims to create a balance between biodiversity, urban development, community identity and the economy. In order to achieve this, improvements to existing social, ecological and economic systems need to be identified and implemented.

An additional consideration in establishing the directions for the region is the global environmental challenge of climate change. Scientific evidence indicates climate change is already impacting, and will continue to impact, on all communities. Building the region's resilience to such implications requires a coordinated response.

Projections for the region include a decline in rainfall, with increasing temperature and evaporation, in conjunction with more extreme weather events, and possible sea level rise impacting on coastal communities. These temperature and rainfall changes are likely to affect the communities and industries throughout the region, and will require specific management to ensure impacts are minimised.

International and Australian research indicates that there are significant benefits to be gained from responding immediately to climate change by both reducing the emission of greenhouse gases and adapting to climate change impacts. In simple terms, earlier reduction of emissions and adaptation to climate change will mean fewer long-term costs to economic growth and lifestyle.

Strategies to increase the region's resilience to climate change impacts will strengthen the economy and protect environmental and natural resource values. These may include using water more responsibly and adopting sustainable land management practices. Further modelling and research to identify regionally specific implications and opportunities will be required.

The effects of climate change may be mitigated through adaptation strategies, for example, through influencing the location and design of development, and protecting areas at risk (in particular coastal areas) from sea level rise.

A consolidated urban form and the adoption of transit oriented development principles will assist in reducing greenhouse gas emissions through increased walking and cycling, and a reduction in the frequency and length of vehicle trips.

Natural and man-made hazards also pose a significant threat to the region, including flood, bushfire and coastal hazards. Future development should not be located in areas of risk from natural hazards, and should be designed to mitigate risks to life and property.

Complex interrelationships between climate change and sustainability and the other regional priorities exist which will require consideration as part of all the desired regional outcomes.

**Environment**

The natural environment underpins the economy and lifestyle enjoyed by the residents of the region. Many of these environmental values are recognised at national and international levels. The World Heritage areas of Fraser Island and the Great Barrier Reef, along with the Ramsar-listed Great Sandy Strait wetland, comprise a significant portion of the region's coastal land and waters.

The Great Sandy Biosphere has been established, and is one of the most diverse regions in Australia. It spans a subtropical to temperate 'transition' zone, and contains representative species from both climates, including some that are unique to the region. It contains the world's tallest and most complex rainforests growing on sand, habitat supporting half of Australia's known bird species, more marine fish diversity than the entire Great Barrier Reef, over 7500 recorded species of fauna and flora (many of which are rare or endangered), the largest and highest perched dune lakes in the world, World and National Heritage listed areas, and the world's best observable example of ancient sand dunes.

Population growth and climate change pose immediate and significant threats to the region's natural assets, highlighting the imperative for sustainable management and use.

Previous urban and rural residential developments have been acknowledged as impacting on the significant natural environmental values through:

- loss and fragmentation of important habitats in the coastal zone, an area high in biodiversity and environmental values, terrestrial ecosystems and wetland environments
- poor water quality entering wetlands, waterways, estuarine systems and the Great Barrier Reef Lagoon as a result of urban development and land management practices
- the spread of invasive pest weed and animal species.

The health and resilience of the environment will be improved through managing new impacts on areas of ecological value, encouraging sustainable management practices, and limiting urban encroachment and rural residential subdivision in these areas. Connectivity will also
be achieved through identifying and preserving areas of high ecological significance, protecting and restoring waterways, and expanding and linking green space across the region, allowing for increased public use and accessibility. This will allow the region's significant biodiversity to continue its contribution to the prosperity of the region economically, socially and culturally.

**Natural resource management**

The region's plentiful natural resources include productive agricultural land, freshwater systems, air, forests, native plants and animals, minerals and marine waters. These resources underpin the region's economy, and support the diverse range of industry and business opportunities that rely on their quality and accessibility.

Population growth places significant stress on the condition and availability of natural resources. Escalating pressures and a continual reliance on natural resources highlights the necessity for sustainably managing these resources for current and future generations. Proper management of the natural resources associated with agriculture and mining is also vital to the future of the region.

Limiting loss and further fragmentation of productive agricultural lands and forestry will ensure the strong economic base of the region is maintained. Supporting rural activities through opportunities for diversification and value adding will encourage ongoing confidence in the industry.

Water resources, both quality and quantity, will play a significant role in building resilience and providing water security for the region.

**Rural futures**

Rural communities are an important component of the regional fabric. They are major contributors to Queensland's economy, providing diverse agriculture, grazing and fishing opportunities. Strong rural communities that have sustainable economies will contribute to the overall wealth, character and liveability of the area. The sustainability and viability of rural communities needs to be supported to ensure the region's quality of life.

Natural resources are in many ways the foundation of rural communities. Economic growth will result from the protection of natural resources, such as water through sustainable management practices, and rural production lands by limiting further fragmentation and managing impacts from urban encroachment. Alternative activities that are compatible with rural activities, such as tourism and rural industries, will also assist in sustainability and longevity of these rural landscapes.

Sustainable planning and infrastructure and human services delivery in a region with many small towns and a dispersed settlement pattern requires diverse and adaptive approaches. State and local government will need to work together with rural communities to promote leadership, social networking and enhanced communication to provide opportunities to capitalise on and preserve their special attributes and valued characteristics.

**Strong communities**

The region is made up of many vibrant local communities, each with their own unique character and identity. The region is growing rapidly, and this presents many challenges in managing the implications of growth while continuing to support the prosperity of local communities.

High levels of disadvantage have been consistently recorded over many years for the region. There are many causes for these circumstances, and records show that a significant number of residents are experiencing some form of disadvantage, such as low income, low educational attainment, unemployment or low levels of car ownership.

Demographic factors, such as a significantly higher than average ageing population and the dispersed nature of the population, mean supporting growth is a complex task. Other factors, such as geographical distribution, access to transport, appropriate and affordable housing, family and social support, adequate income and employment, a quality built environment, community safety and optimal health are all contributors to community wellbeing.

Strengthening the region's communities will occur through consolidating and improving built environments, understanding the uniqueness of place and the needs of individual groups, working in partnership with communities to inform planning and decision-making processes, and ensuring access to key essential community services by all residents. This will ensure that the liveability of the region is retained and improved.

Many residents live in rural areas, where essential community services are often provided via outreach from larger centres. The dispersed settlement pattern in the region results in many residents travelling some distance to access health and education services, business and employment opportunities, and social and cultural experiences. Other factors, such as a lack of timely and affordable transport options, further inhibit access to such services. A settlement pattern that consolidates growth within, and close to, key centres will improve accessibility, as will adopting alternative solutions such as videoconferencing as part of service provision.

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1 Social and Economic Indicators for Areas (SEIFA) data from the 2006 Census, the Scan of Disadvantage 2010.
Individual communities create place and identity, and are the essence of any regional area. It is their ability to respond to change and maintain unique characteristics that distinguishes one region from another. Strong communities look to provide social and economic opportunities to encourage people to remain in, return or move to the region. Improving employment and education opportunities will assist in the attraction of a wider demographic profile. This is particularly important to locations with greater numbers of older people. Ensuring a more balanced social mix and providing for the retention of young people and young families within these communities are essential for the future growth and sustainability of the region.

Engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Many of the region's communities have significant numbers of resident Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, in particular, Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council area. Although the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is not proportionally high, these residents show very high levels of social disadvantage (notably in terms of health, education and general community service participation and access).

The active involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including Traditional Owners, in planning and decision-making processes is imperative, particularly given the high number of cultural sites and artefacts to be identified and considered across the region.

The culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is unique and offers many economic and cultural advantages. Similarly the importance of connection to Country for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders should not be underestimated, as it is this connection that underpins the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Urban consolidation and delivery

The region's settlement pattern currently consists of several regional cities and large towns, and numerous rural and coastal communities. This produces many challenges to economic growth, accessibility, and the provision of infrastructure and services across the region. In addition, the trend toward growth in coastal locations may potentially result in risk to life and property through storm surge and climate change impacts, as well as significant implications for the environment and natural resource assets.

Extensive agricultural lands surround existing urban and rural residential areas and support a vibrant rural industry. Urban encroachment has the potential to impact on the viability of agricultural activities; however, some losses of agricultural land will be inevitable to accommodate the projected growth for the region. The continuation of high value primary production activities will be safeguarded through the development of a regional framework, which will identify strategically located and recognised productive agricultural land. The framework will recognise the importance of these lands and protect them indefinitely.

Recent trends show changing household structure and reduction in average household size will mean the percentage of growth in housing demand will continue to be higher than the population growth rate. A diverse housing supply, providing suitable options for a range of circumstances, will also need to include affordable housing alternatives that respond to current and future resident needs, as well as making more efficient use of available land for urban development.

Providing a more compact urban settlement pattern focusing on existing towns and cities will provide higher levels of accessibility and more efficient and cost-effective provision of infrastructure and services. These strategies will assist in limiting the loss of valuable resources, such as agricultural land, and environmental values of the region.

A coordinated approach to urban planning and development, including the provision of infrastructure, will ensure growth is managed well into the future.

Areas at risk from flooding, storm surge, climate change impacts or other natural or man-made hazards should not be extensively developed. Where this cannot be avoided, for example, in areas that have already been settled and are part of the urban fabric, measures will be required as part of development to ensure these risks are minimised.

Towns and cities structure and form

Towns and cities are the focus for regional growth in employment, housing and provision of services. Where and how growth is accommodated can affect accessibility, the character of a place and the economic sustainability of the region.

A mix of uses, including affordable housing, will be designed to enhance accessibility and efficiency of infrastructure provision and management for long-term sustainability and investment security. It will also assist in the reduction of greenhouse gases that influence climate change.

Establishing a clear role for centres, and adopting a complementary and cooperative approach to the planning and development of the subregions, will benefit the economy of the region as a whole by reducing unnecessary competition between centres.

Maintaining and enhancing the character and heritage of the region, and considering design attributes that suit the climate, will further build on the characteristics that make the region a sought-after location to live and visit.
**Strong economy**

A region's economic viability is a key element in ensuring its sustainability and growth. The principal drivers for attaining sustainable economic development include population growth, business and industry opportunities, a skilled workforce and good environmental management.

The region accounts for approximately 10 per cent of Queensland’s agricultural production, with a diverse agricultural and agribusiness base. Significant agricultural activities include timber production and processing (softwood and hardwood), beef, pork and poultry production and processing, sugarcane production and processing, tree crops (in particular macadamias and avocados), fruit and vegetable production (especially citrus and tomatoes), and seafood production and processing. These agricultural industries will continue to be important for the region into the future. This agricultural base has remained steady in recent times, with declines in traditional industries such as sugar and dairy being balanced against the growth in horticulture, aquaculture, pork and beef.

In more recent years, growth in aviation, advanced manufacturing, aquaculture, food processing, marine industry, construction and service industries have further expanded the economy.

Diverse employment opportunities will assist in attracting and accommodating current and future residents and retaining young families in rural areas. Appropriate opportunities need to be available to enable employment-related development to occur.

Economic development and population growth will support the expansion of higher order services within the regional centres, contributing to lifestyle factors that will also help attract and retain skilled workers within the region. Establishing appropriate planning for these developments will stimulate further investment and growth without diminishing existing liveability.

The region's close proximity to South East Queensland presents opportunities for access to the largest population in the state, as well as national and international markets. Economic growth could also be leveraged through the region's physical connection to the development of the Surat Basin's liquefied natural gas (LNG) and coal production. The Port of Bundaberg, and upgrades to the Bundaberg and Hervey Bay airports, present further opportunities for economic growth within a range of industries.

**Infrastructure and servicing**

The growing popularity of coastal corridors, such as the Bargara area and Hervey Bay, represents a move away from the historical dominance of urban centres such as Bundaberg, Maryborough and Gympie. This growth, coupled with the region's dispersed rural settlement pattern, presents many challenges to the timely provision of accessible, well-located regional infrastructure.

The delivery of infrastructure and services in a coordinated and timely manner is fundamental in securing the community’s liveability and viability to support future growth. There are many impediments to successful long-term infrastructure planning and coordination, including the need to consider capacity, and the implications of climate change.

A multi-layered approach will deliver infrastructure that supports the preferred settlement pattern of the regional plan. It contributes significantly to strong economic gain and employment opportunities for the region, and allows communities to fully maximise existing infrastructure before needing to invest often limited funds in augmenting or building new networks. Funding for new infrastructure needs to be timely to meet growth demand, while simultaneously considering whole-of-life costs of infrastructure to ensure benefit to current and future users. Innovative partnerships to facilitate effective joint funding options may be required.

Appropriate planning will ensure the identification and coordination of infrastructure is efficient and timely to support predicted population growth. The provision and funding of infrastructure will be in line with land-use planning and decision-making to significantly improve the region's ability to cater for future development needs and meet capacity demands.
Regional settlement pattern

The regional settlement pattern has a central role in achieving the intentions of the regional plan. It is relevant to all aspects of the plan, as it outlines the spatial distribution of activity and associated growth.

During the last 30 years, the region has experienced noteworthy growth in the resident population, particularly within the region’s coastal communities. Similar levels of growth are anticipated over the coming two decades.

Urban growth has traditionally been through low density housing, and limited dwelling diversity has occurred in the absence of market pressures. This has led to the outward spread of low density urban areas and the highly dispersed regional settlement pattern that exists today. The preferred regional settlement pattern is heavily influenced by these existing urban and rural land-use patterns, particularly the location of existing towns and centres, transport networks, ports and airports, rural activities and tourism attractors. The settlement pattern will also continue to be significantly impacted by the natural features and topography that characterise the region.

Achieving a more efficient and sustainable settlement pattern will help balance the projected rates of growth for the regional cities and townships with the need to protect the inherent lifestyle and important natural assets unique to the region. Consolidation of urban development will contribute significantly to making the best use of existing and future infrastructure investments, and improve the liveability and attractiveness of residential and tourist areas. Importantly, the preferred regional settlement pattern will ensure all communities have the opportunity to grow in a sustainable way and achieve self-containment appropriate to the resident and business communities’ needs.

The existing and future investment in state infrastructure for the region will support the regional vision and settlement pattern, which seeks to:

- relieve development pressures on the coast and avoid risk to lives and property as a result of natural coastal hazards such as cyclone, storm surge and sea level rise
- manage the high costs of providing infrastructure for a dispersed population
- protect valuable and unique environmental features of the region, including terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, noting that to accommodate the high levels of anticipated growth, some loss of natural resources and environmental values may be inevitable
- redistribute growth to Bundaberg and promote additional growth opportunities (particularly employment generating development) in Maryborough and Gympie to build on the economic foundations of these communities. Hervey Bay will also continue to attract high levels of growth and will develop to complement the role and function of Maryborough
- support Kingaroy and Gayndah as the key inland towns of the region
- support existing centres through promoting mixed land uses, and improving the quality of overall urban design and density, access to services and sustainability
- ensure rural towns have opportunities to prosper and accommodate appropriate levels of growth, stabilising and supporting the vibrancy of these important hinterland areas
- manage and appropriately plan for the development of additional rural residential lots throughout the region. Local government planning outcomes may identify locations suitable for additional semi-rural living; however, the expansion of rural residential development should be restricted in areas that may have capacity for more efficient use of land when considering safety, liveability and ongoing land management.
Any growth in the region will inevitably add pressure to existing water supply limitations and critical ecological habitat. Electricity, communication and road infrastructure will need to be progressively upgraded across the region, and the capacity of many education, health and other community facilities will need to be increased. The preferred settlement pattern seeks to minimise adverse impacts and deliver cost-effective and efficient infrastructure services. Further investigation and planning will be required to ensure development proceeds in a logical and sequential pattern, supported by the timely delivery of appropriate communications, social and transport infrastructure.

Meeting changing residential pressures in the future will rely on the provision of diverse and affordable housing options. Supporting the development of a broad range of styles and forms of housing choices will assist in creating diverse communities and preventing social polarisation and displacement. It is important that affordable housing is well-located in relation to transport, community facilities and services, open space and recreation, and education and employment opportunities.

Residential growth should be underpinned by a strong focus on delivering education, commercial and industrial activity for the community. Growth is supported in rural towns, and rural sustainability will be promoted by encouraging diversification and using existing infrastructure and services.

Centres throughout the region provide hubs of activity and key locations for services, housing choice, hotspots of commerce and community services. The regional settlement pattern reinforces the roles of centres, primarily through the consolidation and containment of key attractors within each centre. This principle will be reflected in the use of appropriate actions and policies in local planning strategies and decisions. Consideration of the role of each centre is to be applied when making decisions about the location of significant development and the siting of government and community services. It is important that all communities are provided with the opportunity to enhance self-containment of residential uses, employment and services, with capacity for appropriate levels of growth provided.

As the population of a town or city increases with time, so does the range of specialty services and infrastructure it provides, and the relative catchment area that centre supports.

There are five key centres of commerce and urban activity—Bundaberg, Hervey Bay, Gympie, Maryborough and Kingaroy—which provide a range of higher order services and functions for the urban communities of the region and support the region's rural areas.

These key growth locations will provide for sustainable residential and employment growth due to good accessibility and a network of established communications, social and transport infrastructure. Consolidation of growth will help sustain the provision of social and community services and facilities across the region, including culturally specific events and activities. A consolidated settlement pattern will encourage broader diversity in housing styles that take advantage of existing infrastructure and services. Focusing growth within key centres will also have a positive impact on the environment by reducing trip length and travel time, while building on opportunities for public and active transport. Areas of significant ecological value, or subject to environmental constraints, will need to be protected from development pressures to ensure a successful future for the region.

Bundaberg, Maryborough and Hervey Bay have historically been the most dominant regional cities, containing the most diverse concentration of urban activities, and accommodating the significant proportion of the resident population, services and community facilities for the region. These centres will continue to provide higher order services in the future and support expansion, due largely to their existing infrastructure, diverse economies and available water and land supplies.

Gympie, Kingaroy and Gayndah are also important centres in the region. They will continue to supply services and facilities to the surrounding rural communities, in addition to the resident population. These regional centres generally possess extensive areas of land that are relatively unconstrained, with good levels of accessibility and moderate diversity in their economies. They will provide a range of retail services, local and state government administration, and important economic, industry, health, education, cultural and entertainment facilities to meet the everyday needs of local and regional residents.

Population expansion has not been evenly distributed across the region, with many rural communities not sharing in the region's overall growth by migrant attraction or natural increase. However, through the sustained presence of these towns, the rich agricultural fabric and landscape values of the region will be maintained. These smaller centres cater to the daily needs of local residents, tourists and primary production industries, and are critically important to the longevity of the region's population, economy and production.

The coastal centres of the region, particularly east of Bundaberg between Burnett Heads and Elliott Heads, provide limited opportunities for additional growth. Consideration to the management of the coastal environment and protection against natural hazard risks will be critical for new development, as well as safeguarding these locations and their existing residents. Development in coastal areas south of the Elliott River will be limited due to the higher potential for risks from natural hazards, the anticipated impacts of climate change, and reduced accessibility.
European pioneers initially settled in the area as timber getters, leading to the establishment of the first timber mill on the banks of the Burnett River. Shortly after, sugarcane plantations were founded, and the Bundaberg Sugar Company is still heavily invested in the region for the growing and refining of sugar for national and international markets. Sugarcane growing and processing remains a significant contributor to the region's landscape and economy, although small crops and tree crops now dominate the rural economy.

The Bundaberg region is located at the southern end of the Great Barrier Reef, and captures portions of the Great Sandy Marine Park within its bounds. Part of its coastal waters includes the environmental reserve of Mon Repos, which supports the largest concentration of nesting marine turtles on the east coast of Australia. Protecting critical and unique environments such as these will be a key challenge, as well as an opportunity for the subregion as it continues to support a growing population.

Bundaberg Regional Council area is anticipated to accommodate a projected population of 150,100 by 2031. The area consists of a diverse range of rural and coastal communities. The city of Bundaberg straddles the Burnett River, with urban settlement primarily on the south side of the river, where extensive residential, commercial, health and social infrastructure has been developed to meet growing community needs. It is the hub of commerce and services for the subregion.

The Burnett River is a significant feature of the local environment, flowing in a generally northern direction toward the coastline and the mouth of the river at Burnett Heads. Small pockets of rural residential development are scattered throughout the surrounding area. Unlike other parts of the region, Bundaberg consists of relatively flat terrain.
Future development in existing urban areas will assist in preserving important natural environments and resources surrounding the urban areas of the region, such as agricultural land, and avoiding urban development in areas subject to risks of natural hazards.

Growth of the Bundaberg region’s economy and residential sectors over the next two decades will rely on the adequacy of infrastructure ahead of, and during, cycles of growth. Appropriate expansion of road, rail and reticulated services in Bundaberg, coastal and rural towns and rural areas that make up the subregion's community will be required to support this growth.

**Bundaberg**

Bundaberg is the major centre for the subregion, providing essential and higher order services to the residents of the urban and rural areas. Employment, retail, health, education, cultural and recreation opportunities are all represented within the city, and draw residents of the subregion seeking the variety and specialist services that are not available in the smaller towns.

Development is predominantly residential and focused on the south side of the Burnett River. The primacy of the traditional retail and commercial centre, including the main street of the CBD, are to be protected in future decisions for the subregion. The Burnett River presents significant potential to enhance the riverside atmosphere of the city in future development for residential, recreation and entertainment purposes.

The city is well placed to support a greater share of the region’s population growth into the future, in part as a result of the proportion of relatively unconstrained land near the city centre.

The regional settlement pattern for Bundaberg reflects this capacity by providing additional areas for growth, through the provision of a wider extent of urban lands and supporting greater levels of development.

The Urban Footprint provides capacity for additional dwellings, as well as commercial and industrial uses. This capacity will support demand for employment and social infrastructure, including schools, health services and child care, in addition to open space and recreation lands. Growth will be accommodated through the extensive, relatively unconstrained broadhectare lands. However, infill opportunities, including the redevelopment of established areas, will be facilitated to promote a range of housing options close to employment and services, and make best use of available land. This will also reduce pressures to convert agricultural lands to urban development.

Broadhectare land will accommodate a range of housing types, with a focus on consolidating growth. Land within broadhectare areas will also be considered for non-residential uses, including employment and local industry development. Increasing densities in appropriate locations will assist in providing affordable and accessible housing and maintaining the vibrancy of the city.

The Kalkie–Ashfield Development Area (DA) to the east of Bundaberg provides a significant opportunity to accommodate residential growth in Bundaberg. It is intended that the area will incorporate local employment, community and recreation activities, in addition to the predominantly residential uses which will provide a diverse housing stock.

Development of the Kalkie–Ashfield DA will not occur until further detailed planning is undertaken and endorsed. Infrastructure planning and investment will be necessary to ensure that Kalkie–Ashfield can support a substantial proportion of the envisaged growth for Bundaberg. The interface with the Bundaberg Ring Road, and with adjacent agricultural land, requires specific consideration to achieve satisfactory separation between these agricultural areas and sensitive land uses.

Bundaberg is well placed to increase its role as a manufacturing hub. With the existing port facilities, airport, rail and highway access, its relative proximity to mining centres and reliable water supply, the city will be able to support a moderate to high increase in manufacturing and industry.

Recent upgrades to the Bundaberg airport also provide opportunities for the establishment of additional aviation industry and related business close to the airport.

In order to satisfy anticipated demand and diversification of industrial activities, the identification and protection of suitable land is pivotal to the long-term capacity of Bundaberg to actively participate in Queensland’s industrial expansion. Further analysis and planning will be required to determine suitable locations for industrial activities, including consideration of the types of activities for each area, specific environmental constraints, transport requirements and consistency with the regional settlement pattern. Bundaberg and its proximity to southern markets makes it well suited as a location for industrial development.

The area adjacent to the Bundaberg Ring Road, and accessed through Channel Lane in South Bundaberg, has potential for service industry uses. Particular consideration will be required in relation to impacts on nearby sensitive land uses and transport access impacts on the Ring Road.

Some areas of Bundaberg are subject to the threat of flooding from the Burnett River. This is a consideration for existing residential areas, as well as in the future development of urban land. It is important that detailed planning processes and investigations to establish the extent of the urban area take into account land determined to be at risk of flooding and other constraints. However, there may be opportunities for expansion to the urban areas adjacent to locations at risk of flooding for non-residential activities.
Sequencing of urban development and infrastructure provision will prioritise the management and progress of growth for Bundaberg. Improvements to existing infrastructure services will be necessary in many cases, and the capacity of these networks to support growth will be a key driver for future expansion.

Bundaberg will continue to play a vital role in the growth and development of the region beyond 2031. Identified Growth Areas (IGAs) at Fairymead and Branyan have been designated to accommodate some of this future growth. The Fairymead IGA may be suitable for employment uses that support the Port of Bundaberg. Its location on the western bank of the Burnett River includes strategic port land which may accommodate an expansion to the Port of Bundaberg in the future. Significant environmental values and access to the area will require investigation and investment prior to a development commitment. Parts of the area are also at risk from flooding and climate change impacts, which will require resolution prior to development.

The Branyan IGA may be suitable for employment and residential uses in the future. Its strategic location adjacent to the Urban Footprint and the Isis Highway, and its proximity to the Bundaberg Airport, present significant opportunities for its potential development. The area may also accommodate a range of employment opportunities and local services commensurate with the level of residential development located in the area. The Branyan area is currently fragmented by a mix of rural, residential and industrial activities, which may impact on the sequencing of development and provision of urban infrastructure. Further fragmentation and development that may conflict with the potential use of the site for urban residential purposes should be avoided.

Development may be supported prior to 2031 if a need for the IGAs can be established, and the issues associated with each location can be resolved.

Coastal towns

Small towns located along the eastern coastline from Elliott Heads to Burnett Heads currently function as suburbs of Bundaberg. They support residential and small-scale tourism development, with limited district level services, providing an alternative lifestyle option for residents to the more urban environments of Bundaberg. These areas support a growing tourism sector, which has generated significant growth in communities such as Bargara.

Bargara, a tourist and retail centre for the coastal strip, will continue to accommodate most of the existing and future growth on the coast. However, this will be restricted to areas unlikely to be threatened by unacceptable risk from natural hazards and the anticipated impacts of climate change. There are limited opportunities for ongoing growth in Bargara, but small increases in appropriately located district level services will provide for improvements in the self-reliance of Bargara and nearby coastal communities, such as Innes Park.

Additional urban development between Coral Cove and Bargara may be appropriate in the future; however, further planning will be required prior to this development occurring. This planning should take into account the mix of uses that should be established, impacts from existing Key Resource Areas, other extractive resource deposits, transport infrastructure and environmental values.

Woodgate, Buxton and Moore Park Beach are at relatively high risk from potential impacts of storm surge and climate change, and only limited growth will be achieved within these established urban areas. Availability of infrastructure and their distance from the local centre of Childers and Bundaberg also reduces the ability of these towns to support additional growth.

The role of these towns as residential and tourist locations is not likely to change, and they will continue to rely on Bundaberg for employment and more specialised services into the future. Employment within each of these towns will remain locally significant, consisting predominantly of nature-based tourism, community services and small-scale retail. It is not intended that the coastal towns will support broad expansion of employment or commercial development in the future; however, diversification of local employment will be supported where appropriate.

Higher order service needs will continue to be met by Bundaberg. The relative distance to the city centre, limited infrastructure capacity and inherent environmental constraints of coastal towns will impede further expansion. Intensification of urban uses in these areas should be managed to avoid additional people and property being subject to the anticipated risks of climate change and natural hazards.

The temperate climate and relaxed pace of life offered by these coastal localities will continue to be a drawcard for retirees and older residents. A significantly ageing demographic profile, and continued demand for accommodation will place increasing pressure on the existing health and community facilities provided. Some expansion of these services may be necessary in appropriate locations to provide local support for the ageing population.
Rural towns and surrounds
While significant proportions of the subregion's growth will be met by Bundaberg City, rural towns will continue to provide alternative residential and employment opportunities for residents. To sustain expansion within these areas, additional infrastructure and employment, education and other social services will need to be investigated.

Gin Gin and Childers provide key services to their surrounding rural communities. Both of these towns are located on the Bruce Highway, providing an opportunity to accommodate moderate growth in population and employment. Detailed analysis of Childers, Gin Gin and other rural towns, such as Cordalba, Wallaville, South Kolan, Yandaran and Avondale should be undertaken to determine future growth needs and appropriate locations for residential and employment activities as well as infrastructure requirements. Higher level facilities and services will be met by Bundaberg.

As with much of the region, the Bundaberg subregion's economy has traditionally been based on primary industry, and the rural sector forms a cornerstone of the regional economy. Timber milling and sugarcane industries founded many of the rural areas and towns at the time of first European settlement. The Millaquin and Bingera sugar mills and the Bundaberg Rum distillery on the banks of the Burnett River still rely on locally produced sugar cane, and the role of sugar cane in the local economy will be retained largely as a result of its climatic suitability and the local success of its production. These are regionally significant examples of early local industries remaining productive and in operation today.

Rural diversification is improving through increasing successes in producing small crops and tree crops, and the wider expansion of the timber industry, with western areas also supporting other primary industry pursuits, predominantly cattle grazing.

Infrastructure
There is some capacity in the infrastructure networks underpinning the region to support short-term growth in residential, commercial and industrial sectors. However, to accommodate the proposed intensification of employment, health and residential activities within the region, upgraded road and sewerage infrastructure may be necessary to sustain the medium- to long-term additional demand.

There are significant opportunities for the subregion to build a stronger and more responsive economy. However, to achieve the levels of growth envisaged for Bundaberg and its surrounds, upgrades to the regional road network will be required, including improved connectivity between coastal villages, hinterland and city areas through the design and development of regional transport distributor networks.

Strengthening the freight network will support additional economic growth and potential expansion of the Port of Bundaberg and other niche and local industries. A significant area of Burnett Heads is strategic port land accommodating the Port of Bundaberg. The quality and availability of infrastructure to secure the long-term viability of port operations requires planning and investment. An additional consideration for future intensification of port activities, and a possible constraining factor on expansion, is the existing extent and types of development surrounding the port.

The freight network may also require strengthening to support additional economic growth and potential expansion of the Port of Bundaberg.

Existing water capacity, via Paradise and Fred Haigh dams, is available to serve current and anticipated population growth. Demand from economic and industrial expansion should largely be accommodated by this existing water storage capacity; however, the network's ability to continue to underpin projected growth is to be monitored to ensure stability of supply.

A number of smaller towns, including existing coastal towns, are not serviced by sewerage infrastructure. To be responsive to the sensitive receiving environments in the region, an expanded reticulated sewerage network should be investigated and provided where appropriate.

Economy and employment
The Bundaberg subregion is well placed to support a robust economy, characterised by a diverse, contemporary and adaptable range of industries that are compatible with, and advance, the region's lifestyle benefits. Investments supporting the ongoing prosperity, access, connectivity and skilled workforce attributes of Bundaberg will propel the region's economy.

The Port of Bundaberg has capacity to accommodate additional port-related activities such as industry and waterfront development. The port is also adjacent to the Port of Bundaberg Marina and related marine industries. Appropriate management and diversification of port activities will position the Port of Bundaberg as a regional linchpin of southern Queensland's industrial diversity. It has the potential to contribute to external economic activity, such as responding to additional demand for goods transportation generated by the expansion of mining activities in central Queensland and the Surat Basin, and opportunities for overflow from the Port of Gladstone. Opportunities to expand the port operations have led to recognising an area at Fairymead as an IGA as described above.
TAFE Queensland operates a marine training centre near the port. The continuation of this education component, in addition to limited expansion of appropriate tourist activities based on the marina precinct, will support both the marina and port functions.

Value-adding opportunities for local crops and produce are supported, including the development of alternative fuels like ethanol and alternative energies as a result of output co-generation. The Isis Mill industrial area should continue to be supported, drawing on the current focus of primary production, and using by-products such as the Australian Prime Fibre plant that uses sugarcane trash to produce mulch and fibre pellets. Future planning for this area will consider the appropriate range of industrial uses, the area of land that should be dedicated to this purpose, its impacts on transport (in particular the Bruce and Isis highways) and the ongoing operation of the Isis Mill.

Aviation and related industries and uses are supported in proximity to the Bundaberg Airport. This will build on the aviation industry focus established by Jabiru Aircraft Pty Ltd, which manufactures light aircraft (the Jabiru) and other aircraft components. The Bundaberg Airport also hosts the biennial Wide Bay Australia International Airshow. This is a major event for the region and attracts both national and international enthusiasts.

Central Queensland University has a campus at Bundaberg with a current student population of over 1000. Courses and programs offered at the Bundaberg campus are from the Faculties of Arts, Humanities and Education; Business and Informatics; and Sciences, Engineering and Health. The university offers a Bachelor of Aviation Technology at the Bundaberg campus—Australia's only regional aviation degree—which reflects the region's existing aviation and aerospace industries and prospects for further development of these industries.

Attracting and retaining skilled workers in the region will be essential to support the preferred economic development strategies for the subregion. Training and skills improvement programs should cater to niche and emerging industries and areas of current and projected shortfall.

Development of the Surat Basin for LNG and coal extraction may also present new opportunities for residential and industrial growth. This may include assembly of mining machinery components at the Port of Bundaberg or Fairymead, warehousing, logistics and maintenance, relating to both mining and Port of Gladstone operations.

Residential

By 2031, it is projected that an additional 23,100 dwellings will be required to house the Bundaberg region's expected population growth. A substantial proportion of this can be accommodated within broadhectare lands identified for this purpose. However, infill and redevelopment in established areas should be supported to increase housing choice and accessibility for existing residents seeking alternative housing options, making better use of public infrastructure and improving opportunities for non-car based transport.

The significant amount of broadhectare land identified in the Urban Footprint will require detailed planning by state and local governments to plan and coordinate appropriate sequencing of infrastructure with development to serve the projected population.

Rural residential

Rural residential development can be found in various parts of the Bundaberg region. Where existing rural residential areas have a significant capacity for further ‘infill’ rural residential lots, these areas are located within the Rural Living Area designation. Where no significant capacity for additional lots can be identified, rural residential land is located within the RLRPA.

Rural residential development is abundant in the Bundaberg region, both within the identified Rural Living Areas and existing subdivided rural lands in the RLRPA.

The Rural Living Area is generally located close to existing towns, with a significant proportion located close to Bundaberg, including the areas of South Bingeria, Kensington and Innes Park. Additional capacity is provided at Branyan and Sharon.

All future rural residential development is to be appropriately located to achieve land and infrastructure efficiency, and ensure that further fragmentation of strategic agricultural land does not occur. Land suitable for cropping or other rural production activities and higher order urban purposes are to be protected from this form of incompatible development.

Community services

Many community services are approaching, or at, capacity, and ongoing investment in line with growth will be required to satisfy long-term demand, particularly in health and education.

Bundaberg Hospital is the major hospital and referral centre for the Wide Bay Health Service District. It provides specialist services, mental health and a variety of community health services for the region. There are also two private hospitals in Bundaberg—Friendly Society Private Hospital (an acute care medical facility) and the Mater Hospital. There are planned extensions at the private hospitals that will provide for an expanded range of services for the community.

Childers and Gin Gin each have a small public hospital with a range of services. Higher order health care within the subregion will continue to be provided by the Bundaberg hospitals, with expansions of these regional health facilities not intended.
Continued growth in coastal areas may result in the need to review the provision of education facilities, especially in Bargara, and the enhancement or addition of specific aged care and health services to meet the needs of the changing demographic over time.

Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire comprises the small township of Cherbourg and adjacent lands, approximately six kilometres to the south of Murgon. The community is small compared to other local government areas in the region, situated on three square kilometres of Deed of Grant in Trust land. The current estimated resident population of the shire is 1260 people.

The Cherbourg community has developed a strong culture deriving from 40 different groups, which include the original group from this area, the Wakka Wakka people. Cherbourg is the oldest and the third largest Aboriginal community in Queensland.

Since the mid to late 1960s, Cherbourg has had an elected Aboriginal Council. However, since the passing of the Deed of Grant in Trust legislation in 1986, Cherbourg started managing its own affairs as an independent shire.

The township is located adjacent to Barambah Creek, with the majority of development on the south side of the creek. The township surrounds the school and hospital, with opportunities for expansion in most directions.

The close proximity to the town of Murgon provides key opportunities for a complementary and cooperative approach between the Cherbourg and South Burnett Councils to the planning, development and capacity building for employment and services for the Cherbourg community.

High unemployment and housing demands, coupled with the provision of appropriate infrastructure, are key challenges for the Cherbourg community.

Developing a community plan and a planning scheme will provide an avenue to set the future strategic direction for the shire.

**Infrastructure**

Providing good access to nearby Murgon and other towns in the South Burnett is important to ensure the residents of Cherbourg—including those with limited access to a private vehicle—have access to work, education, health, and other services and opportunities.

Existing infrastructure and urban services, such as the region's sewerage system, may need to be enhanced in future to meet growth in demand, providing appropriate treatment of waste and management of potential environmental impacts.
Economy and employment
The majority of employment in the area is provided by the council or government agencies. Further opportunities are found in the nearby town of Murgon.

The Cherbourg economy is supported by agriculture, beef cattle, joinery and other small business ventures. These have supported, and continue to support, local employment opportunities to allow for greater employment prospects and a stronger local economy. Further expansion of the market garden selling produce directly to the Cherbourg community and surrounding towns will add value to the local agricultural enterprises.

Opportunities for industry and small business growth in Cherbourg are being investigated and encouraged, such as the re-use of the existing abattoir facility.

Local training ventures that are complementary to staffing requirements for existing and new business and industry should also be encouraged and enhanced. This includes use of the local workforce to construct housing and other infrastructure in Cherbourg.

Residential
Housing growth should be located predominantly within or adjoining the existing township. Opportunities to provide a more diverse range of housing to cater for the changing needs of the population should also be pursued.

Community services
There are a wide range of community services available in Cherbourg, including a hospital, aged care facility, TAFE, primary school, childcare centre, and drug and alcohol rehabilitation service. Other additional services are also available in nearby Murgon. The level of service provision should continue to meet the demands of the population and support for the disadvantaged.
The Fraser Coast Regional Council area contains the Great Sandy Biosphere area, recognised internationally in 2010 for its unique environmental values, and the subregion is home to areas of critical environment and geological distinctiveness, including the World Heritage area of Fraser Island. Its coastal waters also host humpback whales on their annual migrations past the Queensland coast. These naturally occurring characteristics assist in making the Fraser Coast the region’s premier visitor destination. The Fraser Coast was also home to 102,080 people in 2010.

The Fraser Coast subregion possesses rich soils, which assist in agriculture remaining an important economic feature in the region. Productive rural lands will be protected to ensure the viability of rural pursuits in the future. Tourism and manufacturing industries are becoming more prevalent, and will continue to do so, further diversifying the economy of the Fraser Coast over time. Historically, urban development was concentrated in Maryborough and the coastal villages that now make up Hervey Bay. The Mary River was the foundation of first European settlement within the region, with historic settlements originally located on the banks of the river at Maryborough.
The subregion is supported by two major centres—Hervey Bay and Maryborough—supplying a range of community health and services, retail, and education and employment opportunities to the residents of surrounding rural areas and towns. It supports two airports, a state boat harbour at Urangan, and two smaller marinas. An operational state north–south rail network and the Bruce Highway form the major interregional transport links for the region.

The centres of Hervey Bay and Maryborough are closely linked due to their proximity and overlapping catchments. A complementary approach to the development of these two centres will be required in the future to support a sustainable Fraser Coast community.

**Maryborough**

Originally established around a thriving river port used for immigration and the export of wool, cotton, timber, sugar and gold, the city of Maryborough has been a significant centre for the subregion. Its early history has been largely preserved, and the town is well known for its intact heritage buildings and architecture.

Maryborough is centrally located within the Fraser Coast area, and will accommodate a significant proportion of the region's future administrative and employment growth. It possesses a wealth of development potential due to fewer environmental or topographic limitations than other major centres of the region. Key advantages of the Maryborough area include its accessibility to other markets, the available infrastructure, including the national highway, the north–south rail line connecting Brisbane to Cairns, local air transport services, gas supply mains and an established electricity substation.

The preferred settlement pattern for the region supports the potential for Maryborough's population to double in size. Planning for infrastructure, community services and employment will be essential. The Urban Footprint has capacity to accommodate broad ranging uses, in addition to meeting dwelling demand.

Several locations have been identified with the potential to accommodate further growth in industry and manufacturing, including St Helens and Granville. Each of these locations will need to be investigated for suitability and development potential in the short to medium future, before any development commitments are reached. In addition, a marine industry precinct, to be established on the banks of the Mary River at Granville east of Maryborough, will assist in the diversification of the industry base.

The Urban Footprint consists of sufficient land area to accommodate additional urban development and residential dwellings by providing for a mix of broadhectare development and infill capacity. Significant land for rural residential development has also been assigned in the Rural Living Area close to Maryborough.

Granville contains a DA that may provide opportunities for medium term residential and employment expansion. It is intended that the area will primarily provide for residential growth; however, opportunities for local services and employment opportunities to support a higher level of self-containment should be incorporated.

Prior to development, further planning will be required to establish the appropriate mix and location of land uses, the preferred sequence of development, connectivity and accessibility in the area, and a coordinated approach to infrastructure delivery. Constraints such as the potential risk of flooding will need to be considered, as well as the interface with adjacent agricultural land and the nearby marine industry precinct. Planning for the Granville DA should consider the broader context of the site, particularly the intent for the marine industry precinct to be established on the banks of the Mary River, intended future uses, and possible expansion and infrastructure requirements. Significant investment in infrastructure will be required, and access across the Mary River will be a key consideration in the sequencing and delivery of development. Transport impacts in the immediate vicinity, as well as the broader context of Maryborough, will require resolution prior to development commitment in the area.

The St Helens DA will deliver medium- to long-term opportunities for industrial activities. The St Helens DA will predominantly provide employment opportunities for Maryborough, building on the existing industrial uses and the accessibility of the site. Some residential activities are already established in St Helens. Appropriate measures will be required to ensure impacts from the employment activities are mitigated. Prior to development of the DA, planning will need to address the connectivity and accessibility in the area; the interface to the potential Maryborough bypass; access to, and the need for widening of, the Maryborough–Hervey Bay Road; constraints such as risks from flooding; and infrastructure planning, in particular the impacts of the use of recycled water in the area.
Hervey Bay

Hervey Bay is one of the region's major retail and commercial centres and biggest holiday destinations. Its role as a key tourist destination and gateway to Fraser Island will facilitate further growth in the community.

The existing settlement pattern of Hervey Bay has resulted from the development of small coastal villages, loosely based on the historical settlements, which have merged to become suburbs of one large coastal city.

The Urban Footprint of Hervey Bay has capacity to accommodate the anticipated dwelling demand to 2031, primarily within established urban zoned land, as a mix of broadhectare and infill development. The city will continue to experience growth in the short to medium future; however, the proximity of the settlement in relation to the coastline will restrict expansion, given the area's inherent locational vulnerability to the projected implications of climate change.

Hervey Bay is capable of supporting further growth in tertiary education, tourism and service related activities—such as aged care and support services—to a larger extent than Maryborough, expanding on the existing education facilities, such as University of Southern Queensland's Fraser Coast campus. This will support an increase in the diversity of local services and employment opportunities.

One of the key challenges for Hervey Bay in the last two decades has been maintaining centralised retail and commercial development in specific nodes. This is a particular consideration in the protection and primacy of Main Street Pialba and Boat Harbour Drive, Urwaween, with secondary retail centres to be provided by Urangan and Eli Waters.

Urangan Boat Harbour is the local hub for marine transport and tourism. Potential future upgrades and renewal of these facilities will reinforce this focus for the marina. Strong tourism has developed over time as the city established itself as a gateway to Fraser Island. While this opportunity has provided a range of benefits to the area, it has also limited potential for the commercial marine industry to expand among the existing tourism-oriented facilities.

Coastal suburbs, including the Eli Waters and Dundowran Beach areas, are susceptible to the constraints associated with climate change, including sea level rise and storm tide inundation. Consequently, development within the Eli Waters and Dundowran Beach areas may be limited. Consideration for development within these areas would require detailed analysis and planning, particularly in relation to impacts from coastal hazards and protection of its significant environmental values. Planning for infill or redevelopment of existing urban areas of Hervey Bay should also consider the potential impacts from coastal hazards and climate change.

The Nikenbah DA will provide additional residential and employment growth opportunities. Land identified between Maryborough–Hervey Bay Road and Madsen Road is subject to constraints, and is unsuitable for residential development. However, subject to appropriate planning to identify the area of developable land and the range of acceptable uses, other urban activities may be appropriate. Remaining portions are intended to accommodate residential growth in the medium to long term. Infrastructure planning and investment will be required prior to development occurring.

Coastal towns

Growth has historically been dispersed and fragmented, with many coastal towns, including Toogoom, Poona, Riverheads and Boonooroo, accommodating a mix of permanent residences and holiday homes. While this responds to a lifestyle demand for affordable coastal living, it increases the burden on an inadequate coastal road network and social infrastructure, and adversely impacts on natural environment values.

Communities within the coastal towns will continue to be primarily focused on residential accommodation rather than employment or commercial expansion, and the majority of specialist and skilled employment will continue to be provided by Hervey Bay and Maryborough. Employment opportunities provided by each of these coastal areas will continue to maintain locally relevant industries, including retail, tourism and community services.

Residential growth in coastal towns will be consolidated within the Urban Footprint to minimise the increased risk from natural hazards, the potential impacts of climate change, and the restricted capacity of social infrastructure to service further growth.
The coastal town of Burrum Heads was originally established as a coastal holiday village, but has grown into a small community for permanent residents and holiday-makers. The area has significant environmental values, including habitat for the endangered Wallum Froglet, and is potentially at high risk from permanent inundation from sea level rise and impacts from storm tide. Past investment in infrastructure and existing development indicates that some limited additional growth may be supported at Burrum Heads, subject to detailed analysis and planning, particularly in relation to impacts from coastal hazards and protection of its significant environmental values.

**Rural towns and surrounds**

Tiaro, Howard and Torbanlea are the main subregional towns providing local services for residents and those of surrounding rural towns. Higher order services, such as health, retail and community services, will be met by Hervey Bay and Maryborough.

The establishment of Tiaro was originally influenced by the Gympie gold rush, while Howard was settled as a coalmining town. Both towns are now rural settlements that provide an important role in servicing surrounding settlements and rural communities.

The Tiaro and Torbanlea towns are not currently serviced by reticulated sewerage networks. Reticulated sewerage service areas within Howard are limited and the existing sewerage treatment plant requires future investment prior to considering expansion of the urban area it supports.

Detailed analysis and planning of rural towns should be undertaken to determine future growth needs and appropriate locations for residential and employment activities, as well as other infrastructure requirements. Subject to the outcome of these investigations, expansions to the urban area may be identified in local government planning schemes.

A significant defence facility, the Wide Bay Training Area, is located within the Fraser Coast and Gympie Regional Council areas, as identified on Map 2. The defence facility is used by the Australian Defence Force for live firing ranges and field training. This facility can result in noise impacts, and residential development should be avoided adjacent to the facility to ensure the ongoing operation of the facility is not compromised.

**Infrastructure**

Complementary planning of Hervey Bay and Maryborough will be supported by enhanced transport links between, and within, the centres themselves. Investment in public transport and active transport links will be a key driver to the success of this approach to planning for the Fraser Coast subregion.

Regional water capacity and supply is likely to require additional investment to cater for future population growth in the subregion. In some towns and the urban fringe of Hervey Bay and Maryborough, sewerage treatment plants may require upgrades in order to support projected population growth over time. Planning for these areas needs to consider capacities and the timeframes required for upgrades.

Electricity infrastructure will require investment in both Maryborough and Hervey Bay to support anticipated growth. Sites for substations and other infrastructure should be identified as part of the planning for expansion to ensure availability when demand requires installation of these services.

The Fraser Coast currently supports two airports, in Maryborough and Hervey Bay. Future planning of airport land needs to be investigated, and the potential impacts from nearby development should be mitigated to ensure ongoing viability of both airport sites.

**Economy and employment**

Hervey Bay and Maryborough are key activity centres for the subregion, in recognition of their level of commercial, retail and government services. However, their proximity, and the promotion of a greater proportion of growth to Maryborough, will require coordinated and complementary planning and investment in infrastructure and services, and the appropriate allocation of land for commercial, retail and industrial purposes as part of local government strategic planning programs.

Tourism will continue to be a major economic driver in the Fraser Coast, particularly for Hervey Bay. Growth and intensification of these services will contribute to a diverse and self-sufficient employment sector for local residents. The natural environment and rural character of the subregion are the major drawcards for tourist visitation, and planning and development decisions should continue to protect these important resources to support and stimulate the region’s attractiveness for tourism activities.

Rural areas contribute significantly to the amenity of the regional landscape through their natural environment values, and play an important role in the attraction to the region of day-trippers and nature-based tourists.

Agriculture, native forestry and pine plantations have been strong drivers of the subregional economy, and they will remain significant contributors to the region into the future. Farming activities are predominantly within sugarcane and timber farming sectors; however these activities have been declining in their contribution to the economy. Opportunities for diversification and product value-adding will be important long-term strategies for the rural sector, including the ongoing viability of the sugar and timber industries.
In addition to maintaining the traditional industries of the subregion, manufacturing has emerged as an important future employment and economic driver, particularly for Maryborough, which maintains a strong reliance on this sector. Economic strategies and land-use planning should continue to build opportunities for additional manufacturing and other industries in appropriate locations to limit the possible impacts of incompatible land uses, and to encourage diversification of the sector.

The viability of coal mining is being re-examined near Maryborough. Should mining activities recommence, direct and indirect employment opportunities will result, and will have a positive impact on the economy of the community and region as a whole. However, the conduct of these activities should maintain satisfactory separation from, and consideration of, the existing urban fabric and residents of nearby settlements in a way that promotes a balanced approach to land uses that stabilise and diversify the economy.

Canterwood Industrial Area at Owanyilla is recognised as having the potential to provide additional industrial lands, using high quality access to an existing rail siding and the Bruce Highway, and relative proximity to the ports of Brisbane, Gladstone and Bundaberg.

**Residential**

By 2031, it is anticipated that an additional 19,400 dwellings will be required to house growth within the Fraser Coast subregion.

The Urban Footprint can accommodate over 20,000 dwellings through broadhectare and infill development. Taking into account existing capacity of rural and rural residential lands to provide alternative residential forms, the subregion contains sufficient area to accommodate growth within the major cities and larger towns beyond 2031.

The significant areas of broadhectare land available within the subregion will require coordinated and detailed planning by state and local government to accommodate appropriate infrastructure to serve the projected population, as well as delivery of infrastructure with development. Prior to undertaking development or expansion, many of the region's existing urban areas will require infrastructure upgrades, such as sewerage treatment facilities in Hervey Bay and Howard; and secure water supply, electricity and transport infrastructure for the growing communities of Maryborough and Hervey Bay.

Planning of broadhectare areas will be required to make effective use of available land and existing or planned infrastructure. Mixed uses and dwelling diversity in these areas will assist in consolidating growth, reduce reliance on the private motor vehicle, and improve self-containment of the major centres, coastal towns and rural centres.

Existing rural residential areas of the subregion are recognised as providing a valid housing and lifestyle choice for the region, with ample capacity available within the Rural Living Area for growth of this type of development for the life of the regional plan.

**Community services**

Most community services within the subregion are recognised as being at or near capacity. Ongoing investment will be required to strengthen and sustain these important community facilities and services. Higher order community services will be predominantly located in Maryborough and Hervey Bay. Co-location of complementary services will be supported where appropriate.

Further investment will be required in the future to ensure sufficient levels of service are maintained and improved to meet the needs of the diverse and ageing population. Planning for community services will need to take into account predicted growth levels, and the unique implications that population expansion will have for each community.

The University of Southern Queensland Fraser Coast campus is located in Hervey Bay. A range of programs and courses are offered in the areas of human services, community welfare and development, accounting, marketing, education and nursing. The human services focus reflects the needs of the community, and provides an opportunity to develop and retain skilled workers in the region. Capacity to expand the university in its current location provides a further opportunity to diversify the range of programs and courses offered, to retain and attract school leavers through to 35 year olds.

Hervey Bay and Maryborough hospitals will continue to service the subregion over time for specialist and emergency health care. Additional health services will continue to be enhanced by private hospitals in the region, such as St Stephen's hospitals in Maryborough and Hervey Bay, which recently received funding for expansion.

Providing diverse and universal housing designs as part of the urban expansion will assist in accommodating different and changing housing needs over time, including those of an ageing population.
Map 2: Wide Bay defence training facility

Note: this map is not intended to reference specific parcels of land and is to be treated as indicative only. This map should be used in conjunction with the copyright information on the inside front cover of this publication.
The Gympie Regional Council area is located at the southern end of the region, and benefits from access to abundant natural resources and easy access to South East Queensland markets, particularly the Sunshine Coast. The estimated 2010 population was 49,334 people. Urban development is concentrated in Gympie, with rural, coastal and hinterland living opportunities available in various parts of the local government area.

The Gympie subregion has retained the historic settlement patterns established during the early goldmining and timber milling ventures that founded European settlement in the area.

The subregion possesses a wealth of environmental and biodiversity assets, including the Great Sandy Biosphere, national parks, rural hinterland areas and coastal environs. The Mary River and Six Mile Creek riparian corridors are dominant features of the region.

The southern extent of the subregion adjoins the northern boundary of the South East Queensland region. Planning and land-use decisions will concentrate and capitalise on this strength and advantageous proximity to build stronger connections with neighbouring regions that benefit both communities.
Gympie

Gympie is the key regional centre for the southern part of the region, and has a pivotal role as the primary administrative, service, sporting, commercial and industrial centre. Its heritage values are recognised and provide a focus for tourism to the subregion.

Two key areas of urban settlement have been established within Gympie, separated by the Mary River. The eastern area is extensively developed for commercial, health and residential settlements, and is focused around the Gympie CBD. Contemporary housing estates supported by small to medium community and commercial activities are now establishing at the suburb of Southside.

The layout of Gympie has emerged as a consequence of the unique natural constraints of local topography and environmental conditions. Gympie's current extent of development and unique riverside location presents opportunities for future development and design responses that address and embrace the Mary River. Public open space is plentiful, providing significant recreation opportunities for the community. The abundance of open space in the inner city is largely due to the area of land affected by local flooding. However, this natural phenomenon ensures the city will retain large tracts of green space, protecting amenity and recreation opportunities for the future.

Urban growth will continue to be accommodated by the expansion of the suburb of Southside. Large tracts of relatively flat broadhectare land to the south of the Mary River will enable the development of diverse dwelling types that are able to be adapted to changing demographic and housing needs over time. As the development of Southside is progressing, but not yet self-sustaining, residents will continue to travel across the Mary River daily to access health, employment, education and commercial services. Residential intensification will require additional infrastructure investment, and possibly additional or augmented river crossings to retain accessibility to the CBD and other employment hubs.

The Southside DA will provide medium- to long-term opportunities to accommodate residential growth for Gympie. Further development of the area will not occur until comprehensive planning has been completed. This will require consideration of the fragmented nature of the area, natural features, potential flooding impacts and topography to provide high levels of accessibility and connectivity. Sequencing and coordination of development and infrastructure delivery will be required. Access across the Mary River will be a key consideration in the sequencing and delivery of development.

Employment throughout the Gympie subregion has been historically dominated by the agricultural, health, commercial and retail sectors. Economic diversification and employment growth may include expansion of the industrial, resource, aviation and tourism industries, which will help to retain Gympie's youth, as well as attract new workers and families to the region.

The Urban Footprint contains sufficient land to maintain the existing employment base, in addition to accommodating growth in the industrial and business sectors, particularly in the Victory Heights and East Deep Creek areas. The Bruce Highway upgrade is necessary to support the long-term industrial expansion sought for the region. Infrastructure provision and resolution of conflicts in relation to noise and other emissions generated by these uses are to be resolved prior to development being undertaken.

The Urban Footprint is a regulatory tool to manage urban growth and is a response to the information available at the time of its release. Given the topographical constraints of the subregion, the outcomes of detailed local planning in the Gympie area may demonstrate that urban development is suitable outside, or unsuitable inside, the Urban Footprint. The edges of the existing developed areas, and of future or developing areas, are the most logical areas to be considered in detailed local planning. Locations on the edge of the urban area, such as Monkland, and between Stumm Road and Glastonbury Road, Southside, are potentially subject to risks from flooding. It may be suitable to locate urban uses in this area; however, detailed analysis and planning will be required to define the extent of the urban area. This will be reflected in the local government planning scheme, subject to the outcome of those investigations.

Commercial and employment growth will respect and reinforce the primacy and importance of Mary Street as Gympie's historical and commercial city centre. Competition between commercial and industrial land needs to be managed to ensure industrial areas are not constrained by commercial uses. Land-use allocation and strategic planning decisions to identify future commercial centres will help the subregion attract and accommodate demand, and reduce the incidence of the siting of these uses in incompatible locations.
The Gympie Aerodrome offers opportunities to take advantage of the Wide Bay Burnett’s Centre of Enterprise for aviation. Investigations into appropriate aviation-related land uses (including a residential airpark), and controls to protect the integrity of future aerodrome operations and to minimise impacts on surrounding land uses, including the nearby Mary River, will be required prior to development occurring.

Industry will be the key employment generator to support residential growth. Capacity and the need for additional industrial land should be monitored and responded to accordingly. The Development Areas at Victory Heights and East Deep Creek will meet the majority of the local demand for industrial land.

The Victory Heights DA will accommodate employment opportunities, primarily industry. Planning prior to development will need to establish appropriate land uses and infrastructure requirements. The realignment of the Bruce Highway will require consideration in the planning and development of the area, particularly access to, and the interface between, land uses. Land to the west of the rail line is fragmented and accommodates low density residential uses. Strategies are to be put in place to manage the interface between the DA and the residential uses to ensure the impacts from the industrial activities are mitigated.

East Deep Creek DA will provide employment opportunities to the Gympie region. Future uses will predominantly be industrial, building on the existing uses, including the abattoir and mining activities. This is a significant amount of land, and provides an opportunity for Gympie to attract diverse industries to the area. Further planning prior to development will be required to address the range of land uses, strategies to mitigate impacts, and infrastructure provision. The Bruce Highway will be realigned through East Deep Creek. Appropriate planning to ensure access and resolution of potential conflicts in relation to noise and other emissions will be required prior to development. Further, growth in this area, including the need to gain access to the current or future alignment of the highway, may have significant impacts on the local road network. This, in addition to state government infrastructure requirements, will require detailed analysis and planning to ensure sufficient capacity to accommodate increased traffic movements as well as mitigating impacts on local areas.

**Coastal towns**

Rainbow Beach, Cooloola Cove and Tin Can Bay are local centres servicing the coastal area of Gympie Regional Council. They offer a coastal way of life for residents and a tourist experience for visitors. Employment in each centre will maintain locally relevant industries—predominantly fishing and marina activities in Tin Can Bay, local shopping and emerging industrial activities in Cooloola Cove, and nature-based tourism and hospitality in Rainbow Beach. However, further diversification of local employment and economic activity will be supported where appropriate.

The attraction for older and retired residents to these coastal towns, particularly Tin Can Bay and Rainbow Beach, as part of the sea change lifestyle phenomenon, will place increasing strain on emergency services and health care sectors over time. Some expansion of these health services will be required in appropriate locations to support the needs of the ageing community.

The Cooloola Cove air strip is currently underused, and options for its redevelopement may resolve the land-use conflict with nearby residential uses. Opportunities may include future tourism activities or affordable housing, given its proximity to the existing Cooloola Cove services and infrastructure. The need for the development, the type and scale of uses, and potential impacts on the adjacent environmentally significant areas will require resolution prior to development.

There are limited opportunities for broadhectare residential expansion to occur within the Cooloola Cove area. The Urban Footprint does not identify new areas for growth for these settlements, generally containing future development to existing areas already committed for development, and redevelopment within established areas where appropriate. Development within each of these towns is required to respect the intent and scale of its setting, and contribute to the amenity and coastal character of the location.

These coastal locations are particularly susceptible to the impacts of climate change and natural hazards, and have restricted infrastructure capacities. Therefore, the expansion of urban activity, particularly residential development beyond existing urban areas, is severely limited.

Higher order services will continue to be provided by Gympie. The physical distance of these towns from the major centre, the absence of significant infrastructure capacity (education, utilities and health), and limited land availability to establish such facilities will, in addition to environmental constraints, restrict the ongoing expansion of these locations.

**Rural towns and surrounds**

Goomeri, Kandanga, Kilkivan and Imbil service rural areas in the Gympie Regional Council area. Higher level services will continue to be met by Gympie, and to a lesser extent, the Sunshine Coast.

The rural areas are the cornerstone of the regional economy, as they support primary production and tourism. Opportunities for the diversification of rural industries should be investigated in order to supplement rural production activities into the future.
Imbil is the hub of the Mary Valley community. It provides a diverse range of commercial, industrial and social services for residents, and has retained a village atmosphere. Imbil will remain the commercial centre of the Mary Valley. New development will largely occur on the north side of Yabba Creek.

Kilkivan and Goomeri provide opportunities for residential and industrial expansion, as these locations have existing highway and infrastructure capacity, as well as ample residential land. Growth in these towns will not compromise the village feel of the settlements.

Urban expansion will occur to the outer areas of Goomeri. However, growth is to be located so that the substantial existing extractive industry activities located near the town, which are envisaged to be in operation for another 50–60 years, will not be compromised.

Access to reliable water supplies for some rural towns is problematic, particularly for western towns of the region, which experience significantly reduced rainfall and warmer climatic conditions than coastal areas. These towns will require new infrastructure over time to help sustain communities and support additional growth.

**Infrastructure**

There is existing capacity in the Gympie region to accommodate growth in the residential, commercial and industrial sectors. The major location for industrial land is east of Gympie, which has sufficient water capacity to support projected growth. However, upgraded road and sewerage infrastructure may be required in the medium term to meet additional demand. Following the highway upgrade, the Kybong area will have significant opportunities for industrial development, and may support large footprint and hard to locate industries. The local government planning scheme should appropriately identify this area to ensure these opportunities are not lost to inappropriate development.

The Gympie region has considerable opportunities to accommodate regionally significant industrial expansion; however, to fulfil this potential, investment in upgrading the Bruce Highway will be crucial. The Bruce Highway upgrade, which will result in additional road capacity and provide a bypass of Gympie from Cooroy to Curra, will provide additional opportunities to attract growth in industry to Gympie. It will facilitate safe and quick access to South East Queensland, presenting opportunities for logistics and transport operations in proximity to the highway. Large footprint and hard to locate industries will also benefit from the highway upgrade, which will ensure safe access is available without prohibitive costs.

The towns of Tin Can Bay, Rainbow Beach and Cooloola Cove have adequate water and wastewater capacity to accommodate the moderate growth expected, particularly following the recent completion of new sewerage treatment plants in each community.

Further expansion of residential and industrial land in Imbil will require water and road infrastructure investments to support growth.

During the life of the regional plan, it is projected that an additional 400 marine wet berths will be required in the southern area of the Great Sandy Straits. Marine facilities should locate near existing infrastructure where possible.

Additionally, a significant defence facility, the Wide Bay Training Area, is located within the Gympie and Fraser Coast Regional Council areas, as identified on Map 2. The defence facility is used by the Australian defence force for live firing ranges and field training. This facility can result in noise impacts, and residential development should be avoided adjacent to the facility to ensure the ongoing operation of the facility is not compromised.

**Economy and employment**

Gympie benefits from major road and rail infrastructure connections to South East Queensland. This will continue to create opportunities in the Gympie region to access local and international markets, and in particular, demand generated from the Sunshine Coast.

Gympie represents an affordable option for relocating and expanding enterprises servicing the south-east corner and requiring access to state and national freight routes. National manufacturing businesses are already located in the region in sectors such as food items and timber goods.

Coordinated land-use and infrastructure planning and sequencing will be required to ensure appropriate areas are able to be used for industrial purposes, and not used for incompatible uses such as commercial or retail.

Rural production, including grazing, cropping and forestry, will remain key contributors to the subregion's economy. Agribusiness and agritourism will be strong drivers for diversifying the economy of rural towns and larger centres such as Gympie. Future land-use decision-making should seek to take advantage of these opportunities to diversify the economy, stimulate a sustainable rural sector and protect areas identified as Good Quality Agricultural Land.
Residential
By 2031, it is anticipated that an additional 8500 dwellings will be required to house expected population growth within the Gympie Regional Council area. It is anticipated that broadhectare development can accommodate more than 9000 dwellings, primarily within the Gympie Urban Footprint. Along with infill development, these dwellings will be sufficient to accommodate growth beyond 2031.

A significant amount of broadhectare land projected to accommodate further growth will require detailed planning to accommodate appropriate infrastructure to serve the projected population and determine land capabilities and constraints.

Rural residential
The established rural residential communities dispersed throughout the subregion are a fundamental part of the settlement pattern and identity of Gympie, and provide an important lifestyle drawcard to the region. Existing residents of Gympie and its surrounds seek out this form of residential accommodation for its natural amenity and aesthetic values.

A significant proportion of the subregion, and in particular, land close to Gympie, has already been divided into rural residential properties. In a large proportion of these cases, rural residential development offers the most efficient use of this land, based primarily on topography, and hazard management and mitigation. On the whole, these developments have allowed otherwise difficult topography, located only a short distance from established community services, urban areas, employment and the Gympie CBD, to be used for residential purposes. Increasing the density of development in many of these areas would expose a greater proportion of the population to hazards, including, for example, bushfire, landslide or flood inundation, and place strain on infrastructure systems and capabilities.

The subregion hosts a number of outlying rural residential areas that are located a significant distance from existing towns and services. Expansion within these areas needs to consider these locational disadvantages before development commitments are made, potentially leading to restrictions on further development.

All future rural residential development commitments are to be appropriately located to achieve land and infrastructure efficiency and avoid unacceptable risks from natural hazards. Land that is suitable for more intensive residential development or rural endeavours is to be protected for these uses. Further fragmentation and development of rural residential land that may conflict with the preferred use of the site and surrounding areas should be avoided.

Community services
As with much of the region, the ageing population highlights the need for an increase in the diversity and availability of housing opportunities and improved support services.

The subregion is serviced by Gympie Hospital and Gympie Private Hospital. Both of these community facilities are located within the Gympie CBD area to the north of the Mary River. Additional health services to support population growth at Southside will be necessary in the future to address residential expansion and changing demographics.

Education requirements for primary and secondary students are adequate for the current population, but may need to be reviewed in light of future population changes, including long-term investment in strengthening these, as well as expanding tertiary education opportunities. Accessibility to secondary school education is limited for residents of many of the region's coastal communities. Strategies to monitor and support improved accessibility should be considered to address changing demands.
North Burnett Regional Council has a large geographic area and population, which is accommodated primarily in the towns of Gayndah, Biggenden, Mount Perry, Mundubbera, Monto and Eidsvold. The estimated residential population in 2010 was 10,805, which is likely to increase to 14,900 by 2031. The region supports a substantial rural sector, predominantly centred around grazing and citrus.

The subregion is steeped in history, from the first European settlements for grazing activities to the strong goldmining industries. This history is evident in the location and pattern of land uses, as well as visually apparent in many buildings that have been retained in the towns within the subregion.

In recent years, North Burnett has been experiencing low growth, and in some locations decline. Creating and sustaining growth will be a key challenge into the future.

With a large geographic area and a population accommodated primarily within six towns, providing and prioritising infrastructure and investment by all levels of government will continue to necessitate detailed planning and coordination of government and community services.

**Towns**

Gayndah, Biggenden and Mount Perry have recently experienced higher levels of growth than other centres in the subregion. This is expected to continue, with each of these rural towns continuing to grow by diversifying and building on a foundation of rural pursuits.

Gayndah will be the focus for attracting and accommodating a greater share of the growth in the North Burnett; however, all communities are provided with the opportunity to improve their self-containment. Biggenden, Eidsvold, Monto, Mount Perry and Mundubbera have additional capacity for residential uses, employment and services.

Detailed analysis and planning of towns should be undertaken to determine future growth needs and appropriate locations for residential and employment activities, as well as other infrastructure requirements. Subject to the outcome of these investigations, expansions to the urban area may be identified in local government planning schemes.

**Infrastructure**

Transport within the subregion is reliant on the road network. The dispersed settlement and urban form require improved connections and accessibility between towns within the subregion and outside the region to Bundaberg, Maryborough and Biloela. In particular, appropriate regional public transport provision should be maintained for towns in North Burnett to provide access to services such as health care, professional services and higher level retail in Bundaberg and outside the region.
The Mungar–Monto–Taragoola rail line is challenged by issues such as poor alignment, steep topography and significant load limits. Opportunities exist for reactivation of the rail network in the North Burnett for emerging mining, tourism and agricultural sectors. For example, in the event that the North Burnett mineral province is developed, the Mungar–Monto–Taragoola rail line may be investigated to cater for this potential demand. The retention and possible upgrade of rail infrastructure in the North Burnett would strengthen opportunities for mining in the region, and provide an alternative option to road transport of materials. Opportunities for open space activities, such as a recreational rail trail, may also be considered.

Infrastructure and associated services in the six major towns of the North Burnett are to be maintained or enhanced to a level appropriate to the purposes, population and demand of each town.

Reliable water supply is problematic for the North Burnett, and in particular for the urban settlements of Gayndah and Mundubbera. Additional capacity and potential alternative sources may be required to provide water supply and improve reliability into the future.

Economy and employment

The economy of the North Burnett is reliant on primary industry activities, with a prevalence of citrus and grazing industries forming the basis of the subregion’s prosperity. North Burnett’s relatively low population base is insufficient to sustain significant retail or commercial activity, and most residents will continue to rely on Bundaberg and Maryborough for higher order shopping, specialist education and training, health and related regional level services.

Opportunities for expansion of industry will be promoted to encourage establishment in the area, to diversify the employment base, and to provide alternative options for residents and the surrounding workforce. This may also assist in retaining youth in the subregion.

An existing goldmining operation currently supports the town of Mount Perry. These mining operations are expected to continue. Other mining exploration and activity are underway throughout the North Burnett. These projects will provide significant economic gains for the North Burnett, and could be supported by upgrades to the rail line.

Residential

Based on an anticipated planning population of 14,900, an additional 1,780 dwellings would be required to house the North Burnett region’s residential growth.

Broadhectare development can accommodate more than 2,000 dwellings. In many areas and towns of the subregion, smaller scale developments will be sufficient to support growth. It is anticipated that this land supply is sufficient to accommodate growth beyond 2031. The capacity of the rural areas to accommodate the projected growth in resident population on existing lots associated with continuing and new rural land enterprises is also acknowledged.

As with much of the region, loss of productive rural land to rural residential uses has occurred in the past. Capacity for well located rural residential development has been provided in the Rural Living Area close to existing towns, and the extension of rural residential land uses into rural areas and productive agricultural land is to be avoided.

Community services

While each local centre and the district centre have health service facilities currently operating, a full range of services, including specialist medical providers, is not available. These services will continue to be provided for the subregion’s residents by Bundaberg, Maryborough and Kingaroy.

A TAFE operates in Gayndah, and secondary schools up to Year 12 are located in Gayndah, Monto and Eidsvold. Biggenden and Mundubbera secondary schools offer classes up to Year 10, with Years 11 and 12 generally completed in Gayndah. Students from Mount Perry generally attend high school in Gin Gin.

A flexible and adaptive approach to the provision of community services over time, and accessibility to additional services, including improved mental health services, will be required. This includes using technology, such as videoconferencing, to access specialist services within and outside the subregion, without the need for extensive travel.
In 2010, the estimated population of the South Burnett Regional Council area was 33,040, accommodated primarily in the urban areas of Kingaroy, Murgon, Nanango and Wondai. These towns are located along major regional thoroughfares leading into and out of South East Queensland. Access from South East Queensland into the subregion is initially via the D’Aguilar Highway, continuing north along the Bunya Highway, and ultimately connecting to the Burnett Highway.

The strategic location of these towns along these major transport routes provides exceptional access for the region into local, national and international markets. South Burnett’s proximity to both South East Queensland and the emerging regional resource province of the Surat Basin provides the subregion with outstanding opportunities for growth and expansion of the existing industry sector, complemented by the projected population increases and the economic and social benefits that growth will produce.

The subregion has largely maintained settlement formations established during European habitation for early industries, including sheep grazing, dairying, timber and peanut farming. The rich soils of the subregion make the continuation and expansion of agricultural pursuits in the area a practical economic strategy, in conjunction with the intended broadening of the local economic and industrial activities for the area.

Kingaroy will continue to accommodate a greater proportion of the subregion’s population and commercial development, with additional capacity provided within the Urban Footprint for the smaller centres of Murgon, Nanango and Wondai.

The subregion possesses a diversity of landscapes and ecological corridors, including several state forests, aquatic ecosystems such as Barambah Creek, and working agricultural pasturelands. The Bunya Mountains are a striking topographical feature of the landscape, offering opportunities for day-trips and tourist visitation to the region.

At its southern and western extent, the South Burnett Regional Council area meets the Surat Basin. South East Queensland adjoins the South Burnett subregion at its eastern boundary, and it encircles Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council. Future planning and land-use decisions for the South Burnett subregion will be mindful of these strategic advantages, and will maximise its accessibility and proximity to these other regions to build a stronger regional economy and community.
Kingaroy

Kingaroy is the main activity centre for the subregion and houses a significant proportion of the residents of the area. As such, it contains most of the South Burnett’s education, retail, health, industrial and government services.

The town of Kingaroy was established originally around the founding of Taabinga Station in the late 19th century, which first introduced sheep grazing to the region. Following the arrival of rail transport, agricultural activities within the Kingaroy rural environs multiplied, including the conversion of sheep grazing to dairying, the establishment of Kingaroy’s butter factory, and several peanut farms. The town still retains many of these early peanut silos, which feature prominently as a marker of the origins of the town. Agricultural and primary industry pursuits have since diversified, and the region now also produces a variety of legumes and small crops.

Kingaroy, and more broadly, the households of rural and urban South Burnett Regional Council area will continue to rely on centres at Gympie, Caboolture, Ipswich and Brisbane for higher order comparison shopping needs, commercial and specialist health services than are available within the town.

Aviation-related business and industry at the Kingaroy Airport will take advantage of the Wide Bay Burnett Centre of Excellence for Aviation initiative and the investment made into the Kingaroy Airport. Opportunities to expand and leverage the current aviation activities may provide avenues for additional transport and specialist employment, in addition to offering future alternative settings for difficult to locate industries, where they will be situated away from sensitive land uses. Appropriate planning and land-use decisions will be required prior to commitments for additional aviation or industrial development in these locations.

Into the future, the South Burnett’s population growth will continue to be accommodated predominantly within Kingaroy and its surroundings. The Urban Footprint includes sufficient capacity to accommodate more than 3500 dwellings through broadhectare and infill development, and will promote a contained urban development pattern.

Murgon, Nanango, Wondai and surrounds

Murgon, Nanango and Wondai provide the region with secondary services and facilities, including convenience shopping, primary and secondary education, and some banking and commercial services.

Murgon and Nanango provide local retail and commercial needs in their immediate areas. Wondai offers some local services but its proximity to Kingaroy results in most local retail needs being met there. It is not likely that the function of these local centres will change in the future as a result of the contrast between the projected population growth of these communities and that for the town of Kingaroy.

Each of these towns was established originally for an agricultural production purpose. For Murgon, grazing and dairying has been a strong community driver for many generations. When at their peak, these industries were substantial enough for the town to support butter and cheese factories and the nationally significant South Burnett Meat Works Co-operative. The town now includes alternative agricultural activities, such as grape and olive growing, and the Murgon region is recognised as containing fossil deposits. These features, when appropriately managed, will be a conservative, but important drawcard, and contribute to the sustainability and resilience of the resident community.

The town of Wondai was settled at a similar time to Kingaroy, and supported timber and dairying, including the establishment of a small butter factory. The extreme climatic conditions experienced by Wondai, coupled with market regulation changes over time, have resulted in the decline of local dairying; however, the timber industry remains a significant contributor to the local economy.

Nanango, as a larger rural town of the subregion, consists of a greater variety of industries and employment opportunities for residents. Originally founded as a settlement of prospectors of local goldmines, Nanango now supports pastoral properties, including beef cattle, bean, grain and grape growing. In addition, the Tarong Power Station and Meandu Coal Mine in the southern reaches of Nanango are significant industries for the region and for the community.

The proximity of Nanango to the emerging industrial activities of the Surat Basin will provide opportunities for residents to access alternative employment. Prospects to improve and diversify existing rural industries should be investigated; however, growth in these sectors will not compromise the existing rural village feel of the town.

Railway crossing, peanut silos and streetscape, Kingaroy
Courtesy of Ray Cash Photography
Capacity is available in rural townships to accommodate a proportion of growth beyond 2031, although the rate of growth will be limited. Some towns, like Proston and Hivesville, will continue to accommodate small populations in a rural setting, due primarily to the distance between these communities and the larger towns, and restricted infrastructure capacities of these locations. Adjacent to the entrance to the Bunya Mountains National Park, a small number of residential allotments exist. The extent of the urban area of towns in the RLRPA will be defined in the local government planning scheme.

**Infrastructure**

Demand for water in the South Burnett subregion is likely to exceed supply in the short term. Infrastructure and investment may be required to provide a long-term solution to water security, in particular for Kingaroy, and to a lesser extent Nanango, Wondai and Murgon.

While the towns of the South Burnett are relatively close to one another, transit options are largely reliant on private vehicles. Accessibility between towns in the South Burnett should be maintained or improved in line with growth, with existing road networks maintained or improved over time.

The provision and continuation of innovative, locally grounded public transport solutions will remain important to meet local needs as the region expands. Planning for regionally specific transport infrastructure ahead of significant population growth cycles will improve the sustainability of these communities, pre-empt demand and avoid crisis responses to infrastructure shortfalls. Active transport will also provide a convenient alternative to the private vehicle for local travel within the relatively compact towns.

The diversification and expansion of agricultural and industrial activities, particularly in conjunction with emerging industrial and mining activities within the nearby Surat Basin, will place pressures on local infrastructure, including transport (road and rail) for the movement of goods by oversize or heavy vehicles, as well as increase demand for electricity and water supplies. These pressures will present challenges to the region; however, where planned for, will improve the integration of the South Burnett with the wider Queensland economy, and support the communities of the subregion.

**Economy and employment**

The South Burnett subregion currently has a relatively strong economy and low unemployment rate.

Surat Basin and Tarong Energy provide an emerging opportunity for the region to support or participate in complementary industry and commercial activity within the South Burnett. Additional infrastructure capacity and residential growth in appropriate locations will support this strategic vision for the South Burnett subregion.

Maintaining and enhancing the rural productivity of the region is both an opportunity and a challenge. Building on the existing foundations of the rural economy will provide prospects to improve the viability of rural enterprise, attracting additional tourists, strengthening the economy and providing diversity in employment.

High intensity rural uses such as feedlots and piggeries are currently located within the region. It is anticipated that these uses will continue to be supported within the rural area, acknowledging the economic and employment benefits of these uses and the flow-on effects to other uses such as abattoirs.

Agribusiness and industry provide additional key prospects for the region to expand the employment base, including improvements to the viability of rural production activities. This may be through expansion or diversification of the operations of the region’s largest employers and agricultural producers.

Tourism in the South Burnett will continue to grow, predominantly drawing on the driving holiday market, and nature-based and rural-themed tourist stays. The South Burnett region is one of Queensland’s largest wine regions, and home to some of the state’s biggest vineyards. Natural areas, fossil deposits and lakeside recreation areas are also tourist drawcards. The region’s proximity to South East Queensland also provides access to a large day trip market. Agribusiness may also take advantage of this market through agritourism.

The main mining activity in the South Burnett is the Meandu coal mine that services the Tarong Power Station. As the resources at Meandu become depleted, the locus of coalmining is anticipated to shift to the Kunoon resource, south of Kingaroy. As a result, some economic activity is likely to transfer from Nanango to Kingaroy. However, the relative proximity of these towns to each other will provide opportunities for a large proportion of the employment base to transfer at the cessation of mining activity at Meandu.
Residential

By 2031, it is anticipated that an additional 4300 dwellings will be required to house growth within the South Burnett region.

Urban and rural living broadacre land can accommodate a significant proportion of the required dwellings. This, with infill development, is sufficient to accommodate potential growth beyond 2031.

A large area of rural residential land is currently available within the subregion. Limited additional capacity is provided in the Rural Living Area close to existing towns, resulting from existing supply of this residential type when compared to demand. Until such time as market demand for this housing product increases, the creation or extension of existing rural residential areas is to be avoided.

Diverse and well-designed dwellings to satisfy the housing requirements for South Burnett residents will be required. Retirement housing and the use of universal housing designs will assist in meeting the accommodation needs of an ageing and demographically evolving population.

Community services

With Kingaroy serving much of the South Burnett region, health and community services and improved accessibility to this centre will be required in line with the anticipated increase in demand.

Kingaroy Hospital is the main medical facility servicing the South Burnett region. Improvement of the hospital’s facilities and staffing levels will allow a wider range of health services, including mental health services, to be provided. Currently, residents of the South Burnett subregion are required to travel out of the region to access these services. Smaller hospitals are located in Wondai, Murgon and Nanango, and offer limited capacity and services from specialists visiting from Kingaroy Hospital and from outside the region.

Education and training within the subregion is satisfactory for the current extent of settlement, but may need to be reviewed in light of future demand and in response to demographic changes over time. Education facilities should be complementary to the business and industry sectors relevant to the South Burnett subregion to attract and retain the region’s youth.