

Review of Development Incentives for Tablelands Region Planning Scheme 2016



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PSA Consulting in conjunction with Foresight Partners has been engaged by Tablelands Regional Council to undertake a Review of Development Incentives and the Tablelands Regional Council Planning Scheme 2016.

The purpose of this report is to outline the findings and recommendations regarding the incentives, issues and proposed Planning Scheme amendments which have been developed as a result of the analysis undertaken, as well as taking into consideration the feedback received during consultation conducted with key stakeholders.

As a consequence of the review, a range of recommendations can be made for Council's consideration. This includes the following:

Recommendation 1:

Take a holistic approach to economic development incentives for the region by first establishing Council's policy position regarding the desired outcomes it is seeking to achieve and the uses it wishes to particularly incentivise (and in which locations). Once the incentives policy has been established, a suite of measures should be considered, to most effectively implement the incentives policy. This could be a combination of a targeted marketing program campaign to attract certain uses/businesses to the region; infrastructure charges reductions; reduced development assessment fees; ongoing business and other support to developers seeking to develop in the region; improved development assessment processes and timeframes for determining applications; and ultimately, Planning Scheme amendments to facilitate this.

Recommendation 2:

Consider similar incentives packages for key industries/uses Council is seeking to encourage within the region, as currently provided for by other Queensland local governments (refer Appendix 1 for examples).

Recommendation 3:

- Intensive horticulture should be Code assessable in the Rural zone, where not Accepted development subject to requirements. If mushroom farms hold particular concern for Council, then these could continue to be made Impact assessment.
- Rural worker's accommodation should be made Accepted development subject to requirements within all precincts of the Rural zone. This is particularly in relation to the Agricultural Land Precinct and the General Rural Precinct of the Rural zone.
- Relocatable home park could be made Code assessment in certain zones and certain circumstances (as a means of facilitating a different aged care housing product), such as in the Low density residential zone and the Medium density residential zone.
- Encourage more rural-based tourism and/or accommodation uses within the Rural zone by lowering some levels of assessment. This could include developing more refined qualifiers/criteria for those circumstances in which certain rural tourism-based uses are to be encouraged.

Recommendation 4:

It is emphasised that attracting new knowledge-based industries (or any new industries) is a highly competitive and speculative venture with a low success rate, particularly in a relatively remote location with a small population. Therefore, in attempting to attract new industries, Council should minimise its direct and ongoing financial exposure.

The key factors in successfully attracting new industries are:

- Low total costs of operation compared to other jurisdictions, including development, operations, government charges and employee remuneration; and
- Availability of required resources. For a knowledge based industry, the single most important resource is local availability of suitably qualified persons.

Five concurrent strategies are recommended:

- Minimise the financial cost of entry for new industries through (for example) long term tax holidays, and provision of land at little or no cost.
- Demonstrate that the total cost of operation of the new industry in the Tablelands region will be highly competitive with any other jurisdiction.
- Identify the key objectives of senior decision makers in the target industry in terms of quality of life, and demonstrate how living in the Tablelands region will meet those objectives.
- Guarantee the provision of local education and training programs that meet the specific requirements of the targeted knowledge-based industries, and provide an opportunity for synergy between local industry and educational sectors in terms of research and development.
- Minimise the related direct financial obligations of Council. Contributions by Council can include (for example) provision of underutilised land and facilities with a low opportunity cost, but should avoid significant ongoing financial commitments.

Recommendation 5:

- As a priority, consider undertaking a land supply study to address future shortages of suitably zoned land for residential, commercial and industrial purposes within the region and make future subsequent Planning Scheme amendments to address the shortfall identified (if any).
- Through consultation with established local industries, identify the most significant short-term opportunities for expansion and/or value adding, and the resources and strategies needed to achieve it.
- Identify constraints to potential development which are within Council's control, such as a shortage or inappropriate location of suitably zoned land.
- Identify how the Council can reduce or eliminate specific planning constraints.
- Contribute to a business plan for expansion of the industry that demonstrates to investors and other industry stakeholders that Council will support expansion through relevant planning provisions.

Recommendation 6:

- Undertake the proposed Planning Scheme amendments as identified by Council in its document entitled: "Proposed Changes to the TRC Planning Scheme 2016"; and
- Remove the following Editor's Note from all tables of assessment within the Planning Scheme:
"Editor's note—unless listed above the default level of assessment is impact assessment, unless otherwise prescribed within the Act or the Regulation."

Recommendation 7:

- Council address the underlying Development Assessment cultural and system issues through consideration of the Action Plan contained in *Appendix 3*;
- Consider Planning Scheme amendments in the interim which may go some way to addressing the issues raised by Council and the development industry – e.g. amending levels of assessment around key industries to encourage economic development, including those recommended in section 4.3 item 2 of this report;
- Consider convening a working group with development industry stakeholders to work through and discuss specific examples of how:
 - overlay code provisions could potentially be amended to provide greater flexibility for development, whilst still maintaining a sufficient level of rigour;
 - code provisions could potentially be amended to provide more specific criteria that provides greater certainty for the development industry;

- Council to determine whether there is a need to review the current GQAL mapping and associated zonings as a future major Planning Scheme amendment;
- Council to determine whether to review the minimum lot sizes in the Rural zone if the application of the Planning Scheme continues to raise legitimate questions about the appropriate minimum lot size in the Rural zone; and
- Council to make the necessary Planning Scheme amendments it identifies as necessary to rectify the issues currently causing development applications to be triggered for a Dwelling house in the Rural residential zone (4000m² Precinct) as Building Work Assessable Against the Planning Scheme (BWAPS); or a Material Change of Use for a Dwelling house under the Water Resource Catchment Overlay for the Lake Tinaroo catchment area, if it is not Council's intention to capture these as development applications. Further, a broader review of those instances where BWAPS are being triggered by the Planning Scheme and the associated Acceptable Outcomes that could be triggering a higher level of assessment may be warranted.

It is evident that the amendment of the Planning Scheme is not the only measure required to effectively implement a range of economic development incentives for the Tablelands region. A broader approach is needed to provide a clear line of sight as to what Council's policy intent is regarding economic development incentives, supported by the range of measures to be implemented to facilitate this. Simply amending the Planning Scheme through changes to tables of assessment, code provisions and the like is unlikely to be sufficient to achieve the outcomes Council are seeking in providing for enhanced economic development of the region.

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1 INTRODUCTION

PSA Consulting in conjunction with Foresight Partners has been engaged by Tablelands Regional Council (Council) to undertake a Review of Development Incentives and the Tablelands Regional Council Planning Scheme 2016 (the Planning Scheme).

The objectives of this project are to:

- Review the Planning Scheme and identify possible incentives for development, including a consideration of what Councils or Local Governments are implementing across Queensland, Australia or internationally, with respect to development incentives and the success or otherwise of such incentives.
- Consult and meet with key stakeholders who utilise the Planning Scheme and workshop the above mentioned point to identify potential issues and their possible solutions.
- Review the proposed 16 amendments that Council officers have identified.
- Review Codes, Tables of Assessment and Infrastructure Charges and compare with progressive Councils located in regional, rural or remote areas.
- Present the findings and recommendations regarding the incentives, issues and proposed Planning Scheme amendments to Council and key Council stakeholders.
- Provide Council with a written report, including an executive summary on all findings, proposals and workshops, including all extrinsic material relied on.

1.1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to outline the findings and recommendations regarding the incentives, issues and proposed Planning Scheme amendments which have been developed as a result of the analysis undertaken, as well as taking into consideration the feedback received during consultation conducted with key stakeholders. The report also provides a summary of all consultation conducted to date and outlines the extrinsic material relied upon in developing recommendations for potential Planning Scheme amendments.

2 BACKGROUND

Information provided by Council provides the following background to this project:

Council adopted a Sustainable Planning Act 2009 Planning Scheme on 1 September 2016 with Ministerial amendments made to the Planning Scheme to comply with the Planning Act 2016 on 3 July 2017. The Planning Scheme is now 12 months old and Council committed to its stakeholders that a 12 month review would be conducted and key stakeholder consultation would be undertaken to gauge how the Planning Scheme was performing and if any further fine tuning or other amendments were required.

Tablelands Regional Council has seen steady population growth (0.6%) throughout the past 5 years with some towns seeing more than others. Council is also committed to being an enabler of economic growth within the region; therefore have embarked on a review of the Planning Scheme to seek possible further incentives within it. Generally speaking, Council wishes to consider removing “red tape” or general obstacles to development. This review is to identify potential incentives and opportunities to encourage development.

Council has identified 3 minor and 13 major amendments within the Planning Scheme. These amendments will be part of a major amendment made in conjunction with any amendments proposed as an outcome of this review.

This report responds to the primary drivers for this project, which are to identify any initial Planning Scheme amendments that could possibly be made regarding incentives that could assist in facilitating economic growth within the Tablelands region. Particular consideration is given to both the Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022 recently adopted by Council, as well as the feedback received through the stakeholder consultation conducted as part of this project.

3 REVIEW OF BEST PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

A review of what other Councils, State agencies and other organisations are implementing particularly across Queensland and Australia with respect to development incentives has been undertaken as part of this project. This is for comparison purposes and to help guide recommendations in relation to potential incentives. The findings of this analysis can be found in *Appendix 1*.

The analysis has found that of the Queensland Council examples analysed in particular, many have an overarching incentives policy established, which promotes certain types of development that are both appropriate and/or desired for that specific local government area. For example, Rockhampton Regional Council seeks to support projects involving:

- Aged Care and Retirement;
- Destination Tourism;
- Education and Training;
- Farm Stay Accommodation; and
- Medical, Health & Community Services.

Up to 75% concession is available on infrastructure charges. Council's facilitation includes:

- Access to Council's Economic Development team to provide advice on applicability and incentives that may be available under the policy;
- Access to Council Planning Officers through the Duty Planner to provide advice in preparing development applications;
- Pre-lodgement meetings with all relevant Council officers free of charge; and
- Assistance with identifying and facilitating contact with State Government agencies with a view to facilitating the development (Rockhampton Regional Council Development Incentives Policy 2017-2019).

Similarly, Bundaberg Regional Council is currently offering discounts off infrastructure charges for development that is completed by 28 June 2019 across four broad categories:

- 100% discounts for development in the Bundaberg CBD and town centres of Bargara, Childers and Gin Gin;
- 100% discounts for Intensive Horticulture, Rural Industry, Aquaculture and Winery (where in a Rural zone) developments and 50% discounts for Intensive Animal Industry and development that provides housing for itinerant farm workers and backpackers;
- 50% discounts for Long Term Employment Generating (Industrial, Medical, Commercial (where in a Commercial Zone) and Tourism) development; and
- 50% discounts for certain infill residential and greenfield residential developments, as well as residential subdivision in the Rural Residential Zone and Relocatable Home Parks (Bundaberg Regional Council, Bundaberg Open for Development – 2016 Development Incentives).

It is also Moreton Bay Regional Council's policy to incentivise infill development projects for specific uses through the waiving of both application fees and infrastructure charges where a proposal meets the conditions of the incentives policy and where for:

- Rooming Accommodation (Student accommodation);
- Mixed use building (a mix of shop and / or office uses with multiple dwelling and / or short term accommodation);
- Multiple dwelling;
- Short term accommodation;
- Retirement facility; and
- Residential care facility (Moreton Bay Regional Council , Incentivising Infrastructure Development Policy).

In considering the learnings from these local government examples, there are consistent core elements which are consistent across all examples, which are:

1. Clear economic development objectives which specify the rationale and outcomes for Council and the community;

2. A focus for the incentive, expressed as;
 - a. Specific land uses/development;
 - b. Specific locations;
 - c. Within specified time frames;
3. Utilisation and alignment of a range of policy, operational and financial tools. These include:
 - a. Facilitative Planning Scheme provisions;
 - b. Streamlining development assessment timeframes;
 - c. Discounts or waiving of development assessment fee and infrastructure charges;
 - d. Incentivised pre-lodgement meetings and other processes; and
 - e. Appointment of Council officers to facilitate and support applications as “case managers”.

The common elements should be considered in developing a holistic economic development incentives package.

Recommendations:

Tablelands Regional Council to consider similar incentives packages for key industries/uses Council is seeking to encourage within the region as currently provided for by other Queensland local governments (refer Appendix 1 for examples). Associated Planning Scheme amendments can include a range of incentives in terms of levels of assessment, code provisions etc., but financial incentives through reduced infrastructure charges or other financial grants will also need to be considered.

It is important to note that other policy measures will also be needed for development incentives, which sit outside the Planning Scheme. That is, a holistic and integrated approach which establishes a clear line of sight between the overarching corporate Council policy and filtering through to the Planning Scheme through potential amendments, is needed.

An assessment of the Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022 is provided below, which seeks to establish the broader Council policy objectives for economic development of the region. However, it is generally beyond the scope of this project to consider other policy measures and incentives required outside the Planning Scheme. The entire suite of measures required to effectively implement economic development incentives for the region should be considered by Council as part of an overarching approach to economic incentives.

4 REVIEW OF TABLELANDS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

4.1 Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022

The Tablelands Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022 (EDS) was recently adopted by Council and has been reviewed to compare how the key strategies within that are linked to the TRC Planning Scheme and/or can inform potential Planning Scheme amendments. The review has found the following key characteristics of the Tablelands Region, which has:

- A relatively small population – only 25,000 residents;
- A very low population growth – a net increase of only 1,600 residents in the past ten years;
- An unemployment rate (7.8%) which is higher than regional Queensland and state averages;
- A high proportion of young adults leave the region;
- Workforce skill levels and education levels that are below state averages;
- An individual median weekly income which is 23% below the state average;
- A significant ageing population;
- Economic outputs that are dominated by traditional industries - agriculture/forestry/fishing, construction and mining;
- Most employment in agriculture/forestry/fishing, retail and health care/social services. i.e. traditional industries and local population-serving jobs; and
- A number of major infrastructure projects that have been identified as crucial to the future development of the Tablelands.

4.2 Key Strategic Areas

Five Key Strategic Areas have been identified within the EDS that are within Council's sphere of influence and budget:

1. Business and investment attraction;
2. Industry expansion and acceleration;
3. Infrastructure and planning - place enablement;
4. Smart centres innovation and entrepreneurship; and
5. Local business and workforce capacity building.

The EDS provides a series of actions and projects that Council will undertake across the five years that the Strategy encompasses. The EDS recognises that the actions and the projects can only be achieved by working with a range of key partners including chambers of commerce, industry groups, universities, state departments and local council colleagues across the region.

4.2.1 Business and Investment Attraction

The Strategy identifies investment opportunities across a number of industry sectors, inclusive of, but not limited to: aged-care, accommodation, retail, hospitality and agriculture processing. There are a range of actions identified that seek to best advance business and investment attraction. The action that is most relevant to the Planning Scheme (and potential amendments), is the promotion of economic land zones through the development and implementation of tax incentives to encourage increased development from the private sector. This will require a collaborative and whole-of-Council policy position to be established first, in determining where these economic land zones should be located within

the region and how tax incentives can be implemented to encourage increased development in the private sector and what type of increased development is desired within the specific economic land zones, before meaningful Planning Scheme amendments can be recommended. Notwithstanding, the Planning Scheme currently facilitates aged-care, accommodation, retail, hospitality and agriculture-processing activities within the Scheme through appropriate levels of assessment in appropriate zones.

4.2.2 Industry Expansion and Acceleration

The EDS also identifies a number of industry sectors that are significant in the Tablelands region:

1. **Agriculture** - has the largest economic output by industry in the Tablelands and has over 800 businesses at work in the sector. The industry is also the biggest employer in the Tablelands – over 1,400 workers.
2. **Tourism** - the tourism sector employs 569 workers, and in 2016 there were over 150,000 combined international and domestic overnight visitors to the Tablelands region. Targeting key strategic events to drive increased visitation and economic benefit to the Tablelands is a recognised sector strategy.
3. **Retail Trade** - is the second highest industry employment sector in the Tablelands region with almost 1300 jobs contributing to the local economy. Opportunities exist in the digital space as global trend in the retail sector has seen an increase in online retailing.
4. **Health Care and Social Services** - in the Tablelands region, is the third largest employing sector, with 1,236 workers. The nature of demand for health and social services is being impacted by an ageing population trend, and the expectation that medical care and social assistance will need to be increasingly geared towards the aged.
5. **Knowledge-Based Industries and the Education Sector** - these are key areas to target in the Tablelands as intensification of knowledge as a key business input now plays a critical role in determining economic success.

These generally align with the industry sectors identified for business and investment attraction. Associated actions are provided but do not provide any direct linkages for recommendations on immediate Planning Scheme amendments. However, there are several actions identified that could potentially lead to ultimate amendments to the Planning Scheme, including:

- Establish a Tablelands Agriculture Diversification (TAD) Group to lead the development of next generation diversification and value-add in the sector.
- Work with agricultural businesses to enhance industry expansion, and identify and support niche and/or new agricultural activities to foster opportunities for longer-term diversification and sector strength.

Identification of opportunities to diversify and value-add to the agricultural sector may help to identify certain instances where defined uses such as Intensive horticulture and Rural industry could have lowered levels of assessment subject to certain qualifiers, or specific code provisions could be developed to address these. These potential levels of assessment qualifiers and/or code provisions might reflect the emerging trends and/or niche opportunities for the agricultural sector which is identified through the work undertaken in the above two actions; and

- Partner with Regional and Local Tourism Organisations to support innovative destination marketing and leading in-market experiences that will grow the tourism sector.

The above action could also potentially lead to Planning Scheme amendments, where innovations in tourism developments/opportunities could result in the more refined levels of assessment being developed subject to qualifiers. Specific tourism-related development codes or provisions may also be developed, based on additional work being undertaken in this industry sector, which could inform future scheme amendments.

Notwithstanding, the Planning Scheme currently facilitates agricultural, rural and tourism-related uses by ensuring that the levels of assessment accommodates this type of development in suitable locations.

4.2.3 Infrastructure and Planning Place Enablement

The EDS seeks to provide access to reliable and high quality infrastructure, along with a welcoming and efficient, and outcome-focused, planning department which drives business growth and influences decisions about business locations.

Council has a role to play in providing quality local infrastructure and is committed to meeting its infrastructure renewal needs, including asset renewal and management and key transport links.

The Strategy states that simplifying the development assessment process and ensuring it remains transparent is an immediate priority. Ways this may be achieved is to simplify the application process, reducing turnaround times for development applications and the provision of additional support information to support business development initiatives at first point of contact with Council. (This report acknowledges that the development assessment process is regulated by the *Planning Act 2016* and cannot be altered, however there may also be scope to undertake Council-led initiatives to simplify the development application process by, for example, improving on the timeframes set by the legislation, or providing additional support to developers through allocation of a case manager (or similar), to assist with the progress of their development applications).

The EDS also states that Council aims to implement best practice systems to facilitate and encourage local business investment. This includes ways to continue to streamline the planning process particularly for small business.

Council will also plan for and ensure adequate capacity of strategic employment lands to support development leading to economic and jobs growth.

There are a number of major infrastructure projects which have been identified as crucial to the future development of the Tablelands. Support and promotion of these projects will need to be continued over the next five years, as well as the coordinated delivery once funding has been secured.

Associated action statements refer to the need to establish and implement e-planning services at Tablelands Regional Council. The development and implementation of a planning incentive and support scheme is also identified. These are some important matters that need to be actioned by Council and provides a direct linkage between the overarching EDS policy and the achievement of incentives other than simply through the Planning Scheme, which is not the only appropriate mechanism for providing incentives – i.e. a Planning Scheme cannot implement e-planning services or develop and implement a planning incentive and support scheme. Rather, once the planning incentive and support scheme is developed as an action arising from the EDS, the Planning Scheme may then need to be amended to reflect what the incentive policy seeks to achieve.

There are also several actions identified that could potentially require amendments to the Planning Scheme to support the achievement of these actions, including:

- Advocate and plan for the development of a technologically underpinned Atherton Allied Health and Medical Service Precinct.
- Lead and market the Prior's Creek redevelopment to revitalise and expand Atherton's town centre.

It is important that the Planning Scheme be supportive of these actions, and makes the necessary amendments to reflect these outcomes (where required), in order to support Council's established policy position in this regard.

4.2.4 Smart City Innovation and Entrepreneurship

The Tablelands Regional Council Corporate Plan 2017-2022 has, as one of its four identified corporate direction priorities, 'Smart Centres'. Goals aligned to the Council's corporate direction are:

1. Embrace innovative practices and technologies.
2. Develop digital connectivity and engagement.
3. Overcome the digital divide.
4. Mitigate the impacts of natural disasters.

There are no actions in the EDS for this key area that relate directly to Planning Scheme amendments. However, the desire to achieve Smart Centres and embrace innovation and entrepreneurship can be facilitated through the Planning Scheme by ensuring the flexibility to account for innovative development proposals, through appropriate levels of assessment and performance-based provisions. A review of the Planning Scheme reveals that it is generally quite facilitative of development opportunities in appropriate locations.

4.2.5 Local Business and Workforce Capacity Building

The Strategy recognises that a critical element of the Tablelands economy is its local business community. Local businesses play a key role in driving the economic and social wellbeing of the wider community and economic development efforts should give priority to supporting existing enterprises as a vital source of business expansion and local growth. Associated actions refer to the need to actively support growth and expansion of existing businesses (via the development application process) by assisting with information, referrals to other layers of government, funding sources, etc. The development application process relies on the Planning Scheme to guide assessment of applications. There is a role that the Planning Scheme can play in promoting local businesses, through levels of assessment and assessment provisions, however a clear policy articulation of the types and nature of businesses desired in certain locations is required, before effective planning scheme amendments can be recommended.

4.3 Implications for Planning Scheme

Analysis of the EDS reveals that from an economic analysis perspective, there are a number of implications for the amendment of the Planning Scheme which need to be considered in developing recommended amendments that seek to encourage economic development incentives. These are as follows:

1. As inherent population growth is minimal, TRC will need catalysts to attract investment and accelerate growth;

Amendments to the TRC Planning Scheme in and of themselves will not be sufficient to attract investment and accelerate growth within the region. This needs to be combined with a suite of incentives that complement one another, which may include reduced infrastructure charges, reduced Development Assessment fees, other marketing programs to target specific industries to the Tablelands etc. The Planning Scheme can only go so far in seeking to attract investment to the region through levels of assessment, code provisions and the like.

Recommendations:

Council needs to take a holistic approach to economic development incentives for the region by first establishing its policy position regarding the desired outcomes it is seeking to achieve and the uses it wishes to particularly incentivise (and in which locations). Once the incentives policy has been established, a suite of measures should be considered, to most effectively implement the incentives policy. This could be a combination of a targeted marketing program campaign to attract certain uses/businesses to the region; infrastructure charges reductions; reduced development application fees; ongoing business and other support to developers seeking to develop in the region; improved development assessment processes and timeframes for determining applications; and ultimately, implementation of Planning Scheme amendments to facilitate this.

2. Facilitate industry sectors with inadequate land provision or strong growth potential (now or in future):

- **Value-added agricultural processing;**
- **Accommodation for agricultural workforce;**
- **Facilitating growth in aged care and health care services;**
- **Rural tourism accommodation and attractions;**

Amendments to the Planning Scheme should be considered which might be more facilitative and flexible in providing for industry types which have strong growth potential for the Tablelands region. This is particularly relevant for the Rural zone, where agricultural and tourism prospects are identified as industry sectors with strong growth potential.

Specifically, with respect to the above nominated industries and uses, the following is observed:

- Agricultural Processing can potentially be defined as Intensive horticulture or Rural industry within the TRC Planning Scheme. Within the Rural zone, Intensive horticulture is Accepted development subject to requirements where not a mushroom farm and where setback a minimum 20m from any property boundary. If the proposal does not meet these requirements, it triggers Impact assessment. Consideration should be given to making this use Code assessment where not accepted development subject to requirements. If mushroom farms

hold particular concern for Council, then these could continue to be made Impact assessment. Rural industry is either Accepted development, Accepted development subject to requirements or Code assessment within the Rural zone and this approach is reasonable.

- Rural worker’s accommodation is Accepted development subject to requirements, where within the Broadhectare or Agricultural investigation precinct. It is Code assessable otherwise. If the risk of such development is quite low within the region’s rural areas, consideration could be given to making this use Accepted development subject to requirements within all precincts of the Rural zone. This is particularly in relation to the Agricultural Land Precinct and the General Rural Precinct of the Rural zone.
- Growth in aged care and health care services can potentially be facilitated through the Planning Scheme through a number of defined uses. This includes:

Aged care

- Community care centre
- Community residence
- Relocatable home park
- Residential care facility
- Retirement facility

Health care services

- Health care services
- Hospital

Table 1 below provides an overview of the levels of assessment applicable for these uses within the Low density residential zone, Medium density residential zone, Centre zone, Community facilities zone and Atherton Local Plan.

Table 1 – Levels of Assessment for Aged Care and Health Care Uses in selected zones in TRC Planning Scheme 2016

Defined Use	Zone				
	Low density residential	Medium density residential	Centre	Community facilities	Atherton Local Plan
<i>Aged Care</i>					
Community care centre	Impact assessment	Accepted development subject to requirements	Code assessment	Accepted development subject to requirements/ Code assessment	Code assessment (if in Town Centre Fringe Precinct and within existing building)
Community residence	Accepted development subject to requirements	Accepted development subject to requirements	Impact assessment	Accepted development subject to requirements	No change
Relocatable home park	Impact assessment	Impact assessment	Impact assessment	Impact assessment	No change
Residential care facility	Code assessment (on premises)	Code assessment	Impact assessment	Accepted development	No change

Defined Use	Zone				
	Low density residential	Medium density residential	Centre	Community facilities	Atherton Local Plan
	4000m ² or greater)			subject to requirements/ Code assessment	
Retirement facility	Code assessment (on premises 4000m ² or greater)	Code assessment	Impact assessment	Impact assessment	No change
<i>Health Care Services</i>					
Health Care Services	Impact assessment	Impact assessment	Accepted development / Accepted development subject to requirements / Code assessment	Accepted development subject to requirements/ Code assessment	Accepted development subject to requirements (if in Town Centre Fringe Precinct)
Hospital	Impact assessment	Impact assessment	Impact assessment	Accepted development subject to requirements/ Code assessment	No change

Both a Residential care facility and a Retirement facility are Code assessable within the Low density residential zone (where on a site 4000m² or greater) and are also Code assessable within the Medium density residential zone. A Retirement facility is Impact assessable in the Centre and Community facilities zone (there is no change as a result of the Atherton Local Plan).

Health care services are facilitated as either Accepted development with or without requirements, or as Code assessment in the Centre and Community facilities zone and is Accepted development subject to requirements if in the Town Centre Fringe Precinct in the Atherton Local Plan. A Hospital is most easily accommodated within the Community facilities zone, being either Accepted development subject to requirements, or Code assessment.

Overall, it is considered that aged care and associated uses and health care services are generally facilitated in the appropriate zones and locations, based on the current tables of assessment contained within the Planning Scheme. Some consideration could be given as to whether a Relocatable home park, which forms a legitimate affordable aged care housing option for some, could be made Code assessment in certain zones and in specific instances, as this is currently Impact assessment across the zones scrutinised above. It is noted that the Herberton Local Plan (Herberton Character Precinct) and the Malanda Local Plan (English Street Precinct) would make such a use Code assessable in certain circumstances. It is noted that Bundaberg Regional Council makes this use Code assessable in its Low and Medium density residential zones and that this use is specifically targeted in its incentives scheme.

- With respect to rural tourism accommodation and attractions, this can potentially be facilitated through the Planning Scheme in the Rural zone, through a number of defined uses, including Environment facility, Nature based tourism, Outstation, Resort complex, Short term accommodation, Tourist attraction and Tourist park.

Within the Rural zone, Environment facility and Nature based tourism are potentially subject to Code assessment, subject to meeting specific criteria. An Outstation (which includes an Indigenous camp site as an example), is Impact assessment in all circumstances within the Rural zone, as is a Resort complex, Tourist attraction and Tourist park. Short term accommodation is Accepted development subject to requirements if a

Farm stay and meeting certain criteria. There could be some scope to encourage more rural-based tourism and/or accommodation uses within the Rural zone (where not likely to impact on GQAL), by lowering some levels of assessment, should TRC wish to encourage this type of industry in the region and provide incentives to do so. This could include developing more refined qualifiers/criteria for those circumstances in which certain rural tourism-based uses are to be encouraged.

There are other zones where some of the above uses are also encouraged – such as Environment facility being Accepted development in the Conservation zone and Recreation and open space zone, however the focus is on the Rural zone in this analysis, due to the recognition of rural tourism accommodation and attractions as key industries to target within the EDS.

Recommendations:

- Intensive horticulture should be Code assessable in the Rural zone where not Accepted development subject to requirements. If mushroom farms hold particular concern for Council (as these are currently singled out within the table of assessment), then these should continue to be made Impact assessment.
- Rural worker's accommodation should be made Accepted development subject to requirements within all precincts of the Rural zone. This is particularly in relation to the Agricultural Land Precinct and the General Rural Precinct of the Rural zone.
- Relocatable home park could be made Code assessable in certain zones and certain circumstances (as a means of facilitating a different aged care housing product), such as in the Low density residential zone and the Medium density residential zone.
- Encourage more rural-based tourism and/or accommodation uses within the Rural zone (where not likely to impact on GQAL), by lowering some levels of assessment. This could include developing more refined qualifiers/criteria for those circumstances in which certain rural tourism-based uses are to be encouraged.

3. Planning support is needed to facilitate a "Smart City strategy" and particularly projects with a demonstrated business case. However, establishing knowledge-based industries in the TRC will be a major challenge;

The Planning Scheme can only go so far in encouraging knowledge-based industries to establish within the Tablelands. If there is no incentive or attractors to establishing these uses in the region, then a Planning Scheme amendment on its own will not be effective in drawing these uses to the region. An integrated and holistic approach is needed to address this.

Recommendations:

It is emphasised that attracting new knowledge-based industries (or any new industries) is a highly competitive and speculative venture with a low success rate, particularly in a relatively remote location with a small population. Therefore, in attempting to attract new industries, Council should minimise its direct and ongoing financial exposure.

The key factors in successfully attracting new industries are:

- Low total costs of operation compared to other jurisdictions, including development, operations, government charges and employee remuneration; and
- Availability of required resources. For a knowledge based industry, the single most important resource is local availability of suitably qualified persons.

Five concurrent strategies are recommended:

- 1 Minimise the financial cost of entry for new industries through (for example) long term tax holidays, and provision of land at little or no cost.
- 2 Demonstrate that the total cost of operation of the new industry in the Tablelands region will be highly competitive with any other jurisdiction.

- 3 Identify the key objectives of senior decision makers in the target industry in terms of quality of life, and demonstrate how living in the Tablelands region will meet those objectives.
 - 4 Guarantee the provision of local education and training programs that meet the specific requirements of the targeted knowledge-based industries, and provide an opportunity for synergy between local industry and educational sectors in terms of research and development.
 - 5 Minimise the related direct financial obligations of Council. Contributions by Council can include (for example) provision of underutilised land and facilities with a low opportunity cost, but should avoid significant ongoing financial commitments.
4. ***The TRC Economic Development Strategy says “...80% of net new jobs and capital investment in any economy are generated by existing businesses, and established businesses tend to provide even more return on investment in smaller, rural and regional areas.” (Page 15) Therefore, the most effective strategies are likely to be those that:***
- ***capitalise on opportunities associated with existing local industries (like agriculture value-adding and nature-based tourism);***
 - ***ensure that there are no significant planning constraints to development in economic sectors that are growing significantly (such as aged care and health services); and***
 - ***address identified future shortages of suitably zoned land (e.g. industrial).***

Recommendations have been made previously regarding the way in which the Planning Scheme could be amended to be more facilitative of the existing local industries, by amending the levels of assessment in certain circumstances for agriculture value-adding and nature-based tourism opportunities. The Planning Scheme is currently not overly constrained in providing for aged care and health services to locate in appropriate zones and locations within the region. If there is a shortage of suitably zoned land, such as for industrial development and the like, then a future major Planning Scheme amendment should also address this, however this needs to be supported by a land supply study which quantifies what the expected shortage is and where additional land needs to be zoned. As confirmed in discussions with Council officers, this land supply study should be undertaken as a priority and should address both residential, commercial and industrial land.

Recommendations:

- Refer recommendations in 4.3 (1) and (2) above regarding Planning Scheme amendments.
- As a priority, Council to consider undertaking a land supply study to address future shortages of suitably zoned land for residential, commercial and industrial purposes within the region and make future subsequent Planning Scheme amendments to address the shortfall identified (if any).
- Through consultation with established local industries, identify the most significant short-term opportunities for expansion and/or value adding, and the resources and strategies needed to achieve it.
- Identify constraints to potential development which are within Council’s control, such as a shortage or inappropriate location of suitably zoned land.
- Identify how Council can reduce or eliminate specific planning constraints.
- Contribute to a business plan for expansion of the industry that demonstrates to investors and other industry stakeholders that Council will support expansion through relevant planning provisions.

4.4 Overall Assessment of Economic Development Strategy and Relationship with the Planning Scheme

The core strategies of the EDS include a range of actions, several of which have direct implications for the Planning Scheme. However, there are also some actions identified which need to be completed before Planning Scheme amendments can be most effectively informed. For example, once the planning incentive and support scheme is developed as an action arising from the EDS, the Planning Scheme may then need to be amended to reflect what the incentive policy specifically seeks to achieve. While some Planning Scheme amendments can be developed in the interim, a further series of Planning Scheme amendments may be needed to more directly respond to the incentives scheme to be developed as recognised within the EDS.

5 TABLELANDS REGIONAL COUNCIL PLANNING SCHEME 2016

This section of the report discusses the Tablelands Regional Council Planning Scheme 2016 and the recent consultation conducted with developers and industry, to determine what other changes could potentially be made to the Planning Scheme to provide for additional incentives for progressing economic development of the region. This section also provides a review of the current Planning Scheme in light of the consultation conducted.

5.1 Tablelands Regional Council Planning Scheme 2016

The Tablelands Regional Council Planning Scheme 2016 (TRC Planning Scheme) took effect on 1 September 2016. Immediately prior to and around the implementation of the TRC Planning Scheme, Council undertook a targeted program of consultation with industry and the community. Council gave an undertaking at that time to review the TRC Planning Scheme after it had been in force for 12 months, in order to determine where the scheme was working well and also whether there were any deficiencies.

An alignment amendment was made to the Planning Scheme in May 2017 in preparation for the commencement of the *Planning Act 2016*, however this did not result in any specific policy changes.

A review of the Planning Scheme in terms of the economic development aspects reveals the following applicable provisions in the Strategic Framework:

3.4.1 Economic Development – Strategic Outcomes

3.4.1.1 Primary Industries

Increasing opportunities for value-adding and processing primary products are realised on-farm and within surrounding towns.

Agricultural land, strategic cropping land, rural industries and primary production are protected from development which will compromise their ability to operate.

3.4.1.2 Commercial Development

The region's towns increase their level of self-reliance through providing their local catchments with a range of services and employment opportunities.

The Tablelands region is increasingly provided with retail opportunities, business and government services which reduce leakage of spending and reliance on travel to Cairns.

3.4.1.3 Tourism

Large scale tourist accommodation facilities are developed in key sites across the region and a diverse range of short term accommodation facilities are provided in the region's towns and rural areas.

Caravan and recreational vehicle users are provided with a variety of attractive locations to stay in the region.

Adventure, nature based and food tourism experiences are developed across the regions rural and natural areas.

3.4.1.4 Industry

Industrial development and expansion is supported through provision of industry areas with appropriate infrastructure to support industrial development.

Industry areas are protected from incompatible development and sensitive land uses.

3.4.1.5 Research, education and the arts

Catalysts for economic and cultural activity...are encouraged in the region, preferably near or within major and district regional activity centres.

3.4.1.6 Mining and Extractive resources

Accommodation for mining workers is encouraged to be provided within the Tablelands region.

Activity centres proximate to mining activities support mining activities through the provision of support services and in providing accommodation for workers.

3.4.1.7 Small and emerging enterprise

Flexibility and responsiveness allow for economic diversity and innovation, leading to a greater variety of employment and meeting the changing needs of the community and the economy.

Home based businesses provide opportunities for self-employment and small enterprise in residential areas where impacts are limited and manageable.

3.4.1.8 Energy generation

Major existing facilities...and newly established facilities are protected from development which could compromise their operations.

These provisions encourage a range of different economic drivers to locate within the region. Analysis of the EDS shows that specific uses such as value-added agricultural processing; accommodation for the agricultural workforce; facilitating growth in aged care and health care services; and rural tourism accommodation and attractions are key industries being targeted. A number of recommendations for amendments to the Planning Scheme have already been made in this regard (refer section 4 of this report).

5.2 Proposed Planning Scheme Amendments

Council has identified several major amendments for the Planning Scheme including some minor amendments (consequential zone changes and administrative amendments), which are included in the document entitled: "Proposed Changes to the TRC Planning Scheme 2016" as *Appendix 2*. Council have currently identified a list of 16 Planning Scheme amendments, of which the majority are amendments which seek to reflect existing approvals, or to correct anomalies in relation to zoning and the like. It is not considered that these amendments specifically relate to embedding further economic development incentives into the Planning Scheme document per se. A review of the proposed amendments has been undertaken and there are no issues of concern with respect to these amendments being made in conjunction with any other amendments made regarding the inclusion of additional economic incentives.

5.2.1 Editor's Notes in Tables of Assessment

Further discussions with Council have revealed that there is currently an inadvertent contradiction or inconsistency within the Planning Scheme in the form of the Editor's Note at the end of each table of assessment, which currently reads:

"Editor's note—unless listed above the default level of assessment is impact assessment, unless otherwise prescribed within the Act or the Regulation."

This Editor's Note has the potential to contradict section 5.3.3 (2) of the Planning Scheme, which states:

"(2) Accepted development that does not comply with one or more of the nominated acceptable outcomes in the relevant parts of the applicable code(s) becomes code assessable development unless otherwise specified."

The proposed solution to this is to delete the above Editor's Note from all tables of assessment.

Recommendations:

- Undertake the proposed Planning Scheme amendments as identified by Council in its document entitled: "Proposed Changes to the TRC Planning Scheme 2016"; and
- Remove the following Editor's Note from all tables of assessment within the Planning Scheme:

"Editor's note—unless listed above the default level of assessment is impact assessment, unless otherwise prescribed within the Act or the Regulation."

5.3 Consultation Outcomes

A key part of this project was the conduct of consultation with Council, developers and the industry. This was held over a two day period on the 20th and 21st November 2017 and included sessions with:

- Council-elected representatives and Council officers;
- Developers and designers;
- Chambers of commerce; and
- Planning consultants and building certifiers.

The consultation conducted with the developers and designers and planning consultants and building certifiers in particular, revealed that there is an underlying cultural issue between Council and these groups in relation to the overall Development Assessment system operating within the Tablelands region, which runs deeper than just the current Planning Scheme provisions and economic development incentives. These matters became the core focus of the discussions and largely fall outside the scope of this immediate project.

As a result, the consultation conducted led to the development of an action plan moving forward, much of which does not relate directly to this specific Planning Scheme amendment project, although it does inform it. This action plan can be found in *Appendix 3*. A number of matters were identified through the stakeholder consultation conducted for potential Planning Scheme amendments, including the levels of assessment around key industries to encourage economic development, such as:

- Nature based tourism;
- Retirement villages and aged care (to cater for ageing population);
- Overlays – addressing mapping triggers and code provisions, specifically Council’s code provisions associated with overlays, where mapping is imposed by the State;
- Review code provisions – set out specific criteria that must comply with- e.g. revegetation of creek corridors, to provide certainty on what must be achieved;
- General review of levels of assessment – e.g. elevation from Accepted development with requirements to Impact assessment. Wholesale review of Impact down to Code where meeting strategic objectives of zone/scheme;
- Review GQAL mapping and zonings;
- Reconfiguring a lot – review lot sizes in Rural zone (e.g. avocado farms only need a much smaller area than the minimum lot size in the planning scheme to be viable);
- Building works assessable against planning scheme – reducing triggers for DA’s and review AO’s; and
- Levels of assessment, unnecessary barriers to development, other Planning Scheme provisions etc.

A specific response to each of these issues raised above is provided as follows:

1. *Nature based tourism* – recommendations have been made in section 4.3 item 2 of this report with respect to encouraging nature-based tourism (among other things) through potential Planning Scheme amendments;
2. *Retirement villages and aged care (to cater for ageing population)* - recommendations have been made in section 4.3 item 2 of this report with respect to encouraging aged care (among other things) through potential Planning Scheme amendments;
3. *Overlays – addressing mapping triggers and code provisions, specifically Council’s code provisions associated with overlays, where mapping is imposed by the State* – there is limited scope for Council to make meaningful amendments to the overlay code provisions, which are often reliant on the State-imposed mapping triggers. Council may consider convening a working group with development industry stakeholders to work through and discuss specific examples of how overlay code provisions could potentially be amended to provide greater flexibility for development, whilst still maintaining a sufficient level of rigour;
4. *Review code provisions – set out specific criteria that must comply with - e.g. revegetation of creek corridors, to provide certainty on what must be achieved* – it is considered that overall, the current Planning Scheme provides an appropriate degree of certainty on what must be complied with to demonstrate compliance with the various Planning Scheme codes, through the range of Acceptable Outcomes drafted. However, Council may consider convening a working group with development industry stakeholders to work through and discuss specific examples of how code provisions could potentially be amended to provide more specific criteria that provides greater certainty for applicants;
5. *General review of levels of assessment – e.g. elevation from Accepted development with requirements to Impact assessment. Wholesale review of Impact down to Code where meeting strategic objectives of zone/scheme* - recommendations have been made within section 4.3 item 2 of this report with respect to reviewing levels of assessment for a range of uses that Council should be seeking to encourage;
6. *Review GQAL mapping and zonings* – It is understood that this is a topical issue for Council and it will need to determine whether there is a need to review the current GQAL mapping and associated zonings. If it is determined to undertake this exercise, this could potentially inform a future Planning Scheme amendment, as such review would take time;
7. *Reconfiguring a lot – review lot sizes in Rural zone (e.g. avocado farms only need a much smaller area than the minimum lot size in the planning scheme to be viable)* – there has been no evidence submitted at this stage, to

warrant a recommendation to change the minimum rural lot sizes for the Tablelands region. There is an 8ha precinct within the Rural zone which provides opportunity for a lot size of 8ha to be achieved, which is significantly less than the default lot size of 60ha in the General Rural and Agricultural land precincts in the Rural zone. As part of the development of this relatively recent and contemporary Planning Scheme, Council presumably would have undertaken an assessment of those rural areas where a smaller lot size was deemed appropriate, when allocating land within the 8ha precinct. This is considered an appropriate response at this point in time. If the application of the Planning Scheme continues to raise legitimate questions about the appropriate minimum lot size in the Rural zone, then this may need to be revisited at a later stage;

8. *Building works assessable against planning scheme – reducing triggers for DA's and review AO's* – This issue has been raised by most of the stakeholder groups consulted, including Council staff. It appears that there is a need to broadly review when Building Works is made assessable against the Planning Scheme and as part of this, a general review of the applicable Acceptable Outcomes may also be warranted.

It is understood based on discussions with Council that since the Planning Scheme was introduced, a large number of development applications for Building Work Assessable against the Planning Scheme (BWAPS) have been triggered for Dwelling houses within the Rural residential zone (4000 m² Precinct), due to non-compliance with setback provisions. In addition, a drafting error in the Water Resource Catchment Overlay code has also been identified, which is inadvertently requiring Code assessable MCU applications for some Dwelling houses in the Lake Tinaroo catchment area. It is understood that a report is being put to Council on 22nd February 2018 in this regard, which outlines the specific issues being faced in the Planning Scheme. That report seeks Council's adoption of a policy position to issue exemption certificates under section 46 of the *Planning Act 2016* to overcome this matter, until such time as the Planning Scheme is amended. In seeking to rectify the issues currently causing these Development Applications to be triggered, it may be necessary to review the specific Planning Scheme provisions that are triggering the development applications and to amend these provisions accordingly if it is not Council's intention to capture these as development applications; and

9. *Levels of assessment, unnecessary barriers to development, other Planning Scheme provisions etc.* – this has been addressed throughout this report and a number of recommendations are made in this regard.

Recommendations:

- Council address the underlying Development Assessment cultural and system issues through consideration of the Action Plan contained in Appendix 3;
- Consider Planning Scheme amendments in the interim which may go some way to addressing the issues raised by Council and the development industry – e.g. amending levels of assessment around key industries to encourage economic development, including those recommended in section 4.3 item 2 of this report;
- Consider convening a working group with development industry stakeholders to work through and discuss specific examples of how:
 - overlay code provisions could potentially be amended to provide greater flexibility for development, whilst still maintaining a sufficient level of rigour;
 - code provisions could potentially be amended to provide more specific criteria that provides greater certainty for the development industry;
- Council to determine whether there is a need to review the current GQAL mapping and associated zonings as a future major Planning Scheme amendment;
- Council to determine whether to review the minimum lot sizes in the Rural zone if the application of the Planning Scheme continues to raise legitimate questions about the appropriate minimum lot size in the Rural zone; and
- Council to make the necessary Planning Scheme amendments to rectify the issues currently causing development applications to be triggered for a Dwelling house in the Rural residential zone (4000m² Precinct) as Building Work Assessable Against the Planning Scheme (BWAPS); or a Material Change of Use for a Dwelling house under the Water Resource Catchment Overlay for the Lake Tinaroo catchment area, if it is not Council's intention to capture these as

development applications. Further, a broader review of those instances where BWAPS are being triggered by the Planning Scheme and the associated Acceptable Outcomes that could be triggering a higher level of assessment, may be warranted.

In conjunction with the previous recommendations made in this report, the above recommendations provide a good starting point for the consideration of amendments to the Planning Scheme as a first major amendment. Such amendments should go some way to addressing some of the fundamental issues and concerns raised in the consultation conducted with key stakeholders as part of this project. A number of the above recommendations, such as convening a working group with development industry stakeholders to work through and discuss specific examples of how specific code provisions could be redrafted, could potentially lead to potential future major Planning Scheme amendments, once the specific issues have been identified and resolved.

6 OTHER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

As previously discussed within this report, Council needs to take a holistic approach to economic development incentives for the region by first establishing its policy position regarding the desired outcomes it is seeking to achieve and the uses it wishes to particularly incentivise. Once the overarching incentives policy has been established, a suite of measures will need to be considered, to most effectively implement the incentives policy. This could be a combination of a targeted marketing program campaign to attract certain uses/businesses to the region; infrastructure charges reductions; reduced development application fees; ongoing business and other support to developers seeking to develop in the region; improved development application processes and timeframes for determining applications; and ultimately, Planning Scheme amendments to facilitate this.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

As a consequence of the review undertaken, a range of recommendations can be made for Council's consideration. This includes the following:

Recommendation 1:

Take a holistic approach to economic development incentives for the region by first establishing Council's policy position regarding the desired outcomes it is seeking to achieve and the uses it wishes to particularly incentivise (and in which locations). Once the incentives policy has been established, a suite of measures should be considered, to most effectively implement the incentives policy. This could be a combination of a targeted marketing program campaign to attract certain uses/businesses to the region; infrastructure charges reductions; reduced development assessment fees; ongoing business and other support to developers seeking to develop in the region; improved development assessment processes and timeframes for determining applications; and ultimately, Planning Scheme amendments to facilitate this.

Recommendation 2:

Consider similar incentives packages for key industries/uses Council is seeking to encourage within the region, as currently provided for by other Queensland local governments (refer Appendix 1 for examples).

Recommendation 3:

- Intensive horticulture should be Code assessable in the Rural zone, where not Accepted development subject to requirements. If mushroom farms hold particular concern for Council, then these could continue to be made Impact assessment.
- Rural worker's accommodation should be made Accepted development subject to requirements within all precincts of the Rural zone. This is particularly in relation to the Agricultural Land Precinct and the General Rural Precinct of the Rural zone.
- Relocatable home park could be made Code assessment in certain zones and certain circumstances (as a means of facilitating a different aged care housing product), such as in the Low density residential zone and the Medium density residential zone.
- Encourage more rural-based tourism and/or accommodation uses within the Rural zone by lowering some levels of assessment. This could include developing more refined qualifiers/criteria for those circumstances in which certain rural tourism-based uses are to be encouraged.

Recommendation 4:

It is emphasised that attracting new knowledge-based industries (or any new industries) is a highly competitive and speculative venture with a low success rate, particularly in a relatively remote location with a small population. Therefore, in attempting to attract new industries, Council should minimise its direct and ongoing financial exposure.

The key factors in successfully attracting new industries are:

- Low total costs of operation compared to other jurisdictions, including development, operations, government charges and employee remuneration; and
- Availability of required resources. For a knowledge based industry, the single most important resource is local availability of suitably qualified persons.

Five concurrent strategies are recommended:

- Minimise the financial cost of entry for new industries through (for example) long term tax holidays, and provision of land at little or no cost.

- Demonstrate that the total cost of operation of the new industry in the Tablelands region will be highly competitive with any other jurisdiction.
- Identify the key objectives of senior decision makers in the target industry in terms of quality of life, and demonstrate how living in the Tablelands region will meet those objectives.
- Guarantee the provision of local education and training programs that meet the specific requirements of the targeted knowledge-based industries, and provide an opportunity for synergy between local industry and educational sectors in terms of research and development.
- Minimise the related direct financial obligations of Council. Contributions by Council can include (for example) provision of underutilised land and facilities with a low opportunity cost, but should avoid significant ongoing financial commitments..

Recommendation 5:

- As a priority, consider undertaking a land supply study to address future shortages of suitably zoned land for residential, commercial and industrial purposes within the region and make future subsequent Planning Scheme amendments to address the shortfall identified (if any).
- Through consultation with established local industries, identify the most significant short-term opportunities for expansion and/or value adding, and the resources and strategies needed to achieve it.
- Identify constraints to potential development which are within Council's control, such as a shortage or inappropriate location of suitably zoned land.
- Identify how Council can reduce or eliminate specific planning constraints;
- Contribute to a business plan for expansion of the industry that demonstrates to investors and other industry stakeholders that Council will support expansion through relevant planning provisions.

Recommendation 6:

- Undertake the proposed Planning Scheme amendments as identified by Council in its document entitled: "Proposed Changes to the TRC Planning Scheme 2016"; and
- Remove the following Editor's Note from all tables of assessment within the Planning Scheme:
"Editor's note—unless listed above the default level of assessment is impact assessment, unless otherwise prescribed within the Act or the Regulation."

Recommendation 7:

- Council address the underlying Development Assessment cultural and system issues through consideration of the Action Plan contained in *Appendix 3*;
- Consider Planning Scheme amendments in the interim which may go some way to addressing the issues raised by Council and the development industry – e.g. amending levels of assessment around key industries to encourage economic development, including those recommended in section 4.3 item 2 of this report;
- Consider convening a working group with development industry stakeholders to work through and discuss specific examples of how:
 - overlay code provisions could potentially be amended to provide greater flexibility for development, whilst still maintaining a sufficient level of rigour;
 - code provisions could potentially be amended to provide more specific criteria that provides greater certainty for the development industry;
- Council to determine whether there is a need to review the current GQAL mapping and associated zonings as a future major Planning Scheme amendment;
- Council to determine whether to review the minimum lot sizes in the Rural zone if the application of the Planning Scheme continues to raise legitimate questions about the appropriate minimum lot size in the Rural zone; and

- Council to make the necessary Planning Scheme amendments it identifies as necessary to rectify the issues currently causing development applications to be triggered for a Dwelling house in the Rural residential zone (4000m² Precinct) as Building Work Assessable Against the Planning Scheme (BWAPS); or a Material Change of Use for a Dwelling house under the Water Resource Catchment Overlay for the Lake Tinaroo catchment area, if it is not Council's intention to capture these as development applications. Further, a broader review of those instances where BWAPS are being triggered by the Planning Scheme and the associated Acceptable Outcomes that could be triggering a higher level of assessment, may be warranted.

It is evident that the amendment of the Planning Scheme is not the only measure required to effectively implement a range of economic development incentives for the Tablelands region. A broader approach is needed to provide a clear line of sight as to what Council's policy intent is regarding economic development incentives, supported by the range of measures to be implemented to facilitate this. Simply amending the Planning Scheme through changes to tables of assessment, code provisions and the like is unlikely to be sufficient to achieve the outcomes Council are seeking in providing for enhanced economic development of the region.

APPENDIX 1: EXAMPLES OF OTHER INCENTIVES

AP01

INCENTIVISING DEVELOPMENT IN TABLELANDS REGIONAL COUNCIL PLANNING SCHEME 2016 ANALYSIS OF TRC PLANNING SCHEME AND EXAMPLES OF OTHER INCENTIVES

No.	Example	Comment
Tablelands Planning Scheme:		
1.	<p><u>Rural zone:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some examples where uses automatically proceed straight from Accepted development subject to requirements, to Impact assessment – e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Intensive animal industries ○ Intensive horticulture ○ Short-term accommodation • Purpose of the Rural zone code is to provide for a wide range of uses including Intensive animal industries and Intensive horticulture (among other things) and to provide facilities for visitors and tourists etc. (e.g. Short-term accommodation). Does the table of assessment reflect the purpose of the code? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are a lot of qualifiers in the tables of assessment, which can be both an advantage (finer grain level of planning) and a disadvantage (inadvertently triggering higher levels of assessment due to the detail in the qualifiers). • To encourage or incentivise developments to occur in zones where the use should generally be supported, revising tables of assessment, including qualifiers and the categories of assessment would be beneficial. • Rural zone contains some examples of land uses that should generally be contemplated within the Rural zone, but which go from lowest level of assessment to highest level of assessment as soon as qualifiers not met. Are there instances where Code assessment may also be appropriate?
2.	<p><u>Medium density residential zone:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some examples where typical residential development can be Accepted development subject to requirements – e.g. for Dual occupancy and Multiple dwelling, where on premises greater than a specified area. However, if the site provisions are not met, immediately goes to Impact assessment. • Other examples where Code assessment applies across the board for a use – e.g. Residential care facility and Retirement facility. Impact assessment is never triggered, however Accepted development subject to requirements is never triggered either. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium density residential zone provides some good examples of uses that are Accepted development subject to requirements where meeting certain site area requirements – e.g. Dual occupancy and Multiple dwelling. However, they immediately become Impact assessment if it doesn't meet the site area criteria. Are there instances where Code assessment may also be appropriate?
Other Planning Schemes:		
3.	<p><u>Bundaberg Regional Council Planning Scheme 2015</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes many uses that are incentivized in 6. below as code assessment at a maximum (generally only accepted development subject to requirements, where in an existing building and not changing the development footprint, with some exceptions). • Relocatable home park is code assessable in the Low density and Medium density residential zones, which aligns with incentive policy, but is impact everywhere else. • Residential subdivision in the Rural residential zone is an incentivized use but is likely to be impact assessable where not meeting the minimum lot size for the Rural residential zone. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The incentives policy for uses referred to in 6. below aligns to a large degree with the levels of assessment for these uses in the zones specified. • Relocatable home parks are code assessable in the low density and Medium density residential zone. TRC could consider lowering levels of assessment for this use in some zones, where deemed appropriate, as currently impact assessment in most zones and precincts.
4.	<p><u>Cairns Planning Scheme 2016</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contains a specific Tourism zone, Tourist accommodation zone and other Tourist accommodation zone precinct 1 – Island, which supports a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The specific examples of how tourism uses are treated in the Cairns Planning Scheme through specific tourism zones, appears to align with the specific policy incentive to

No.	Example	Comment
	<p>range of tourism and accommodation uses as Code assessment (particularly in the Tourist accommodation zone). This aligns with the incentives policy to encourage Tourism as a key strategic industry for Cairns (refer 6. In Business Processes below).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intensive horticulture is generally code assessable in the Rural zone, which is consistent with the intent and with the incentives policy to encourage Agricultural production as a key strategic industry for Cairns (refer 7. In Business Processes below). 	<p>encourage tourism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The other example of Intensive horticulture being code assessable in the Rural zone also appears to align with the specific policy incentive to encourage agricultural production in the region. TRC could consider a similar approach for those uses it seeks to incentivise through the Planning Scheme.
5.	<p><u>Rockhampton Planning Scheme 2015</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some uses which are the subject of the incentives scheme (refer 8. In Business Processes below), are designated as Code assessment in the appropriate zones – e.g. Retirement facility in Low-medium density and High density residential zones, or Educational establishment in the Centre zones. Other uses, such as Short term accommodation (including farm stay), are Impact assessment in the Rural zone, despite being promoted in the incentives scheme. Contains an extensive range of zones and precincts, which allows finer grain levels of assessment and planning to be reflected in Planning Scheme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite the incentives offered for certain land use categories (see Business Processes below), there can be a mismatch between what the incentives purport to encourage and the level of assessment applicable in the Planning Scheme – e.g. Short term accommodation (including farm stay) is impact assessment in the Rural zone, despite offering a 75% reduction in infrastructure charges for this use type through the incentives policy. TRC needs to ensure alignment between what their ultimate incentives policy might be and also take steps to reflect this in the Planning Scheme through levels of assessment, code provisions etc.
6.	<p><u>Lockyer Valley Gatton Shire Planning Scheme 2007</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farm Worker's Accommodation is potentially Self-assessable (otherwise Code) in all Rural zones. This aligns with the infrastructure charges incentive outlined as an example in Business Processes (see 9. below). There is a specific Farm Workers' Accommodation Code to guide its development. There is only one Probable Solution applicable for development to remain self-assessable in this specific code, related to one access point. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The level of assessment in the Rural zones and associated code provisions for Farm Workers' Accommodation in the Gatton Scheme reflects the incentives policy to encourage this type of development. The Scheme whilst dated, does not impose undue barriers to this form of development in the Rural zone and aligns with the incentives policy intent. TRC could consider a similar approach for those uses it seeks to incentivise through the Planning Scheme.

No.	Example	Comment
Business Processes		
7.	<p><u>Bundaberg Regional Council – Bundaberg Open for Development – 2016 Development Incentives</u></p> <p>The Bundaberg Regional Council is firmly committed to supporting development and construction sector of the economy to provide employment and economic growth for our region.</p> <p>Following on from the success of the incentives for development provided in 2013, the Council released a new range of incentives on 19 July 2016 to stimulate further development activity, provide opportunities for longer term job creation and to assist housing affordability in our region.</p> <p>Council is offering generous discounts off infrastructure charges for development that is completed by 28 June 2019 across four broad categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% discounts for development in the Bundaberg CBD and town centres of Bargara, Childers and Gin Gin; • 100% discounts for Intensive Horticulture, Rural Industry, Aquaculture and Winery (where in a Rural zone) developments and 50% discounts for Intensive Animal Industry and development that provides housing for itinerant farm workers and backpackers; • 50% discounts for Long Term Employment Generating (Industrial, Medical, Commercial (where in a Commercial Zone) and Tourism) development; and • 50% discounts for certain infill residential and green-field residential developments, as well as residential subdivision in Rural Residential Zone and Relocatable Home Parks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tablelands Regional Council may wish to consider similar incentives packages for key industries it is seeking to encourage within the region. • Planning Scheme amendments can include a range of incentives in terms of levels of assessment, code provisions etc. but financial incentive through reduced infrastructure charges, reduced DA fees or other financial grants may also need to be considered. • Streamlining Development Application timeframes for specific key industry application types may be a further incentive for consideration. • Other policy measures may also be needed for development incentives, which sit outside the Planning Scheme.
8.	<p><u>Cairns Regional Council Investment Incentives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will provide discretionary support to projects where the nature and scale of investment will stimulate significant economic and community benefits, diversity and value-add to the wider regional economy beyond the growth of the business itself. • Key strategic industries include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tourism ○ Advanced manufacturing ○ Mining ○ Aviation ○ Marine ○ Value-adding agricultural production ○ Creative industries ○ Professional and business services ○ Tropical services and products 	

No.	Example	Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentives include in-kind support (e.g. Case manager to assist) and direct financial incentives, including infrastructure costs and financial grants for establishment. • Applicants/Project Proponents will undergo assessment to ensure that only those projects that will provide a significant net economic and community benefit to the Cairns region are considered as being eligible. Key Criteria include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ demonstrated experience ○ demonstrated financial viability and ongoing sustainability ○ demonstrated economic and community outcomes ○ meets policy, legislation and environmental objectives 	
9.	<p><u>Rockhampton Regional Council Development Incentives Policy 2017-2019</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of Council’s Development Incentives Policy is to provide tangible financial and non-financial support for projects with the following land uses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Aged Care & Retirement ○ Destination Tourism ○ Education & Training ○ Farm Stay Accommodation ○ Medical, Health & Community Services • 75% concession available on infrastructure charges. • Council’s facilitation includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Access to Council’s Economic Development team to provide advice on applicability and incentives that may be available under the policy; ○ Access to Council Planning Officers through the Duty Planner to provide advice in preparing development applications; ○ Pre-lodgement meetings with all relevant Council officers free of charge; and ○ Assistance with identifying and facilitating contact with State Government agencies with a view to facilitating the development. 	
10.	<p><u>Lockyer Valley Development Incentives – Infrastructure Charges 2016</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only applies to contributions payable for development permits for MCU that are approved during the period within which policy is in effect and where development has commenced within two years of the date of approval. • Only applies to contributions payable for development for which all conditions of the relevant permit 	

No.	Example	Comment
	<p>have been satisfied.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not apply to contributions for reconfiguring a lot. • Does not apply to development for which an infrastructure agreement has been entered into. • Applies specific discounts according to location and charge category type (ranges from 12.5% to 50%). • One example - For development within all localities that has its sole or primary function the provision of accommodation for itinerant workers engaged in the agricultural industry of the Lockyer Valley, irrespective of its Charge Category as provided in Schedule 3 of Lockyer Valley Adopted Infrastructure Charges Resolution (No.1) 2015, the discount amount is 50%. 	
11.	<p><u>Moreton Bay Regional Council, Qld - Incentivising Infill Development Policy 2150-096</u> Council is committed to incentivising the right development in the right location. Commencing 1 July 2017, a new Incentivising Infill Development Policy has become available for a range of developments within targeted areas of Strathpine , Caboolture and in and around the Redcliffe Peninsula Line.</p> <p>Infill Incentives Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is Council’s policy to incentivise infill development projects for specific uses in the Moreton Bay Regional Council (MBRC) Local Government Area by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Waiving application fees ○ Waiving infrastructure charges where the proposed development meets the conditions of this policy. The above are referred to as the defined charges. • The total value pool for the incentive policy is limited to \$10,000,000, or as otherwise determined by MBRC. • The policy commences on 1 July 2017 and is valid for two (2) years or as otherwise determined by MBRC. • For the following defined uses that have been assessed and approved under the MBRC Planning Scheme (which commenced on Monday 1 February 2016) :- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rooming Accommodation (Student accommodation); ○ Mixed use building (a mix of shop and / or office uses with multiple dwelling and / or short term accommodation); ○ Multiple dwelling; ○ Short term accommodation; ○ Retirement facility; and ○ Residential care facility. 	

No.	Example	Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council will waive the defined charges within the defined areas for the defined uses where the following criteria are met <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Development approval that took effect between 1 Feb 2016 and 30 June 2019 inclusive, and that was assessed and approved under the MBRC Planning Scheme that commenced on 1 February 2016. ○ Application for the waiver of the defined charges is made to Council prior to 30 June 2019. An infrastructure agreement must be entered into with council for the waiving of the defined charges. ○ Building work is substantially commenced by 31st Dec 2019 • Applications decided by the P&E courts are ineligible for consideration under this policy. • The following are additional requirements that are specific for the uses identified – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multiple Dwelling – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contain a minimum of 20 units ▪ Be at least three storeys in height ▪ Be designed, finished and maintained to a very high visual design standard ○ Student accommodation – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is for either Rooming accommodation (off-site student accommodation) or Educational establishment (on-site student accommodation) ▪ Provide accommodation for students enrolled at a tertiary or higher education campus, including university and TAFE colleges and private educational establishments providing nationally accredited courses ▪ Contain a minimum of 20 bedrooms ▪ Contain an ancillary communal recreation space to be shared by the students with a minimum area of 30 square metres ▪ Be designed, finished and maintained to a 	

No.	Example	Comment
	<p>very high visual design standard</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Include an active onsite management regime and presence, to control day-to-day activities on the site and ensure that standards of amenity, maintenance and behaviour are maintained ▪ Be operated and actively managed by a bona fide and experienced tertiary or higher education student accommodation provider. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Residential care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contain a minimum of 75 beds ▪ Be designed, finished and maintained to a very high visual design standard <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council at its discretion can consider any matter relevant to this policy. 	

OTHER COUNCIL EXAMPLES

Lockhart Shire Council, NSW- Investment Attraction Incentives Scheme

Lockhart Shire Council’s Investment Attraction Incentives are designed to attract investment in key strategic industries and stimulate significant and sustainable economic growth, diversify our industry base and value add to our regional economy. The Incentives Package is a discretionary scheme which seeks to attract and support projects that will deliver the greatest benefits to the Lockhart Shire region.

The focus of the incentives package is on projects that will:

- Create new jobs and investment;
- Value-add through enhanced supply chains;
- Generate growth within key strategic industries and locations;
- Demonstrate innovation and environmental sustainability; and
- Diversify and make the local economy more sustainable.

Key sectors

The Investment Attraction Incentives Package is specifically targeted to businesses in the following industries:

- Agricultural Production
- Manufacturing and Light Industry
- Transport and Logistics

Levels of incentives

The level of incentive applicable to a development and/or project will be determined by the eligibility criteria contained within the policy and may be based on but not limited to:

- Specific target industry and identified location.
- Quantum of jobs growth and investment.
- Economic diversity, innovation and special community benefit.

Incentive	Description
Dedicated Business Assistance Officer	A dedicated Business Assistance Officer will act as a single point of contact for prospective investors, providing continuity of advice and assistance in helping to meet individual business requirements.
Fast Tracked Development Application	Guaranteed Development Application assessment timeframes including provision of pre-lodgement meetings, dedicated assistance and guidance. Guaranteed 10 day turn around on low complexity applications, house and shed applications and concurrence agency assessments, not requiring further referral or public notification.
Property Location Assistance	Assistance provided to prospective investors searching for ideal development sites or building premises within the Lockhart Shire region.
Guided Familiarisation Tours	Provision of a guided familiarisation tour to highlight the region’s unique characteristics and business potential.

Incentive	Description
Business Case Assistance	Assistance provided to prospective investors in obtaining the local economic and business data needed in preparation of project analysis and viability studies.
Business Welcome Information Package	Provision of a package of information pertinent to business operations in the Lockhart Shire region to prospective investors or relocating employees.
Industry Networking	Provision of information and contact details for regional Industry Bodies and Business Enterprise groups including an introductory meeting.
Business Support	Access to Murray-Riverina NSW Business Chamber and Riverina Business Enterprise Centre to provide support through disciplines including accounting, legal, marketing, financial planning, banking, business mentoring, real estate, construction and more.
Financial Incentives	Financial incentives may include but not be limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waiving or discounting of development application fees; • Deferred payment of developer contributions and/or infrastructure charges; • Access to free co-operative regional marketing campaigns; • Free assessment of trade waste discharge requirements; • Attractive vendor terms on purchase of Council owned industrial or residential land; • Discounted sale price on multiple lot purchases of Council owned industrial or residential land; • Other financial incentives considered appropriate in the circumstances and based on the merit of individual applications.
Business Profile, Marketing & Connectivity	Access to business profile and marketing assistance through Council's website, business networks including but not limited to Regional Development Australia, Murray-Riverina NSW Business Chamber, Riverina Business Enterprise Centre and Lockhart Shire Tourism.
Community Engagement	Provision of general public relations/media advice and assistance and/or participation in marketing/awareness campaigns to assist with community engagement for relevant projects.

Macedon Ranges Shire Council, Vic - Rates Incentive Scheme

Council has developed and implemented a number of support services for existing businesses and have identified the need for incentives that will create employment opportunities in the shire.

By creating a minimum of five new full-time jobs (or part time equivalent) businesses can now apply for a discount on rates. Eligible business can save up to \$2,500 per year, depending on the number of new jobs created.

Rate discount criteria

The rate rebate is conditional upon the business owner complying with Council requirements and meeting the criteria below:

Measure	Incentive
Creation of 5 or more jobs	Waiver of rates up to \$2500 for one year
Creation of 10 or more jobs	Waiver of rates up to \$2500 each year for two years
Creation of 25 or more jobs	Waiver of rates up to \$2500 each year for three years
Creation of 50 or more jobs	Open to further negotiation

- The business must be in the Macedon Ranges.
- These must be new jobs and the equivalent of permanent full time hours e.g. a full time position is constituted by a minimum of 28 hours plus per week.
- All Council rates and municipal charges or levies must be up to date.
- The business must be able to provide payroll or pay as you go documentation as submitted to the Taxation Office to demonstrate that the positions are retained for the period of the rate rebate.
- If the business premises are leased and the business owner is not responsible for payment of rates, the business is still eligible for a rate rebate and can apply. As the rate rebate will apply to the landlord, it is up to the tenant (business owner) and landlord to enter into a separate agreement.

STATE GOVERNMENT AND OTHER ORGANISATION EXAMPLES

Queensland Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning - The Advance Queensland Industry Attraction Fund

Industry development

The Queensland Government is committed to building a new economy—one that is strong and diversified, builds on the state’s competitive strengths and generates the knowledge-based jobs of the future.

The Advance Queensland Industry Attraction Fund has been designed to attract businesses to Queensland, either to relocate or establish new projects in the state. The fund will support jobs creation, regional growth, increased innovation and the building of local supply chains.

The fund will target a wide range of innovative and emerging industries to invest in Queensland. These include the DSDMIP’s six priority industry sectors of:

- advanced manufacturing
- aerospace
- biofutures
- biomedical
- defence
- mining equipment, technology and services.

Other key Queensland industries such as education, tourism and agriculture will also be targeted. The fund is a whole-of-government initiative, coordinated by DSDMIP to ensure a seamless service for clients across all industry sectors.

Principles and criteria

All project proposals seeking financial assistance through the fund will need to meet a clear set of principles and criteria, there will be a rigorous assessment and approval process, and a well-defined contract management and reporting framework. This will ensure that any financial incentives flow through to the wider community and result in a net benefit for Queensland.

How we can assist industry

To further this economic vision, DSDMIP is actively engaging with companies, with the aim of encouraging the relocation and establishment of new projects, or reinvestment and expansion of existing operations in Queensland. DSDMIP works closely across government and with private sector agencies to provide a Queensland one-stop-shop approach for advice, information and facilitation support.

The type of facilitation support that may be provided can include:

- providing the business case information as to “Why Queensland” – delivering information addressing project requirements, business costs, skills availability and other business investment drivers
- identifying suitable site options reflecting project requirements
- providing streamlined access to government services

- coordinating pre-lodgement meetings and giving advice on the development approval process to expedite approvals and reduce red-tape barriers
- providing advice and provision of contacts or introductions to universities and various service providers such as property groups, utilities, education and training organisations, raw materials suppliers and other organisations to allow business to effectively expand in the state.

NSW Regional Growth Fund (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/improving-nsw/regional-nsw/regional-growth-fund/>)

- \$1 billion economic activation funds; \$300 million community amenity funds
- *CONNECTING COUNTRY COMMUNITIES* –
To invest in communications infrastructure and deliver improved regional voice and data connectivity. This fund will build and upgrade mobile base stations, connect businesses to global markets and schools with innovative learning resources.
- *REGIONAL SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE* –
To foster the benefits of sport in communities. This fund will invest in new and existing venues to improve the participation and performance in sports at all levels.
- *REGIONAL CULTURAL FUND* –
To deliver investment to support bold and exciting regional arts and culture. This fund will encourage the rich diversity of the regions, build tourism potential and support young people.
- *GROWING LOCAL ECONOMIES* –
To develop the enabling infrastructure to grow regional centres. This fund will invest in the crucial projects needed to support job creation and economic growth in regional NSW.
- *RESOURCES FOR REGIONS* –
To support job creation and economic growth in mining communities in regional NSW. This fund will help build infrastructure across health, water, road, education, tourism and CBD renewals to attract new business, tourists and residents
- *STRONGER COUNTRY COMMUNITIES FUND* -
To support councils and community groups in delivering crucial local infrastructure to improve quality of life. This fund will support local projects such as upgrades to community facilities and playgrounds.

JOBS FOR NSW (<https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/invest-in-nsw/why-sydney-and-nsw/jobs-for-nsw>)

More than 30% of the Jobs for NSW fund will be invested under the Regional Jobs Now Portfolio to support the growth of businesses and jobs outside of metropolitan Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong. With our support, NSW will grow new jobs, create new industry clusters and transform regional communities.

Minimum Viable Product Grant

Minimum Viable Product (MVP) grants are designed to support promising startups with the funds needed to progress from a proof of concept stage to a minimum viable product.

The grants are aimed at startups that are yet to generate revenue to help them engage with a potential business customer, or channel to market, and create innovative solutions that address compelling industry needs or market gaps.

An MVP grant is a matched funding grant up to 50% of approved project costs, **to a maximum of \$25,000.**

Successful grant applicants will receive 35% of the funding up-front and 65% after completion and validation of the MVP.

MVP grants are available across all industry sectors to startups who are primarily focused on the development of a scalable technology solution.

To be eligible for an MVP grant, a startup must:

- Have a completed proof of concept (e.g. prototype completed)
- Have an ABN registered in NSW and be based in NSW
- Be at pre-revenue stage
- Hold IP or the rights to commercialise
- Have a potential business customer or business channel to market
- Have a scalable solution that can be deployed to multiple customers
- Demonstrate that 80% of development costs will occur in NSW
- Demonstrate adequate matched funding has been secured for the project

Building Partnership Grant

Building Partnerships grants help revenue generating technology startups become the high-growth, job-creating businesses of tomorrow.

The grants are designed to:

- complete pilot projects with key customers, providing evidence to accelerate market adoption of the company's products or services
- fund new marketing partnerships here in Australia or overseas to develop innovative, new-to-market solutions.

The solution must use an enabling technology to address a compelling industry need or market gap.

'Enabling technologies' are new technologies or new uses for existing technologies that enable new products, services, or more efficient processes (e.g. mobile, cloud, analytics, sensors, advanced materials).

Eligible businesses can receive up to 35% of approved project costs up to a maximum of \$100,000.

Businesses must have an ABN registered in NSW.

Grants are available across all industry sectors, as long as the business:

- is primarily focused on the development of technology
- owns the relevant intellectual property, or the rights to commercialise the technology
- has a relationship with a potential customer who can give feedback, or with a potential distributor willing to on-sell the technology.

The business must also be either:

- a resident of a co-working space, incubator or accelerator
- an established business able to provide recent financial statements to Jobs for NSW.

Regional Growth Loans

Regional Growth Loans are direct, interest-free loans for emerging and fast-growth SMEs in regional NSW that are scaling quickly and creating jobs, but face barriers in accessing finance from traditional lenders.

Regional Growth Loans are for businesses who are creating jobs specifically in areas outside of Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong.

Direct loans ranging from **\$200,000 to \$500,000** are available to businesses with **no interest payable**. Jobs for NSW does not require the loan to be secured by personal assets such as residential property. As part of the standard terms and conditions, Jobs for NSW will place a general security over the current and future assets of the business.

To apply for a Regional Growth Loan, your business must:

- have a registered ABN and be an incorporated company
- have a minimum of 5 employees (full-time, part-time or casual)
- be creating a minimum of 10 additional FTE within two years outside of metropolitan NSW (Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong)
- be able to demonstrate likely revenue of at least \$500,000 within 12 months
- have been trading for a minimum of one year
- demonstrate future growth for at least one year evidenced by secured pipeline or contracts
- demonstrate that they have been unable to obtain commercial finance.

Strategic Growth Loans

Strategic Growth Loans are flexible, direct loans for emerging and fast-growth SMEs that are scaling quickly and creating jobs, but face barriers in accessing finance from traditional lenders.

Direct loans ranging from **over \$500,000 to \$1,200,000** are available to businesses with flexibility in payment terms including the flexibility of multiple advances.

Loans are offered over a term of four (4) years and at an interest rate of 9.2%. Jobs for NSW does not require the loan to be secured by personal assets such as residential property. As part of the standard terms and conditions, Jobs for NSW will place a general security over the current and future assets of the business.

To apply for a Strategic Growth Loan, your business must:

- have a registered ABN and be an incorporated company
- have a minimum of 5 employees (full-time, part-time or casual)
- be creating a minimum of 20 additional FTE jobs within three years in NSW
- be able to demonstrate likely revenue of at least \$1 million within 12 months
- have been trading for a minimum of one year
- be able to demonstrate future growth for at least one year, evidenced by future pipeline or contracts
- be unable to obtain commercial finance.

Loan Guarantees

Loan Guarantees are offered in partnership with an Australian authorised financial institution. Jobs for NSW will act as a Guarantor for up to 50% of the loan (up to \$5 million of the loan amount), for businesses who are unable to access the full quantum needed to enable business expansion.

Businesses must have revenue of \$3 million or more to apply, and can be located in both regional and metropolitan NSW.

A Loan Guarantee will be offered under terms and conditions that meet the needs and objectives of the borrower, the partnering financial institution and Jobs for NSW to enable the business to create more jobs.

The terms and conditions of a Jobs for NSW Loan Guarantee are:

- we will guarantee up to 50% of the amount lent to the business by a financial institution (up to \$5 million of the loan amount)
- the guarantee term is typically two to five years
- repayment arrangements will be negotiated taking into account the proposed transaction, the financial stability of the business and the purpose of the loan.

Loan Guarantees are available to fast-growing SMEs creating jobs in NSW that require capital to fund further expansion.

To be eligible for a Loan Guarantee, businesses must:

- have a registered ABN and be an incorporated company
- have a minimum of 5 employees (full-time, part-time or casual)
- be creating a minimum of 30 additional FTE jobs within 3 years in NSW
- be able to demonstrate revenue of at least \$3 million

- have an inability to access sufficient funds from the Lender to enable the business expansion.

Financial assistance from a Loan Guarantee may be used to expand operations through:

- working capital
- payroll
- scaling of commercialised research and development
- expanding production capacity
- exports and establishing national and international headquarters (if the business headquarters and jobs are created within NSW).

DESTINATION NSW (<https://www.destinationnsw.com.au/>)

Tourism funding and grants programs managed by Destination NSW and Tourism Research Australia available to NSW tourism businesses.

Regional Visitor Economy Fund

The Regional Visitor Economy Fund is managed by Destination NSW and supports investment in the regional New South Wales visitor economy on a matched dollar-for-dollar basis. Applications may be submitted for product development and marketing activities that will contribute to the NSW Government objective of doubling overnight visitor expenditure by 2020.

Regional Flagship Events Program

Destination NSW's Regional Flagship Events Program supports events with tourism potential in regional New South Wales to serve as flagships for the region - building its image and boosting visitation numbers.

International Business Development Program

The International Business Development Program is designed to support NSW product suppliers and destination promoters by providing financial support for trade familiarisation and educational visits, Destination NSW missions to market, trade workshops, nominated Tourism Australia missions and events, and other international trade events. The Program will run from June 2016 to July 2017.

Destination Visitor Survey Program

Tourism Research Australia provides research information that supports improved decision making, marketing and tourism industry performance for the Australian community. The aim of the Program is to provide the opportunity for regional tourism destinations to undertake research surveys specific to their area and assist informed decision making to support growth of sustainable tourism products.

INVEST VICTORIA (<http://www.invest.vic.gov.au/>)

Incentives, grants and programs

These programs may be available to you when you are entering the Melbourne market or once you have established your operations in Melbourne. The following funding grants are offered by the State Government of Victoria, the Commonwealth Government of Australia and AusIndustry.

Victorian Government grant programs

1. Future Industries Fund (FFI)

The Victorian Government has established the A\$200 million Future Industries Fund to support high-growth sectors that have potential for extraordinary economic growth - to create jobs and attract investment in Victoria. Future Industries is about supporting investment in high-growth industries through industry excellence and development projects, including establishing collaborative networks and building supply chain readiness capabilities.

The fund will offer grants of up to A\$1 million for projects that align with sector action plans. Recipients will be expected to contribute at least A\$1 for every A\$1 in grant funding awarded. The fund will also offer general grants of up to A\$500,000 to companies engaged in manufacturing - recipients do not need to be part of the six high-growth sectors but will be expected to contribute at least A\$3 for every A\$1 in grant funding awarded.

Further information about specific programs within the fund will be released shortly, however the overarching focus is on projects that create the most jobs and projects unlikely to succeed without government support.

Through the Future Industries Fund, these grant programs provide direct funding support to businesses seeking to innovate and grow:

2. Future Industries Manufacturing Program: Future Industries Fund: Future Industries Fund

Funding: Up to A\$500,000

This funding program is designed to assist business to invest in new manufacturing technologies and processes in their Victorian operations and to support Victorian businesses.

Eligibility criteria

An applicant company must have:

- an ACN and ABN number
- financial capacity to meet co-contribution requirements (A\$3 for every A\$1 granted)
- be investing in its Victorian manufacturing operation

3. New Energy Jobs Fund (NEJF): Future Industries Fund

Funding: A\$50,000 to A\$1 million

This funding program is designed to support new energy technology projects and support Victorian businesses.

Eligibility criteria

The project must have a 'Lead Organisation' which must act as the applicant. The Lead Organisation must have an ACN and ABN and operating history of at least three years.

Participants (as a part of a consortium) do not have to meet the Lead Organisation requirements above. If the lead organisation or their parent company submits overseas financial records as part of the financial risk assessment it may disadvantage the project but will be considered on a case by case basis.

4. The Victorian Defence Industry Supply Chain Program (VDISCP): Future Industries Fund

Funding: up to A\$50,000

To help Victorian small to medium enterprises (SMEs) compete for and win more defence and national security related work.

Eligibility criteria

An applicant company must be:

- A Victorian SME with an ACN and ABN number
- Financial capacity to meet co-contribution requirements (A\$1 for every A\$1 granted)
- Currently engaged in a defence or national security supply chain or be able to demonstrate a genuine intent to enter a defence or national security supply chain.

5. LaunchVic for startups

LaunchVic, a new entity that will accelerate startups, drive new ideas and create jobs in Victoria has been launched by the State Government of Victoria in conjunction with Victoria's startup community and the successful Melbourne-grown firm 99designs.

The A\$60 million fund is being provided over four years from 2016 from the Premier of Victoria's Jobs and Investment Fund.

LaunchVic works in partnership with entrepreneurs, industry, business, the community and our educational institutions to strengthen Victoria's entrepreneurial and startup ecosystem. Its focus is to invest in the infrastructure of Victoria's startup ecosystem to increase scale and improve capability.

The fund currently funds programs to support startups and entrepreneurs in Victoria by:

- Fostering a more collaborative and linked network of co-working spaces, incubators, and

accelerators.

- Encouraging the clustering of destination hubs that build capacity and connectedness within the startup community. These 'Launch Hubs' would be focal points to lift global visibility and brand Victoria as a regional startup powerhouse.
- Building capability through improved advocacy, education programs, mentoring, events, hackathons, competitions, improving access to venture capital and startup ecosystem mapping.

6. Round 4 Grant Funding: World-Class Accelerator Program

Funding: Up to \$3 million per application

Round 4 of the LaunchVic grant funding is open until 10am AEDT Tuesday 10 October 2017. Funding will be granted to an accelerator program that will support global excellence in the provision of services, and global connectivity to help accelerate the very best startups to achieve on an international scale.

Open to local (Australian) accelerators, international accelerators and teams with proven track records of success.

The program must be delivered in Melbourne and help contribute to the growth of the local ecosystem.

7. Local Industry Fund for Transition (LIFT)

Funding: A\$50,000 to A\$2 million

To support job creating projects in Melbourne's North, West and South-East and the Geelong Region (communities affected by the departure of Ford, Holden and Toyota manufacturing operations).

The policy intent of the program is to support Victorian businesses.

An applicant company must have:

- An ACN and ABN number
- Financial capacity to meet co-contribution requirements (A\$3 for every A\$1 granted)

8. Public Sector Innovation Fund (PSIF)

Funding: On average A\$50,000 to A\$400,000

The fund supports collaborative, small-scale projects that drive innovation in the Victorian public sector.

The applicant and project lead must be a Victorian government department, agency or statutory body.

Commercial entities involved in the project could be registered overseas or have overseas trading history. The impact of this would be assessed at the due diligence stage of the application.

9. The Victoria- Israeli Science Innovation and Technology Scheme (VISTECH)

Funding: Up to A\$250,000

The VISTECH program aims to provide incentives for Victorian and Israeli companies to collaborate on research and development activities pertaining to technology-based products, processes or services. This program is designed to support Victorian businesses.

The applicant company must be a for-profit entity with a registered office and principal place of business in Victoria.

10. Assigned Production Investment - Games

Funding: Up to A\$150,000

Administered by Film Victoria, the fund assists Victorian games companies to create and market a diverse range of games for any distribution platform with an emphasis on the **creation of intellectual property** (IP) and long-term benefits for their business. Project support is available for all stages including prototyping, production and release.

The applicant cannot be a non-resident, but may be a company directed by a non- resident. An applicant company must have been based in and operating out of Victoria for at least 12 months prior to the funding application (or have a company principal/parent entity which meets this requirement).

11. Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF)

Funding: Up to A\$500,000

To promote investment in regional infrastructure in the following areas:

- Visitor Economy (tourism)
- Productive and liveable cities
- Infrastructure innovation
- Regional development

The applicant cannot be an individual or non-resident, but may be a company directed by a non-resident.

APPENDIX 2: TABLELANDS REGIONAL COUNCIL - PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE TRC PLANNING SCHEME 2016

AP02

TABLELANDS REGIONAL COUNCIL

Proposed Changes to the TRC Planning Scheme 2016

Proposed Major Amendments (September 2017)

For the past 12 months Council's Planning and Building Officers, Planning Consultants, Building Certifiers and key stakeholders have been assessing and proposing development applications against the TRC Planning Scheme 2016. Currently there are 16 amendments (Attachment 1) that have been identified with 3 of those being minor amendments and 13 being major amendments. There were 44 administrative and minor amendments adopted on 02 May this year and the Ministers amendment to align the Planning Scheme with the *Planning Act 2016* on 3 July 2017. The proposed amendments are identified within the following table.

Proposed Minor and major amendments

No.	Description	Amendment	Type	Reason
1	Lots 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11 & 12 on SP292097 described as 11, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 25, 27 & 29 Acacia Avenue, YUNGABURRA	Change of Zone from Rural Zone - Agricultural precinct to Low density residential zone.	Minor Amendment	This is classed as a minor amendment under the Act, as it is reflecting a current development approval. These lots have recently been created from one lot currently zoned Rural - Agricultural precinct within the TRC Planning Scheme. The lots are an extension of the existing Low density residential zoned lots, therefore are proposed to be zoned Low density residential zone in which they are being used for. This is not a major amendment, as it is just a procedure under the <i>Sustainable Planning Act 2009</i> .
2	Lots 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 139, 140, 141,	Change zone from Emerging communities	Minor Amendment	This is classed as a minor amendment under the Act, as it is

No.	Description	Amendment	Type	Reason
	<p>142, 147, 148, 149, 150 on SP280057 described as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 26 Bellamy Drive, 1-3 Crawford Street and 3 & 4 Valse Street, TOLGA.</p>	<p>zone to Low density residential zone.</p>		<p>reflecting a current development approval. The lots have recently been created from one lot currently zoned Emerging communities within the TRC Planning Scheme and are a progressive extension of the existing Low density residential zoned lots already created within the estate, therefore are proposed to be zoned Low density residential zone in which they are being used for. This is not a major amendment, as it is just a procedure under the <i>Sustainable Planning Act 2009</i>.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Lots 1 on SP276700, 2 & 3 on SP289724, 4, 61 & 115 on SP282412, 5 on SP276700, 6 on SP271381, 7 on SP273712, 62, 63, 64, 65, 93 & 118 on SP287190, 66, 89, 90, 91, 92, 116 & 117 on SP289724, 94 on SP261227 and 112 & 114 on SP280093 described as 32, 33, 34, 35, 36-38, 37, 39, 41, 42-44, 43, 45 Rankine Avenue, 1-3, 5, 7, 9, 11 & 13 Lawson Street, 1-3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 Cahill Close and 2-4 & 6 Duffy Avenue, YUNGABURRA.</p>	<p>Change of Zone from Community purpose to Rural Zone - General rural precinct</p>	<p>Minor Amendment</p>	<p>This is classed as a minor amendment under the Act, as it is reflecting a current development approval. The lots have recently been created from one lot currently zoned Emerging communities within the TRC Planning Scheme and are a progressive extension of the existing Low density residential zoned lots already created within the estate, therefore are proposed to be included within the Low density residential zone in which they are being used for. This is not a major amendment, as it is just a procedure under the <i>Sustainable</i></p>

No.	Description	Amendment	Type	Reason
				<i>Planning Act 2009.</i>
4	<i>Lot 1 on SP282751 described as 6475 Kennedy Highway, WALKAMIN.</i>	Change zone from Community Purposes zone to Rural zone - General rural precinct	Major Amendment	The lot is currently zoned Community Facilities within the TRC Planning Scheme, as it was part of the rail corridor and no lot was created. The lot has now been created and is freehold. The property is currently being used as a grain and seed distributor, therefore the use definition is categorized as a Rural industry. The proposed zoning is Rural - General precinct, therefore the use of Rural industry is best suited for this lot.
5	<i>Lot 136 on NR1252 described as 388 Anderson Road, MALANDA.</i>	Change zone from Community Purposes zone to Rural zone - Agricultural land precinct.	Major Amendment	The lot is currently zoned Community Facilities within the TRC Planning Scheme. The existing zoning was a drafting error. The property is a small lot surrounded by Rural zone, therefore it is best suited to be returned to its previous zone of Rural - Agricultural precinct
6	<i>Lot 1 on RP715814 described as 23 Centenary Drive, ATHERTON.</i>	Change zone from Recreation and Open Space to Community purposes zone.	Major Amendment	The lot is owned and used by Telstra Corporation Ltd and is currently zoned Recreation and Open Space Zone within the TRC Planning Scheme. The lot encompasses a communication tower and associated facilities for communication purposes, therefore

No.	Description	Amendment	Type	Reason
				is proposed to be rezoned within the Community facilities zone.
7	<i>Lot 2 on RP883889, Lots 10, 11 & 12 on SP220770, Lots 30, 31 & 32 on SP206166 and Lot 5 on CWL808404 described as 10 Mowbray Road, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 16 & 18 Magazine Road, HERBERTON.</i>	Change zone from Rural Residential zone - 4000m2 precinct to Low density residential zone.	Major Amendment	The lots on the southern side of magazine Road where zoned Low density residential and the said lots were also supposed to be included within this zone. 6 of the 8 lots are approximately 1000m ² with residential conveniences including kerb and channel, therefore it is recommended that these lots are included within the Low density residential zone.
8	<i>Lot 50 on SP233236 described as Kennedy Highway, MOUNT GARNET.</i>	Change zone from Rural Residential zone - 5ha precinct to Rural zone - General rural precinct.	Major Amendment	The said lot is west of the township of Mount Garnet. A development application exists for the reconfiguration of 1 lot into 16 lots. The reconfiguration of a lot application is still valid until the relevancy period expires. If the reconfiguration of a lot is completed, then the lots may be placed within the relevant zoning (deemed as a minor amendment to the planning scheme), whereas if the lots are not created. The

No.	Description	Amendment	Type	Reason
				property was mistakenly put into this zone as it has not been acted upon, therefore should revert back to the previous zoning - Rural Zone - General rural precinct.
9	Lots 11 & 12 on CP881026 and Lot 6 on NR808107 described as Eacham Road, YUNGABURRA.	Include within the Yungaburra Local Plan - Yungaburra Character Precinct (A).	Major Amendment	The 2 lots are zoned recreation and open space and are reserve - parks and recreation. All of the other parks and recreation are included in the Yungaburra Local Plan - Yungaburra Character Precinct (A), therefore keeping the in character of the town, therefore the said lots require being placed within the precinct as well to protect the character of the town
10	<i>Atherton Local Plan Map 7 of 14</i>	Update Urban Growth Area Map to a more detailed conceptual map.	Major Amendment	The proposed Urban Growth Area Map has been modelled in accordance with the latest water and wastewater investigations and studies. The detail is more refined and will provide potential developers greater detail of the future structure of the area.
11	Part 5 - Table 5.5.7.1 - Industry zone level of assessment	Change Industry zone level of assessment of assessment for Indoor sports and recreation to read; "If within the Low impact industry precinct	Major Amendment	The previous level of assessment absent to include what industry precinct that an indoor sports could be included. An indoor sports would not be compatible being within or adjacent to a medium or heavy

No.	Description	Amendment	Type	Reason
		and not adjoining any other Industry precinct and Low density residential or medium density residential zone.		industry precinct.
12	Part 8 - Table 8.2.2.3.1 - Bushfire hazard overlay code	Change Bushfire hazard overlay code - AO1 do point 2 to; "no less than 10,000L of stored water, located within 20m of habitable building(s), that is available exclusively for fire fighting purposes (e.g. accessible pool, dam or a tank with fire brigade tank fittings)".	Major Amendment	The previous provision of the overlay code referred to 10m from a building, where the draft State Planning Policy bushfire code referred to the distance being 20m which is an acceptable distance. The amendment will also align the code with the Works, services and infrastructure code
13	Part 9 - Table 9.4.4.3.2 - Reconfiguring a lot code	Change Reconfiguring a lot code - Minimum frontage for Rural residential zone 1ha precinct from 40m to 60m and 4000m ² precinct from 40m to 50m.	Major Amendment	The current minimum frontage of the Rural residential zone 1ha and 4000m ² precincts are 40m for both. This would create a very narrow lot at 1ha and would constrain the width/length of Buildings and Structures to a maximum of 20m in both precincts (10m setbacks apply from an adjoining lot), therefore it is proposed for any new 4000m ² lot to have a minimum frontage of 50m and 60m within the 1ha precinct.
14	Schedule 1.1.3 - Table SC1.3.2 - Administration definition	Change Administration Definitions for "Adjoining	Major Amendment	The current administration definition is unclear whether it

No.	Description	Amendment	Type	Reason
		premises" to; "Premises that share all or part of a measureable common boundary (a common boundary may be a single point such as a corner) and includes adjacent lots no more than 60 metres from the said lot and is directly separated from the lot only by (i) a road, street, footpath, railway or thoroughfare; or (ii) a watercourse; or (iii) a reserve or other similar open space".		incorporates land across a road or easement. Council has drafted the Planning Scheme assuming that it does include lots adjacent to the said lot, therefore it is proposed to include within the definition of adjoining properties that "adjacent lots", are included in the definition, including a measureable distance, therefore eliminating any confusion.
15	Schedule 1.1.3 - Table SC1.3.2 - Administration definition	Change Administration Definitions for "Domestic Outbuilding" to read; "A Class 10a building as defined in the National Construction Code, that is ancillary to a residential use on the same lot and is limited to non-habitable buildings for the purpose of an enclosed shed, garage and carport".	Major Amendment	The current administration definition does not take into account that an open carport does not require the same setbacks as an enclosed carport within the QDC, therefore Officers have included the word "enclosed" within the definition to eliminate the planning scheme overriding the QDC setbacks.
16	Structure plan for future urban growth area -	Replace the current Local	Major	The current Structure plan was

No.	Description	Amendment	Type	Reason
	Atherton Local Plan Map 7 of 14.	Plan map with a revised and more detailed structure plan.	Amendment	drafted some 8 years ago and development has occurred within the Urban Growth Precinct. The proposed plan is more detailed and caters for future reticulated water, sewerage, stormwater and road layouts.

APPENDIX 3: CONSULTATION OUTCOMES AND ACTION PLAN

AP02

OUTPUTS OF TABLELANDS SCHEME REVIEW CONSULTATION 20TH AND 21ST NOVEMBER 2017

- Aside from the specific project of the Planning Scheme amendments review and Integration of Economic Development Incentives, the consultation revealed that there is a bigger issue at play, than merely the planning scheme review/amendments and integration of economic development incentives.
- Council has an opportunity in response to the recent engagement to send positive message and establish positive working relationship between developers, consultants and Council staff.
- A holistic approach is needed to address the fundamental cultural issues (or perception) that exist between Council and the community/development industry. The following provides a summary:

1. PLANNING SCHEME REVIEW/AMENDMENTS

Levels of assessment around key industries to encourage economic development, including:

- a. Nature based tourism;
- b. Retirement villages and aged care (to cater for ageing population);
- c. Rural lot sizes;
- d. Overlays – addressing mapping triggers and code provisions, specifically Council’s code provisions associated with overlays, where mapping is imposed by the State;
- e. Review code provisions – set out specific criteria that must comply with- e.g. revegetation of creek corridors, to provide certainty on what must be achieved;
- f. General review of levels of assessment – e.g. elevation from Accepted development with requirements to Impact assessment. Wholesale review of impact down to code where meeting strategic objectives of zone/scheme;
- g. Review GQAL mapping and zonings;
- h. Reconfiguring a lot –
 - i. review lot sizes in Rural zone (e.g. avocado farms only need a much smaller area than the minimum lot size in the planning scheme to be viable); and
 - i. Building works assessable against planning scheme – reducing triggers for DA’s and review AO’s.

2. PROCESSES

- a. Policy regarding Councillor engagement and not being accessible during the decision making period;
- b. “Open for business” Council policy being reflected and aligned with actions – need to have a solutions- based approach which addresses problems and is more facilitative within Council;
- c. Council should be more approachable - timeframes should be met, as should answering phones and returning calls;
- d. Value of pre-lodgement meetings and building better developer-officer-councillor interactions;

- e. Consistent communication between applicants, consultants and Council about attitudes to developments; and
- f. Working together throughout the application process to come to mutually agreeable outcomes, which may mean achieving a compromise, rather than just “no”.
- g. If the answer is “no” then providing a rationale and clear justification.

3. PROPERTY ECONOMICS & CHARGING

- a. Set charges to facilitate development for infrastructure and fees in the context of underlying economic conditions on the Tablelands;
- b. Develop meaningful incentives – e.g.
 - i. Tourism – lower levels of assessment, discount fees, reviewing infrastructure charges, delayed payment until business up and running, establishing standard Infrastructure Agreement templates to deal with standard matters;
- c. review infrastructure charges – Charges are not realistic when looking at return for investment, compared with places such as Cairns where land is selling for a much higher return;
 - i. stagger or delay payment of infrastructure charges based on when lots are created or sold, rather than requiring payment upfront for all stages, which is not viable.

4. CULTURE

- a. Acknowledge and work on better interactions and relationships between Council staff and industry – currently regarded as obstructionist (e.g. not answering phones), there is no understanding of commercial dynamics etc.
- b. Entrenched culture which has been around for a long time.
- c. Close proximity to a pro-development Council (Mareeba), which is seen as a more positive place to do business.
- d. Need to establish more collaborative working relationships. Consider establishing a stakeholder reference group to meet regularly to discuss policy issues, DA’s etc.

5. ENGINEERING STANDARDS

- a. FNQ ROC standards:
 - i. should reflect local context as there is confusion around whether they are a guide or set standards;
 - ii. Council should be more flexible in application, particularly if RPEQ’s are willing to sign-off on alternative solutions;

6. DA BENCHMARKING

- a. Review DA statistics – e.g.
 - i. What % of DA’s refused?
 - ii. What % DA’s withdrawn before decision made?
 - iii. How many officer’s recommendations overturned by Council?

- Further discussion is needed regarding how the planning scheme amendments review and integration of economic development incentives project fits into the bigger picture, holistic issue of addressing the cultural changes required to both promote and facilitate an “open for business” policy in the Tablelands.

Way Forward Action Plan

The following list of actions provide an initial assessment of a possible way forward for Council. The following steps could be followed by Council:

1. Summarise feedback (meetings)
2. Undertaken further data collation. (DA data / benchmarking)
3. Prepare draft Action plan.
4. Report to Council / obtain necessary approvals.
5. Communicate summary Action Plan to stakeholders
6. Implement.
7. Monitor and Review

Action Plan (Initial Scope)

1. PLANNING SCHEME REVIEW/AMENDMENTS
 - a. Align the Planning Scheme Incentives and Planning Scheme Amendment package to address key issues and reforms.
 - b. Develop a program for ongoing (Annual) Biannual reviews and register of issues to be included in future reviews.
2. PROCESSES
 - a. Review Councils' processes – develop KPI's outcomes and accountabilities
 - i. Eg. Pre-lodgements, telephones, engagement with Councillors.
 - b. Identify short, medium long term business process changes/improvements
 - c. Obtain Councillor/Staff commitment
 - d. Provide key documents and processes to Council/stakeholders.
3. PROPERTY ECONOMICS & CHARGING
 - a. In development of LGIP ensure it is reflective of property economics.
 - b. Develop clear communication strategy regarding:
 - i. level of charge
 - ii. Where / how it is spent.
 - iii. Benchmark with neighbouring/similar Councils.
 - c. Ensure clear understanding Councillor/Stakeholders.
4. CULTURE
 - a. Key issue and will require an ongoing commitment to change in behaviour.
 - b. Require dedicated effort and external support regarding cultural issues.
 - c. Ensure consistency of messaging between Councillors/Senior Executives and Planners.
 - d. Ongoing process of improving culture – see role.
5. REVIEW STANDARDS
 - a. Clarity regarding application of Standards – performance or prescriptive application.
 - b. Benchmark with Other FNQ Councils – in terms of application.

6. STATISTICS ON DA'S

- a. Review DA statistics – e.g.
 - i. What % of DA's refused?
 - ii. What % DA's withdrawn before decision made?
 - iii. How many officer's recommendations overturned by Council?

7. COMMUNICATION

Most fundamental action, Council has real opportunity to develop and apply open/transparent communication with stakeholders. This will be the key issue in terms of

Develop a series of forums / methods to communicate to stakeholders, including:

- Regular (1/4 briefings)
- Web site updates
- Open door / telephone policy