

6.14. HERITAGE STRATEGY

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| DEPARTMENT | Environment and Planning |

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts the Heritage Strategy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Douglas Shire Historical Society previously sought Council to initiate a full, up-to-date and accurate list of local places of significance as well as a heritage strategy for the Shire.

Comprehensive research information was prepared and provided by the Society as a submission to the then proposed 2018 Planning Scheme for changes to the schedule of places of significance, inclusion of a nomination process, request for the inclusion of additional places and corrections to the overlay maps. Despite numerous meetings and provision of information the adopted scheme contained errors.

The Society made representations that Council allocates suitable funding in the 2020-2021 budget to address these matters. These matters were reported to the Councillor workshop held on 11 February 2020. The Council's adopted budget included funding for a Heritage Strategy. Separate funding has been allocated for a Planning Scheme alignment and major amendment.

The recommended changes to the mapping and the schedule of places are being considered in the current Planning Scheme review.

A heritage consultant was engaged, however due to the Covid-19 pandemic the project was delayed. The project has been actively pursued over the past twelve months and the prepared Heritage Strategy was received by Council. Internal consultation with various Council's teams has been undertaken with feedback and comments incorporated into the Strategy.

The Strategy is now being presented to Council for adoption.

BACKGROUND

Places of significance are diverse and can include areas, land, buildings and monuments. These places can be of national, state or local significance. The Commonwealth and the State each have Heritage Strategy.

The Commonwealth Strategy seeks best practice standards for conservation management and supports interpretation, awareness and knowledge of our heritage. The Strategy can be viewed via the following link <https://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/australian-heritage-strategy>

The Queensland Heritage Strategy considers both State and local places of significance. This strategy is a ten year plan, developed in 2009 and last reviewed in 2015. This Strategy follows a similar vision and direction as the Commonwealth strategy with objectives seeking:

- i. leadership to strengthen and streamline heritage protection;

- ii. collaborative investment in Queensland's heritage; and
- iii. to connect Queenslanders with their heritage.

Underpinning and supporting these strategies are various Commonwealth and State Acts (e.g., EPBC Act, Qld Heritage Act and Qld Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act), programs and projects that support and achieve listed objectives. Both the Australian and the Queensland Heritage Strategies seek actions beyond regulatory controls to conserve our heritage. These actions can include interpretations and support for tangible restoration and conservation projects

As reported to the Councillor workshop in 2020 an internal review identified a need for Council to also have its own Strategy. A local Heritage Strategy identifies outcomes to proactively achieve conservation beyond regulatory Planning Scheme controls. A heritage strategy considers natural, historic and Indigenous cultural heritage with aims to value, care and protect the Shire's heritage future generations. Cultural heritage provides significant physical, social and economic values to the community.

COMMENTS

Within the Douglas Shire sit:

- two world heritage areas that are of national significance (Queensland Wet Tropics and the Great Barrier Reef);
- nine of the 1777 Queensland places of State heritage significance;
- places respected by the Eastern Kuku Yalanji and Yirrganydji Indigenous peoples;
- numerous identified local significant places.

Council owns and has a duty of care to places of state and local significance as well as assists in the care of the nationally significant world heritage areas.

Council does not have an overarching heritage strategy. The importance of the world heritage areas and Indigenous people's culture is referred to in Council's economic and arts strategies.

Consideration for natural areas, including the World Heritage and national significant Queensland Wet Tropics and the Great Barrier Reef is included in Council's Corporate Sustainability Strategy 2017-2020. This strategy includes consideration of iconic flora and fauna found within the Shire. Council also supports the conservation of natural areas through collaborative programs for biosecurity issues (weed eradication programs) and access to places of national heritage through the management of local roads and the proposed Wangetti Trail.

Council has regulatory controls under the Planning Scheme and seeks the delivery of conservation and interpretation through the local grant funding program and assistance to the Douglas Historical Society with place markers as well abiding by individual conservation management plans for Council managed properties.

The Planning Scheme requires assessments to have regard to Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Heritage Significance (*also known as the Burra Charter and associated Practise Notes*). This Charter is considered best practise for Australia and is internationally recognised. The Charter is available via the following link.

<https://australia.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/The-Burra-Charter-2013-Adopted-31.10.2013.pdf>

The Strategy affects Council business in that Council's operations need to have regard to the Shire's heritage. Internal consultation has been undertaken in this regard. Part of the Strategy includes a two-year consultation period with the community. The Strategy enables Council to identify funding for various heritage matters at its annual budgetary meetings. Council may consider including items in the Corporate and Operational Plans.

A review of the Planning Scheme matters is being undertaken separately.

PROPOSAL

That Council adopts the Heritage Strategy.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The Heritage Strategy identifies options for future actions that will require resource allocation under future corporate and operations plans.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

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| Economic: | The Heritage Strategy requires all actions of Council to acknowledge and give consideration to the Shire's heritage. |
| Environmental: | The Heritage Strategy acknowledges and gives consideration to the natural and constructed places of significance in the Shire for sustainability of these assets. |
| Social: | The Heritage Strategy acknowledges and gives respect to the contribution heritage makes to the social and community development of the Shire. |

CORPORATE/OPERATIONAL PLAN, POLICY REFERENCE

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

Corporate Plan 2019-2024 Initiatives:

Theme 4 - Inclusive Engagement, Planning and Partnerships

In delivering for our communities, economy and environment, Douglas Shire will ensure open and transparent engagement and communication. We will develop robust strategic plans and we will partner with our community and key stakeholders.

Goal 3 - We will recognise the critical role that our partners play in planning and delivering vital programs and services.

Operational Plan 2023-2024 Actions:

New project arisen during the financial year.

COUNCIL'S ROLE

Council can play a number of different roles in certain circumstances and it is important to be clear about which role is appropriate for a specific purpose or circumstance. The implementation of actions will be a collective effort and Council's involvement will vary from information only through to full responsibility for delivery.

The following areas outline where Council has a clear responsibility to act:

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|-----------------------------|---|
| Custodian | Council owns and manages infrastructure, facilities, reserves, resources, and natural areas. In fulfilling its role as custodian, Council will be mindful of the community, the economy, the environment and good governance. |
| Information Provider | Council provides the community with important information on services, events, policies, rules, strategies, and any other relevant data that helps the community to stay informed. In performing this role, Council seeks to be open and transparent. |
| Regulator | Meeting the responsibilities associated with regulating activities through legislation or local law. |

CONSULTATION

Internal: All employees through their respective Managers, Team leaders and Supervisors.

External: None. To be developed and undertaken as part of the Strategy.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Nil. To be developed and undertaken as part of the Strategy.

ATTACHMENTS

1. November 2023 Heritage Strategy [6.14.1 - 22 pages]



Douglas Heritage Strategy 2023

Douglas Shire Council

November 2023

Version 1

Doc 1192687



DOCUMENT CONTROL

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Cover photographs: Coral Sea – World Heritage Great Barrier Reef and Mossman sugarcane fields with World Heritage Queensland Wet Tropics backdrop

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Eastern Kuku Yalanji and Yirrganydji peoples are the Traditional Custodians and Owners of the land and sea country that encompass the Douglas Shire region.

Douglas Shire Council acknowledges the 'Bama', the traditional rainforest Aboriginal coastal people of our region who hold the unique position of being the First Peoples of this country. We recognise and respect Bama cultural heritage, values, beliefs and continuing relationships and responsibility to their land and sea country. We honour and respect your Elders past, present and future.

We commit to maintaining and strengthening our partnerships and respectful relationships with Bama in the spirit of reconciliation so that together we can increase the opportunities for successful and positive outcomes to the advantage of everyone in our communities.

Council respectfully acknowledges other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who call our region 'home'.

Douglas Shire Council celebrates their continuing culture and we acknowledge the memory of their ancestors.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO ASSISTANCE IN STRATEGY CONTRIBUTIONS

Council acknowledges the contributions and assistance received throughout the development of this Strategy, from Converge Heritage + Community Pty Ltd, the Douglas Shire Historical Society and other members of the community.

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Douglas Shire is a world recognised area of natural beauty and cultural significance. The natural environment in this location has governed the way people have lived in the area in the past and will continue to govern how people can live in the area into the future. This presents the Shire with unique opportunity and responsibility to preserve the cultural and heritage values of the area in a way that both enhances and respects these values. We recognise our responsibility in protecting and preserving our natural world for generations to come. We understand the strong link between the environment and the economy: they are interdependent. This Strategy aims to provide an overarching framework for the way in which Council will work in partnership with its key stakeholders to manage and preserve its heritage; natural, Aboriginal and historic.

1 INTRODUCTION

The intent of this initial Heritage Strategy is to provide an overarching document for Council where heritage is acknowledged, respected, and considered. It sets out what Council currently undertakes to manage its heritage and outlines ways in which this will be enhanced into the future.

Douglas Shire is a place of natural beauty which attracts residents and tourists from around the world. Two World Heritage Areas (the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area), cover 80% of the Shire, and the interface between the two is unique to the wet tropics. The topography of the Shire acts as substantial point of difference to other parts of the Far North Queensland region creating a quite distinct community of interest within the Shire. Residents identify closely with the Shire's physical setting as defining the boundaries to their community. This contributes significantly to the Shire's heightened sense of identity and interest in local issues. The Shire's high biodiversity values are reflected in its natural environments, ranging from rainforest and wet sclerophyll woodlands to mangrove forests and wetlands, to vegetated sand dunes/swale systems, reefs, foreshore areas, intertidal seagrass beds and estuarine creek and river systems.

Douglas Shire has a rich and diverse cultural heritage. The natural heritage is fundamental to the way in which Aboriginal and historic heritage has occurred and developed. It is one of the core values that has, and continues to, attract people to the region either as visitors or as residents. Sustainable development which preserves these values is essential into the future.

The Aboriginal cultural heritage values of the Wet Tropics bioregion are acknowledged, protected and enhanced. The Aboriginal Rainforest People of the Wet Tropics have lived continuously in the rainforest environment for at least 50,000 years and this is the only place in Australia where Aboriginal people have permanently inhabited a tropical rainforest environment.



Queensland Heritage Listed Port Douglas Sugar Wharf

The post-contact cultural heritage places in Douglas reflect the area's development and provide an historical explanation of the Shire's existing settlement pattern. A particular characteristic of built environment in Douglas Shire is that each of the Shire's communities are contained within well-defined urban boundaries, designated towns, villages and other settlement areas. There is clear sense of town and country, where the settlement edges are not blurred by expanding suburbia. These places of cultural significance have been described within themes of mining, timber harvesting, sugar industry, road connections, pastoralism, tourism expansion, and care for the environment. The phases of history can be demonstrated through the variety of communities represented in the Douglas Shire, its pattern of settlement, and the public and community buildings, such as halls, churches, schools, cane rail infrastructure and other commercial and industrial buildings, including the Mossman sugar mill and the wharves at Port Douglas.

It is these places of cultural heritage significance and associated links across other aspects of cultural policy planning and reconciliation initiatives (such as the Reconciliation Action Plan and the Return to Country Plans) which form the basis of the Indigenous components of this Heritage Strategy. Specific sites and places of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage significance are considered separately to this document under the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003 (Qld)*. Statements of Significance for UNESCO sites (Wet Tropics and GBRMPA) or Places of State Significance are also considered under their relevant Acts. However, where they interact with the key elements of landscape, amenity and connection with Country and the preservation of viewsheds they are referenced in this document.

1.1 What is Heritage?

Heritage refers to places and objects from our past, which hold cultural significance for our Shire and community. Heritage encompasses tangible elements (such as buildings, monuments, landscapes, books, works of art and artefacts) and intangible sites and places and traditions (such as places within the environment, language and knowledge). Cultural significance encompasses aesthetic, historic, scientific/technical, social and/or spiritual values that may exist for past, present or future generations.

Place has a broad scope and includes natural and cultural features. Places can be large or small: for example, a memorial, a tree, an individual building or group of buildings, the location of an historical event, an urban area or town, a cultural landscape, an area of biodiversity which is recognised worldwide, a garden, an industrial plant, a shipwreck, a site with *in situ* remains, a stone arrangement, a road or travel route, a community meeting place, or a site with spiritual or religious connections. Places may have significance for more than one value, may have differing significance for separate groups, or may have shared significance between groups. Significance may be embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects.

Places of cultural heritage significance enrich people's lives, often providing a deep and inspirational sense of connection to community and landscape, to the past, and to lived experiences. They contribute to our individuality and character. They are important records, expressions of our identity and diversity, and are irreplaceable and precious.

Douglas Shire Council recognises the deep connection of the community with its heritage in all its forms and how this heritage has governed the way people have always lived, and continue to live, in this area. the Strategy seeks to conserve the cultural context of our heritage, and to enable the community to be enriched by it in a sustainable way through seeking a balance between heritage and appropriate development within the Shire.



Four Mile Beach with backdrop to Great Barrier Reef and Queensland Wet Tropics



Typical local waterway

2 THE ROLE OF COUNCIL

Matters relating to heritage and its ongoing management comprise a component of most of the departments within the Douglas Shire Council. This ensures, and will continue to ensure, that heritage matters are considered within all levels of Council. This is reflected in Council's corporate framework:

| Department | Team | Responsibilities |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| Infrastructure | Open Spaces | Liaison with community stakeholders on specific projects. Consideration of viewsheds and impacts to natural, Aboriginal and historic heritage as part of development of open spaces. |
| | Public and Natural areas | Maintenance and upgrades to Council owned sites, or where Council is the Trustee for the State. |
| | Biosecurity | Maintenance and upgrades to Council owned sites, or where Council is the Trustee for the State. Work with other government agencies to implement programs to manage environmental issues such as weed control and preservation of the Wet Tropics and GBRMP areas. |
| | Building Facilities | Physical maintenance and upgrades to Council owned sites, or where Council is the Trustee for the State. Together with property services organises conservation management plans on Council owned / managed properties. Properties include Stage and local Heritage places. |
| | Infrastructure has also developed an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage General Policy and a Cultural Heritage Duty of Care Procedure including an Aboriginal cultural finds procedure. | |
| Environment and Planning | Planning | Planning scheme considerations, including consideration of heritage, and development applications. Consideration of development in world heritage areas and of Local heritage places. Manage competing community aspirations whilst ensuring compliance with required environmental legislation and Shire policies. |
| | Sustainability | Natural area sustainability matters such as foreshore grant programs, fishing sustainability, biodiversity etc. |
| Projects | Project Office | Project planning and oversight of significant projects and works. Consideration of cultural heritage matters form part of the management framework for the consideration of projects. |

| Department | Team | Responsibilities |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|---|
| People and Community Services | Arts and Cultural | <p>Coordination of cultural events.</p> <p>Promotion of local events and heritage.</p> <p>Liaison with community to highlight the Shire's diverse cultural heritage.</p> |
| | First Peoples | <p>Ongoing development of the Reconciliation Action Plan.</p> <p>Liaison with Eastern Kuku Yalanji, Yirrganydji peoples, Jabalbina and other representatives.</p> |
| | Property | Manage Council owned sites or where Council is Trustee including places of cultural heritage significance. These officers also deal with leases of Council premises. Council properties include State Heritage and Local Heritage places. |
| | Human Resources | Co-ordinate Council officer training for cultural heritage. |
| | Community Liaison | Assists various departments with dealings with Aboriginal Peoples, cultural artifacts. |
| | Libraries | <p>Library and library displays and information.</p> <p>Public education programs.</p> |
| Finance | Frontline Services | Oversight of the budgeting of any programs relating to heritage which the Shire has funded. |
| | Integrated Services | <p>Manage private commercial bookings of Council properties including places of cultural heritage significance.</p> <p>Manage cemeteries and building records including working with the general public and other stakeholders such as Douglas Shire Historical Society to share information from the cemetery records.</p> |
| | Procurement | Consideration of tenders and services provided to Council by contractors including in relation to places of cultural heritage significance. |



Daintree foothills with backdrop of Queensland Wet Tropics

3 HERITAGE AND THE PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Douglas Shire Council addresses cultural heritage matters and their significance through a variety of mechanisms but mainly through the provisions and policies of our Corporate Plan, Planning Scheme and several other plans and policies.

The Planning Scheme was adopted on 1 January 2018, and is currently under review. This review includes consideration of heritage in relation to several, development specific Local Plans and the current Places of Significance Overlay and associated overlay code where any material change of use can be addressed in respect to construction parameters. Current policies and past and current plans in relation to cultural heritage within the Shire are detailed below.

| Policy | Date | Purpose | Current Status |
|--|-------------|---|----------------|
| 1981 Planning Scheme for the Whole of the Douglas Shire | 6 June 1981 | Planning Scheme came into effect on 6 June 1981. Through the Planning Scheme amendment gazetted 26 August 1982 for the <i>Development Control Plan 1, Height of Buildings and Multiple Unit Development in Port Douglas and Four Mile Beach</i> . The DCP included a Schedule of Historic Buildings or Monuments with sixteen listings. The Great Barrier Reef was included on the World Heritage List in 1981. The Wet Tropics of Queensland was included on the World Heritage List in 1988. The Wet Tropics and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park cover 80% of the Shire. | Superseded |

| Policy | Date | Purpose | Current Status |
|---|-------------------|---|----------------------------|
| 1996 Douglas Shire Council Planning Scheme | 20 November 1996 | Planning Scheme came into effect on 20 November 1996. Inclusion of the Shire's ecology, Landscape and Heritage Conservation considerations in the Strategic Plan. Strategic Plan also includes specific criteria for the World Heritage Area and Area of High Biological and/or Scenic Value. Development requirements include cultural heritage considerations. Development Control Plan 2 Port Douglas lists ten buildings/features as worthy of retention and sympathetic treatment. DCP 3 – Daintree-Bloomfield recognised the World Heritage significance and sought conservation of this Area. | Superseded |
| Temporary Local Planning Instrument | 15 September 2005 | The Instrument prohibited certain development north of the Daintree River and its introduction was complimented by a bay-back and compensation scheme funded by the Queensland State Government. Instrument was in place for a year prior to the introduction of the next Planning Scheme. | Revoked |
| 2006 Douglas Shire Council Planning Scheme | 4 September 2006 | Planning Scheme came into effect on 4 September 2006. Underpinning the Desired Environmental Outcomes are considerations for the Queensland Wet Tropics and Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Ares. The Planning Scheme has expanded recognition of other State and local places with the Policy Schedule listed fifty-seven Valuable Conservation Features and Valuable Sites. The Wet Tropics of Queensland was included on the National Heritage List on 21 May 2007. The Wet Tropics is included in the Conservation Zone. | Superseded |
| Port Douglas Waterfront Master Plan | 25 November 2009 | Adopted on 25 November 2009, while the Shire area was amalgamated with the neighbouring Cairns Regional Council. The Plan provides strategic direction for the gradual transformation of the Port Douglas Waterfront to meet the needs of the community, business, visitors, environment and allow for balanced future development. It was developed with a high level of community input into the design. It includes the development of a Swimming Lagoon and plans for the Waterfront Park "Precinct" which require significant funding to enable implementation. As a corollary to this Plan, the Four Mile Beach Esplanade Upgrade was delivered in 2011. The Plan includes consideration of Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage. The supporting background study by Maunsell & Aecom that identified thirty-four places of existing or potential non-indigenous cultural heritage significance in this local area. | Adopted by Council |
| Douglas Shire Council Amendment No.1 of 2010 | 9 September 2011 | Planning Scheme amendment to include the Port Douglas Waterfront Plan considerations. | Included in current Scheme |

| Policy | Date | Purpose | Current Status |
|---|-------------------|--|------------------|
| Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Duty of Care Procedure | Aug 2015 | Outlines the procedure to be followed by Council for the planning, design and delivery of new or upgraded infrastructure projects and for infrastructure repair or maintenance work that requires the disturbance of soil. It applies to all of Council operations and activities and to those activities carried out on behalf of Council by consultants or contractors. The procedure seeks to ensure that the Douglas Shire Council meets its cultural heritage duty of care obligations under the QLD Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003 (ACHA) in undertaking its operations and activities. | Adopted & Active |
| Aboriginal Cultural Heritage General Policy. | 1 August 2017 | Policy adopted by Council. The intent of this policy is to define procedures and protocols in conducting Council activities while undertaking physical work to ensure that Aboriginal Cultural Heritage is protected within Douglas Shire. | Adopted & Active |
| Operational Plans | 2019-2024 ongoing | & These annual plans seek to achieve the Corporate Plan initiatives and include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement an external Indigenous Consultative Committee that works with Council on opportunities such as social enterprise, employment, health outcomes, cultural programs, art, youth and sport for First Nations Peoples in the Shire. • Complete rollout of the Indigenous Signage Project to install interpretive signs. Pending capital works availability. • Plan and deliver projects for implementing Targeted Disaster Resilience and Business Continuity for Indigenous Communities and Douglas businesses. Strengthen (post) COVID-19 recovery projects that feed into the Regional and State Recovery Plans. • Development of a local focus Heritage Strategy (natural, built form and indigenous) for the Shire including working with the Douglas Shire Historical Association on the Heritage Register to correct the site locations and annotations on the 2018 Planning Scheme in relation to Places of Significance, including a gap analysis. • Undertake amendments to align the Planning Scheme with the Planning Act, adjust overlay mapping and zones where required, amend planning scheme codes and assessment tables. Review of the Places of Significance Overlay, Code , maps and associated Policy to include World, National and State places, identify gaps and inconsistencies and achieve suitable statements for each of the local place of local Significance. | Adopted & Active |

| Policy | Date | Purpose | Current Status |
|---|-----------|---|------------------|
| Douglas Shire Council Corporate Plan | 2019-2024 | <p>The Shire's natural features are recognised in the Vision for the Corporate Plan, "A unique, beautiful and sustainable Shire with a connected and inclusive community, thriving economy and deep commitment to protecting the environment for future generations, while honouring our past." The Corporate Plan has five strategic themes: Celebrating communities; fostering sustainable economic growth; and leading environmental stewardship; Inclusive Engagement, Planning and Partnerships; and Robust Governance and Efficient Service Delivery.</p> <p>The plan includes the following initiatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a Reconciliation Action Plan. • Continue Indigenous Signage program. • Continue support for the expression of indigenous culture throughout Douglas. • Implement public art programs and develop place making opportunities. • Undertake actions to achieve Eco-Destination accreditation. • Undertake actions recommended in the Biosecurity Management Plan 2017-2025. • Review and adopt an updated Biosecurity Management Plan 2021 – 2025 and ensure that it targets the Shire's flora and fauna invasive species problems. • Establish a working group comprised of Council, State, primary producer representatives and natural resource groups to determine the best method to ensure effective, timely and affordable rehabilitation or preventative work is able to be delivered along waterways in the Douglas Shire. • Conduct education and enforcement programs relating to water quality entering waterways and the GBR lagoon including sediment from the urban environment. • In matters of significant importance regarding the environment, we will endeavour to engage, consult and share information with the traditional custodians. • Enhance existing Planning Scheme to promote investment while protecting the environment. • Prepare Asset Management Plans for all Council assets. | Adopted & Active |

| Policy | | Date | Purpose | Current Status |
|---------------------|--------|-------------------|---|----------------|
| Reconciliation Plan | Action | Draft 31 Aug 2021 | <p>Council approved the draft Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to submit to Reconciliation Australia for their consideration and endorsement. The plan seeks a reference group of Council, Traditional Custodians, government and semi-government agencies.</p> <p>The role of the RAP Reference Group will be to work together with the Douglas Shire Council to support the reconciliation process and to also provide a forum to discuss, promote, implement, and deliver its initiatives and deliverables. Of relevance to heritage matters, the intention of our Reconciliation Action Plan is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Reconciliation Action Plan Reference Group to provide a forum to discuss, promote, implement, and deliver its initiatives into Council's decision-making processes. • Establish a First People's Consultative Committee to provide a forum for the traditional Custodians of the Douglas Shire local government area with input into Council decision-making pertaining to projects and initiatives affecting the Shire's First Nations community. • Identify key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence. • Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC. • Promote positive race relations through antidiscrimination strategies. • Identify opportunities and actions to work collaboratively to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. • Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning. • Support & promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music, dance, art and other cultural activities. • Identify agreed public places of significance in the region to highlight the history, culture and traditions of Eastern Kuku Yalanjiwarra Bama and Yirrganydji peoples. | In progress |

| Policy | Date | Purpose | Current Status |
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| 2018 Douglas Shire Planning Scheme | 2 January 2018 | Planning Scheme came into effect on 3 January 2018. The World Heritage Areas underpin the Shire's environmental considerations. Development in the Cape Tribulation and Daintree Coast area is conserved through a Local Plan that minimises development. | Adopted 7 Current |
| Local Plans | Under review as part of Planning Scheme Amendment Review | <p>7.2.1 Cape Tribulation and Daintree Coast Local Plan. This local plan area is located in the northern half of the Douglas Shire on land located predominantly to the north and east of the Daintree River. The precinct is a biodiversity hotspot of international significance and predominantly consists of the Daintree National Park and other reserves. The local plan area provides significant habitat for the critically endangered Southern Cassowary, amongst many other species of fauna and flora and cultural and landscape heritage sites.</p> <p>The natural environment is part of the immense drawcard to large numbers of domestic and international visitors. While such an economic resource is invaluable to the Shire, the area needs to be carefully managed to ensure these values are not diminished. However, a significant portion of the local plan area is privately owned freehold land and outside the boundaries of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. Past successive planning regimes have progressively proceeded to rein in development rights within the area. Precincts were created and development was limited. In particular, decisive action was undertaken in 2004 to control and limit permanent residential development north of the Daintree River. Where development rights were extinguished, compensation was paid and / or land was bought as part of a buy-back scheme and retained for conservation purposes. The protection of the regional ecosystem and rare and threatened species is paramount in the limitation of development opportunities within the region.</p> | |
| | Under review as part of Planning Scheme Amendment Review | 7.2.2 Coastal Communities Local Plan. The purpose of the Coastal communities local plan code is to provide for attractive residential areas in the Shire as an alternative to Mossman and Port Douglas. The Coastal communities consist of the three residential communities of Wonga Beach, Newell and Cooya Beach: each located 13 km to the north-north-east, 5 km to the north-east and 4 km to the east of the Mossman town centre, respectively. All are located on the flat coastal plain along the Coral Sea. Each community is located on the coastal network sandy swales of the foreshore and are therefore low-lying and vulnerable to coastal erosion and storm tide hazards. All communities have a ready supply of vacant lots, with a limited capacity for further residential expansion. Of the three communities, only the new residential estate on the western side of Cooya Beach is connected to reticulated sewerage. The purpose of the Plan is to ensure sustainable low density housing and development is in balance with the need to protect the environmentally sensitive coastal areas | |

| Policy | Date | Purpose | Current Status |
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| | | and coastal processes from detrimental impacts associated with urban development, and balance urban and rural land uses. | |
| | Under review as part of Planning Scheme Amendment Review | 7.2.3 Mossman Local Plan. The Mossman local plan area is located at the northern end of the Captain Cook Highway where it continues to the Daintree township as the Mossman-Daintree Road. The local plan area contains the rural and local administrative centre of Mossman. The purpose of the Mossman local plan code is to facilitate development which creates a vibrant and independent community which supports the needs of the local community and surrounding rural areas, while protecting and enhancing the unique local and historic character of the town. | |
| | Under review as part of Planning Scheme Amendment Review | 7.2.4 Port Douglas/Craigie Local Plan. The Port Douglas/Craigie local plan encompasses the traditional Port Douglas town centre and surrounding tourist and residential areas, including Four Mile Beach and Craigie. A particular characteristic of the local plan area is its high quality, lush landscaping complementing the tropical resort town atmosphere. This theme will be carried throughout the local plan area with gateways, nodes and corridor planting emphasising the role of the town as a tropical tourist destination. The purpose of the Port Douglas/Craigie local plan code is to facilitate development outcomes consistent with community values, the local tropical built-form and protection of the natural environment within the Port Douglas/Craigie local plan area, while providing a platform for investment and prosperity. | |
| | Under negotiation | 7.2.5 Return To Country Local Plan. The intent of the Return to Country local plan is to break new ground and position Douglas Shire as a leader in recognising Traditional Owners in a local government planning scheme. The area subject to the Plan is predominantly located north of the Daintree River and reflects areas of Aboriginal freehold land (under the <i>Aboriginal Land Act 1991</i>), known as the 'Pink Zone'. The purpose of the Return to Country local plan is to facilitate social and economic opportunities for Indigenous people to return to their country so that Bama can live on their Bubu and manage their environment, land and culture. As Trustees of the Eastern Kuku Yalanji People's traditional estate, Jabalbina's vision is to be caring custodians of bubu so Bama benefit culturally, economically, academically, and socially, while enhancing Eastern Kuku Yalanji tribal lore and cultural values. | |
| | | Council Planners are continuing to work with Wet Tropics Management Authority Officers and Jabalbina to enable return to country development. | |

| Policy | Date | Purpose | Current Status |
|------------------------|---------|---|----------------|
| Planning Theme | Scheme: | <p>Theme 4: Strong communities and identity. As it relates to heritage, this part of the Planning Scheme are that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places of cultural and heritage significance, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, are identified, protected and retained for their significance and importance to the history and identity of the Shire. • The distinctive character and unique sense of place of the Shire's towns, villages and other settlement areas are maintained, promoting community pride and well-being and community safety and prosperity. • Development is managed to enhance the character and identity of existing and future communities, providing services, facilities, parks, recreation areas, places to work, live and play and to celebrate culture, history and identity. • Progress is be made working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider community, to help remove social and economic disadvantage. • The conservation and adaptive re-use of places of heritage significance is facilitated. <p>This ensures that the many distinctive and important places that give strength to the local character of the Shire are preserved into the future. Cultural heritage significance for different cultures within the Shire, and the importance of preserving Aboriginal, non-Aboriginal, natural and cultural heritage is recognised.</p> | |
| Planning Overlay Codes | Scheme: | <p>8.2.6 Landscape values overlay code. The purpose of this overlay code is partly to ensure that the environment and landscape values including scenic amenity of the Shire are managed in an appropriate and sustainable way. It provides guidance to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas of High landscape value are protected, retained and enhanced. • Areas of Medium landscape value are managed to integrate and limit the visual impact of development. • The landscape values of the Coastal scenery area are managed to integrate and limit the visual impact of development. • Development maintains and enhances the significant landscape elements and features which contribute to the distinctive character and identity of Douglas Shire. • Ridges and vegetated hillslopes are not developed in a way that adversely impacts on landscape values. • Watercourses, forested mountains and coastal landscape character types remain predominantly natural in appearance in order to maintain the region's diverse character and distinctive tropical image. • Areas in the coastal landscape character type which are predominantly natural and undeveloped in appearance retain this natural landscape character. | |

| Policy | Date | Purpose | Current Status |
|--------|------|---|----------------|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watercourses which are predominantly natural and undeveloped in appearance retain this natural landscape character. • The rural character of cane fields and lowlands landscape character types which are predominantly rural or natural in appearance are maintained. • Landscape values are maintained when viewed from lookouts, scenic routes, gateways and public places. • Views towards High landscape value areas and the Coral Sea are not diminished. • Development is consistent with the prevailing landscape character of its setting and is neither visually dominant nor visually intrusive. • Advertising devices do not detract from the landscape values, character types or amenity of an area. | |
| | | <p>8.2.7 Natural areas overlay code. The purpose of the code is to manage development within the Shire and if possible, avoid development in areas of natural environment sensitivity such as areas containing matters of state environmental significance, wetlands, wetland buffers, waterways and waterway corridors. Where this is not possible, the overlay aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and enhance areas containing matters of State environmental significance. • Provides appropriate buffers to development. • Protects the known populations and supporting habitat of rare and threatened flora and fauna species, as listed in the relevant State and Commonwealth legislation. • Ensures that adverse direct or indirect impacts on areas of environmental significance are minimised through design, siting, operation, management and mitigation measures. • Does not cause adverse impacts on the integrity and quality of water in upstream or downstream catchments, including the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. • Protects and maintains ecological and hydrological functions of wetlands, waterways and waterway corridors. • Enhances connectivity across barriers for aquatic species and habitats. • Rehabilitates degraded areas to provide improved habitat condition, connectivity, function and extent. • Protects areas of environmental significance from weeds, pests and invasive species. | |

| Policy | Date | Purpose | Current Status |
|--------------------|--|---|----------------|
| | Under review as part of Planning Scheme Amendment Review | <p>8.2.8 Places of significance overlay code. Identifies places and sites of historic local heritage significance. Proposed development at these places are currently considered on a case by case basis.</p> <p>The Policy tables fifty-two places of significance. Development is required to take into account the</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the location and cultural heritage significance of world heritage properties, national heritage places and the requirements of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999; (b) the location and cultural heritage significance of Queensland heritage places; and (c) identification of local heritage places and areas. <p>Development in or on a local heritage place or area is to avoid or otherwise minimise adverse impacts on the heritage significance of the place or area and not compromise the cultural heritage significance of the place or area. the scheme seeks adaptive reuse of places of cultural heritage significance occurs where the use does not harm the qualities and significance of the place or area.</p> <p>This overlay has known gaps. It is anticipated that through the Planning Scheme Amendment, Council can achieve suitable statements for each of the local places identified by the scheme Overlay. It is also anticipated that the amended Planning Scheme will include the World Heritage Areas, and State heritage places.</p> | |
| Planning Schedules | Scheme: | <p>SC6.6 Landscape values policy. The purpose of this policy is to identify the level and type of analysis required to provide requirements and guidance for the preparation of a visual impact assessment where required by the Landscape values overlay code or for impact assessable development to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and enhance landscape features and places of high landscape value and medium landscape value. • Manage and limit visual impact and intrusion within the coastal scenery zone. • Protect and maintain valued landscape character attributes and rural amenity. • Maintain scenic views towards landscape features, areas of high landscape value and attractive combinations of distinctive landscape character from lookouts, scenic routes and gateways. <p>SC6.8 Natural environment policy. The purpose if this policy is to:</p> | |

| Policy | Date | Purpose | Current Status |
|---|---------------|--|----------------|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and provide guidance about information that may be required to support a development application. Provide guidance on preparing an ecological assessment report, vegetation audit report and waterway audit report. | |
| | | <p>SC6.11 Places of significance policy. The purpose of this planning scheme policy is to support the local dimension of the planning scheme by ensuring that places of significance in the shire are recorded and protected from removal and from inappropriate development. The objectives of the planning scheme policy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that Places of significance in the Shire are identified, recorded and recognised as important elements and features of the historical and environmental fabric of the Shire. To ensure that Places of significance in the Shire are protected and retained in perpetuity as community assets. | |
| Project Management Framework template from Initiate to Finalise Phase. | November 2022 | Requirement for the consideration of impact of a project on cultural heritage matters and the achievement of required approvals in respect to cultural heritage matters. | |



4 HERITAGE AND THE COMMUNITY

Douglas Shire Council engages with community stakeholders in relation to heritage matters in a variety of ways. Consultation is often project specific, for example, with the Douglas Shire Historic Society in relation to development or maintenance at specific historic buildings and places, or with Jabalbina and Yirrganydji peoples in relation to Aboriginal sites and places. Biodiversity in natural heritage places are managed in cooperation with WTMA and Jabalbina. Alternately, engagement with the community is through the implementation of the Planning Scheme or compliance with environmental legislation as managed by Council. Council also engages with the community through its library, events and education programs and is keen to enhance awareness of the culturally diverse nature of the community.

5 STRATEGIC VISION AND TASKS

Moving forward, Douglas Shire Council is keen to address the gaps apparent within its strategies, policies and the Planning Scheme to ensure a consistent, practical approach to heritage management within the Shire so as to ensure that heritage is preserved for the future in a meaningful and sustainable manner. In order to achieve these goals we plan to instigate a number of measures:

| Task | Timeframe | Purpose |
|--|-----------------------------|--|
| Preparation of an Engagement Plan | 12 Months | Identify stakeholders and appropriate engagement activities designed to review the draft Heritage Strategy and gather feedback. |
| Consultation about this Heritage Strategy | Within 2 years | To ensure wide stakeholder participation in the finalisation of this Heritage Strategy and ongoing support of the Strategy, a public consultation and review process is anticipated. Representatives from Aboriginal parties, government agencies, business groups including tourist operators, Douglas Historic Society, and other interested parties will participate in the workshopping of this draft strategy. These workshops will include the themes of aims and objectives, desired outcomes, implementation processes and conflict resolution strategies. |
| Establishment of Heritage Committee | Within 2 years | To develop a true partnership with key stakeholders representing Government, Scientific, Aboriginal, Community and Industry sectors with a view to working together to ensure a sustainable future for our shared heritage; natural, Aboriginal and historic. Meetings should be at least quarterly and discuss matters arising from proposed developments within the Shire, sharing of new data/resources, consideration of places of intangible cultural heritage significance and other relevant issues. |
| Interpretation Policy for Heritage Sites, Places and Stories | Within 2 years then ongoing | To develop an overarching strategy and style guide for the interpretation of heritage sites and places within the Shire that incorporates modern technology for access to knowledge and information about these places. |

| Task | Timeframe | Purpose |
|--|----------------------------|--|
| Local Heritage Overlay | Within 1 year | <p>To continue to include in Council's Planning scheme a list of places of local historic cultural heritage significance in accordance with the <i>Queensland Heritage Act 1992</i> and associated State heritage guidelines. Statements of Significance for identified heritage places to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of the place. • Historical context. • Place location. • Updated mapping (both digital and physical) . • Identification of heritage significance. <p>Ensure supporting policies are practical and consistent to guide development within the Amended Planning Scheme. This will provide a continuity of approach and transparency in the application of the Overlay Code.</p> |
| Development of Conservation Management Plans | Within 3 years | Initiate and/or update (for plans over 10 years old) conservation management plans for all places of cultural heritage significance for which Council has direct responsibility. This is to ensure implementation of best practise in relation to cultural heritage management at the places for their ongoing protection and preservation for the community and provide an example of best practise. |
| Review and Reinstitute Staff Cultural Awareness Training Program | Within 1 year then ongoing | To broaden the understanding of Shire employees of what heritage is and its importance to the community. This will include natural, Aboriginal, and historic heritage and outline practical ways in which Shire employees can ensure that management of the Shire's heritage is appropriate and sustainable. |
| Assistance for Heritage owners | | Explore mechanisms where Council can assist owners to meet their heritage obligations. Attract heritage grant funding for projects to maintain and repair Council owned or managed heritage properties. Provide assistance to private owners to undertake same. |

6 MONITORING AND TIMEFRAMES

It is anticipated that this initial Heritage Strategy will be reviewed within 18 months of its formal acceptance by Council. During this period Council will undertake Stakeholder engagement.

