

5.9. CONCEPT PLAN FOR LOT 83 SR596 CAPE TRIBULATION RD, KIMBERLEY

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RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorses the Lot 83 SR596 Concept Plan, the establishment of a stakeholder reference group and undertakes community consultation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council has a unique opportunity to deliver positive environmental outcomes in partnership with the community, environmental groups, Traditional Owners, local businesses and researchers through the establishment of local initiatives located on Lot 83 Crown Plan SR596.

The Concept Plan outlines Council's objectives for Lot 83 Crown Plan SR596 and identifies potential stakeholders, as well as community consultation opportunities.

It is recommended that project initiatives are identified following the establishment of a stakeholder reference group and community consultation. The stakeholder reference group will be tasked with ensuring project initiatives are designed to compliment existing Daintree Rainforest experiences and product offerings.

BACKGROUND

On 3 October 2019, Council purchased a 376 hectare block of land, north of the Daintree River to expand its environmental initiatives. The land is located on Lot 83 Crown Plan SR596 and was purchased for \$725,000 exclusive of GST. Whilst the land is predominantly rainforest, there are cleared sections consisting of approximately 70 hectares (19% of the total block). The cleared sections are currently being used for beef cattle farming, with the existing farmer continuing to use the land under an executed Licence Agreement with Council.

Council held two Environmental Workshops on 12 December 2019 in Cow Bay and Port Douglas. The Environmental Workshops provided a high-level overview of Council's current environmental initiatives and introduced the Lot 83 SR596 project. Ideas for Lot 83 SR596 were discussed and included: carbon sequestration planting; an interpretation kiosk; a dedicated research area; additional solar capacity for the Daintree Ferry; a walking trail and viewing platform; and the sale of 'tourist trees'.

COMMENT

Council has a unique opportunity to deliver positive environmental outcomes in partnership with the community, environmental groups, Traditional Owners, local businesses and researchers through the establishment of local initiatives located on Lot 83 Crown Plan SR596. Council has an obligation to act locally to mitigate the impacts of climate change and this project will form an important part of Council's action in this space.

The Concept Plan outlines Council's six (6) objectives for Lot 83 Crown Plan SR596, which are:

1. Environment
2. Partner
3. Indigenous
4. Research
5. Learn
6. Recreation

The Concept Plan recommends that a dedicated stakeholder reference group is established with representatives from local environmental groups, Traditional Owners and local businesses. The stakeholder reference group will be involved in designing the project initiatives, which aim to complement existing Daintree Rainforest experiences and leverage local expertise through partnership opportunities. In addition, wider community engagement is recommended, through a dedicated website, online surveys and a public gazetting period of the draft plan prior to the final plan being recommended to Council for adoption.

PROPOSAL

That Council endorses the Lot 83 SR596 Concept Plan, the establishment of a stakeholder reference group and undertakes community consultation.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

A Feasibility Study for the project will be undertaken following the establishment of a stakeholder reference group and the identification of potential initiatives.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic: The stakeholder reference group will be tasked with ensuring project initiatives are designed to compliment existing Daintree Rainforest experiences and product offerings. The project has the potential to generate funds through initiatives such as the sale of carbon offsets and/or credits and trees for planting. It is anticipated that these funds could offset weed and maintenance costs, which will be further scoped out in a future feasibility study. Council officers would seek to secure grant funding for any larger scale infrastructure projects, such as a trail or boardwalk.

Environmental: The primary objective of the project is to achieve positive environmental outcomes. This includes improving the water quality of runoff to the Great Barrier Reef, provide habitat for cornerstone species (e.g. Southern Cassowary, Daintree River Ringtail Possum), sequester carbon, including blue carbon and provide a research site (e.g. informing carbon sequestration rates in the tropics). Council has an obligation to act locally to mitigate the impacts of climate change, this project will form an important part of Council's action in this space.

Social: The project offers a unique opportunity to partner with conservation groups, Traditional Owners, researchers and the community. It aims to leverage the expertise of various groups and individuals, whilst also providing a recreational space for the community and visitors to enjoy.

CORPORATE/OPERATIONAL PLAN, POLICY REFERENCE

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

Corporate Plan 2019-2024 Initiatives:

Theme 3 - Leading Environmental Stewardship

Our visitors and residents deeply value the unparalleled environment in which we live. 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. Douglas Shire will be at the forefront of environmental protection by developing strategies, setting policies, and working with all stakeholders to become the envy of and to inspire locations across Australia and the World.

Goal 1 - We will protect our sensitive environment and plan for the impact of climate change.

Goal 2 - We will implement programs that reduce and offset our environmental footprint.

Goal 4 - We will partner with the community to educate and monitor.

Goal 5 - We will recognise the contribution that Traditional Owners make to the protection of the environment

Theme 5 - Robust Governance and Efficient Service Delivery

Strong governance and financial management are the foundations of the way in which Council will conduct its business and implement the initiatives of the Corporate Plan.

Goal 1 - We will conduct Council business in an open and transparent manner with strong oversight and open reporting.

Operational Plan 2019-2020 Actions:

2.2.1 - Undertake actions in the Eco-Destination Accreditation program.

3.2.2 - Undertake 2019/20 actions in the Corporate Sustainability Strategy 2017-20

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:

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.
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CONSULTATION

Internal: Management Team; Environment and Planning Team; Biosecurity Team.

External: Daintree Discovery Centre; James Cook University; Griffith University.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Following Council's Environmental Workshops on 12 December 2019, seven (7) organisations have been in contact with Council to express an interest in delivering and/or supporting project initiatives, these organisations are:

- Daintree Discovery Centre
- Daintree Life
- Jabalbina
- Queensland Trust for Nature
- Rainforest Rescue
- Rainforest Trust
- Rainforest 4

ATTACHMENTS

1. LOT 83 S R 596 Concept Plan [**5.9.1** - 7 pages]

LOT 83 SR596 CONCEPT PLAN

11 February 2020



Engaging, Planning, Partnering
Muruku Kirraji - Eastern Kuku Yalanji
Nganyji pina ngunda-lum ... Ma:lnyjirri-yngku - Yirrganydji

Image: Daintree Rainforest

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Lot 83 SR596 Concept Plan

1. Introduction

On 3 October 2019, Douglas Shire Council (DSC) purchased a 376 hectare block of land, north of the Daintree River to expand its environmental initiatives. The land is located on Lot 83 Crown Plan SR596, approximately one kilometer north of the Daintree Ferry. Whilst the land is predominantly rainforest, there are cleared sections consisting of approximately 70 hectares (19% of the total block). The cleared sections are currently being used for beef cattle farming, with the existing farmer continuing to use the land under an executed Licence Agreement with DSC.

This Concept Plan presents six (6) objectives for the land which will shape the project initiatives; and outlines the establishment of a dedicated stakeholder reference group and wider community engagement activities.

2. Objectives & Scope

2.1. Objectives

The objective of this Concept Plan is to communicate DSC's intentions for Lot 83 SR596.

2.2. Scope

The scope of this Concept Plan is to provide a preliminary overview of Lot 83 SR596's key objectives, identify potential stakeholders and detail community engagement opportunities. It is not in scope to identify potential project initiatives, these will be shaped through community consultation activities.

3. Location

The 376 hectare block of land is located on Lot 83 Crown Plan SR596, approximately one kilometre north of the Daintree Ferry. The land is predominantly rainforest, with the south and south-west boundary bordering the Daintree River, which leads to the Coral Sea and Great Barrier Reef. The cleared sections consist of approximately 70 hectares (19% of the total block) and are adjacent to the north and south of Cape Tribulation Road. The land is currently being used for cattle grazing, with the existing farmer continuing to use the land under an executed Licence Agreement with DSC. **Map 1** illustrates the location of the project site.

Map 1: Location of Lot 83 SR596



4. Project Objectives

The primary objective of the Lot 83 SR596 project is to achieve positive environmental outcomes. DSC has an obligation to act locally to mitigate the impacts of climate change and this project will form an important part of DSC's action in this space. In addition, the project aims to achieve positive social outcomes by offering the opportunity to partnership with environmental groups, Traditional Owners, local businesses and researchers; and engage with the Douglas Communities, schools, corporate groups and visitors to the Daintree Rainforest.

The Lot 83 SR596 project has six (6) key objectives which are detailed in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Lot 83 SR596 Objectives

#	Objective	Description
1	Environment	Achieve positive environmental outcomes, e.g. improve water quality, promote habitat, support keystone species, open up habitat corridors and sequester carbon.
2	Partner	Provide partnership opportunities with community groups and the community.
3	Indigenous	Provide knowledge sharing opportunities with Traditional Owners.
4	Research	Contribute to scientific research, e.g. carbon sequestration, agroforestry.
5	Learn	Provide meaningful interpretation about the history of the block and project initiatives.
6	Recreation	Provide a nature experience for visitors and residents, e.g. nature trail, tree planting.

5. Project Initiatives

The site is extremely versatile and is suitable for a wide range of project initiatives. The project initiatives will be designed to support at least one of the key objectives identified in **Table 1**. Initial ideas discussed at DSC's Environmental Workshops on 12 December 2019 included: carbon sequestration planting; an interpretation kiosk; a dedicated research area; additional solar capacity for the Daintree Ferry; a walking trail and viewing platform; and the sale of 'tourist trees'. It is anticipated that initially pest and weed control will be required, the extent of this will be identified during a site visit undertaken by DSC's Biosecurity Team.

Project initiatives will be identified following the establishment of a stakeholder reference group and community consultation.

6. Project Stakeholders

Objectives two (2), three (3) and four (4) relate to partnership opportunities with the community, environmental groups, Traditional Owners, local businesses and researchers. **Table 2** provides an overview of potential project stakeholders. This list is not extensive and DSC welcomes additional

groups and organisations to express an interest in the project. A formal public expression of interest will be released by DSC prior to any project partners being established.

Table 2: Project Stakeholders

Stakeholder Group	Organisation / Individual
Community	Forest Creek, Kimberley, Cow Bay, Diwan, Thornton Beach & Cape Tribulation community members. Other interested Douglas Shire residents
Environmental Groups	Daintree Life Douglas Shire Sustainability Group GBR Legacy Queensland Trust for Nature Rainforest Rescue Rainforest Trust Rainforest 4
Traditional Owners	Jabalbina
Local Businesses	Tourism Port Douglas Daintree Daintree Marketing Cooperative Daintree Discovery Centre Other interested businesses
Research Institutes	James Cook University & Daintree Rainforest Observatory Griffith University
Internal DSC	Biosecurity Team & Public Spaces Media & Communications Mossman Nursery Planning & Development Sustainability

6.1. Stakeholder Reference Group

A dedicated stakeholder reference group will be established for the project, providing strategic advice and direction. The group will be tasked with ensuring project initiatives are designed to meet the identified six (6) objectives in **Table 1** and compliment existing Daintree Rainforest experiences and product offerings. A public expression of interest will be issued in April 2020 and the group will meet at least four times between May to December 2020.

6.2. Wider Community Engagement

A dedicated webpage will be created on the <https://environment.douglas.qld.gov.au> website, with regular project updates and online surveys to gauge community appetite for various project initiatives. If required, community workshops will be arranged to provide residents and businesses with an additional opportunity to shape the direction of the project. There will be a public gazetting period of the draft plan prior to the final plan being adopted.

7. Timeline

A preliminary timeline for the project is presented in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Preliminary Timeline

Project Task	Date
Preliminary discussions with Research Institutions	February 2020
Call for Expression of Interest in Stakeholder Reference Group	April 2020
Stakeholder Reference Group (Meeting #1)	May 2020
Website Launch	June 2020
Community & Business Survey #1	June 2020
Stakeholder Reference Group (Meeting #2)	August 2020
Stakeholder Reference Group (Meeting #3)	October 2020
Community & Business Survey #2	October 2020
Stakeholder Reference Group (Meeting #4)	November 2020
Draft Project Plan & Feasibility Study Released for Public Comment	November 2020
Final Plan (detailing project partners & initiatives)	December 2020