

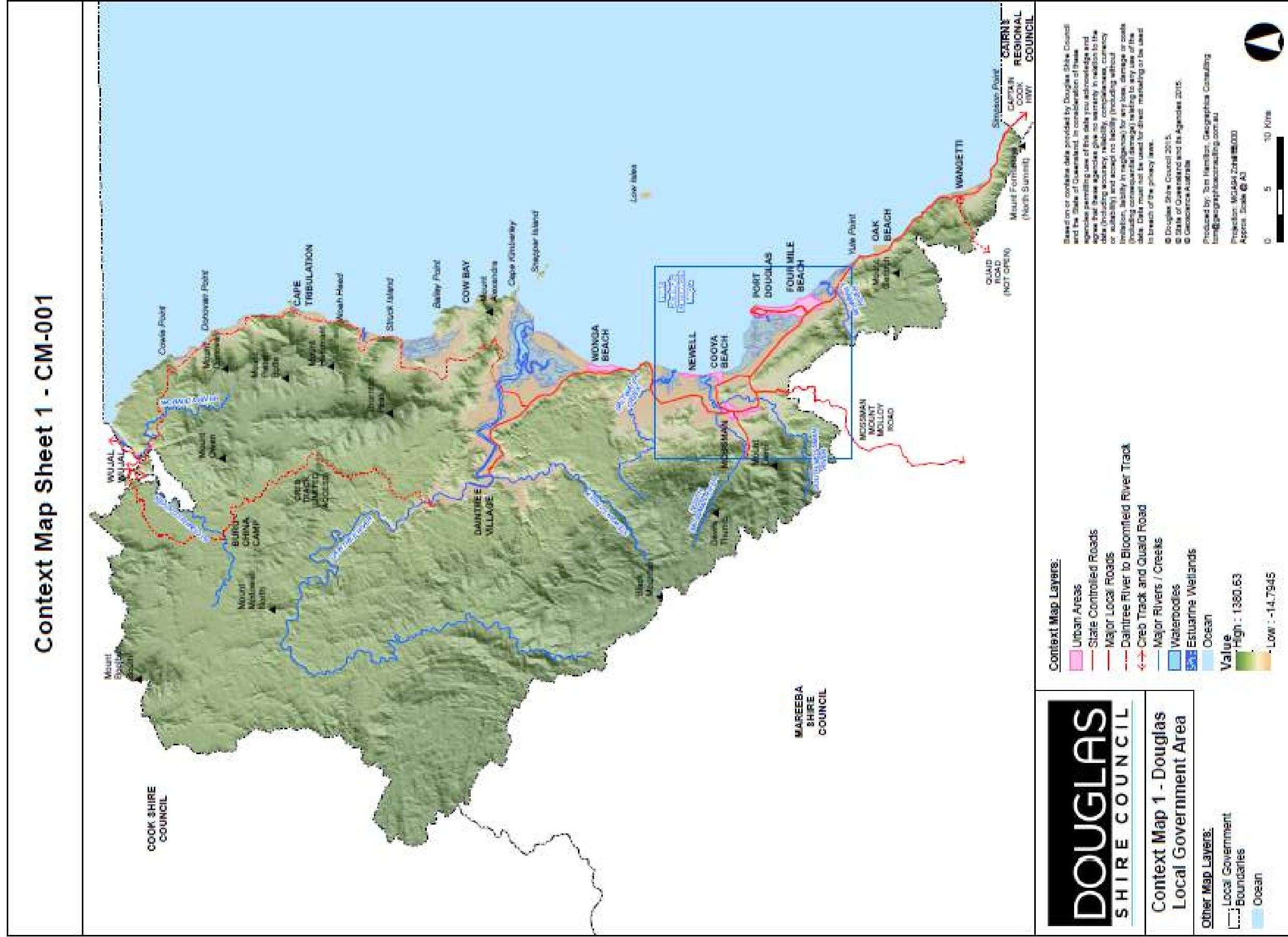
PART 3 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

3.1 Preliminary

- (1) The strategic framework sets the policy direction for the planning scheme and forms the basis for ensuring appropriate development occurs within the planning scheme area for the life of the planning scheme.
- (2) Mapping for the strategic framework is included in Schedule 2.
- (3) For the purpose of describing the policy direction for the planning scheme, the strategic framework is structured in the following way:
 - (a) the strategic intent;
 - (b) the strategic framework structure;
 - (c) the following themes that collectively represent the policy intent of the scheme:
 - (i) settlement pattern;
 - (ii) environment and landscape values
 - (iii) natural resource management;
 - (iv) strong communities and identity;
 - (v) economy;
 - (vi) infrastructure and transport.
 - (d) the strategic outcome(s) proposed for development in the planning scheme area for each theme;
 - (e) the element(s) that refine and further describe the strategic outcome(s);
 - (f) the specific outcomes sought for each, or a number of, elements;
 - (g) the land use strategies for achieving these outcomes.
- (4) Although each theme has its own section, the strategic framework in its entirety represents the policy intent for the planning scheme.

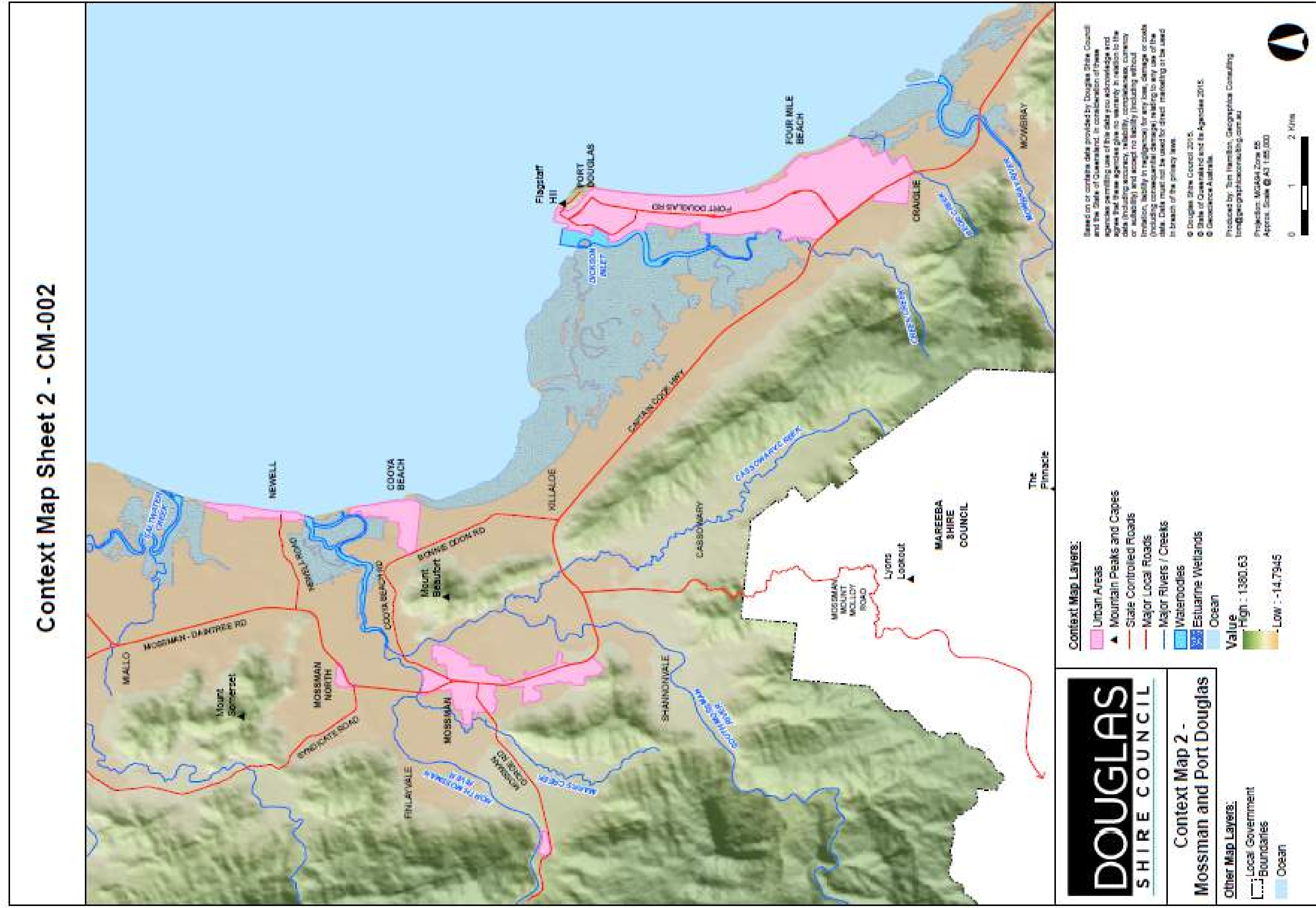
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Figure 3.1.a



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3.2 Strategic intent

3.2.1 Douglas Profile

3.2.1.1 Douglas Shire's regional context

- (1) Figure 3.1.a and Figure 3.1.b show Douglas Shire in its regional context. The Shire is the northern-most local government area in Queensland's Far North Region. Its southern boundary is just north of Ellis Beach, approximately 25 kilometres north of the Cairns City centre: the major urban centre of the Far North Region. It extends about 95 kilometres along the Coral Sea coastline, adjacent to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, to the mouth of the Bloomfield River. In total, the Shire covers approximately 2427 square kilometres.
- (2) The Shire abuts Cook Shire and the small Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire located on the Bloomfield River to its north, Mareeba Shire to its west and Cairns Regional Council to its south.
- (3) Mossman, the administrative centre of the Shire is located 65 kilometres from Cairns City Centre and about 150 kilometres from Cooktown to the north by road. Port Douglas, one of Australia's premium tourism destinations is located on the coast approximately 10 kilometres to the east-south-east of Mossman.
- (4) A major feature of the Shire is its mountainous terrain which defines the northern, western and south boundaries and extends right to the Coral Sea coastline in numerous locations. The broad Daintree River effectively divides the Shire into northern and southern parts. To the south are the major coastal plain, farming and settlement areas and to the north is a predominately mountainous, forested and relatively isolated environment.

3.2.1.2 Physical setting

- (1) The Shire contains rich and diverse environmental, cultural and scenic landscapes including extensive areas of mountainous forested terrain, in the north, west and south defining limited areas of alluvial coastal plain, river valleys, estuarine flats and coastal headlands and sand ridges. The mountainous areas retain their natural vegetation whereas most of the coastal plain has been cleared for cultivation, grazing and settlement. Much of the Shire's foreshore, riverine and estuarine vegetation remains intact, although some areas have been cleared, as a result of agricultural or urban development. Numerous peaks in the Shire exceed 1,000 metres above sea level.
- (2) The Shire's main coastal plain is between Yule Point in the south and Rocky Point in the north, with the mountain ranges meeting the coastline at each of these two points. This area contains most of the Shire's cultivated land and the main urban settlements of Mossman and Port Douglas. This coastal plain is drained by the Mowbray, Mossman and, South Mossman Rivers and Saltwater Creek.
- (3) To the south of Yule Point, the Shire is relatively narrow in width and principally comprises the steep slopes of the McAlister Range. Small flatter areas at Wangetti, Oak Beach and Pebbly Beach contain small coastal and rural residential communities and some limited cropping areas.
- (4) To the north of Rocky Point, is the Dagmar Range, the Wonga foreshore dune formation and the Daintree / Stewart Creek River valley. The Daintree River is the Shire's major watercourse, draining an extensive area of mountainous terrain. It is periodically subject to significant and

extensive flooding and represents a significant geographical barrier between north and the south of the Shire, particularly at its lower reaches.

- (5) To the north of the Daintree River valley, the Shire consists almost entirely of mountainous terrain with small pockets of flat areas adjacent to the coast. The most significant of these flatter areas is immediately to the north of the Alexandra Range. Major creeks draining this area include Hutchinson, Buchanan, Bailey, Mackenzie and Cooper Creeks. Another area of flat land occurs between Noah Head and Cape Tribulation, with smaller areas around Noah Creek and just to the north of Cape Tribulation. Significant creeks include Myall and Mason Creeks.
- (6) To the north of Cape Tribulation, other areas of flat land are located to the south of Cowie Point and Donovan Point. A number of fast flowing creeks drain directly to the Coral Sea including Emmagen, Tachalbadga, Donovan, Melissa Creeks, while Meelele Creek and the Woobadda Creek drain northward into the Bloomfield River.
- (7) The far northern part of the shire in Buru-China Camp and the surrounding areas, the landscape is vastly different to the coastal regions north of the Daintree. In the Buru region, the landscape is mostly undulating to hilly, with steeper areas along the McDowall Range in the south and around Mount Owen to the east. Central and western areas are within the Bloomfield River catchments (Granite, Watermelon, Keating, Baird and Woobadda Creek sub-catchments). Eastern and southern areas are within the Daintree River catchment (Boolbun, Adastra, Kobi, Devil Devil and Hilda Creeks). The region is dominated by open eucalypt woodland and areas of grasslands with regrowth occurring in previously disturbed former mining, timber harvesting and grazing country.
- (8) The Shire also includes a number of offshore islands including Snapper Island, Low Isles and Struck Island.
- (9) The topography of Douglas 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.
- (10) The Shire's physical setting, located in a wet tropical climate, framed by lush World Heritage listed forests and fringed by the Coral Sea and associated World Heritage listed Barrier Reef Marine Park to the east, makes the Shire a desirable location for its residents and for tourists alike.

3.2.1.3 Environment

- (1) The Shire's natural beauty 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. This characteristic is invaluable from both an environmental conservation and tourism perspective. The general predominance of the natural environment throughout the shire and the unique value of forests growing down to the shoreline should be recognised.
- (2) The Wet Tropics also presents an unparalleled record of the ecological and evolutionary processes that shaped the flora and fauna of Australia, containing the relics of the great Gondwanan forest that covered Australia and part of Antarctica, 50 to 100 million years ago. This area is mostly tropical rainforest and is extremely important for its rich and unique biodiversity.

- (3) Douglas Shire is home to a diverse range of native and endemic plants and animals, including habitat for rare and endangered species, some of which are found nowhere else on the planet. 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. Some of these areas are located outside the World Heritage Areas and are exposed to development pressure.
- (4) Douglas Shire adjoins the State Great Barrier Reef Coast Marine Park. The Commonwealth Great Barrier Reef Marine Park is adjacent to the low water mark. The Great Barrier Reef is internationally recognised for its outstanding biodiversity. The World Heritage status of the reef acknowledges its diversity of species and habitats. The reef's extraordinary biodiversity and the interconnectedness of species and habitats make the Great Barrier Reef and surrounding areas one of the most complex natural systems on Earth. Maintaining a healthy and diverse Great Barrier Reef ecosystem is important so it is better able to withstand, recover and adapt to any negative impacts and stresses. A productive and healthy reef environment also contributes significantly to successful local fishing and prawn production industries.
- (5) The zoning plans which are in force over the marine parks control the use of the tidal lands and tidal waters within the parks. However, they do not place any direct control over the use of adjacent land, except where such use involves works within the park area, or directly discharges into the park area. Areas of important remnant/riparian habitat and areas of considerable biodiversity value which occur along the coastal plain are also subject to development pressure.

3.2.1.4 Historical context

- (1) Douglas Shire has a rich and diverse cultural heritage. The land was originally occupied by aboriginal people from distinct groups with different dialects in different parts of the Shire. The Buru-China Camp region has a long history of settlement, both by Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Large aboriginal camps existed throughout the Buru area long before European settlement and many families remained after the land was fenced and divided into leases for cattle grazing. Although many Indigenous families were forced to move away, there has always been an aboriginal presence in the area with dwellings constructed using available materials, some of which were left following mining activities.
- (2) Timber harvesting, tin and gold mining, droving and cattle grazing were predominant in the Buru-China Camp region. In the early 1900s, the township of China Camp included a store, school, butcher and market gardens. The name China Camp was conceived when large numbers of Chinese camped in the area en-route to the Palmer River goldfields having landed at in Bloomfield.
- (3) Elsewhere, the post-contact cultural heritage places in Douglas reflect the area's development and can be described through a series of influential phases which provide an historical explanation of the Shire's existing settlement pattern. The majority of post-contact places reflect these phases:
 - (a) Gold discovery and port settlement:
 - (i) Gold discovery in the 1870s on the Hodgkinson River led to the development of a suitable route to the coast for access to and from the goldfields, resulting in the opening of a track down the southern range of the Mowbray River valley (the Bump Road). This track connected to the newly declared Town of Port Douglas,

established as the main port servicing the goldfields. In the late 1870s and early 1880s, Port Douglas was the preferred location for banks and government offices to service the trade from the mining fields. Craiglie, to the south of Port Douglas, was originally established as a packers and teamsters village, being the closest place to Port Douglas along the track to graze horses and cattle.

- (b) Timber harvesting and the development of the sugar industry:
 - (i) In the late 1870s timber getters were initially harvesting cedar along the Daintree and Mossman Rivers. In the 1880s, cane growing was established in the Mossman River Valley, ultimately leading to the establishment of the Mossman sugar mill on its current site in 1897.
 - (ii) Land north of the Daintree River was settled in the early 1880's with the intention of developing tropical agriculture. However such schemes were limited in success due to the areas isolation, protracted wet weather and cyclones.
- (c) The rise of Mossman as the Shire's administrative centre:
 - (i) Following the establishment of rail to Cairns (1891) and the establishment of the port of Cairns, the importance of Port Douglas declined. In 1900 a tramway link was established between the Mossman mill and Port Douglas for the transport of sugar, along with the establishment of cane rail to cane fields surrounding the town. By the 1920s, many businesses had relocated to be near the mill in Mossman from Port Douglas, a process that was hastened by a severe cyclone in 1911 that destroyed and damaged many of Port Douglas's buildings.
- (d) Development of road connections and pastoralism:
 - (i) The opening of the Captain Cook Highway to Cairns along the coast in 1933 led to the decline in the use of the Bump Road and the introduction of bulk sugar handling resulted in the cessation of sugar export via Port Douglas. The town reverted primarily to a fishing village and low key holiday destination, mainly used by nearby locals.
 - (ii) Dairying was established close to the Daintree township in the 1930's. However this was later superseded by beef cattle raising. A road was also established between Mossman and Daintree at this time.
- (e) Tourism expansion and the Daintree blockade:
 - (i) In the 1980's, the natural attractions of the Shire drew increasing numbers of visitors and an associated surge in the demand for accommodation, particularly in Port Douglas. Visitation was significantly boosted in 1984 with the opening of the Cairns Airport with direct international flights. An integrated resort development was established between Port Douglas and Four Mile Beach, along with a major tourist development at Dickson's Inlet in 1988, giving impetus for the development of further tourist accommodation and facilities. In addition, both Port Douglas and Mossman expanded its residential communities to cater for those seeking to live within the Shire.
 - (ii) In 1983-84, a controversial plan to connect Cairns to Cooktown resulted in a road being pushed through the forest via a coastal route over the steep Cowie and Donovan Ranges, connecting Cape Tribulation to the Bloomfield River. The construction of the road resulted in a large scale environmental protest known as the 'Daintree Blockade' which generated nationwide and international publicity, drawing attention to the plight of North Queensland's rainforests. In addition, in the late 1980's, the State Government over-ruled a Council decision to refuse a proposal to subdivide land into 958 one-hectare housing lots in the Daintree rainforests of Cow Bay, Diwan and Alexandra Bay. These actions refocussed

attention on the Daintree area which is now recognised by all levels of government for its natural attributes and landscape values, resulting in measures to kerb further incompatible development in this part of the Shire.

- (4) These phases of history can be demonstrated through the variety of communities represented in the Douglas Shire, its pattern of settlement, a variety of cultural heritage places, 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.

3.2.1.5 People and settlement

- (1) In 2011 Douglas Shire's population was 10 829 (ABS 2011 Census Quick Stats). At this time, the population of its main settlements included Port Douglas/Craiglie (4237), Mossman (1732), Wonga Beach (994) and Cooya Beach (855).
- (2) In comparison to other parts of Far North Queensland, the Shire has:
 - (a) Higher proportions of older age groups 55-64 years (13.9%) and 65-74 years (8.3%).
 - (b) Higher proportion of townhouses/flats/apartments (25%), concentrated in Port Douglas.
 - (c) Higher proportion of residents in long term caravan accommodation (3.7%).
 - (d) Higher household vacancy rates, particularly in Port Douglas, Wonga Beach and areas north of the Daintree.
- (3) The key demographic characteristics for Douglas are as follows:
 - (a) Population density is greatest in Port Douglas.
 - (b) There is noticeable seasonal variation in population in Port Douglas due to the influx of tourists during certain times of the year.
 - (c) A significant proportion of the population lives outside the Shire's urban areas.
 - (d) The proportion of the population in the older age groups is increasing, consistent with State-wide trends.
 - (e) Of the families in Douglas, 37.0% were couple families with children, 47.3% were couple families without children and 14.6% were one parent families. Household sizes are decreasing, consistent with State-wide trends.
 - (f) Of the employed people in Douglas, 14.2% worked in Accommodation. Other major industries of employment included Cafes, Restaurants and Takeaway Food Services 7.8%, School Education 4.4%, Scenic and Sightseeing Transport 4.4% and Supermarket and Grocery Stores 3.3%.
 - (g) On the day of the Census, the methods of travel to work for employed people were Car, as driver 54.5%, Walked only 8.5% and Car, as passenger 6.0%. Other common responses were Bicycle 5.0% and Other 1.4%. On the day, 1.7% of employed people travelled to work on public transport and 60.7% by car (either as driver or as passenger).

3.2.1.6 Built environment and heritage

- (1) Douglas Shire is characterised by a variety of buildings and places of heritage significance which contribute to the sense of place and have informed the character and style of the settlement areas in the Shire.
- (2) A distinct tropical vernacular is established in the Shire, representing a wide variety of different eras of Shire development and progress. This distinctive tropical vernacular contributes significantly to the identity of the Shire, making the place special for visitors and residents alike.

- (3) The historical gridded street pattern in the Port Douglas town centre, the dominance of vegetation over built form, and the open space between the Boat Harbour and Wharf Street are important elements in the townscape of Port Douglas.
- (4) The rural setting of Mossman as the Shire's administrative centre and mill town, framed by the western mountains, Mount Beaufort and the Mossman River, and its characteristically traditional north Queensland on-the-front-alignment buildings and wide main street, and the Rain-trees are important qualities of the town.
- (5) 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. For example, the remote rural setting of Daintree Village is a very distinctive, tourism-focussed community, contained and surrounded by agricultural land and the Daintree River.
- (6) From the Mossman sugar mill to the Blockade site at Cape Tribulation, to the wooden bridges that span many creeks and rivers in the Shire, to the more formal monuments such as the Bombing monument in Miallo, the Carstens Memorial and the War Memorial in Macrossan Street and Wharf Street, Port Douglas, respectively, each helps describe the story of the Shire.
- (7) Elsewhere, other built heritage places include rural homesteads, public and community buildings such as halls, churches, cemeteries, schools and tramway infrastructure.

3.2.1.7 Economy

- (1) The tourism and sugar industries are the principal determinants of economic activity, employment and population growth in Douglas Shire. The development and construction industry and the retail service sectors are dependent on these important income generating industries. Other primary production activities, such as fisheries, although important, have a relatively minor role to play.
- (2) The interdependent relationship between the Mossman sugar mill and canegrowers makes the sugar industry that much more important to the economic well-being of the Shire. One cannot survive without the other, making the retention of cane lands very important. The cane land areas are not only important for agriculture, but are increasingly valued in terms of their contribution to scenic amenity, the Shire's tourism and recreational value and to the overall liveability of the Shire. However, while the sugar industry is still a significant contributor to the economy, it employs a relatively small proportion of the Shire's workforce.
- (3) Both domestic and international tourist visitation continues to be vital to the Shire's economy. The tourism industry relies primarily on the internationally renowned natural attractions of the Great Barrier Reef and the World Heritage Area rainforests, as well as the Shire's outstanding scenic setting. Port Douglas will continue to be one of Australia's premier tourism destinations. Great care is needed to ensure that development not only protects the Shire's natural assets, but promotes attractions that are relevant to, and appropriate for the Shire, so that the long-term unique attractiveness of the Shire to tourists is sustained.
- (4) Port Douglas is home to a small fishing fleet and is expected to continue to function as a small, but significant port. However, aquaculture expansion is likely to be limited by environmental constraints.

- (5) Beef cattle production is a relatively small industry in the Shire, located mainly in, and around, the Stewart Creek Valley.
- (6) Other crops, principally tropical fruit crops including tea and cocoa, are of little direct economic significance. However they are a valuable asset to the local economy and tourist industry.
- (7) The unique community, north of the Daintree River, has the opportunity to showcase sustainable living and legitimate caretaking of the local environment. Small scale developments that occur in existing cleared areas contribute to this area's local economy without compromising the environmental values of the area.

3.2.1.8 Transport

- (1) The transport system in Douglas Shire consists of a network of sealed and unsealed roads, tramways and sidings, a port, public boat ramps, marinas and wharves, a vehicular ferry across the Daintree River and private airstrips and helicopter landing sites. Most of this network is located south of the Daintree River servicing the settlement and farming areas. A local network of pedestrian and cycle paths is also available in some of the urban areas of the Shire.
- (2) The Captain Cook Highway is the principal access route into Douglas Shire, linking the area to Cairns. The Captain Cook Highway between Buchan Point (in Cairns Regional Council) and Yule Point is of great scenic importance. For the most, it is a winding two-lane road. Upgrading this road to a higher standard has the potential to significantly detract from its scenic appeal. Accordingly the vehicular capacity of the Captain Cook Highway has implications on the ultimate development and population capacity of the Shire.
- (3) In the long term, Council may need to consider a by-pass around Craiglie depending on the ultimate pattern of development planned for the Port Douglas-Craiglie area.
- (4) Other significant roads in the Shire include the Mossman-Mount Molloy Road providing direct access to the Tablelands, the Mossman-Daintree Road providing the main route north of Mossman to the Daintree River and Village, Bailey Creek and Cape Tribulation Roads, north of the Daintree River and the 4 wheel-drive Bloomfield Track, between Cape Tribulation and Degarra.
- (5) The Cairns Regional Electricity Board constructed the CREB Track from Daintree to Bloomfield in 1965 for the supply of electricity through to Cooktown. The CREB track is 4 wheel-drive only and becomes inaccessible particularly during the during the wet season. The CREB track is the main route for residents in the Buru-China Camp area to access services and neighbouring communities.
- (6) The Daintree River and its vehicular ferry represents a significant break between movement north and south of the river and also represents a significant threshold on development and population capacity on the northern side of the river. The Far North Queensland Regional Plan does not envisage any alternative to the ferry, and as such, areas north of the Daintree River will remain sparsely populated and maintained as a conservation area and a remote recreation experience.
- (7) Port Douglas is a significant port for fishing boats, reef tours and holiday charter vessels and this role is expected to continue. Land available for the water access is limited and the waterfront area has been the subject of a number of studies that seek to coordinate land use at the waterfront.

3.2.1.9 Infrastructure

- (1) Service infrastructure in Douglas Shire has always represented a constraint on the extent and configuration of development within the Shire. Adequate services can be provided to a variety of development forms, at a cost. However, traditionally Douglas Shire has sought to minimise that cost, economically and environmentally. The protection of ecological and scenic landscape values are a significant factor for consideration in the implementation of any infrastructure scheme.
- (2) Water supply
 - (a) Douglas Shire extracts raw water from Daintree in the north to Mossman in the south. Some of these extraction locations are pristine rainforest and untouched by human activity. Once extracted raw water is treated at Council's treatment plants and then stored in one of seventeen reservoirs so that it is on tap when required throughout the region.
 - (b) Mossman, North Mossman, Port Douglas, Newell, Cooya Beach, Cassowary and Mowbray communities are supplied with water from Rex Creek, a tributary of the Mossman River within the Mossman Gorge section of the Daintree National Park. The water is treated at the Mossman Water Treatment Plant located at Gorge View Crescent, Mossman.
 - (c) Miallo, Rocky Point and Wonga and surrounding communities are supplied with water from Little Falls Creek in the Whyanbeel Valley. Water is supplied to most surrounding areas, with the exceptions being the upper parts of Whyanbeel, Saltwater Creek, Bamboo Valley Creek and north of Vixies Road in Wonga. This water is treated at the Whyanbeel Water Treatment Plant located at Karnak Road, Karnak.
 - (d) The Daintree and surrounding communities are supplied from Intake Creek, a tributary of the Daintree River upstream of the township and Stewart Creek. This water is treated at the Daintree Water Treatment Plant located at Stewart Creek Road, Daintree Village. The existing infrastructure is of limited capacity and probably not able to cater for much more development than currently exists in the area.
 - (e) Elsewhere in the Shire, development is reliant on its own water supply provisions, including the extraction of bore water.
 - (f) Upgrading of water supply capacity represents a significant financial investment to the Shire and can be considered to be a threshold for the capacity of future development in the Shire.
- (3) Waste water treatment
 - (a) There are two waste water treatment plants in Douglas Shire serving the main township communities, as follows:
 - (i) The Mossman Waste Water Treatment Plant located at Junction Road, Mossman, services the Mossman township, the Mossman Gorge Community and parts of Cooya Beach. The plant treats waste water to a secondary standard and has a capacity of 4529 people or 1.15 mega-litres per day. The liquid stream treatment is an oxidation ditch with clarifier. Effluent is chlorinated and discharged to the Mossman River. Sludge is dewatered via sludge lagoon and belt filter press.
 - (ii) The Port Douglas Waste Water Treatment Plant located at Port Road, Port Douglas, services Port Douglas and Craiglie. The plant treats waste water to a tertiary standard and has a capacity of 20,000 people or 4.9 mega-litres per day. The liquid stream treatment is via a sequencing batch reactor. Effluent is treated with UV and discharged to Dickson's Inlet or reused. Sludge is dewatered from an aerobic digestion system using a belt filter press. Recycled water is reused at Mirage and the Links Golf Courses.
 - (iii) Due to the relatively low-lying and flat nature of the terrain, the Port Douglas system includes a number of small catchments which drain by gravity to pump

stations. These pump the sewage via rising mains to the sewage treatment plant. The capacity of individual pump stations represents a significant consideration in respect of any higher density development which may occur in the Port Douglas area.

- (b) Elsewhere in the Shire, other methods of waste water treatment are employed including package plants for isolated developments or individual septic tanks and absorption trenches or transpiration areas. The latter can be problematic during the wet season, particularly in areas with a high water table.
- (4) Refuse disposal
- (a) The disposal of waste by land fill no longer occurs in Douglas Shire. Waste in the Shire is collected at transfer stations and disposed of outside the Shire. There are four transfer stations that receive local residents' domestic and self-haul waste and recycling materials, located at Killaloe Dump Road, Killaloe; Rankine Street, Newell; Quandong Road, Cow Bay and Mossman-Daintree Road, Daintree.
 - (b) All general waste that is collected kerbside is taken to the Advanced Resource Recovery facility, operated by Sita Environmental Solutions at Portsmith (Cairns). All general waste is processed into compost. Any residual waste (non-organic waste that cannot be processed) is transported to landfill on the Atherton Tablelands.

3.2.1.10 Community services

- (1) Social infrastructure is the framework of community services and facilities that provide for the quality of life and well-being of the Shire's residents. The distinctive character and unique sense of place of each town and village represented in the Shire contributes to strong community pride and well-being. A range of community facilities and services are available to meet the needs of the community. A hospital is located in Mossman along with family, maternal and child health care services provided elsewhere in Mossman and in Port Douglas. A need has been identified for a well-located, aged care facility in the Shire.
- (2) A range of other facilities and organisations are provided throughout the Shire, including child care centres, schools, libraries, public parks and reserves, community halls, sporting clubs, youth groups and emergency services. (3) The region also offers a range of formal outdoor sporting spaces, interconnected and accessible open space corridors and opportunities for self-directed recreation. An outdoor healthy lifestyle is integral to the character of the Shire, including in particular, the provision of well-designed and highly-shaded park and open space areas in the Mossman and Port Douglas town centres.

3.2.2 Shaping the future

3.2.2.1 Planning stewardship

- (1) The planning scheme has a very important role to play in ensuring that growth in Douglas Shire is aimed at minimising human impact on the environment while continuing to support economic progress and social well-being. Essentially this entails strong stewardship and the pursuit of planning strategies that:
 - (a) conserve the Shire's natural environment and outstanding biodiversity values;
 - (b) utilise the region's natural resources efficiently, in particular water and energy, while reducing waste;
 - (c) ensure the region's atmosphere remains clear and clean;
 - (d) contain urban growth to a defined footprint and promote the best use of land that is allocated for that purpose;

- (e) support development of a diverse thriving economy that complements the region's green and environmentally responsible image.
 - (f) provide opportunities that ensure everyone is able to participate, live, work and benefit in the healthy cohesive environment that the Shire promotes.
- (2) This planning scheme promotes environmental responsibility in Douglas Shire as being fundamental to the community's future prosperity and is consequently a common theme that will direct land use decision making.

3.2.2.2 Reinforcing Douglas Shire's sense of place and identity

- (1) Sense of place is a dual characteristic that derives from certain distinctive features of a place and the feelings and perceptions that people hold with regard to that place. In planning, it is usually used to promote positive places that foster community attachment.
- (2) At the Shire-wide scale, the topography, creeks and rivers, and the coastline contribute significantly to the Shire's sense of identity. Residents identify closely with the Shire's physical setting, and this in part, contributes to a heightened sense of place and interest in local issues. This physical definition creates a range of smaller communities within the Shire's boundaries, many with their own unique sense of identity, character, history and culture. It is important to protect this sense of place as it enhances the quality of life for its residents, and is of enormous value for tourism.
- (3) During the life of this planning scheme, the Shire will continue to grow while retaining the unique characteristics of individual communities and building upon these qualities through local variation in development requirements. This will be done through the Local Plans which are tailor-made to suit local needs. Amongst other things, each local plan will:
- (a) identify the qualities that make the individual place special, including environmental and built form characteristics;
 - (b) promote gateway treatments, nodes of activity, viewing corridors and landmark sites;
 - (c) define an urban / rural interface boundary to reinforce the sense of town and country.
- (4) In addition, tourism activity will need to be Shire-appropriate with a discerning preference for nature-based tourism that has a direct association with the environmental and rural characteristics of the Shire, as opposed to large-scale attractions that have little connection to local context, particularly those that can be found anywhere.
- (5) Port Douglas will retain its lively tropical tourism 'buzz' as a premier tourist destination. Development will be carefully planned to achieve sensitive incremental change, rather than instant, over-scaled development projects, that have little local context or character.

3.2.2.3 Catering for economic opportunity

- (1) Tourism and primary production will remain significant drivers and employers in the Shire, but other supporting industries and services will continue to emerge. While increasing economic opportunity for Douglas will involve strategies that go beyond the scope of what a planning scheme can achieve, it will involve the general diversification of the Shire's economic base to counter the negative effects of global trends. In turn, this will provide greater resilience in the local Douglas economy. Amongst other things, this will involve:
- (a) a focus on building up small business in the community;
 - (b) the allocation of land for future enterprise needs within the community;

- (c) building up tourism opportunities taking advantage of the Cairns airport as an international gateway, and in particular marketing Port Douglas as a premier tourism destination;
 - (d) recognition and protection of the Shire's environmental and scenic assets and realising the recreational and economic opportunity they deliver, in a well-planned and managed network of environmental parks, trails and tracks;
 - (e) improving transport links into and out of the Shire, as well as within the Shire;
 - (f) allowing 'start-up' business to establish as small-scale home based businesses without excessive red tape;
 - (g) a continued focus on education and training opportunities within the community;
 - (h) taking advantage of digital technologies and the associated digital economy.
- (2) This planning scheme will promote Douglas Shire as a place to invest and conduct appropriately planned and environmentally responsible businesses.

3.2.2.4 A sustainable Shire

- (1) The planning scheme has a key role to play in ensuring growth in the region is sustainable aiming to minimise human impact on the environment while, at the same time, continuing to support economic opportunity and social well-being. Essentially this entails the pursuit of planning strategies that:
- (a) conserve the Shire's natural environment and outstanding biodiversity values;
 - (b) utilise the Shire's resources, including energy and water, efficiently including waste reduction;
 - (c) ensure the Shire's atmosphere remains clear and clean;
 - (d) contain urban growth to a defined urban footprint and promote the best use of land that is allocated for urban purposes;
 - (e) support the development of a diverse and thriving economy that complements the Shire's green and environmentally responsible image;
 - (f) provides opportunities that ensure everyone is able to participate, live, work and benefit in the healthy environment that the Shire promotes.
- (2) The planning scheme promotes sustainability in Douglas Shire as being fundamental to the Shire's future prosperity and is consequently a common theme that will direct future land use decision making.

3.2.2.5 Increasing housing choice

- (1) Housing needs of the Douglas Shire are varied and as such a variety in housing choice is needed to cater for those needs. While there is a concentration of high density housing in Port Douglas, the majority of this housing type is tourist accommodation or resort style living. Elsewhere, a significant proportion of the Shire's housing stock consists of suburban detached housing. The development industry continues to construct this form of housing, which is most notable in the more recent residential estates established in Mossman, Cooya Beach and Craiglie.
- (2) The trend in the Shire has generally been toward smaller lot sizes, containing bigger houses. However this is not necessarily producing a more affordable product. Despite this, housing is still reasonably affordable in some parts of the Shire. However there is quite a substantial difference in affordability between individual communities in the Shire. As household sizes continue to decrease alternative accommodation choices will be need to supplied beyond the standard 3 and 4 bedroom housing stock that continues as the predominant housing supplied to the market.

- (3) There is also growing need for some form of aged care facility in the Shire as the population in older age groups increases, in line with the State-wide trend.

3.2.2.6 Acknowledging limits to development capacity within the Shire

- (1) Douglas Shire has previously had sufficient space to cater for its population growth and this is likely to continue to be the case into the foreseeable future. However the amount of land in the Shire that is constrained by one or more factors is significant. Amongst other things, such constraints include:
 - (a) land containing vegetation of high ecological significance, including endangered, and of concern, flora and fauna;
 - (b) wetland areas;
 - (c) quality agricultural land;
 - (d) land subject to significant natural hazards such as flood and storm tide inundation.
- (2) The implication of the limited supply of unconstrained land makes decisions about land use and future urban growth, even more important. The Shire will cater for modest growth in housing and most of this growth will be accommodated in Mossman in the foreseeable future, with an adequate supply of land already catered for.
- (3) There is pressure in Port Douglas / Craiglie to extend urban development on to the western side of the Captain Cook Highway. Previous planning regimes resisted such a move, as being contrary to the Shire's iconic values. Additional land is still available at the at the southern end of Craiglie on the eastern side of the Captain Cook Highway and in-fill opportunities still exist in Port Douglas so as not to warrant an immediate need for urban residential development on the western side of the highway. However the area is considered in the longer term to potential represent an area that may be suitable for accommodating further residential growth.
- (4) Furthermore the capacity for the Shire to continue to grow is also constrained by the need to provide a reliable and adequate water supply, and in the road capacity of the Captain Cook Highway to cater for increase traffic volumes. Both of these represent thresholds, beyond which significant and expensive infrastructure upgrades would be required.

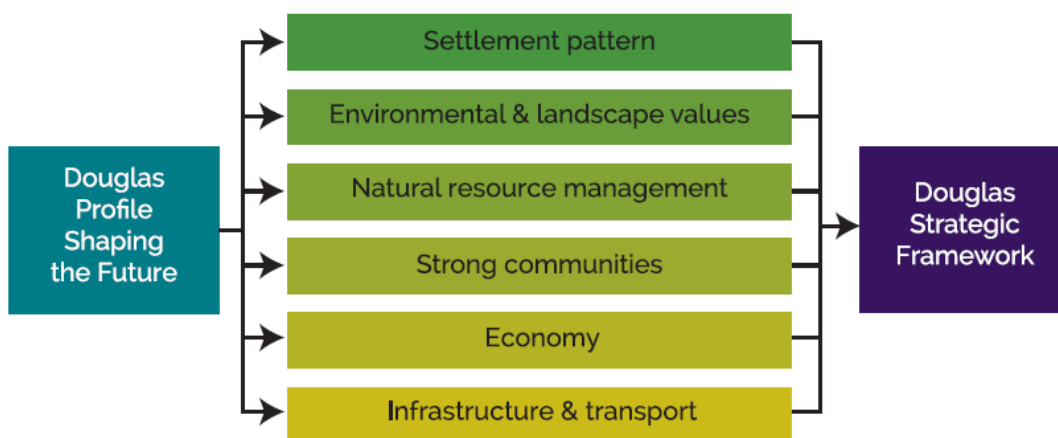
3.3 Strategic framework structure

- (1) Council's vision for Douglas Shire is described in the six themes which set the policy direction in this framework. These themes are as follows:
 - (a) Settlement pattern;
 - (b) Environment and landscape values;
 - (c) Natural resource management;
 - (d) Strong communities and identity;
 - (e) Economy;
 - (f) Infrastructure and transport.
- (2) The six themes are interrelated and are not to be viewed as stand-alone. No particular theme overrides any other. The planning scheme facilitates the theme outcomes by:
 - (a) providing for the outcomes of the State Government's Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031 ('the Regional Plan') as they relate to Douglas Shire;
 - (b) applying the State Planning Policy;
 - (c) establishing a framework that provides policy direction to facilitate development that supports the needs of the community;
 - (d) promoting innovative planning outcomes where it supports the policy intent of the strategic framework.

- (3) Douglas Shire Council proposes to be the custodian that shapes the Shire's future in order to improve the quality of life of its residents. Section 3.2.2 of the Strategic Intent specifically examines ways to achieve this through:
- planning stewardship;
 - reinforcing Douglas Shire's sense of place and identity;
 - catering for economic opportunity;
 - a sustainable Shire;
 - increasing housing choice;
 - acknowledging limits to development capacity in the Shire.

These five principles provide the rationale that supports the more specific details contained within each Strategic Framework theme.

Figure 3.2.2.6.a – Combining local and state context



- (4) The planning scheme will also complement other initiatives of Council to ensure that Douglas Shire is able to take advantage of opportunities as they arise. The six themes in the following section explain how the planning scheme will do this.

3.4 Theme 1 - Settlement pattern

The settlement pattern for the region is shown on the Strategic framework maps contained in Schedule 2.

3.4.1 Strategic outcomes

- The Shire will consist of a network of well planned, discrete settlements that integrate existing and future development while maintaining an emphasis on the natural and scenic qualities of the landscape.
- Coastal settlements are consolidated by conserving the natural state of coastal areas outside existing urban areas.
- Commercial and retail activity is concentrated into defined town centres.
- Industrial activities are located in areas that are separate from sensitive land uses.
- New rural residential development areas are not established. However existing rural residential areas will be protected from further incremental subdivision and land use activities that would compromise the ambience and amenity of such areas.

- (6) The rights and interests of native Title land holders are recognised through provision for Indigenous housing and seasonal camps (bayan) on Aboriginal Freehold land within the Return to Country local plan code.
- (7) Natural hazards and the impacts of climate change will determine the location, scale and intensity of land use activities. Development will achieve an acceptable or tolerable level of risk based on a fit for purpose risk assessment.

3.4.2 Element – Urban settlement

- (1) The urban area is intended to include residential areas, business areas, community and recreational facilities and other services and facilities necessary to provide for the Shire's urban population.
- (2) The two major urban communities in Douglas Shire are Port Douglas and Mossman. Port Douglas has a distinctive tourism focus, being located close to the sea and Dickson's Inlet, while Mossman is the Shire's major administrative and rural service centre. Douglas Shire also has a range of compact townships and villages in scenic rural settings.
- (3) Residential development is primarily detached low-set housing, with medium density development focussed in and around the Port Douglas town centre, and in the nearby tourist areas to the south of the town centre..
- (4) Commercial development is low-profile and is predominately focussed along the main streets in Port Douglas (Macrossan Street) and Mossman (Front Street).
- (5) Industrial development occurs in clusters in Mossman South and adjacent to the Mossman sugar mill close to the Mossman town centre. A newer industrial land subdivision is established on the western side of the Captain Cook Highway in Craiglie. Marine-orientated industry, and associated tourism activities, occurs adjacent to Dickson Inlet in Port Douglas.

3.4.2.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) The settlement pattern for Douglas Shire is shown on the Strategic Framework map contained Schedule 2.
- (2) Urban development occurs within the urban area as shown on the Strategic Framework Map contained in Schedule 2. Expansion beyond this boundary is not facilitated as it does not support the efficient and orderly delivery of urban infrastructure.
- (3) Residential investigation areas are allocated at Wujal Wujal (reflecting the Urban Footprint nominated in the 'Regional Plan'), Mossman and Craiglie, but some of these areas are not anticipated to be required until later in the planning scheme time horizon: if not beyond it. No urban development is to occur within the Residential investigation areas until a comprehensive structure plan has been prepared that provides for integrated, well-connected residential settlements, taking into account constraints, infrastructure servicing and capacity requirements, flooding and drainage, and sequencing.
- (4) The development of rural towns and coastal settlements will be confined to distinct township boundaries, with coastal settlements consolidated to conserve the natural state of coastal areas outside existing urban areas..
- (5) Urban areas are protected from encroachment of competing and conflicting land use activities.
- (6) Artificial lakeside and coastal canal developments are not established.

- (7) Residential developments are designed to incorporate pedestrian, cycle and road connections that offer a high degree of permeability and legibility.
- (8) Development does not rely on complex, visually intrusive engineering solutions to overcome site constraints.
- (9) Local plans provide localised planning responses and desired development outcomes for communities.
- (10) Residential developments are designed and located to ensure the operational integrity of key infrastructure within the shire is not compromised.

3.4.3 Element – Activity centres

- (1) Activity centres are concentrations of activity, including amongst other things, retail, business, employment, research, education, health and community services.
- (2) Douglas Shire is part of a network of activity centres that is specifically defined within the Regional Plan. The principal activity centre for the Far North Queensland region is Cairns City, which provides the highest concentration, range and density of activities and services for the entire region. Also of planning influence to Douglas Shire is the existing Major Regional Activity Centre at Smithfield.

Note – All of these places are part of the adjoining Cairns Regional Council local government area.

- (3) Mossman and Port Douglas are both defined as District regional activity centres under the Regional Plan. District regional activity centres generally contain a reasonably large concentration of business, employment and population. They provide a range of convenience retail and urban services and may contain small district or branch offices of government. Despite being relatively close, each centre has a different role that results in different economic synergies. Mossman is the main administrative, service, agricultural and industrial centre, whereas Port Douglas has a stronger tourism focus.
- (4) Attractive, vibrant and functional activity centres are integral to local economic development as well as servicing the needs of the business sector and the community. New commercial developments should be located in appropriate areas within the town centres to ensure that their viability is maintained. There is also a need to retain a high level of services within the Shire to meet the needs of the community, to provide employment opportunities and reduce the need to commute outside the Shire for work opportunities.

3.4.3.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) The hierarchy of activity centres established within the region is shown on the Strategic framework maps contained in Schedule 2.
- (2) Activity centres are the focus of retail, employment and community services catering for the needs of the Shire's residential and tourist-oriented communities alike.
- (3) Mossman and Port Douglas are the Shire's District activity centres. Mixed use development will be permitted, noting that this form of development is more likely to be achieved in Port Douglas, due to its tourism focus. Future growth of each centre will respect the centre's distinctive character and functions.
- (4) Local activity centres will take the form of a cluster of shops and associated commercial activities catering for the needs of a cluster of smaller neighbourhoods.

- (5) Neighbourhood activity centres will take the form of small-scale neighbourhood facilities providing opportunities to cater for the day-to-day convenience needs of individual towns and neighbourhoods.
- (6) New and redeveloping activity centres will establish high quality environments drawing on the positive characteristics of the surrounding area having particular regard to creating or reinforcing security, vitality and a sense of place.
- (7) Entertainment and after hours activities are appropriately located in activity centres, mainly concentrating in and close to the Port Douglas town centre.
- (8) Development is designed to integrate into activity centres through mechanisms such as:
 - (a) mixed use development.
 - (b) high quality footpaths and streetscapes suitable for walking and cycling.
 - (c) awnings and shade trees along pathways.
 - (d) active street faces with smaller active front tenancies.
 - (e) limiting or sharing vehicular access across footpaths to encourage a continuous built form.
 - (f) concealing parking behind, underneath and/or above tenancies in architecturally screened roof-top car parking.
 - (g) using spaces above retail tenancies for other uses.
- (9) Community services and facilities are provided close to the communities they serve and public transport routes.

3.4.4 Element – Industry areas and activities

- (1) Growth in manufacturing, property and business services and transport and storage will continue to contribute to Douglas Shire's economy. The infrastructure required to support industry and business development will continue to be planned and provided.
- (2) Any future expansion of industry is encouraged in Mossman rather than Port Douglas having regard to the high demand for land for tourism and residential purposes at Port Douglas and the role of Mossman as a commercial centre.

3.4.4.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) Sufficient land and infrastructure is supplied in Industry areas such as Craiglie and Mossman South to accommodate new and expanding enterprises.
- (2) The Mossman Mill is of critical importance to the future prosperity of Mossman. It is intended that land, at and near, the Mossman Mill will become the consolidated industrial area in Mossman catering for low/medium industrial development. As such, an Industry investigation area is allocated on the Strategic framework maps as contained in Schedule 2 for Mossman North adjacent to the sugar mill. This investigation area will cater for the types of industry that may otherwise constitute an amenity nuisance in other industrial locations. However prior to establishment of such uses, it will need to be demonstrated that such uses are adequately separated and any impacts appropriately mitigated to ensure that nearby residential amenity is not compromised.
- (3) Existing higher impact industry uses are protected from encroachment by development that would compromise the ability of the land use to function safely and efficiently.

- (4) Marine orientated activities will establish in Dickson's Inlet in Port Douglas, in accordance with the Port Douglas / Craiglie Local Plan code.
- (5) The industry area at Craiglie is a mix of commercial services / service industries. However, it will not be promoted as an area suitable for land uses that rely heavily on the highway for exposure to trade/function.

3.4.5 Element – Residential areas and activities

- (1) Mossman currently contains a large supply of broad hectare land available for residential growth, whereas other areas including Port Douglas/Craiglie are constrained by ecological values and infrastructure constraints.
- (2) The coastal settlements of Wonga Beach, Newell and Cooya Beach and various other small towns, villages and rural residential land, including the land north of the Daintree River, are not intended to grow or increase in density over and above existing zoned land and what current approvals provide. These communities generally have low levels of infrastructure and significant coastal or environmental constraints.

3.4.5.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) Coordinated residential development will be facilitated. Development will not compromise the effective development, or continued use of adjacent land or the comprehensive development of land that is part of a local plan or structure plan.
- (2) Residential development is located and designed to provide a wide range of living options that maintain and enhance the character and identity of individual communities.
- (3) Residential areas are used for residential purposes. Non-residential uses are provided, only where they support the local community, and where such uses do not detract from the residential amenity of the area.
- (4) Medium density housing is facilitated within identified areas in the relevant zones.
- (5) Areas identified for low density residential development provide predominantly low-rise detached dwelling houses to maintain the low density character of the area.
- (6) Residential greenfield development incorporates:
 - (a) mixed lot sizes to promote a range of housing choices and densities;
 - (b) high levels of pedestrian, cycle and road permeability and connectivity;
 - (c) the efficient and timely provision of infrastructure and services;
 - (d) open space that provides opportunities for sport and recreation activities;
 - (e) elements that promote a positive identity and character.
- (7) Residential development incorporates tropical design principles that are responsive to the natural environment and climate.
- (8) Home based businesses are established where they are low impact in nature, subordinate to the primary residential use, and do not detract from the amenity of the area.

3.4.6 Element – Rural residential areas

- (1) The valleys and surrounding lush tropical hillslopes in Douglas Shire add significantly to the visual quality of the Shire, and are seen as attractive locations for those seeking a rural

residential lifestyle. However, the Shire also contains some highly productive agricultural land and there is a need to preserve rural land for commercial scale primary production and avoid the extension of rural residential activities into these areas. There is also a need to avoid the land use and servicing issues arising from the development of rural residential areas.

- (2) Where rural residential development is firmly established in parts of the Shire such as in the Mowbray Valley, Upper Cassowary, Shannonvale, parts of Somerset and Whyanbeel, and to the north of Vixies Road in Wonga, such development continues to offer a high amenity residential alternative to township living and should be protected from any further urbanisation, or inappropriate subdivision.

3.4.6.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) New rural residential development areas are not established. Existing rural residential areas are protected from further incremental subdivision that results in lot sizes less than the minimum area to ensure that the character and amenity of these areas is maintained.
- (2) In rural residential areas any subdivision that is permitted creates lots of appropriate shape and proportions to ensure that existing rural residential amenity and character is not compromised. Rural residential areas are characterised by low-scale detached housing on large lots with sufficient area available to maintain a generous separation between each house on each lot.
- (3) Incompatible land uses are not established in rural residential areas.

3.4.7 Element – Mitigation of hazards

- (1) Douglas Shire is susceptible to a variety of naturally occurring hazards including floods, cyclonic winds, bushfire, landslides, coastal hazards, storm tide and erosion prone areas. Reasonable efforts to communicate predicted hazard risks to the community are nominated in this planning scheme. However none of the planning scheme mapping infers that parts of the Shire are entirely free from any particular form of hazard.
- (2) Some established urban areas are already located in parts of the Shire which are periodically vulnerable to a variety of hazards. A reasonable risk-tolerant approach to development will be taken in existing areas taking into account individual hazard impacts. However as a first principle, further expansion of development into areas subject to hazards should be avoided.

3.4.7.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) Development avoids natural hazard areas or mitigates risks to an acceptable or tolerable level.
- (2) Development directly, indirectly and cumulatively avoids an increase in the severity of the natural hazard and the potential damage on the site or to other properties.
- (3) Locate and design community infrastructure to maintain the required level of functionality during and immediately after a natural hazard event.
- (4) Development does not unduly burden disaster management response or recovery capacity and capabilities.
- (5) New development takes into account the latest science with respect to climate change in addition to the avoidance of natural hazards.

3.4.7.2 Land use strategies

- (1) Additional modelling of the impacts of sea-level rise may be required, along with strategies to mitigate sea-level rise, including retreat strategies.

3.4.8 Element – Recognition of the rights and interests of native title land holders

- (1) Overview of the Clans, native title determination outcomes and land transfer – the spatial extent and history within Douglas Shire (forthcoming by Jabalbina).
- (2) All possess the desire to return to their Country to practice their culture and strengthen their identity.
- (3) The intent of Return to Country local plan code is to provide for a range of residential and economic land uses to reflect the aspirations of the Eastern Kuku Yalanji People. These ILUA's reflect these agreements and the planning scheme supports the Eastern Kuku Yalanji People in their return to Country.

3.4.8.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) The range of agreed land uses contained within the ILUA's are reflected in the land uses that apply within the Return to Country local plan code.
- (2) Culturally appropriate housing is facilitated within the Return to Country local plan code.
- (3) The Return to Country Local Plan has been created to reflect the Eastern Kuku Yalanji aspirations to return to Country and derive economic benefits from their land and waters.

3.5 Theme 2 - Environment and landscape values

3.5.1 Strategic outcomes

- (1) 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 50000 years and this is the only place in Australia where Aboriginal people have permanently inhabited a tropical rainforest environment.
- (2) The unique environmental values of the Shire, which result from its location within the Wet Tropics bio-region, are maintained and protected for current and future generations.
- (3) Those parts of the Shire located within the Wet Tropics and Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Areas and other areas of environmental value and ecological significance, are preserved and protected for nature conservation, landscape/scenic quality, biodiversity and habitat values. In particular, the Southern Cassowary and its habitat are protected.
- (4) Development takes into account matters of:
 - (a) national environmental significance (MNES) and the requirements of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth) (EPBCA);
 - (b) state environmental significance (MSES);
 - (c) local environmental significance (MLES).

- (5) The integrity and system functions of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area and the State Great Barrier Reef Coast Marine Park are to be protected by maintaining and restoring the connectivity, resilience and condition of marine and coastal ecosystems.
- (6) Natural waterways such as the Daintree River, the Mossman River, the Mowbray River and Dickson Inlet; all wetlands but particularly those on the Directory of Wetlands Importance in Australia, being the Lower Daintree River, Alexandra Bay and the Hilda Creek Headwater; and all catchments located in coastal areas within the Shire, are managed to protect their ecological processes, enhance water quality, conserve riparian ecological values and landscape and scenic quality, while acknowledging nature based recreation opportunities.
- (7) Development north of the Daintree River is restricted to achieve low key, sustainable and self-sufficient outcomes and is carefully planned to conserve the scenic and ecological World Heritage values of the area.
- (8) Where appropriate, development maintains and enhances public access and use of natural areas, rivers, dams creeks and foreshores.
- (9) The unique environmental character of the Shire comprising internationally renowned landscapes, ecologically significant rainforest systems, sensitive coastal systems and areas of unsurpassed natural beauty, are maintained in association with sustainable development practices, which seek to minimise the effects of development on the natural environment.

3.5.2 Element – Aboriginal cultural heritage values

- (1) Jabalbina is registered as the Cultural Heritage Body for the Eastern Kuku Yalanji Peoples' traditional estate under the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003*.
- (2) In November 2012, the Australian Government announced the inclusion of the national Indigenous heritage values as part of the existing National Heritage Listing for the Wet Tropics of Queensland.

3.5.2.1 Specific Outcomes

- (1) The cultural heritage values of the Wet Tropics bioregion are protected and enhanced through the implementation of Jabalbina's cultural heritage management plan.

3.5.3 Element – Biodiversity

- (1) Douglas Shire is internationally recognised as a high biodiversity hot spot. The Shire forms part of two World Heritage listed areas: the forests of the Wet Tropics and the reefs and waters of the Great Barrier Reef. The rainforests contain some of the oldest continually surviving tracts of tropical rainforest in the world and contain many plant and animal species found nowhere else. The Great Barrier Reef is an international icon, known for its abundance and diversity of corals, fish and many other forms of marine life. In addition, the Shire contains significant freshwater biodiversity and wetlands, mangroves and coastal vegetation.
- (2) Maintaining and restoring the Shire's biodiversity is important. Not only does biodiversity provide crucial ecosystem services such as clean air and water, it also provides a basis for the Shire's economic prosperity and social well-being. Accordingly, the impacts of human habitation and tourist activity require careful management.

3.5.3.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) The Shire's biodiversity values and associated ecosystems, including matters of national environmental significance (MNES) and matters of state significance (MSES) , are maintained and protected from incompatible development, managed, and where appropriate enhanced, to restore ecological integrity and habitat connectivity.
- (2) Development:
 - (a) is located in areas that avoids significant adverse impacts on matters of state environmental significance (MSES) and matters of local environmental significance (MLES);
 - (b) protects and enhances MSES and MLES; and
 - (c) maintains and enhances ecological connectivity.
- (3) Endangered, vulnerable, and threatened flora and fauna species and habitats are protected.
- (4) Aquatic biodiversity is protected through the minimisation of development impacts on waterway and wetland environments.
- (5) The integrity of the region's areas of ecological significance and their contribution to biodiversity is maintained for present and future generations.
- (6) Weeds and pests, in particular feral pigs and purpose-bred wild hunting dogs, are a significant threat to the region's biodiversity conservation values. Development avoids exacerbating threats and eradicates invasive species.
- (7) Development is designed, sited, operated and managed to avoid or minimise potential impacts on natural corridors and habitat links.

3.5.3.2 Land use strategies

- (1) A Planning Scheme Policy on Environmental offsets is to be developed, in conjunction with the development of mapping for Matters of Local Environmental Significance, including an analysis to determine the best locations to develop the Strategic habitat investment areas.

3.5.4 Element – Coastal zones

- (1) With over 95 kilometres of coastline and a vast network of shoreline estuaries, the Shire plays an important role in affording protection to the Coral Sea and the Great Barrier Reef. This extensive area of natural coastline contributes significantly to the desirability and attraction of the Douglas Shire to visitors and residents alike. As is the case with many Australian communities, the coastline provides a strong sense of place. Great care needs to be taken to ensure that competing pressures for recreational use do not diminish these values.
- (2) Beyond its natural fluctuations, the coastal environment is particularly sensitive to the effects of climate change and sea level rise. Policies are required to protect life and property from the hazards of storm surge and coastal erosion incorporating climate change variables.

3.5.4.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) Coastal resources, including foreshores, coastal wetlands, mangroves, marine ecosystems and sand dunes are protected, managed, and where appropriate, rehabilitated, with no further loss of the coastal ecosystem extent and function.

- (2) Natural coastal processes such as sand dune erosion and accretion are allowed to occur in all areas without intervention, other than where a significant strategic asset requires protection.
- (3) Waterways and wetlands are managed and maintained to ensure the natural quality and quantity of water delivered to the Coral Sea is not diminished.
- (4) Coastal dependent development is carefully planned, constructed and managed to minimise impacts on the coastline. Coastal dependent development is expected to predominately occur with waterfront sub-precincts in Port Douglas.
- (5) Development maintains and enhances natural processes and the protective function of landforms and vegetation that can mitigate risks associated with the natural hazard;
- (6) Maintain the erosion prone area within the coastal management district as a development free buffer zone (except for coastal dependent development, temporary or readily relocatable or able to be abandoned development).
- (7) Redevelopment of existing permanent structures in the erosion prone area is required to avoid coastal erosion risks through a strategy of planned retreat, or mitigate coastal erosion risks.
- (8) Land use activity avoids the disturbance of areas of land that are prone to the release of acid sulfate or any other metal contaminant producing soils or adequately manages, treats contaminant producing soils.
- (9) The community's access to the foreshore is maintained, and where appropriate, extended.

3.5.5 Element – Scenic amenity

- (1) Douglas Shire is located on a narrow coastal plain between the Great Dividing Range and the Coral Sea. The lush green backdrop provides a dramatic green frame to the Shire's diverse tourist areas, townships, rural lands and rural communities. This green frame adds significantly to the Shire's much admired high quality scenic amenity. In addition, the sugar cane fields contribute significantly to the Shire's scenic amenity and sense of place on the plains below the green frame. Great care is required to protect the Shire's natural and rural settings given the vital contribution they make to the Shire's identity and to the everyday experiences of residents and visitors alike.

3.5.5.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) Development protects, maintains and enhances the region's Landscape values as shown on the Landscape values overlay maps contained in Schedule 2.
- (2) Major scenic routes and scenic outlooks, as shown on the Landscape values overlay maps contained in Schedule 2, are protected from both the detrimental visual impacts of development and inappropriate vegetation clearing that may detract from the scenic qualities of the scenic route, outlook or ocean-side views.
- (3) Rural and inter-urban breaks are protected from negative visual intrusion.
- (4) The hillslopes, including Flagstaff Hill, are retained as a valued scenic backdrop to the Shire and the landscape character of the hillslopes are protected from inappropriate development.

- (5) The location, size and scale of advertising devices located along the Shire's road networks is reduced. Older off-premises advertising devices that have become dilapidated are removed and not replaced.

3.5.6 Element – Air and acoustic protection and hazardous materials

- (1) Other than the Mossman Sugar Mill and some of the marine industries in Dickson Inlet at Port Douglas, there are no areas of land devoted to the heavier forms of industry that would generate significant air or acoustic problems. As a result, it is possible that new industrial development may present future challenges. The key management approach in planning is to separate sensitive land uses from generators of nuisance. Given the historical development of the Shire (i.e. the Mossman sugar mill and port industries), this is not always practical and mitigation measures need to be implemented as an alternative.

3.5.6.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) The air and acoustic environment and hazardous materials are carefully managed to maintain the health and well-being of the community and the natural environment.
- (2) Industries that have the potential to cause greater air and acoustic impacts and/or that include hazardous materials are separated from sensitive land uses.
- (3) New noisy recreational activities such as major motorsport activities are not likely to be compatible with the amenity of the Shire. Impacts on sensitive receiving environments, including environmental habitats is to be avoided.

Note – Air and acoustic impacts are avoided and/or mitigated to comply with appropriate standards, Environmental Protection (Air) and Environmental Protection (Noise) Policy standards.

3.6 Theme 3 – Natural resource management

3.6.1 Strategic outcomes

- (1) The natural resources of the Shire, such as agricultural land, and in particular land suitable for sugar cultivation, forestry, water, fisheries and extractive resources are protected or managed in a sustainable manner to ensure their ecological and economic values are assured.
- (2) Natural resources are well managed through federal, state, local government, regional resource management bodies, traditional owners and the community.
- (3) Extractive activities do not unduly compromise natural landscape values.

3.6.2 Element – Land and catchment management

- (1) Interaction with the natural environment directly and indirectly impacts on the community's lifestyle and standard of living. Land and water degradation issues facing the Shire include soil erosion, pest plants and animals and water quality. It is important to ensure that the Shire's natural resources are protected and actively promoted for the benefit of current and future generations.
- (2) The Shire consists of a range of land tenures from national parks through to freehold land and leasehold properties. Improved management practices are required to prevent overuse or degradation of natural resources. A significant part of this management relies on the three levels of government as well as regional resource management bodies, traditional owners, land owners and the community using statutory and non-statutory means. This planning scheme

focuses primarily on the significant role of land use planning. However the presence of other non-planning scheme programs such as pest management and riparian rehabilitation programs is acknowledged.

3.6.2.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) Creeks, wetlands and the sea are an important resource for the community. The Shire's water is sustainably managed in accordance with total water cycle management principles to maintain the ecological health of the Shire's ecosystems. Development and land uses will not be permitted to cause pollution or other negative impacts on water quality or the other qualities of these essential environments. Development is to facilitate the protection of environmental values and achieve water quality objectives for Queensland waters.
- (2) Water catchments and ground water aquifers are recognised and protected from inappropriate land use activity that may compromise the quality and characteristics of the water resource. In particular water needs to be managed to give priority to agricultural production and water supply to the Shire's communities, rather than for other purposes such as bottled-water extraction.
- (3) Water quality, in-stream and riparian waterway values, and the nature-based recreation values of modified waterways, and wetlands and their catchments are protected from harmful activities.
- (4) Development is planned, designed, constructed and operated to manage stormwater in ways that help protect the environmental values of waters including the biodiversity and functioning of the aquatic ecosystem.
- (5) The construction of dams on waterways does not detrimentally affect environmental flows, safety, or the amount of water available to downstream users.
- (6) Water quality and its physical and chemical properties are maintained and managed to avoid and reduce the conveyance of sediment and nutrients into natural hydrological systems.
- (7) Traditional ecological land management practices and knowledge is recognised and acknowledged
- (8) Weeds and pests are managed to ensure that natural resources are not degraded.

3.6.3 Element – Primary production, forestry and fisheries

- (1) Primary production is a significant part of the natural resource and landscape value of the Shire. The Shire's townships and villages rely heavily on their surrounding sugar cultivation, tropical agriculture, horticulture and grazing industries. In particular, the primacy of the sugar cultivation will continue as a dominant rural pursuit in the Shire due to the critical importance of the sugar industry to the Shire. Continued support is necessary to ensure the continued prosperity of these townships through the exclusion of non-agricultural land use activities in primary production areas.
- (2) Forestry is not a prevalent activity in the Shire and where it occurs; it tends to be small scale production that is compatible with the Shire's rural production area. Large scale timber production is not a compatible land use within the Shire.
- (3) The importance of the Shire's key fisheries activities are recognised and are protected.

3.6.3.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) The viability of agricultural land is protected and maintained. Land uses that have the potential to conflict with on-going primary production are not established in rural areas.
- (2) Rural areas include a range of rural activities of varying scale depending on land suitability and access to appropriate infrastructure, with development being consistent with prevailing land uses in the area.
- (3) Lot reconfiguration does not result in the further fragmentation of rural land. Boundary realignments only occur where improved agricultural production or environmental protection outcomes are demonstrated, or where they resolve encroachments.
- (4) Timber plantations and forestry production are small in scale and do not compromise the predominant pattern of primary production in the Shire.
- (5) Estuarine, marine and freshwater environments and their associated fish habitats are protected from the adverse impacts generated by new or intensified developments to ensure healthy and plentiful fish stocks.

3.6.4 Element – Resource extraction

- (1) Douglas Shire is not, and is not likely to be, a major resource extraction area. However where extraction does occur, it is small-scale, visually unobtrusive and managed in an environmentally responsible manner. All land disturbed by mining and extractive industries is appropriately rehabilitated.

3.6.4.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) Coal Seam Gas ('CSG') extraction does not occur in Douglas Shire.
- (2) Other extractive industries do not detrimentally impact on community well-being or the Shire's ecological, landscape, scenic amenity and rural production values, and in particular the sugar industry.
- (3) Extractive industries are either progressively rehabilitated to a natural state, or are rehabilitated upon completion of extractive activities, with all buildings, machinery and other associated infrastructure being removed.

3.7 Theme 4 - Strong communities and identity

3.7.1 Strategic outcomes

- (1) Places of cultural and heritage significance, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, are identified, protected and retained for their significance and importance to the history and identity of the Shire.
- (2) 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.
- (3) Residential communities, particularly communities within the major tourism areas of Port Douglas, Daintree Village and the Daintree Lowlands maintain a prosperous economy, a sense of community and promote harmony between residents and visitors.

- (4) 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.
- (5) Progress will be made working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider community, to help remove social and economic disadvantage.
- (6) Equitable access is provided to a complete range of services, open space, active and passive recreation, employment, accommodation and entertainment.
- (7) The conservation and adaptive re-use of places of heritage significance is facilitated.
- (8) Residents have access to appropriate social infrastructure, community services and adequate housing, including a greater variety of housing choice.

3.7.2 Element – Social planning and infrastructure

- (1) There is a need to identify and provide for a range of social, cultural, educational, leisure and health services to meet the needs of the community, including youth, families and the elderly. Adequate provision of social infrastructure assists in sustaining the Shire's population, and attracting new residents to the Shire. The correlation between the well-being of the community and the economic prosperity of the Shire is recognised.

3.7.2.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) The unique characteristics of individual communities are recognised and respected.
- (2) Future planning of the Douglas Shire takes into account changing community characteristics, issues and needs.
- (3) Access is available to a range of community services for all residents and is distributed on an equitable basis.
- (4) Social infrastructure is clustered into a series of co-located Community hubs and with Activity centres as shown on the Strategic framework maps contained in Schedule 2 for ease of accessibility.

3.7.3 Element – Active communities

- (1) Planning in the Shire will play an increasingly important role in maintaining healthy communities. Given an increasing awareness of the need to encourage healthy active lifestyles, walkable and cycle-friendly neighbourhoods will be promoted. The Shire is developing a network of inter-connected and accessible open space and green corridors and this network will be progressively expanded to encourage opportunities for recreation, while recognising an increasing trend toward self-directed, non-organised sporting activity.
- (2) Better use of the Shire's outdoor spaces requires careful urban design to ensure that there is a high perception of personal safety. Highly visible and well-shaded parks and town spaces will be established to encourage dynamic well-used public spaces.

3.7.3.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) The Shire is an active community, providing opportunities for residents to make healthier life choices. Planning and development will make provision for open space, recreation areas and safe walking and cycling paths.
- (2) Sufficient land is available and distributed across the Shire's communities to cater for the development of parks and sport and recreation facilities. Open space areas and sporting and recreational facilities are provided to:
 - (a) ensure a diverse range of recreational opportunities.
 - (b) encourage multi-purpose spaces and hubs for recreation.
 - (c) facilitate a recreational trail network, particularly along rivers and creeks.
 - (d) form networks of interlinked connections.
 - (e) promote and contribute to the green space character of the Shire.
 - (f) promote a degree of flexibility in the use of open space for other community purposes such as community gardens.
- (3) New publically accessible and usable open space is provided in new development where appropriate. Open space will be the centre piece of new communities contributing to the Shire's overall network of parkland, sporting and recreational facilities and open space corridors.
- (4) Neighbourhoods are to be accessible and safe, providing opportunities for social interaction, participation and improved well-being. In particular, open space is highly visible, being located along road frontages and not placed to the rear of new allotments.
- (5) The number of tropical shade producing canopy trees of appropriate species is increased.

3.7.4 Element – Sense of place, community and identity

- (1) Sense of place is the dual characteristic that derives from certain distinctive features of a place and the feelings and perceptions that people hold with respect to that place. Fostering a good sense of place promotes community attachment. New development in the Shire should avoid the delivery of homogeneous development consisting of identical communities. In growth areas, gated enclave communities will not be encouraged. The larger new developments will be supplied with a range of facilities to support new residents and to ensure that these new developments are a good place to live.
- (2) Many areas in the Shire have high quality character that derives from their buildings, pattern of subdivision and street layout. The Shire's older and traditional character is derived from the wide street, grid layout, tin and timber housing and vegetation. Intact commercial precincts consisting of shops, churches, halls, hotels, post offices, banks, hospitals and the like are recognised and will be retained.
- (3) New development will not be characterised by off-the-shelf corporate designs that have little regard for the Shire's unique communities and sense of place, in order to ensure the experience of living and visiting the Shire is not diminished.

3.7.4.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) The distinctive character and unique sense of place of towns and villages and other communities, including Aboriginal communities, throughout the Shire is maintained, promoting community pride and well-being and community safety and prosperity.

- (2) New communities in the Shire are established with a recognisable and distinctive sense of place.
- (3) Through site specific tropical design, franchise corporate designs are adapted to integrate with established urban qualities that make the Shire's local communities unique and distinct from other places.
- (4) Gated communities that offer little or no integration with surrounding and adjacent communities are not the preferred pattern of development in the Shire.
- (5) Important buildings in the community are designed to be readily recognisable for their purpose and use.

3.7.5 Element – Housing choice and affordability

- (1) Douglas Shire contains a range of housing types that contribute to the lifestyle opportunities and attractiveness of the Shire as a place to work, live and visit. However, for the long-term sustainability of the Shire, it is important that adequate opportunities are provided to accommodate the changing lifestyles and housing needs of the existing and future population. In particular, there is a need to cater for an ageing population, while at the same time providing affordable housing opportunities for the Shire's workforce.
- (2) Currently, outside Port Douglas, there is a lack of innovative and creative medium density housing development. Opportunities exist to encourage this type of development in appropriate locations in Mossman, without compromising existing local character.

3.7.5.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) The community has access to a greater variety of housing choice throughout the urban areas of the Shire, facilitating a variety of lot sizes, house sizes and designs and land tenures.
- (2) An increase in housing diversity is encouraged in appropriate locations while maintaining the existing character and identity of individual communities.
- (3) Broad-acre land developments are established with mixed lot sizes and densities of development.
- (4) The development of appropriate Indigenous Housing or Bayan is recognised as an affordable housing choice and alternative living option on Aboriginal Freehold Land.

3.7.6 Element – Arts and culture

- (1) Douglas Shire has an abundance of community-based festivals and events held throughout the year. The Shire attracts a broad cross-section of creative and spirited people that place art and culture at the centre stage. Port Douglas will continue to be a focus for creative activity, adding to the town's liveliness and its economic buzz. Port Douglas will also be supported by Shire-wide, smaller-scale dispersed cultural activities in local towns, villages and communities.

3.7.6.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) Tourist and entertainment areas are planned and developed in appropriate parts of the Shire with a particular focus in Port Douglas. It is recognised that in these areas lively activity contributes significantly to its vibrant tourist-town amenity.

- (2) Where appropriate, the public realm is promoted as a place for public art, cultural activities, events, markets and festivals.
- (3) Appropriately-scaled art and cultural infrastructure is provided in new development.

3.7.7 Element – Cultural and landscape heritage

- (1) Douglas Shire has many distinctive and important places that give strength to local character. Cultural heritage significance for different cultures and the importance of preserving Indigenous, non-Indigenous, natural and cultural heritage is recognised.

3.7.7.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) Places and landscapes of cultural and heritage significance are protected and retained for their significance and importance to the history and identity of the Shire.
- (2) Development takes into account:
 - (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
 - (c) identification of local heritage places and areas.
- (3) Development in or on a local heritage place or area avoids or otherwise minimise adverse impacts on the heritage significance of the place or area and does not compromise the cultural heritage significance of the place or area.
- (4) Adaptive reuse of places of cultural heritage significance occurs where the use does not harm the qualities and significance of the place or area.

3.7.7.2 Land use strategies

- (1) A Douglas Heritage Study was prepared by Cairns Regional Council in 2011. The purpose of this study was to create a local heritage register to meet the requirements of Part 11 of the *Queensland Heritage Act 1992*. The associated consultant's report, nominated 47 places for inclusion in the local heritage register (excluding 8 places of the State heritage register), an additional 16 as potential places for inclusion in the local heritage register and rejected a further 41 places as not meeting the threshold for inclusion in the local heritage register.
- (2) At this point in time, there has been no further verification of any of the nominated places listed in the register following initial public notification, as to the list's accuracy and there is a degree of uncertainty with respect to some places, as outlined in the consultant's report. Prior to including Places of Significance list as planning scheme policy in the planning scheme, further verification is required with respect to the list. This will require an independent review. In addition to being a listing of nominated sites such review should also examine positive incentives for listing in the planning scheme.
- (3) Jabalbina and Douglas Shire Council will work collaboratively to develop a management plan aimed at identifying, protecting and retaining matters of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance.

3.7.8 Element - Strengthening Indigenous communities

- (1) The Shire has the significant, discrete Indigenous community of Wujal Wujal on its northern boundary, adjacent to the Bloomfield River. The Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council has developed its own planning scheme for its community. However this community and its people

will also continue to have influence outside their own local government boundary, through the implementation of the Eastern Kuku Yalanji people's Indigenous Land Use Agreement (the 'ILUA') and aspirations to 'return to country' in the northern part of Douglas Shire. Also of particular note is the relatively small Mossman Gorge Community, to the west of Mossman, and the nearby Indigenous eco-tourism development – the Mossman Gorge Centre.

- (2) The on-going development of the Return to Country Local Plan seeks to address social and economic disadvantage, environmental management of lands and waters, cultural heritage protection and management, the relationship between Jabalbina and Douglas Shire Council and economic development opportunities for the eastern Kuku Yalanji people.

3.7.8.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) Traditional cultural landscapes and significant places are protected in partnership with traditional owners of those landscapes and places.
- (2) Traditional knowledge, skills and cultural practices are respected and, where appropriate, reflected in land management decision making, location and in the form of infrastructure and design of community spaces.
- (3) Sites of cultural significance, including sites with cultural significance for clan groups, and sites with broader significance for the community are protected.
- (4) Council will continue to support and work with Traditional custodian / Owner groups to progress their ability to care for, work on and live on Country, and create economic development opportunities, particularly within the urban footprint of Mossman Gorge and the good bush-living precincts in certain areas north of the Daintree River.

3.8 Theme 5 - Economy

3.8.1 Strategic outcomes

- (1) A prosperous community with a strong rural sector, a dynamic tourism industry and commercial and industrial activities offering a diverse range of employment opportunities is supported by the sustainable use and management of the Shire's natural resources.
- (2) The Shire's economic base will be broadened to improve employment opportunities and to provide resilience to any future adverse economic, social and environmental conditions.
- (3) Economic benefits are maximised through the promotion of appropriate land uses, minimisation of land use conflicts and the protection of strategic economic infrastructure.
- (4) Clustering and co-location of land uses achieve synergies that utilise existing and planned infrastructure and provide opportunities for growth.
- (5) The natural values and key lifestyle attributes of the Douglas Shire are protected to maintain its regional competitive advantage.
- (6) Higher education facilities are encouraged in the Shire to broaden the economic base, increase employment, inject research and innovation into rural/environment/marine industries.
- (7) Indigenous economic and social disadvantage is reduced over time through carefully planned development of traditional lands.

3.8.2 Element – Economic growth and diversification

- (1) The Mossman Mill, supporting the sugar industry, has been in operation for over 120 years and is the primary economic driver in the Shire. Elsewhere, Douglas Shire is not characterised by a significant industrial base to support its primary economic drivers of tourism and primary production. However, value adding manufacturing and processing, research and education can play an important role in the future of economic growth opportunities in the Shire. The lower operational costs for businesses and the unique lifestyle that the Shire offers should be promoted to attract new employment opportunities and economic growth.

3.8.2.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) Economic growth that supports clean, green businesses and resilient communities is encouraged throughout the Shire. In particular a range of economic initiatives is facilitated in appropriate locations, including:
 - (a) the growth of new and traditional industries;
 - (b) further development of Port Douglas as a premium tourist destination;
 - (c) establishing Douglas Shire as a player in the global tropical tourist market;
 - (d) targeting infrastructure that strengthens Douglas Shire as a tourist destination and a gateway to the region;
 - (e) promoting the Shire's marine industries;
 - (f) providing for higher value jobs, particularly for young people;
 - (g) focussing on education and knowledge-based industries;
 - (h) taking advantage of the digital age and associated digital economy;
 - (i) protecting the assets on which existing and future business relies, such as agricultural land resources and the beautiful natural environment;
 - (j) enhanced economic opportunities through appropriate development of Aboriginal Freehold Land.
- (2) Business development and innovation are supported in appropriate settings, particularly within the Shire's activity centres and employment clusters.

3.8.3 Element – Tourism

- (1) Tourism is a significant employer and generator of economic activity within the Shire. The Shire boasts two of the State's major icons, the World Heritage Wet Tropics and the Great Barrier Reef. The quality of the Shire's natural and rural landscapes, spectacular mountains, dramatic bluffs, outstanding scenic coastal areas and environmental features, and numerous historic and culturally significant sites are a major tourism drawcard.
- (2) The extent, range and configuration of tourist accommodation, facilities and services is based on the intrinsic and distinctive qualities of the Shire which promotes an efficient and sustainable tourism industry, and the well-being of the resident population.

3.8.3.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) Development that contributes to the tourism industry and complements and promotes the Shire's natural assets is facilitated. In particular, tourism development is consistent with, and sensitive to, the nature of tourism appropriate in different parts of the Shire.
- (2) A distinctive and attractive destination image for the Shire is fostered.
- (3) An efficient and coordinated pattern of tourism development is established which ensures tourist convenience and accessibility and focusses on the Tourism nodes as shown on the Strategic framework maps contained in Schedule 2.

- (4) Major tourist accommodation and entertainment areas will continue to focus in the Port Douglas Town Centre.
- (5) Tourist development in the Daintree Village, Cape Tribulation and other parts of the Shire:
 - (a) is of a scale appropriate to its location;
 - (b) respects the environmental quality of its surrounds;
 - (c) is limited in size and extent;
 - (d) consists of low-intensity activities, generally based on the appreciation of the natural environment.
- (6) Low intensity tourist activities may be acceptable in the rural areas, provided there are no adverse impacts on the natural environment, good quality agricultural land, farming practices and bona-fide extractive resource activities.
- (7) A limited number of low-intensity tourist accommodation facilities may be acceptable in Conservation areas where it is designed to integrate with its setting (e.g. similar to the Silky Oaks Resort in Mossman).
- (8) The development of bed and breakfast, cabin, homestead / farm-stay accommodation and other low impact tourism development is encouraged in appropriate locations.

3.8.4 Element – Primary production

- (1) Primary production, in particular the dominant sugar industry, and associated manufacturing has always been a significant contributor to Douglas Shire's economy. Considerable opportunities exist to add value to primary produce and to diversify the base income of the rural sector and improve employment opportunities. The Shire's competitive strengths of rich agricultural soils, tropical climate with high rainfall, and proximity to Cairns should be promoted to attract new industries complementary to the Shire's lifestyle.

3.8.4.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) Opportunities to enhance agricultural industry particularly in the Shire's rural towns through the expansion of existing activities, development of value-adding processes and the introduction of new crops will be supported. However, sugar production will continue to be the most dominant cropping activity in the Shire.
- (2) Grazing activities are supported where they do not intrude into vegetated and / or steep land.
- (3) The availability and viability of rural land for on-going agricultural uses is not compromised by inappropriate or incompatible development.
- (4) Fish habitat areas continue to be protected and managed to ensure that the Shire continues to produce a diverse range of sustainable marine/seafood industry products important to both domestic and international markets.
- (5) Carbon sequestration activities are encouraged on steep, denuded hillslope land and broken corridors and away from areas of quality agricultural land.

3.8.5 Element – Innovation and technology

- (1) Technology is the driver of change. Land use policies for the Shire will as far as practical, anticipate and capitalise on innovation and technology. A focus on innovation and technology

will deliver a more robust economy in which opportunities for enterprise are plentiful and innovation is rewarded.

- (2) The outstanding natural beauty of the Shire and its proximity to Cairns City and its international airport makes the Shire an attractive location for those who can telecommute or have transportable businesses in the information technology, consulting and business services sectors. The promotion of the Shire to these groups and to those seeking an improved lifestyle will lead to growth and a more sustainable economy for the Shire.

3.8.5.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) The development of specialised economic innovation precincts and service industries occurs in Mossman, Craiglie and other appropriate locations in Port Douglas, in order to provide the Shire with an economic edge and to support the local population and provide employment opportunities.

3.9 Theme 6 - Infrastructure and transport

3.9.1 Strategic outcomes

- (1) Development is facilitated through the provision of physical infrastructure which complements the economy of the Shire in an efficient, equitable and environmentally safe manner, as well as circulation networks which provide for the efficient movement of people and goods without compromising the Captain Cook Highway as a scenic corridor in the Shire.
- (2) Infrastructure and services are provided to Douglas Shire's communities in a planned, timely, economical and efficient manner in order to support community needs.
- (3) Development is appropriately coordinated between all of the government tiers and agencies, and sequenced, to ensure that activities are appropriately serviced by infrastructure.
- (4) An integrated transport system is developed that promotes increased walking, cycling and the use of public transport.
- (5) Sustainable on-site waste water disposal and electricity supply occurs in parts of the Shire that cannot be connected to reticulated networks.
- (6) Key sites and corridors for existing or planned infrastructure are identified and protected from incompatible development.
- (7) New technologies are utilised to achieve sustainable infrastructure outcomes.
- (8) Infrastructure is located and designed and sited to respect the visual amenity of the shire.

3.9.2 Element – Energy

- (1) Reticulated energy supplies are provided to all urban communities within the Shire.
- (2) Elsewhere, alternative energy as a source of electricity for dwellings can present significant environmental benefits. The use of alternative, renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power is a small, yet significant method by which the community can address the global issue of climate change through local actions. However, a balance between the potential benefits and negative impacts of using alternative energy technologies is needed.

3.9.2.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) The energy needs of the Shire are met in a manner that minimises impacts on the health of the surrounding communities, natural environments and scenic amenity, and wherever possible, supports low emission and/or renewable energy sources.
- (2) Renewable energy facilities, such as small-scale wind turbine generators and solar panels can connect to an existing, nearby high voltage electricity network (with adequate capacity) without significant environment, social or amenity impact..
- (3) Energy infrastructure in urban development areas is located, designed and constructed to ensure continuing functioning after severe natural hazard events.
- (4) The paradox of polluting fuel-based power generation and the pristine World Heritage setting of the Daintree rainforests, north of the Daintree River is acknowledged. Proposals to extend electricity supply to properties north of the Daintree River take into account the sensitive environmental characteristics of the area, the fact that it is an area that is largely of world heritage significance and the climatic risks impacting the area such as cyclones and other weather events, all of which will influence decisions about the nature and scale of the electricity supply infrastructure which may be provided.

3.9.3 Element – Water and waste management

- (1) Wastewater management is a major issue for the unsewered small towns and communities of the Shire. Reticulated water and sewerage services and stormwater drainage improvements are required to minimise impacts on the environment and accommodate projected population growth.

3.9.3.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) Water supply resources are protected and used efficiently and sustainably. Waste is minimised.
- (2) Water and sewerage infrastructure is provided in locations that maintain the health and well-being of the community and the environment.
- (3) Development in urban areas is connected to the reticulated water supply and sewerage infrastructure according to demand and service standards.
- (4) Development in rural and rural residential areas is provided with a reliable, potable water supply and on-site effluent treatment that will ensure no detrimental impacts on amenity, health or well-being of communities or the natural environment.
- (5) Waste management facilities and recycling infrastructure does not result in impacts on the environment or on scenic amenity. Waste management and recycling facilities are spatially separated from sensitive land uses and receiving waters, and these facilities are equally protected from the intrusion of new sensitive land uses.
- (6) Improved technologies and capture/treatment methods, such as water sensitive urban design and recycling, are used to carefully manage stormwater discharge to reduce excessive flows, improve water quality discharge and protect the natural environment from adverse impacts.

3.9.4 Element – Transport

- (1) It is important to maintain a safe and efficient transport network across the Shire. Many of the roads within the Shire are multi-purpose in function and face increased usage by large transport

vehicles associated with agriculture, as well as domestic and tourism traffic volumes. The Captain Cook Highway connects Douglas Shire to Cairns and is a winding two lane carriageway that caters for the majority of the Shire's freight needs. The Mossman Mount Molloy Road is also an important link connecting the Shire to the Tablelands.

- (2) The Daintree River will continue to operate as a Ferry Service and the road north of Cape Tribulation to Wujal Wujal and the CREB track will remain as 4 wheel-drive only.
- (3) The current lack of public transport facilities within the Shire restricts the movement of residents and impedes visitors to the Shire who do not have access to a vehicle. Additional public transport facilities, such as buses (or mini-buses), may be required to improve accessibility for both the resident population and the wider community.
- (4) There are no commercially operating airfields within Douglas Shire. However there are a number of smaller scale airstrips. Careful planning is needed to ensure that the distribution of such air strips does not compromise the safety of their function.
- (5) The cane rail network is an important infrastructure network for the efficient operation of the sugar industry and the mill.

3.9.4.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) The current and future function of higher order roads and transport networks (including buffer areas), is taken into account in land use planning, and protected from incompatible development.
- (2) Local and State road networks are integrated with existing communities and new developments.
- (3) Dickson's Inlet close to the Port Douglas Town Centre continues to function as the main passenger terminal for the reef.
- (4) Connectivity between neighbourhoods and communities is established in existing and new development areas ensuring road, cycle and pedestrian connections.
- (5) Development is designed, located, maintained, and where necessary improved, to facilitate pedestrian, cycle and transport functions.
- (6) Development does not compromise the efficient use of the cane-rail network.
- (7) The Daintree Ferry continues to be the method of transport across the Daintree River.
- (8) The cane railway network is retained and maintained as a significant infrastructure network for the sugar industry in the Shire.

3.9.5 Element – Information technology

- (1) Information technology advancement and delivery is important to the economic success, education, health and well-being of the Douglas Shire.

3.9.5.1 Specific outcomes

- (1) The community is not exposed to any harmful infrastructure elements associated with information technology provision. Wherever possible, infrastructure is co-located with existing

information technology infrastructure, or is otherwise, visually unobtrusive to the greatest extent possible.

- (2) Development in new urban areas installs information technology, or makes provision for such information technology, for ease of installation, when networks become available.