

Strategic Intent

Torres Shire is a geographically and culturally unique part of Queensland and Australia. With its history extending back over 40,000 years, when Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people first came to the Torres Strait, it is today a place of great diversity - environmentally, economically, socially and culturally. This diversity is to be embraced and enhanced within the Shire, to provide an inclusive place that fosters new opportunities for all members of the community. The Shire's rich heritage and multiculturalism is to provide a foundation for its ongoing development.

Torres Shire presently plays a critical administration and service role for the Torres Strait and Cape York regions, anchored by Thursday Island (Waiben). As the northernmost local authority in Queensland, Torres Shire also is important for national administration, due to its border with Papua New Guinea, serving as a gateway between the two nations. Torres Shire's role as a key local, regional and national centre is intended to be protected and enhanced with Council to continue as a key partner in the development of the Torres Strait region.

A high quality of essential and core services is to be provided throughout the Shire, supported by infrastructure that serves the community's needs. Community health is improved through new initiatives, amenities, facilities and infrastructure, particularly those that promote an active lifestyle. The community is to be well informed about the development of the Shire through increased participation in decision making.

The retention and growth of local business is vital for community wellbeing, whilst investment in the region is to be encouraged in a way that focusses on an increased level of economic independence and the creation of a diverse and sustainable economy. Local employment is enhanced through a range of industries and activities that capitalise on the unique geographical, physical and cultural assets that Torres Shire offers.

In providing and promoting new opportunities, it is important to maintain a sense of place, character and community. New development is to integrate with the existing physical and social fabric to enhance the Shire, rather than altering it. Torres Shire is to provide the highest possible quality of life for its local community and this is to remain a primary objective of all activities within the Shire. Particularly care is to be taken in relation to economic development opportunities associated with tourism, to ensure these are appropriately organised and implemented to remain subordinate to the primary objective of the Shire.

Torres Shire is also faced with a number of existing and future challenges. This planning scheme seeks to implement a range of measures to avoid, mitigate and minimise their effects. Decisions in relation to land use, development and planning therefore need to be well considered with regard to current and future circumstances.

The Shire is currently subject to a number of housing pressures and it is sought that these pressures be relieved through a variety of mechanisms, including an increase in the supply and diversity of housing available. The main aim in this regard is to deliver both affordable and appropriate housing. Conditions of increased home ownership, affordable rentals and a lower cost of living are all sought within the Shire.

Natural hazards, particularly those associated with coastal waters, combined with sea level rise, have the potential to significantly impact on the future development of Torres Shire. Risks and impacts associated with these hazards are to be prevented, mitigated, responded to and recovered from in the most effective manner.

Torres Shire is also home to stunning natural beauty and significant biodiversity. Development in the Shire is to seek to deliver a situation where the human and natural environments can coexist harmoniously. The sustainable use of resources and the environment is to be promoted to ensure that present and future generations of the community can enjoy and prosper from the brilliance of the Torres Strait.

Note – The Strategic Intent is extrinsic material and is not an assessment benchmark for any assessable development under this planning scheme.

