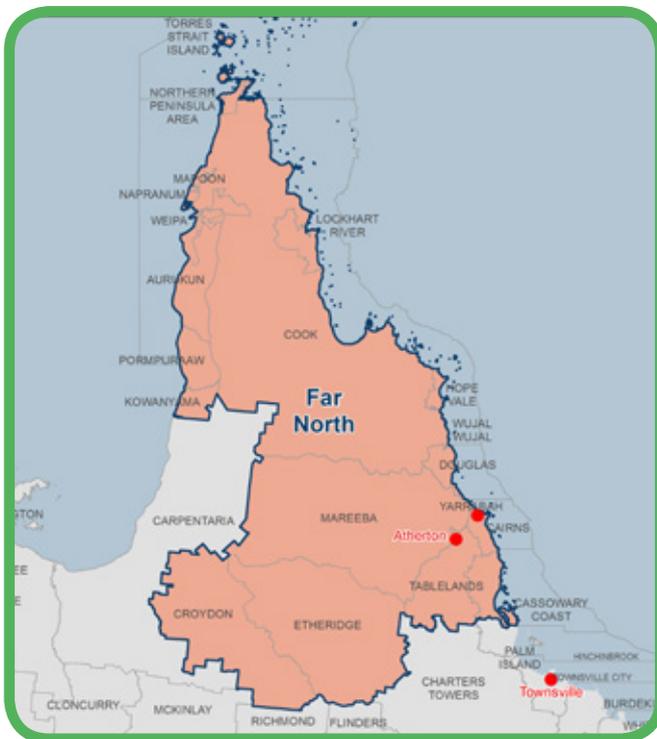


# Far North Queensland Region

## About the region

Far North Queensland is a large geographical and economically diverse region. Cairns is the heart of the region and a gateway to the Pacific and South East Asia. Far North Queensland has enviable assets such as abundant fertile agricultural land, proximity to mineral wealth and a stunning natural environment positioning the region for a strong economic future.



### Departmental regional priority projects

- › South of Embley Bauxite Mine
- › Aquis Resort
- › Cairns Airport
- › Mount Emerald wind farm
- › Nova 8
- › Cairns Aquarium

### Departmental funding

The department is investing **\$29.68 million** in funding to 16 current infrastructure projects in the region.

The types of infrastructure projects funded include roads, an airport, sewerage, community infrastructure, a wharf and water supply.

## Regional snapshot

### Local government areas

Aurukun	Hope Vale	Pormpuraaw
Cairns	Kowanyama	Tablelands
Cassowary Coast	Lockhart River	Torres Strait Island
Cook	Mapoon	Wujal Wujal
Croydon	Mareeba	Yarrabah
Douglas	Napranum	
Etheridge	Northern Peninsula Area	

### Population

As at 30 June 2014, the estimated resident population for Far North Queensland region was **275 216** persons. The projected growth to 2036 is **385 605** persons

### Core industries

Agriculture | tourism | construction | transport | education | defence | retail

### Major infrastructure

- › Cairns International Airport
- › Two major universities
- › National and state highway system
- › Nine ports
- › Convention Centre
- › Freight and passenger rail services

### Key stakeholders

- › 21 local government areas
- › Advance Cairns
- › Tourism Tropical North Queensland
- › Ports North
- › North Queensland Airports
- › Tablelands Futures Corporation
- › Regional Development Australia – FNQ and Torres Strait
- › Tradelinked Cairns and Papua New Guinea
- › Chambers of Commerce
- › Cape York Sustainable Futures

# Summary of departmental regional priority projects

## South of Embley Bauxite Mine

Rio Tinto Alcan Weipa Pty Ltd plans to extend the life of bauxite mining at Weipa for another 40 years. The \$2.7 billion expansion of bauxite mining will lead to direct employment averaging more than 300 full-time equivalent positions per annum over three years during construction. The direct financial contribution of the South of Embley project is estimated at \$264 million locally, \$527 million in Far North Queensland region, \$990 million in Queensland and \$1.3 million nationally during construction. The department is in discussions with Rio Tinto Alcan about coordinating efforts to maximise local industry participation and employment.

## Aquis Resort

The \$8.15 billion Aquis Resort is a new tourism facility beyond the scale and scope of any other development in Australia. The resort is expected to attract up to one million guests a year, 74 per cent from overseas, providing a significant increase to tourism in the region and Queensland. Employment during construction is estimated at 3500 jobs. Once complete the resort will provide employment for 20 000 operational staff. A construction supply chain map is being developed by ICN and the Far North Queensland Regional Office to identify businesses, capability and gaps in preparation for an Aquis construction start date of mid-2016.

## Cairns Airport

The project aims to achieve economically sustainable development of the airport precincts with high quality long term tenants. The project links to departmental/government objectives by fast-tracking the delivery of an aviation industrial project, assisting property and construction industries to grow. Capex is \$1 billion over 20 years (notional). The department is involved in quarterly meetings with the airport to address development, planning and supply chain issues.

## Mount Emerald wind farm

Ratch-Australia and Port Bajool formed a partnership to build a wind farm on private land on a plateau approximately half way between Mareeba and Atherton. It is proposed to build 63 wind turbines generating up to 189 megawatts of energy. The \$426 million project will lead to 51 jobs during construction and an average of 11 direct annual jobs during the 25-year operational phase. The department has had an ongoing role with project facilitation for the wind farm.

## Nova 8

Singapore based Aspial Corporation plans to build seven towers (six residential, one commercial) 17 to 19 storeys on Spence Street in Cairns. The development will include 1188 apartments, 6000 m<sup>2</sup> retail, 11 000 m<sup>2</sup> office space. Construction on the sales and display office valued at \$1 million, commenced in February 2015. Project capex is \$400 million and 200 construction jobs are expected to boost employment. The department's construction supply chain mapping will assist the prime contractor of Nova 8, once appointed. Development of the project has recently been approved.

## Cairns Aquarium

The Cairns Aquarium will be located on a 4003 m<sup>2</sup> development site on the corner of Abbott, Lake and Florence Streets, Cairns. The project is a three-level, 1000 m<sup>2</sup> gateway tourist attraction featuring 70 live exhibits representative of the Great Barrier Reef and Wet Tropics ecosystem, a 180-seat restaurant and function space, retail venues and corporate offices. Project capex is \$50 million and is expected 200 construction jobs will be required when scheduled work starts later in 2015. The department has worked with the Cairns Aquarium proponent since the project's inception. Current activity includes facilitation of a stakeholder steering committee, to inform the interpretive displays, and educational signage to be included in the Cairns Aquarium.