

Cairns South State Development Area

Development Scheme – March 2020

Cairns South State Development Area

The Cairns South State Development Area (SDA) was declared in November 2018 as a special economic zone for regionally significant industrial development to support the long-term needs of the economy and create jobs in the Cairns region.

On 21 February 2020, the Cairns South SDA was varied to include an additional 303 hectares of land around the Mulgrave Mill to support the Mulgrave Mill's future diversification plans, including industrial development opportunities that value-add to the sugar refining process.

The SDA is now a total of 1159 hectares over two separate areas at Wrights Creek and Gordonvale.

Cairns South SDA Development Scheme

The Coordinator-General has prepared a development scheme to regulate development in the Cairns South SDA.

The Cairns South SDA Development Scheme (development scheme) will enable:

- the establishment of regionally significant industrial development including uses that require large blocks of land, operate 24 hours, 7 days a week, and require significant separation and setbacks
- the establishment of a regional intermodal facility next to the North Coast Line to draw

upon future growth trends in the rail freight sector

- the development of priority industries, including bio-futures, advanced manufacturing and defence
- the diversification of the Mulgrave Mill, including bio-industrial development that requires co-location for the use of the Mill's by-products; energy, waste and water
- the management of potential impacts on the sugar industry by retaining approximately 60% of land in the SDA for sugar cane farming and research, while promoting a staged approach to industrial development
- the protection of environmental, cultural heritage and community values, including the management of impacts on residents in Gordonvale.

The key planning provisions of a development scheme are summarised on the next page. The development scheme also includes administrative processes and procedures for the assessment of applications and requests related to development in the SDA.

Next steps

The Coordinator-General will continue to work with key stakeholders to implement the development scheme and progress planning for the Cairns South SDA.

Key planning provisions in an SDA development scheme

Strategic vision for an SDA

The strategic vision sets the overarching direction of an SDA. The statements are broad and high level.

All development must demonstrate that it is consistent with the strategic vision.

Overall objectives for development

The overall objectives for development support the strategic vision.

These objectives are more refined and are related to the outcomes of a development.

All development must demonstrate that their outcomes meet the overall objectives.

Development precincts

There is a preferred development intent that is unique to each development precinct in an SDA. A development precinct is like a zone in a local government planning scheme.

The preferred development intent identifies the overarching principles for the particular location, a list of uses that are supported, and the type of development controlled in the precinct.

The preferred development intent is informed by the opportunities and constraints of the area and can include its topography, flood immunity, proximity to residential areas, and access to transport and infrastructure.

For example, in the Cairns South SDA, development in the Rail Dependent Industry Precinct must be able to demonstrate a need to be proximate to the intermodal facility in the adjacent Intermodal Transport Precinct.

SDA wide assessment criteria

The SDA wide assessment criteria are the most detailed and specific provisions in the development scheme. All development must consider the criteria, and where relevant, demonstrate that it meets the criteria.

The assessment criteria include engineering standards, visual amenity, traffic and access, and emissions.

Further information

For more information contact State Development Areas Division

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