

Schedule 2: Scenic coastal landscapes

Areas of state significance (scenic coastal landscapes)

Coastal landscapes with either ‘Level 1 Scenic Quality’ and/or ‘High Scenic Management Priority’ are determined to be ‘areas of state significance (scenic coastal landscapes)’ for the purposes of coastal management (refer to policy 2.7.1).

Levels of scenic quality and management priority were investigated by the 1996 report *A View of the Coast: An Overview of the Scenic Resources of the Queensland Coast*. The intention of this report was to:

- (a) formulate a sound and repeatable methodology for compiling a continuous scenic resource inventory for the entire Queensland coast, including an appropriate set of criteria for assessing scenic quality;
- (b) assess the relative values of such resources; and
- (c) develop recommendations regarding the relative urgency of conservation measures of scenic landscape values for particular locations.

Please note that the specific localities identified should be viewed as examples and not as an exhaustive list. Further investigation and use of other relevant regional landscape studies are encouraged.

The Queensland coastline was divided into 58 individual coastal landscapes and classified into one of the following coastal landscape character types: regional city; linear coastal strip; low intensity coastal plain; extensive coastal plain; coastal valley; steep coastal range; major peninsula and island groups; and major island groups.

The report investigated the scenic quality as well as priority areas for management of scenic landscape values for each of the 58 individual coastal landscapes.

Areas of ‘Level 1 Scenic Quality’ are those areas that are highly outstanding and distinctive. Criteria for inclusion as a Level 1 Scenic Quality area are as follows:

- ◆ landscape is recognised as having exceptional or unique statewide, national or international aesthetic values; and
- ◆ landscape displays high visual quality indicators for all three criteria of landform, landcover and waterform.

Examples of these areas include Moreton Bay, Great Sandy Region, Keppel Islands, Shoalwater Bay, Whitsunday Islands, Palm Islands, Hinchinbrook, Mossman/Port Douglas and Cape Tribulation.

‘High Scenic Management Priority’ areas were assessed against the following criteria:

- ◆ the distribution and relative abundance of each of the different landscape character types to determine any areas of scarcity;
- ◆ correlation of the scenic quality rating to the scarcer landscape types to determine areas in low relative abundance; and
- ◆ application of an overall rating based upon observed or known threats to an area such as likely land development or urban growth.

Examples of these areas include Gold Coast hinterland, Brisbane basin, Moreton Bay, Sunshine Coast, Blackall Range, Town of 1770, Keppel Bay/Yeppoon, Corio Bay, Port Curtis/Gladstone, St Helens, Whitsunday Islands, Townsville, Hinchinbrook, Mulgrave River, Malbon Thompson Range, Cairns, Cape Tribulation and Endeavour River/Cooktown.

Scenic management issues

The report also identified relevant scenic management issues for each of these coastal landscape types. A description of the coastal landscape type and relevant scenic management issues, as included in the *View of the Coast* report are outlined below. These issues are to be considered when undertaking regional and local planning within the relevant ‘areas of state significance (scenic coastal landscapes)’.

Regional cities

This coastal landscape character type focuses on the state's major coastal urban centres. Typically, they are based on a major river system and comprise mostly established or developing areas. Examples include the Brisbane basin, Cairns and Townsville. The following scenic management issues are relevant:

- (a) maintaining the integrity of major river corridors and estuaries;
- (b) protecting scenic/mountainous backdrops to cities and urban areas;
- (c) avoiding development unsympathetic to the landscape and built form;
- (d) minimising development of prominent foothills;
- (e) maintaining urban scenic character;
- (f) maintaining major areas of remnant vegetation, particularly on prominent hills and ridges;
- (g) protecting headlands;
- (h) sensitive design and location of major city infrastructure such as roads, power stations and transmission lines;
- (i) scenic management of harbour and port areas;
- (j) preventing merging of coastal villages and townships into continuous urban form; and
- (k) scenic management of quarries and extractive industries.

Linear coastal strips

These coastal landscape character types are coastal landscapes that comprise major urban centres, however they are distinguished by the concentration of built development towards the land/water edge, with more scattered development located inland. An example is the Sunshine Coast. The following scenic management issues are relevant:

- (a) avoiding development in close proximity to the land/sea edge;
- (b) controlling the scale and height of development;
- (c) protecting headlands subject to development pressure;
- (d) maintaining the integrity of river corridors and estuaries;
- (e) avoiding inappropriate development of foothills and rolling landscape;
- (f) maintaining rural landscapes as a scenic feature;
- (g) protecting coastal wetlands and lakes;
- (h) avoiding the modification of rivers and low lying areas into canals; and
- (i) avoiding uncontrolled continuation of linear development.

Low intensity coastal plains

This coastal landscape character type, the predominant for the Queensland coast, is characterised mostly by gently undulating lowlands and plains with a range from rural to low intensity townships and urban areas to semi-natural and natural areas. The major difference between this category and 'Extensive coastal plain' is that the distance from the shoreline to the dominant coastal range is far less, usually in the vicinity of 10km. Examples include Keppel Bay/Yeppoon, Mossman/Port Douglas and St Helens. The following scenic management issues are relevant:

- (a) avoiding the merging of coastal villages and townships;
- (b) protecting the setting of landscape features such as prominent mountains and hills from inappropriate development;
- (c) protecting 'passage' landscapes;
- (d) maintaining areas of natural character;
- (e) avoiding extensive land clearing close to the land/sea edge;
- (f) inappropriate development of river mouths and estuaries;

- (g) growth of villages along rivers and creeks;
- (h) protecting backdrop to growing cities and townships;
- (i) protecting natural settings of headlands and bay settings;
- (j) maintaining the integrity of river corridors;
- (k) protecting prominent peninsulas;
- (l) protecting natural character of smaller islands, close to shore;
- (m) enhancing foreshore areas in developed areas;
- (n) scenic management of harbours and port areas;
- (o) visual integration of large scale industrial and processing facilities;
- (p) maintaining natural character of wetland areas;
- (q) protecting rural character; and
- (r) sensitive design and location of utility infrastructure such as roads, power stations and transmissions lines.

Extensive coastal plains

This coastal landscape character type is typified by more northern areas of the state with very limited relief and an extensive coastal plain, sometimes beyond an applied 'limit' for the study of 100km. Land uses comprise mostly natural and semi-natural areas with an extremely limited degree of settlement.

Coastal valleys

This classification applies to both:

- ◆ inland coastal valleys based on major river systems which run either parallel or perpendicular to the coast; and
- ◆ inland coastal 'hinterland' areas of sufficient size and contrast to the adjoining landscape.

Examples include the Blackall Range, Endeavour River, Gold Coast Hinterland and Mulgrave River.

The following scenic management issues are relevant:

- (a) avoiding inappropriate development of foothills and backdrops;
- (b) appropriate management of scenic routes;
- (c) avoiding the merging of villages and townships;
- (d) protecting the estuaries from inappropriate development;
- (e) maintaining field/rural pattern; and
- (f) maintaining the natural character of prominent ridge and ranges.

Steep coastal ranges

This coastal landscape type applies to limited sections of the coastline where, for an extended area, the region is dominated by a continuous mountain range formation. Examples include Malbon Thompson Range and Cape Tribulation. The following scenic management issues were identified:

- (a) maintaining natural character of ranges;
- (b) managing major infrastructure such as roads, power stations and transmissions lines;
- (c) avoiding the merging of coastal townships and villages;
- (d) protecting river estuaries;
- (e) protecting the surrounds and settings of prominent hills and mountains;
- (f) maintaining integrity of river and creek corridors; and
- (g) protecting open exposed headlands.

Major peninsula and island groups

This coastal landscape type applies to island groups that have in their formation a segmented link to the mainland coast. In particular, they are not generally known as ‘off-shore’ islands. Examples include Moreton Bay, Great Sandy Region, Shoalwater Bay, Whitsunday Islands, and Hinchinbrook. The following scenic management issues are relevant:

- (a) protecting ‘passage’ landscapes;
- (b) managing the impacts of sand mining and recreational use;
- (c) managing the growth of island villages and townships;
- (d) integration for tourism development;
- (e) avoiding extensive clearing of hills and ranges;
- (f) managing roads and scenic routes;
- (g) maintaining areas of natural character;
- (h) appropriate siting and management of major infrastructure such as roads, power stations and transmission lines;
- (i) avoiding development along ridgelines;
- (j) protecting and enhancing foreshore areas;
- (k) rehabilitating degraded areas;
- (l) maintaining backdrop to townships and villages; and
- (m) improved appearance of island ‘arrival points’.

Major island groups

Major island groups coastal landscape character type refers to offshore islands, which are not in close proximity to the mainland. It includes Keppel Islands and Palm Islands. The following scenic management issues are relevant:

- (a) maintaining areas with natural character;
- (b) visual enhancement of islands with significant development;
- (c) protecting shorelines and water edge to islands;
- (d) sensitive location of infrastructure, particularly transmission lines;
- (e) rehabilitating mining areas; and
- (f) avoiding ridgeline development.