



2017–2021

**Whitsunday Regional Council**  
Economic Development  
Strategy Overview

*A blueprint for regional prosperity*

*Revised February 2019*



## Game Changers

Attractive investment opportunities are being facilitated across multiple industries through our 'Game Changing' projects. We will continue to build and expand on our existing driver industries of mining, tourism and agriculture to meet demand from national and global markets.



### Lake Proserpine Barramundi Fishing and Tourism Development

With untapped potential as an international drawcard for anglers, Lake Proserpine has a growing reputation as one of Australia's best barramundi fishing destinations. With fishing the largest driver of domestic leisure tourism in Australia, the development of Lake Proserpine will help capture a greater share of this market. This project will deliver an iconic experience with a diverse range of recreational opportunities, both on land and on water, to attract a wide range of sporting and recreational enthusiasts.



### Airlie Beach Luxury Hotel and Conference Precinct

Serving locals and visitors, a five-star hotel and entertainment facility on the Mainland at Airlie Beach will add depth and diversity to region's lifestyle appeal and tourism offering.

Reflecting customer preferences for a modern retail shopping experience, incorporating a range of vibrant boutique retail shops, modern multi-use conference end event venue, along with open air laneway experiences, and accessible customer parking spaces, an iconic retail shopping complex will be pursued in the heart of the tourism precinct at Airlie Beach.



### Regional Water Security Infrastructure Projects

A number of large-scale water security infrastructure projects are in various stages of consideration, planning and delivery across the region. The proposed Urannah Water Scheme will help provide water to 16 existing resource projects and 21 planned new projects; generate over 1300 megawatts of renewable energy per hour through large-scale hydro-electrics and enable prime agricultural land around Collinsville via a 20,000-hectare irrigation scheme.

Council's Whitsunday Water Security and Resilience Program proactively addresses the effects of climate change and population growth in the region through an upgraded reservoir, and water supply pipelines around Airlie Beach; and recycled effluent networks in Bowen and Cannonvale that will divert high quality treated effluent from the Great Barrier Reef for use as controlled irrigation in public spaces.



### Shute Harbour Redevelopment

Stage 1 of Council's Shute Harbour Redevelopment will deliver the additional port-based facilities required to service the Whitsunday marine and tourism industries, and act as a logistics hub for the Island Resorts. The project involves reconstruction of marine and land-based assets for increased resilience, the reinstatement of marine pontoons and gangways and the construction of a two-storey office and terminal building. This complements the adjacent Shute Harbour Marina development, prescribed by the State Government as a project of significance, which proposes to include an integrated marina, resort accommodation, and commercial, retail and dining precincts.



### Whitsunday Marine Centre of Excellence and Maritime College

Utilising up to 100,000m<sup>2</sup> of land adjacent to the existing Bowen Marina, the Whitsunday Marine Centre of Excellence will establish a world class marina and shipyard to service a range of vessels from the smallest cruisers up to the largest superyachts. Currently a high-level concept, and with stakeholders across the private sector and all levels of government, this project has the ability to affect transformational change for the Whitsundays.



### Whitsunday Trade Coast and Airport Precinct







The Whitsunday Coast Airport is a catalytic development that will drive future overall regional investment, growth and development in aviation, tourism, export quality agriculture products as well as transport and logistics infrastructure. The airport is in close proximity to major highways, railway and large parcels of vacant land within and adjacent to the airport site providing a unique opportunity to create a priority development area for the region.



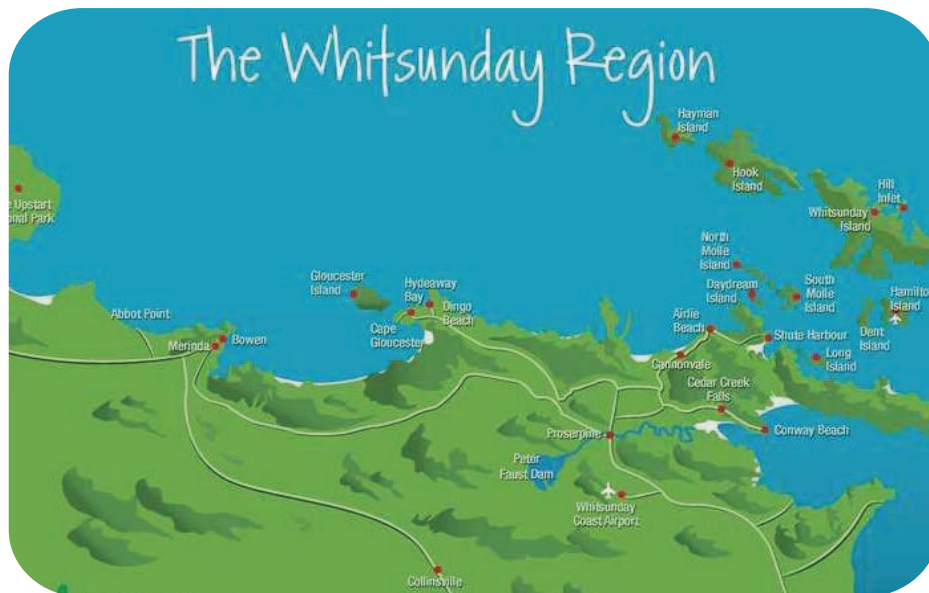
### Diversifying Collinsville

Major construction works planned or proposed near Collinsville over the next 4 years total more than \$10.6B. These projects include the recently completed Solar Farms, the current Coal Mine construction, and the proposed Mine, Rail and multi-faceted power generation projects. Opportunities exist to progress economic diversity and strengthen the small business sector with the development of drive tourism activities and town centre beautification.

## Actions

	 <b>A diverse and world-class tourism destination</b>	 <b>A sustainable and profitable farming region</b>	 <b>An environmentally sustainable region supported by climate adapted</b>	 <b>A globally connected and dynamic region of choice for investment</b>	 <b>A skilled workforce and prosperous small business sector</b>	 <b>A region of vibrant towns and centres</b>
<b>PRIORITY 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for the Whitsunday Marine Centre of Excellence</li> <li>Investigate the feasibility of the WMCE Education Facility;</li> <li>Conduct a regional food produce and tourist centre feasibility study;</li> <li>Develop a Recreational Vehicle (RV) tourism development plan;</li> <li>Develop and deliver an Event Attraction Strategy;</li> <li>Develop the Visitor Information Centres Sustainability Project;</li> <li>Regional Tourism Promotion by Council;</li> <li>Support land-based tourism product development;</li> <li>Support the development and rollout of a new regional Whitsunday Brand;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the feasibility study for Urannah Dam;</li> <li>Identify strategic transport infrastructure needs for the grazing industry;</li> <li>Implement the Whitsunday Regional Biosecurity Plan 2016-2020;</li> <li>Address key challenges and opportunities for the horticultural sector;</li> <li>Support trade missions for horticulture;</li> <li>Advocate for Bowen TAFE as a campus for international studies;</li> <li>Support sustainable development of the sugar industry;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and deliver training packages on climate adaptation and preparedness;</li> <li>Work with experts to mitigate and resolve climate change issues within the region;</li> <li>Support the implementation of the Climate Sustainability Plan 2016-2020 - Mackay Whitsunday Isaac; and</li> <li>Support the implementation of the Burdekin Dry Tropics Natural Resource Management Plan 2016-2026;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revise the Whitsunday Coast Airport Strategic Plan 2016-2021;</li> <li>Develop and publish an annual Whitsunday Regional Investor Prospectus;</li> <li>Determine changes to regional government agencies post STC Debbie; and</li> <li>Prepare a prospectus to promote the Whitsundays as a location for State and Federal government services;</li> <li>Acquire and collate regional economic data to support project development and investment;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver the Small Business Start Up Program Pilot;</li> <li>Undertake a six monthly 'Whitsunday Region business needs and issues survey';</li> <li>Introduce small business/start up programs and networks to the Whitsunday Region;</li> <li>Support and promote activities that optimize use of technology and digital capabilities in business;</li> <li>Review findings from The Rural Futures Project (2012) and The Central Queensland Workforce Development Initiative (2012); and</li> <li>Provide commentary for inclusion in an updated MIW Workforce Development Strategy;</li> <li>Identify opportunities for additional training programs to support local employment;</li> <li>Prepare and implement a strategy to build the capacity of residents to participate in the resources sector workforce;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement the Proserpine Sustainability and Future Growth Masterplan;</li> <li>Implement the Lake Proserpine Recreational Masterplan (multi-year project);</li> <li>Develop a Council-wide open space, sport and recreation plan;</li> <li>Implement the Whitsunday Water Security and Resilience Project;</li> <li>Revitalize, beautify and connect key sites and activity areas for residents and visitors;</li> <li>Prepare a development capacity study for Airlie Beach;</li> <li>Facilitate 'retail inspiration' workshops to support vitality and growth of the region's retail centres;</li> <li>Continue discussions with the Queensland Department of Education on the expressed need for a State High School at Cannonvale;</li> <li>Develop and maintain a register of Adani workers' home base (place of origin);</li> <li>Investigate initiatives to encourage more mining workers to live within the Whitsunday Region; and</li> <li>Explore the feasibility of a program to encourage workers to take up residence in the towns of Collinsville and Bowen;</li> <li>Identify areas or items where Adani can add value to local communities;</li> </ul>
<b>PRIORITY 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate investment opportunities for a 5-star hotel and entertainment precinct at Airlie Beach;</li> <li>If feasible, support the development of the regional food produce and tourist centre;</li> <li>Deliver the Visitor Information Centres Sustainability Project;</li> <li>Review Council policies relevant to the development of tourism and recreation for the northern Whitsundays;</li> <li>Develop and promote a customer service strategy to deliver consistent, quality visitor experiences;</li> <li>Advocate for the South Mollie Island redevelopment;</li> <li>Identify and implement infrastructure projects that will sustainably increase capacity of the Whitsunday Islands;</li> <li>Identify issues with current tourist visa application system/processes and work with the department to address them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a consolidated position from Growers regarding water security and the 'Water for Bowen' project;</li> <li>Prepare business cases for the delivery of priority transport infrastructure;</li> <li>Advocate for the inclusion of priority projects in the Regional Transport Plan and the Remote and Regional Transport Strategy;</li> <li>Develop a 'brand' that effectively cross promotes the region's produce;</li> <li>Identify Agri-industry proponents to establish tourism product offerings and coordinate the development of an Agri-tourism product pilot;</li> <li>Consider the alignment of Agri-tourism with Whitsunday Small Business Start-up Program;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the implementation of the Climate Sustainability Plan 2016-2020 - Mackay Whitsunday Isaac; and</li> <li>Support the implementation of the Burdekin Dry Tropics Natural Resource Management Plan 2016-2026;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and plan for strategic development of the Bowen Jetty and Shute Harbour (Stage 2);</li> <li>Implement the actions of the Revised Whitsunday Coast Airport Strategic Plan 2016-2021;</li> <li>Establish an investment enquiry protocol for the Whitsunday Region;</li> <li>Establish and maintain a register of enquiries for investment into the Whitsunday Region;</li> <li>Develop a Council protocol to support business relationships with potential international investment and trading partners;</li> <li>Establish and maintain a published register of commercial / industrial land;</li> <li>Advocate for the prioritization of key roads in the Regional Transport Plan and the Whitsunday Regional Council Local Recovery Plan;</li> <li>Work with Telecommunication providers to address priority mobile blackspot areas;</li> <li>Advocate investment attraction opportunities at the Salisbury Plains Industrial Precinct within the Abbot Point State Development Area;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine the export potential and readiness of the existing business community;</li> <li>Promote and facilitate access to export market development programs;</li> <li>Host a series of local exporters' forums throughout the Whitsunday Region;</li> <li>Record Business Enquiries through Council to ensure that Council's projects and activities are addressing the needs of the business community;</li> <li>Facilitate forums and activities to help build local business capacity to provide goods and services across the region's resource sector and associated supply chains;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare and implement a free public Wi-Fi pilot project in selected towns/centres;</li> <li>Develop and Implement the Whitsunday Regional Council Integrated Transport Strategy;</li> <li>Investigate the feasibility of a regional indoor multi-sports complex;</li> <li>Identify strategic sites and associated initiatives for business development across the region's towns and activity centres;</li> <li>Finalize, adopt and implement the Draft Inclusion and Access Plan;</li> <li>Develop marketing collateral to promote the livability of the Whitsunday Region;</li> </ul>
<b>PRIORITY 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a regional Superyacht attraction prospectus;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If feasible, advocate for funding to deliver the Urannah Dam;</li> <li>Establish marketing support with TW for emerging Agri-tourism products;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a whole-of-Council policy and planning position on renewable energy in the Whitsunday Region;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify a long-term solution for the supply of water to the State Development Area at Abbot Point;</li> <li>Investigate the feasibility of a Multi-storey Retail, Conference and Car Parking Facility on Waterson Way;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate the feasibility of a trade training centre in Collinsville;</li> <li>Investigate options for an incubation project to enable small subcontractors to establish a base in Collinsville to service resource projects;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate the feasibility of a new, dedicated Customer Service Centre and Library complex in Cannonvale;</li> </ul>





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For more information and to view the full  
Whitsunday Regional Council Economic Development Strategy 2017–2021 document visit:

**[www.whitsundayrc.qld.gov.au](http://www.whitsundayrc.qld.gov.au)**

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**Disclaimer:** This report is based on the Whitsunday Regional Council Economic Development Strategy 2017-2021 prepared by SC Lennon & Associates Pty Ltd on behalf of Whitsunday Regional Council. It has been prepared on the understanding that users exercise their own skill and care with respect to its use and interpretation. Any representation, statement, opinion or advice expressed or implied in this publication is made in good faith. SC Lennon & Associates Pty Ltd and the individual authors of this report are not liable to any person or entity taking or not taking action in respect of any representation, statement, opinion or advice referred to above.

A revision of the strategy has been undertaken internally by Council in February 2019, and changes made to the original strategy to capture actions that are complete, and new actions required to address changes in economic conditions within the region.