

3.6 Natural systems and sustainability

Context

The Gympie Region lies within the central coastal section of the south-east Queensland bioregion. The region is considered one of the richest areas of biological diversity and endemism in Australia. The Region also retains the distinction of containing significant portions of both coastal plains and adjacent hills and ranges, considered to be prominent landscape features within the south-east Queensland bioregion. Major areas of ecosystem significance include heathlands, wetlands and forests of the Cooloola Coast, forested ranges of Neerdie, Goomboorian, Wolvi and the Beenham Valley, rainforests and tall sclerophyll forests of Mothar Mountain and Traveston, large forestry areas and surrounds of Borumba, Imbil, Kandanga, Amamoor and Glastonbury and the Mary River environs. Areas around Glen Echo and alongside Barambah Creek bounding the Shire Border near Boobyjan also contains major areas of ecosystem significance. Opportunities to maintain and enhance these assets form an intrinsic role of the Planning Scheme.

3.6.1 Strategic outcomes

- (1) The condition, extent, diversity and connectivity of important natural features are protected from inappropriate development to maintain and enhance their biodiversity values.
- (2) The Region's water, land and air resources are managed on a sustainable basis, maintaining their availability for sustainable use and facilitating their contribution to the Region's ecosystem health, liveability and prosperity.
- (3) New development demonstrates a commitment to the reduction in reliance on non-renewable resources and the generation of greenhouse gas emissions.

Table 3. 4 Theme components - Natural systems and sustainability

3.6.2 Elements	3.6.3 Specific outcomes
(1) Environmental protection and conservation – the intrinsic values that contribute to the Region's environment and biodiversity, attraction and liveability are protected.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Ecosystems and natural resources are protected and managed to enhance their capacity to support and conserve biodiversity; (b) Areas of ecological significance, particularly local components of the Great Sandy Biosphere, are identified, protected, maintained and enhanced; (c) The impacts of development on habitat fragmentation are reduced and areas of ecological significance, including movement corridors, are enhanced through rehabilitation of degraded areas; (d) Opportunities for the establishment, protection, management, rehabilitation and enhancement of identified movement corridors are accommodated; (e) Development in or adjacent to significant wetlands of the Great Barrier Reef catchment prevents the loss or degradation of the wetland and improves the quality of water entering the wetland; (f) Urban development does not impact on waters mapped as being of high ecological value or declared fish habitat areas; (g) Development is located outside significant wetlands and is planned, constructed and operated to avoid adverse impacts on the wetlands; (h) The riparian amenity and habitat of the Region's waterways, wetlands and foreshores are retained, enhanced and restored; (i) Development proposals in or adjacent to areas of ecological significance will be compatible with the values of those areas; (j) In urban areas, where development cannot be avoided in areas of High Ecological Significance, impacts should be minimised and offset; (k) Forms of development that are likely to create adverse impacts on the functions and values of habitat areas will not be supported.

3.6.2 Elements	3.6.3 Specific outcomes
<p>(2) Natural resource management – the use of natural resources provides a sustainable addition to the Region’s economy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Significant natural resources are identified, managed and protected to enhance their economic, communal and environmental values; (b) Ensure that significant natural resources can be accessed and developed without being prejudiced by incompatible development; (c) Management of natural resource operations ensures that significant environmental harm or unreasonable disruption to the amenity of sensitive environments is prevented; (d) The quality of the region’s water (ground and surface), land and air resources is protected from the impacts of development; (e) Specific management techniques must be incorporated into development to avoid the harmful consequences of disturbing or generating acid sulphate soils; (f) Filling in floodplains, erosion, run-off, siltation and other forms of water pollution are minimised and natural drainage patterns are retained or restored where practical; (g) Water is planned and managed as a valuable and finite regional resource on a total water cycle basis, balancing the uses of water and its role in the natural, urban and rural environment; (h) Water storage catchments identified are protected from inappropriate development; (i) Water sensitive urban design principles are integrated into infrastructure planning and urban development and are consistent with the principles of total water cycle management; (j) Coastal resources and values are managed to maintain natural processes and protect safe and sustainable coastal development that minimises its impacts on these resources; (k) Physical coastal processes and the natural fluctuations of landforms continue to occur in a natural way, without human interference; (l) The scenic values of the coast are protected from the impacts of urban development; (m) Opportunities for public access to the foreshore and coastal waters are maintained while conserving coastal resources; (n) Maritime development and supporting activities are accommodated in locations within the Tin Can Bay and Carlo Point settlement areas; (o) Development management recognises the need for a risk-averse strategy dealing with the vagaries of climate change; (p) Development is not placed at risk from coastal hazards, taking into account the likely effects of climate change, coastal erosion, permanent inundation due to sea level rise and storm tide inundation; (q) Development is appropriately located to provide protection from the impacts of flooding from the Region’s watercourses.

3.6.2 Elements	3.6.3 Specific outcomes
(3) Sustainable development – sympathetic design for climate creates more sustainable design and lifestyles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Development contributes to a reduction in the generation of greenhouse gas emissions; (b) Patterns of urban development are established that reduce the generation of vehicle trip frequency and distance and by encouraging an increase in the provision of public transport and encouragement of walking and cycling as viable transport options; (c) Increase the local provision of renewable energy and low emission technology; (d) Increase stored carbon through the retention or planting of vegetation and other land management practices; (e) The efficient use and re-use of water is promoted to manage consumption of natural resources; (f) Incorporate total water cycle management and water sensitive urban design principles in land use and infrastructure planning.