



BRUCE HIGHWAY UPGRADE

Response Strategy



Document Control

Project	Gympie Bruce Hwy Upgrade
Report Title	Bruce Highway Upgrade Response Strategy
Version	3
Project Code	1455
Prepared for	Gympie Regional Council
Author	PSA Consulting

Issue	Date	Approved	Details
1	18/01/2023	SB	DRAFT
2	02/05/2023	SB	FINAL
3	15/05/2023	SB	FINAL

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List of Acronyms

CBD	Central Business District
C2CD	Section D: Woondum to Curra
DTMR	Department of Transport and Main Roads
GRC	Gympie Regional Council
LGA	Local Government Area
PTT	Pekol Traffic and Transport
QFAP	Queensland Freight Action Plans
QFS	Queensland Freight Strategy
SEQ	South East Queensland
VPH	Vehicles Per Hour
WBB	Wide Bay Burnett
WBBRP	Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Introduction

PSA Consulting (Australia) Pty Ltd (PSA) and LatStudios have been commissioned to prepare the Bruce Highway Upgrade Response Strategy (Strategy) on behalf of Gympie Regional Council (Council) for Section D: Woondum to Curra section (C2CD Project) of the Bruce Highway Cooroy to Curra Project. With completion of the C2CD project expected in the short term and Council's current planning scheme review project underway, this Strategy provides a timely analysis of land use, urban design and landscape character opportunities that arise from the realignment of the Bruce Highway between Woondum and Curra. This Strategy highlights strategic constraints and opportunities, considers the policy context and drives, and provides recommendations to be implemented within the drafting of the new planning scheme and through other mechanisms where appropriate. The planning scheme review project will culminate in a new planning scheme to guide land use and development in the Gympie Region through to 2046 and is expected to be adopted and implemented in early-mid 2025.

1.1 Strategy Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the Strategy is to consider land use, urban design and landscaping opportunities resulting from the realignment of the Bruce Highway corridor from Woondum to Curra to identify the planning scheme related measures that Council should take in response to the planned completion of the Bruce Highway realignment. The key objectives of the Strategy are as follows:

- Provide a summary of findings from the projected traffic modelling analysis associated with the new Bruce Highway corridor, including implications for the Council controlled road network
- Provide an overview of the key land use, landscape and urban design features of the existing and new Bruce Highway corridors
- Identify key opportunities and challenges associated with the existing and new Bruce Highway corridors
- Establish a framework response strategy for the existing Bruce Highway corridor and new Bruce Highway corridor including corridor wide and site-specific land use, urban design and landscaping responses
- Present a coordinated framework implementation strategy including planning scheme drafting considerations and other actions to respond to the upcoming completion of the Woondum to Curra Project.

1.2 Context

Gympie is a key regional centre in the context of the Wide Bay Burnett Region. Gympie plays an important role as a primary administration, service, sporting, commercial and industrial centre which benefits from its proximity to the Bruce Highway as a major freight and tourist route. As a regional urban centre within a two hour drive of the Brisbane CBD, Gympie has experienced significant residential growth over the past five years and is a key gateway to SEQ. The population of the Gympie Region is forecast to grow from 52,257 in 2021 to 60,088 in 2041. The Draft Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan 2022 recognises the opportunity for Gympie to become a dormitory suburb with increasing population creep northwards from SEQ.

The settlement pattern of Gympie has been strongly influenced by topography and the extent of flooding associated with the Mary River. The prevailing topography of valleys and hills creates the town centre's distinctive setting and the floodplains evident from the current Bruce Highway's southern approach to the town centre limits future urban development potential within vast areas.

Mary Street has historically developed as the principal urban centre of Gympie supported by a network of district and local centres. Future urban development of the lower half of Mary Street is highly constrained by flooding inundation which reinforces the strategic importance of other centre zoned land in Gympie in supporting commercial and retail services for the local community. Gympie's riverside location presents a range of opportunities to address the Mary River through active transport linkages between the CBD and river's edge as well as supporting adjoining recreation areas and public open spaces with a high level of amenity.

More broadly, Gympie is characterised by its diverse rural, urban, coastal and hinterland setting, and its retention of historical heritage features established during goldmining and timber milling ventures. Rural settlements such as Imbil, Kilkivan and Goomeri to the west of Gympie play an important role in the terms of supporting local rural-based industries and small scale tourism whilst retaining their existing small-town character.

Coastal settlements such as Rainbow Beach, Tin Can Bay and Cooloola Cove are significant centres of population and tourist growth building on traditional industrial strengths of timber, fishing and boating industries. Rainbow Beach is a key tourist gateway to K'gari (Fraser Island), Cooloola National Park / Double Island Point and Inskip Point.

Disaster resilience (flooding) and topography has been identified as a key consideration along with managing the expansion of industrial and agricultural uses adjacent to rural and residential uses within the Draft Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan 2022. Implications of the highway bypass on future settlement pattern and infrastructure serviceability is also noted as a key planning priority facing the region.

The DTMR project landing page provides useful background information on the project including projected traffic volume metrics and visualisations of the proposed interchanges currently under construction. The \$1 billion Section D: Woondum to Curra (C2CD) project is a new 26km, 4-lane divided highway between the existing Bruce Highway interchange at Woondum, south of Gympie and Curra. It is noted that the Gympie Bypass is due for completion in mid-2024 subject to weather and construction conditions.

Key headline benefits of the project articulated on the project landing page include:

- Improve safety and capacity through the separation of long-distance traffic from local traffic. This will reduce traffic volumes on the highway travelling through Gympie, with around 50% less heavy vehicles
- Improve traffic flow, as the upgrade will avoid 53 intersections (including 9 signalised intersections)
- Significantly improve flood immunity compared with the old highway, which has traditionally experienced frequent closures in the Gympie CBD and north and south of Gympie due to flooding
- Improve travel times by having the new highway posted at 110km/h (currently the highway is 80km/h and 60km/h through Gympie).

The Cooroy to Curra project has been one of Queensland's highest priority road projects and will provide improved safety, flood resilience and capacity along the Bruce Highway – bringing significant opportunity for Gympie.

In light of this opportunity the study area for this Strategy includes areas immediately surrounding the existing Bruce Highway corridor and the new Bruce Highway corridor between the proposed Woondum and Curra interchanges as shown in Figure 1.

The Strategy places equal importance on the opportunities and challenges within the existing Bruce Highway alignment running through the outskirts of Gympie CBD whilst addressing land use changes associated with the new Bruce Highway alignment from Woondum to Curra. In this regard, a proposed framework of planning, urban design and landscaping outcomes have been devised for the existing and new Bruce Highway alignment. While it is appreciated that land use and traffic implications of Section D: Woondum to Curra may be realised outside of the existing and new Bruce Highway corridors this Strategy focuses on the places and spaces immediately surrounding the existing and new Bruce Highway alignments.

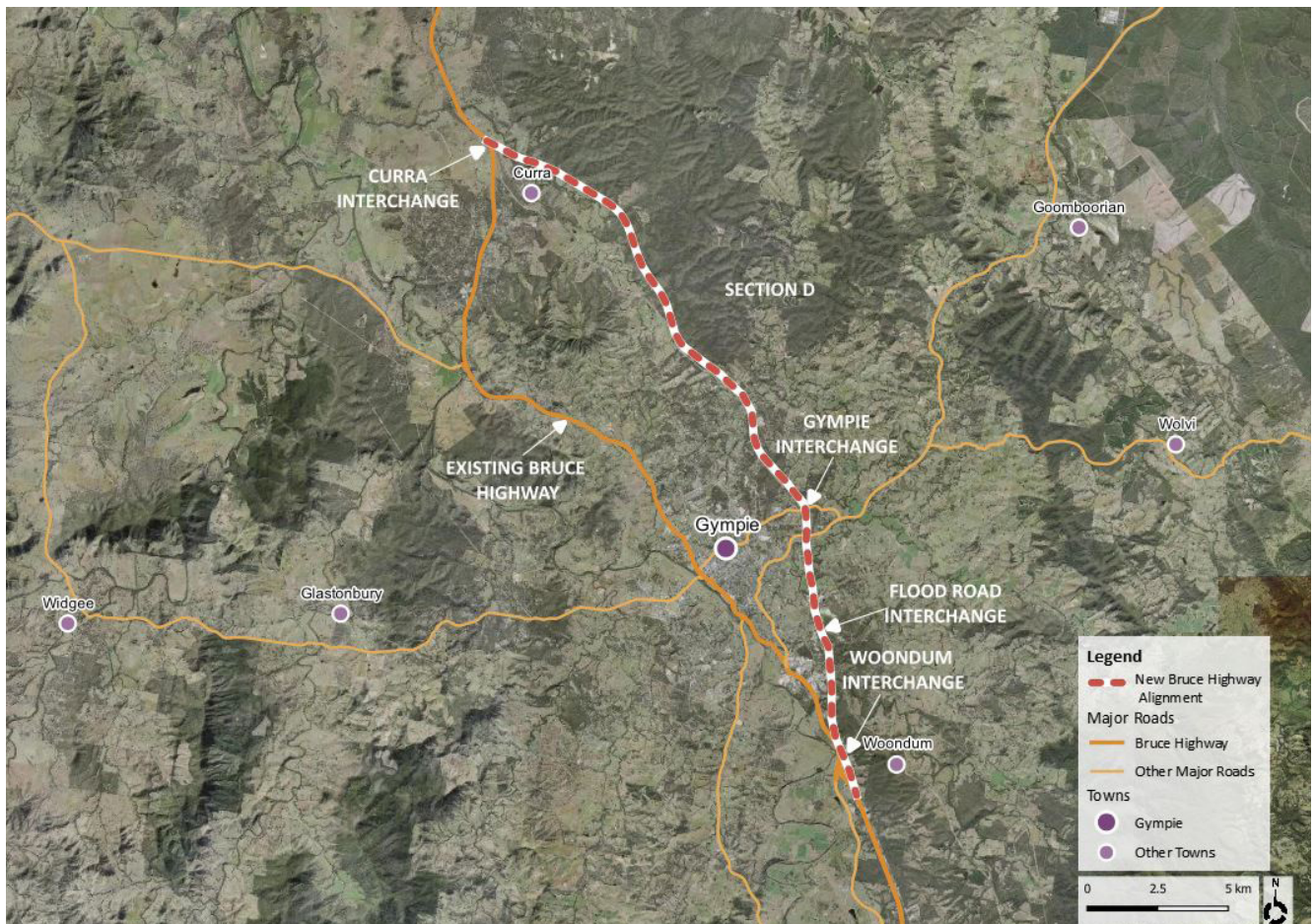


Figure 01: Study Area - Bruce Highway Upgrade Response Strategy

The C2CD will include four interchanges, including two new all movement interchanges at Flood Road and Gympie Connection Road. Delivering the four interchanges will ensure sufficient capacity to meet growing demands for long-term transport across the region. The key features of each interchange are summarised below.

For reference, the final design layout of the C2CD is shown below in Figure 2 and Figure 3 for the Woondum to Sandy Creek Road and Sandy Creek Road to Curra sections respectively.

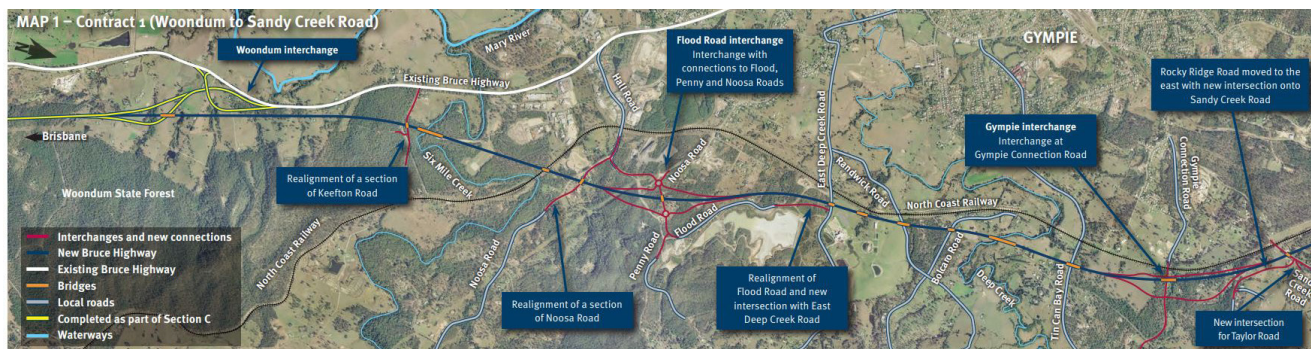


Figure 02: Bruce Highway Upgrade - Woondum to Sandy Creek Road (Source: TMR)



Figure 03: Bruce Highway Upgrade - Sandy Creek Road to Curra (Source: TMR)

1.2.1 Woondum Interchange

A new interchange at Woondum is proposed to be constructed south of the existing connection to the (old) Bruce Highway. The Woondum Interchange will be the southern-most Bruce Highway exit to enter Gympie and is likely to retain a high volume of local traffic, particularly local residents accessing southern suburbs of Gympie.

1.2.2 New Flood Road interchange

The new Flood Road interchange will aid movements at Flood Road to cater for local and industry traffic, enabling heavy vehicles to access commercial and industrial areas east and west of the new highway (refer Figure 4). The interchange will act as a key entry point for East Deep Creek industrial areas to aid the movements of businesses such as Nolan Meats.

1.2.3 New Gympie Interchange

The new Gympie interchange will be constructed at Gympie Connection Road to cater for commuters travelling to Gympie or the Cooloola Coast from the new highway. Traffic signals will be located at each exit ramp and entry ramp intersection with Gympie Connection Road to manage safe flow of traffic between the new highway and the local road network. The Gympie interchange will create a new entry to the Gympie CBD to the west, and Tin Can Bay and coastal settlements to the east.

1.2.4 New Curra Interchange

The new Curra interchange will be constructed just north of Curra to connect the new 4-lane highway with the existing 2-lane Bruce Highway, adjacent to the North Coast Railway Line. The interchange will be to the north of the existing Harvey Siding Road and Bruce Highway intersection. Connections will be made back to Harvey Siding and Ashford Roads for local traffic.

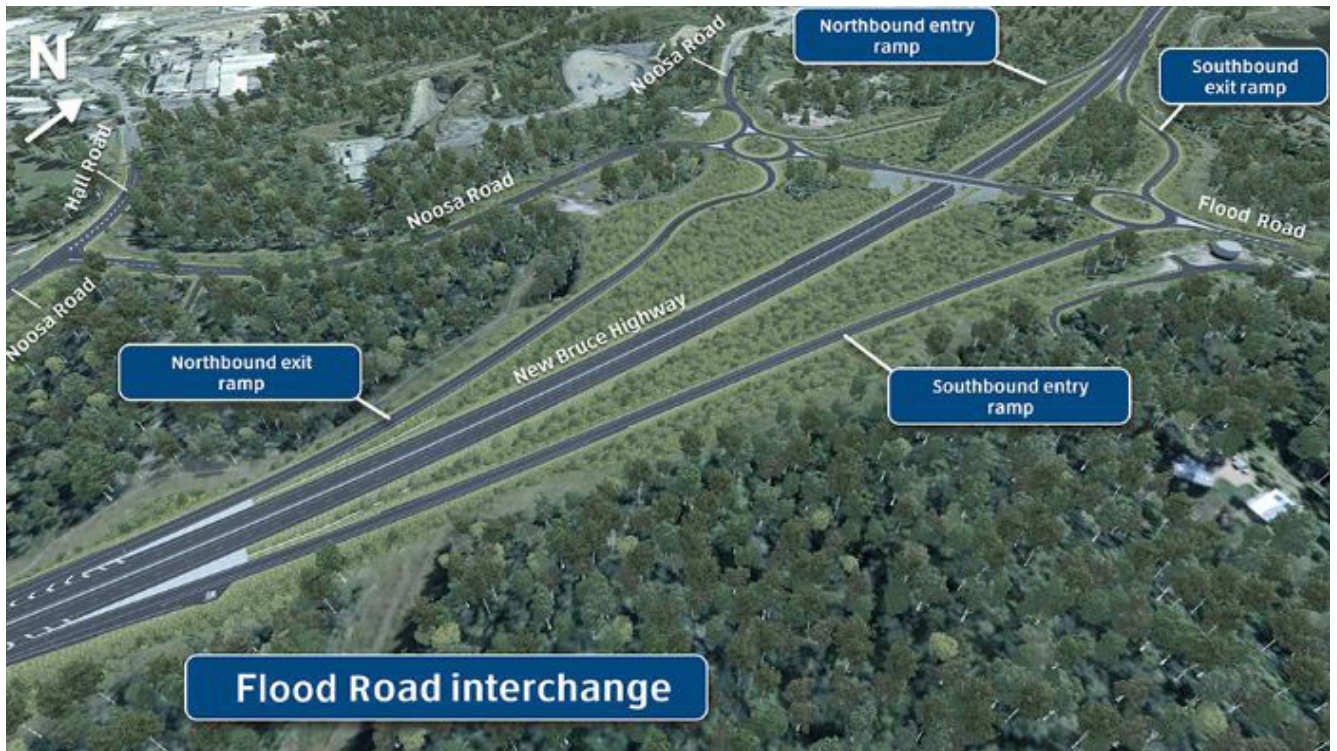


Figure 04: New Flood Road interchange. Source: DTMR 2022

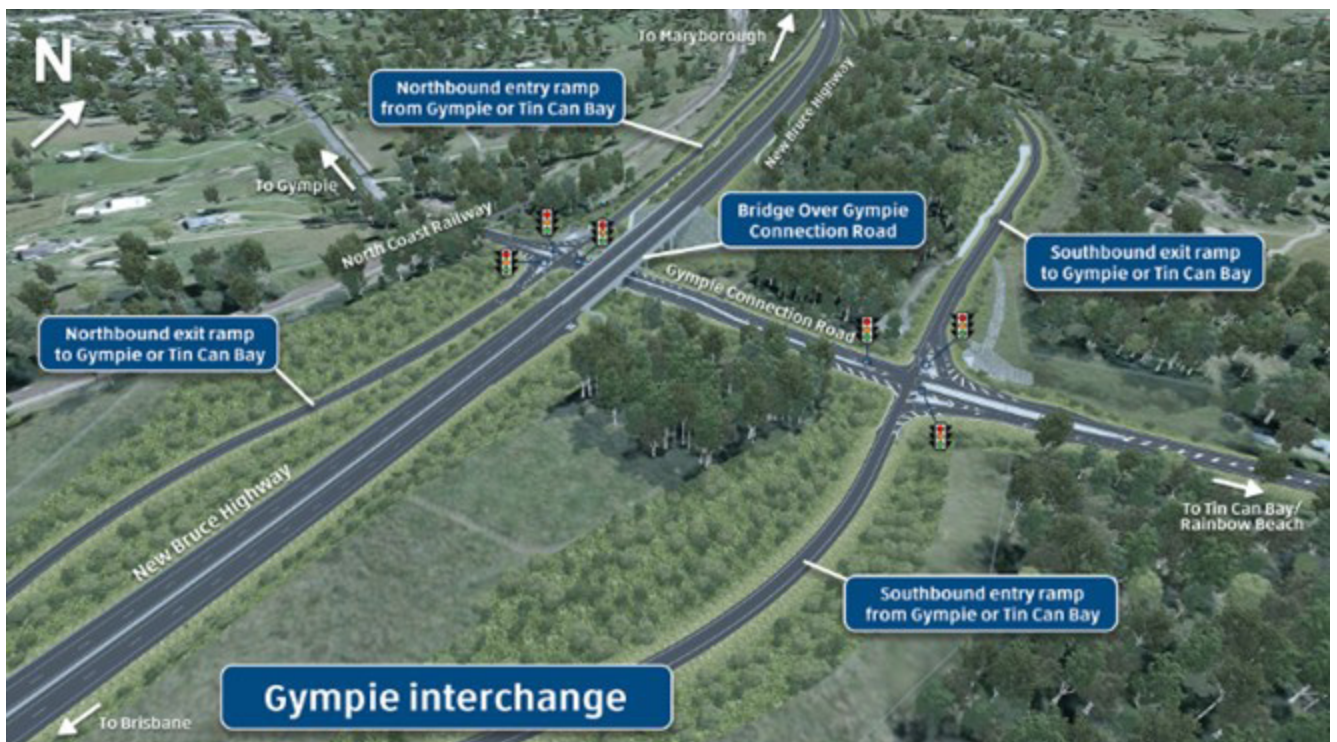


Figure 05: New Gympie interchange. Source: DTMR 2022

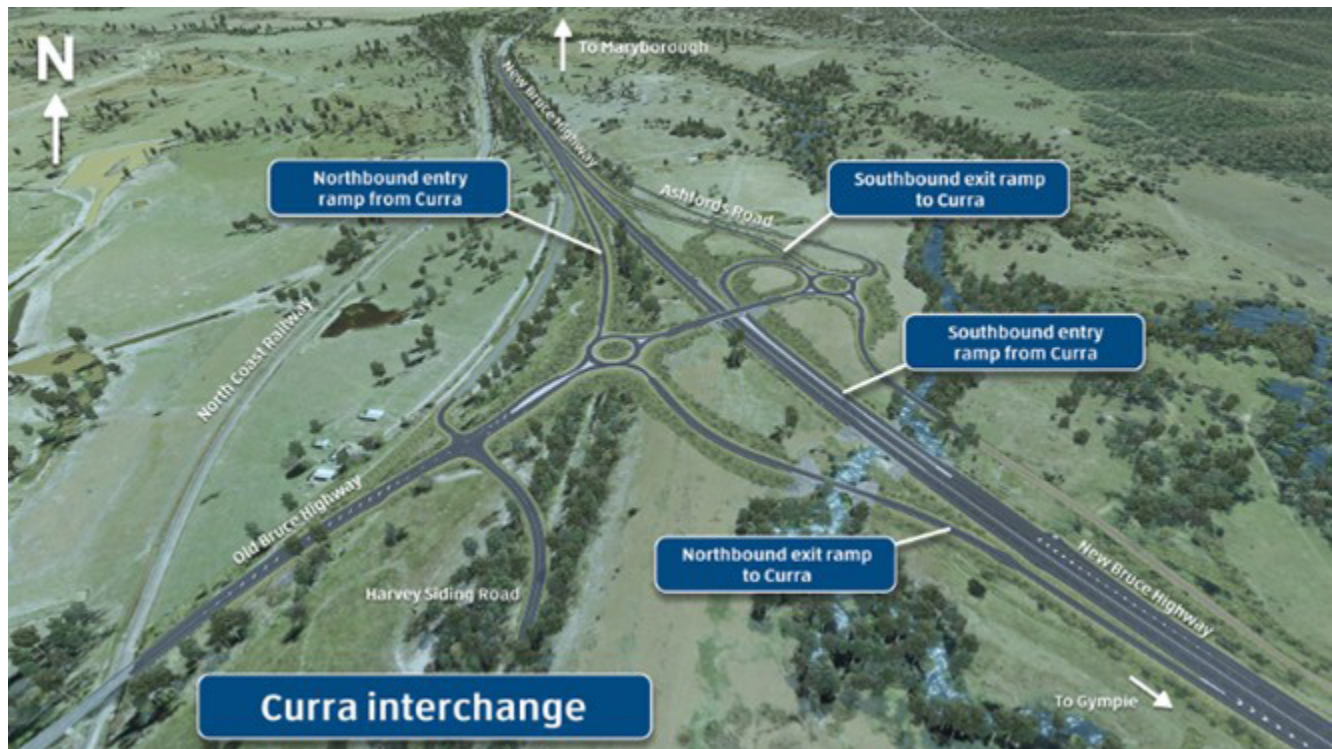


Figure 06: New Curra interchange. Source: DTMR 2022

2.0 BACKGROUND REVIEW & POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Overview

A detailed review of the State and Council policy context has been undertaken, as it relates to the Strategy. Other relevant technical documents, including the Gympie Traffic Report prepared by Pekol Traffic and Transport, have been reviewed to inform the context for the Strategy.

A summary of findings from the background review and the relevance of each piece of work to the Strategy have been outlined below.

2.2 State Planning Policy Documents

2.2.1 Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan 2011

Gympie is identified as a Major regional activity centre in the Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan 2011 Centres hierarchy. The Regional Plan reinforces Gympie's role as a key centre of commerce and urban activity which provides a range of higher order services for Gympie and surrounds. The Regional Plan recognises that two key areas of urban settlements have been established within Gympie, separated by the Mary River. The eastern extent of Gympie is extensively developed for commercial, industrial, health and residential uses focused around the CBD. The western extent of Gympie is accommodating significant residential growth, primarily realised through the ongoing development contemporary housing estates supported by small to medium scale community and commercial activities at the suburb of Southside.

East Deep Creek is identified as a key employment growth area for Gympie region with future uses predominantly envisaged to include industrial activities building on existing uses including the Nolan Meats abattoir. The realignment of the Bruce Highway through East Deep Creek and the proximity of the Flood Road interchange requires detailed analysis and planning to ensure supporting infrastructure and the local road network has sufficient capacity to accommodate increased traffic movements and mitigate amenity impacts on local areas.

The existing Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan highlights the importance of the Bruce Highway as a major interregional transport link for the region and references potential opportunities associated with the project, including long-term industrial expansion. The Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan also references the need for appropriate planning to ensure access and resolution of potential conflicts in relation to reverse amenity issues.

The Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan 2011 will be superseded by the Draft Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan 2022 when finalised and enacted, however; it highlights the fact that the Bypass has been long planned for and has been influencing land use and infrastructure decisions over a long period of time. The Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan 2011 cited the potential opportunity for large footprint industries and logistics and transport operations to establish in proximity to the highway as a direct response to the bypass. This may be realised through industry investigation areas including East Deep Creek and Curra.

2.2.2 Draft Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan 2022

The Draft Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan 2022 has been released for public consultation from 8 November 2022 until 24 February 2023 to enable the community, business and industry to have their say in informing the final Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan.

The Draft WBBRP recognises that Gympie acts as a gateway to SEQ and provides a diverse range of commercial, industrial and social services for the WBB Region. The Draft WBBRP recognises that increasing development pressure from the Sunshine Coast and SEQ, more broadly, will have long term implications on forecast residential development scenarios.

The following opportunities and considerations have been identified in the context of existing and future settlement patterns and housing types in WBB:

Draft Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan 2022

- Opportunities:
 - Consolidation of existing urban area and renewal of old housing stock
 - Increasing population creep from SEQ – potential to become a dormitory suburb
 - Tree-change attributes within closer proximity of major centres
- Considerations:
 - Disaster resilience (flooding) and topography
 - Coastal protections – particularly turtles and shorebirds
 - Implications of the highway bypass on future settlement pattern and infrastructure serviceability
 - Managing Expansion of industrial and agricultural uses adjacent to residential and rural residential uses
 - Role and location of short term accommodation to meet visitor and key/temporary worker demand.

The Draft Regional Plan identifies the opportunity for Gympie to capture industry from SEQ and establish itself as an incubator for new and expanding industrial activities including:

- Large format medium and high impact industry
- Freight and logistics
- Wood products (including chemical extraction)
- Food and beverage products: processing, manufacturing and packaging.

The implications of the Gympie Bypass on future settlement pattern and infrastructure serviceability is acknowledged within the Draft Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan's strategic priorities. The Draft Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan 2022 identifies Gympie North, including the industrial precinct investigation area to the north of Curra, as an industrial precinct of regional significance that will capitalise on its proximity to the Gympie Bypass as a significant freight route (refer to Figure 7).

An infrastructure priority under the Regional responses section of the draft Regional Plan 2022 that is directly relevant to the project is 'locational signage'. As outlined, entry and wayfinding signage should be installed at key locations and designed

in a manner that illustrates the pride communities have in their towns. As the 'front door' to many communities, entry and wayfinding signage is a critical component in improving community visibility and conveying the unique identity of the region's communities' (Draft Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan 2022, pg. 51).

2.2.3 Queensland Freight Strategy and Freight Action Plan 2020 - 2022

The Queensland Freight Strategy (QFS) was released in 2019 and is a shared vision for the state's freight system that is intended to guide policy, planning and investment decision making over the next ten years. The strategy will be implemented through two year rolling Queensland Freight Action Plans (QFAP). The Queensland Freight Action Plan 2020 – 2022 builds on five pillars in the QFS – Build Effective Partnerships, Unlock Economic Opportunity, Smarter Connectivity and Access, A Resilient Freight System and Safer Freight Movements.

Intrinsic to the QFS and QFAP is the recognition that the freight system fulfils the critical role of linking communities, local industry, regions and Queensland to the rest of Australia and internationally. The freight system is vital for employment, competitiveness, and economic growth.

A key action under the Resilient Freight System pillar is to continue long-term planning supporting the sustainability of the freight system. This includes the delivery of the Bruce Highway Upgrade Project to support increased environmental resilience.

Another key action of relevance to the Bruce Highway Upgrade Response Strategy identified under the pillar of Smarter Connectivity and Access is to enhance rail freight access and performance on the metropolitan and regional networks by investigating incentives and opportunities to achieve common user / multi-user access on significant rail infrastructure, including freight terminals.

The Bruce Highway Bypass Alignment intersects the North Coast Railway Line and the opportunity to establish a multi-modal freight terminal has been identified for Curra which would capitalise on improved freight efficiency associated with the Gympie Bypass.

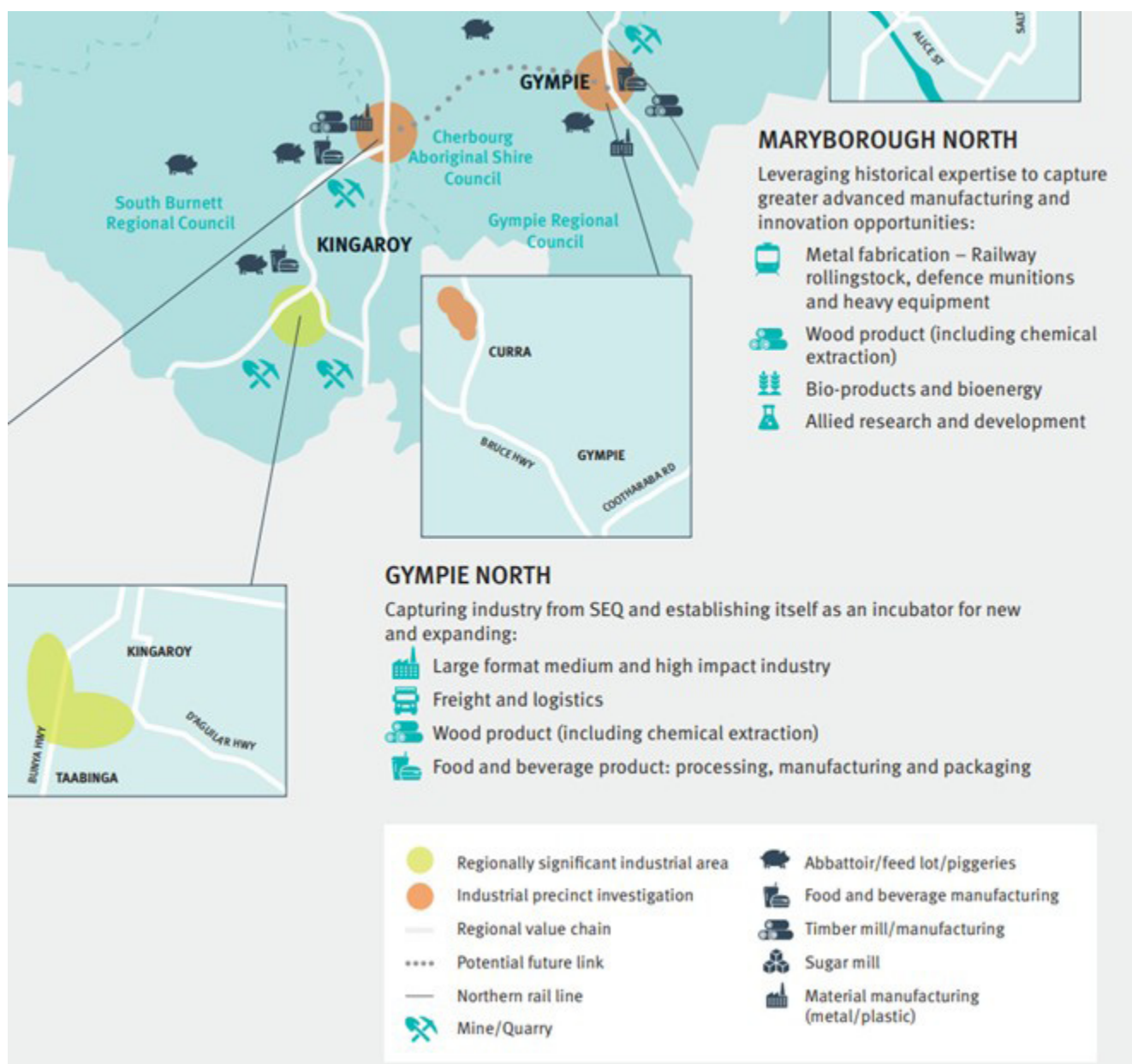


Figure 07: Draft Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan - Industrial precincts and freight routes of regional significance, pg.63.
Source: Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning

2.2.4 Wide Bay Burnett Regional Transport Plan 2019

The Wide Bay Burnett Regional Transport Plan (the Plan) outlines a shared direction for shaping the region's transport system over the next 15 years. The purpose of the plan is to set out regional transport priorities and actions for developing the transport system in a way that supports regional goals for the community, economy and environment.

The Bruce Highway, under the Bruce Highway Upgrade Program, has been a focus for road network investment in the region in recent years including Cooroy to Curra Section D. The efficient movement of freight is identified as a key challenge for the region. **The Transport Plan specifically identifies the opportunity to improve supply chain efficiency in the region through improved freight transfer opportunities between road and rail in Gympie.**

Completion of Cooroy to Curra – Section D is identified by the Regional Transport Plan as a major milestone in realising some of the key priorities under the Bruce Highway Action Plan 'Out of the Crisis' (October 2012), to improve safety, flood immunity and capacity along Queensland's most critical transport corridor.

2.3 Council Policy Documents

2.3.1 Gympie Regional Council Planning Scheme 2013 (V 3.0)

It is important to understand how the Woondum to Curra Section of the Bruce Highway is currently referenced within the existing Gympie Regional Council Planning Scheme V.3 Strategic Framework and consider what changes are needed to reflect the updated road hierarchy and land use arrangements and how these can be integrated into the new Gympie Regional Council Planning Scheme currently being drafted.

The Strategic Framework identifies the potential for the major expansion of industrial development in proximity to the Cooroy-Curra bypass alignment to be prioritised and adequately linked to the state's road and freight network. The Strategic Framework also recognises that the public investment in the Cooroy-Curra bypass needs to be protected from

the intrusive effects of incompatible development. The new Bruce Highway alignment is reflected in the Gympie Planning Scheme 2013's Strategic Plan Map as shown in Figure 8 below. The Settlement pattern also acknowledges the emerging concentration of larger scale and higher impact industry around Glanmire and promotes the logical extension north alongside the Bruce Highway Bypass route. The East Deep Creek Local Development Area Precinct is also specifically recognised as an area with the potential to support a range of future medium and high impact industrial uses subject to buffering of surrounding non-residential uses. East Deep Creek would directly benefit from the proposed Flood Road all access interchange, enabling heavy vehicles to access commercial and industrial areas east and west of the new highway.

It is worth noting that the Gympie Regional Council Planning Scheme 2013 is dated and the Strategic Framework therefore does not capture recent strategic land use opportunities identified through Council studies including the Curra industry investigation area. The strategic land use policy intent of the draft new Gympie Regional Council Planning Scheme will need to reflect the future land use intent of key areas that have an interface with the Bruce Highway Bypass such as Curra, East Deep Creek and Kybong. This will be informed by findings from a range of background technical studies including this Bruce Highway Upgrade Response Strategy.

In summary, the Gympie Regional Council Planning Scheme 2013 includes reference to Bruce Highway Bypass alignment within the Strategic Framework and specifically references the opportunity to prioritise the expansion of industrial development in close proximity to the bypass and adequately link proposed development to the state's road and rail freight network. East Deep Creek is specifically referenced as a potential industrial expansion area; however, Curra is currently denoted as a Rural residential area and the potential opportunity to accommodate a major freight / industrial hub is not captured.

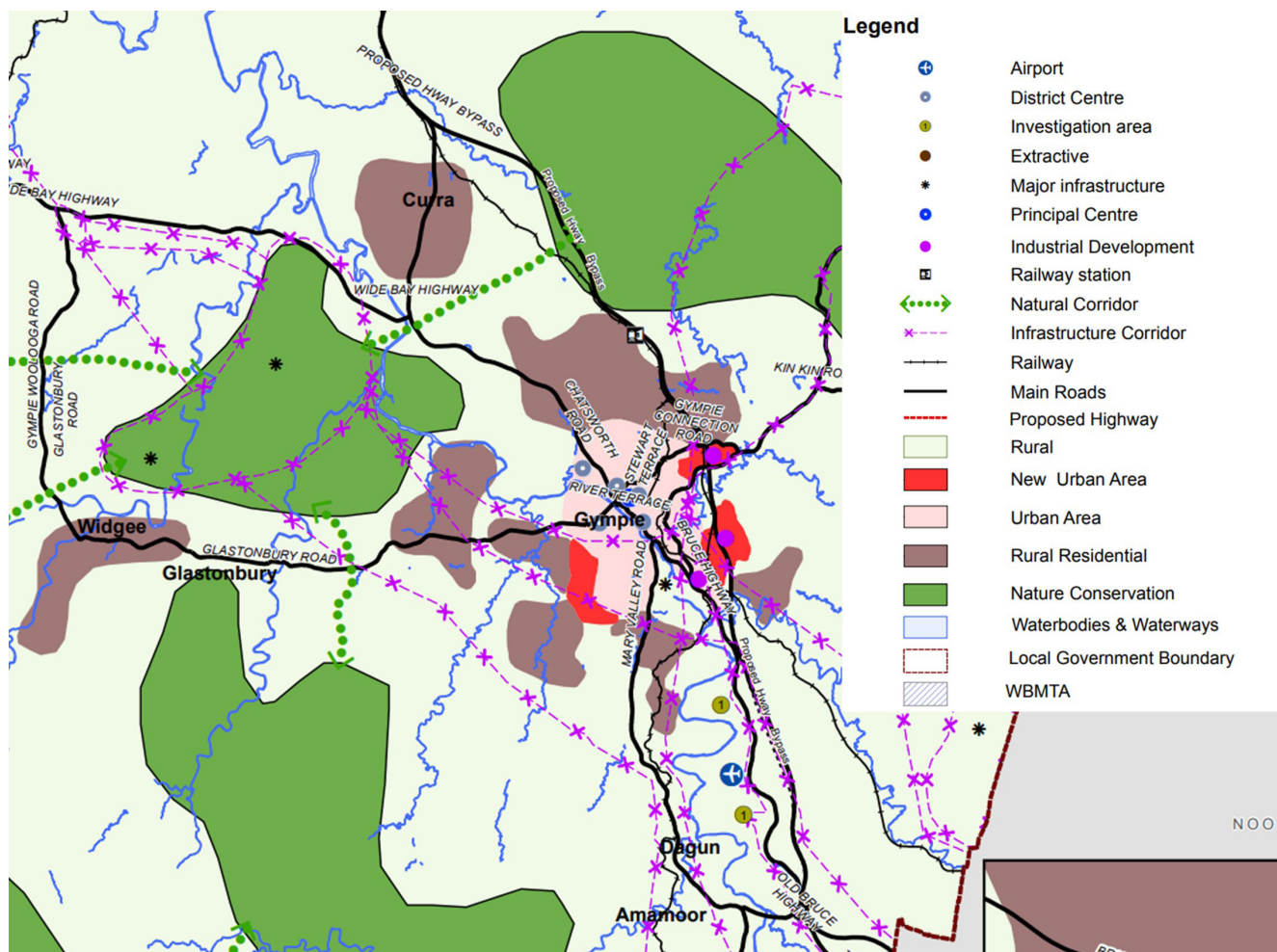


Figure 08: Gympie Regional Council Planning Scheme 2013 - Strategic Framework Map. Source: Gympie Regional Council

The draft new Gympie Regional Council Planning Scheme will need to reflect the strategic land use intent for the abovementioned areas within the Strategic Framework based on policy positions established through the background technical studies. This may also include changes to underlying land use zonings and precincts in specific locations to facilitate the strategic direction.

2.3.2 Gympie Region Community Plan 2030

The Community Plan, based on resident input, aims to maintain and enhance the many assets of the Region and also guide further improvement in the economy, environment and social aspects of the community.

It specifically aims to:

- Provide a common set of priorities for the Region.
- Guide decisions and investment.
- Further mobilise a range of organisations and agencies in supporting the infrastructure, services and vitality of the community.

Whilst dated, the Gympie Region Community Plan 2030 released in 2011 identified an upgrade of the Bruce Highway between Cooroy to Curra as a planned infrastructure project to meet the needs of the community. The Community Plan recognised that an improved major road network will allow easy, safe and convenient travel to Brisbane, South East Queensland, as well as centres to the east, west and north.

2.3.3 Gympie Corporate Plan 2022-2027

The Gympie Corporate Plan is an overarching strategic planning document that sets strategic priorities and pathways for the Gympie LGA over the next five years. Key priorities relevant to the Bruce Highway Upgrade Response Strategy include advocacy to the state and federal governments for improved infrastructure outcomes for the region and the facilitation of integration of land use and infrastructure planning to meet future needs and diverse population and economic growth. **The Strategy presents an opportunity to support the achievement of strategic priorities and pathways identified in the Gympie Corporate Plan.**

2.3.4 Gympie Town Centre Streetscape and Urban Design Palette

The Gympie Town Centre Streetscape and Urban Design Palette sets out a preferred and consistent design direction, principles and intent for streetscape materials and furnishings to be used in the Town Centre public realm. The central purpose of this document is to provide a consistent overall direction for streetscape materials and furnishings to be considered and applied along Mary Street, identified community focal points, adjacent streets and open space.

Reflective of the views of the community established through community engagement for the Town Centre Branding and Marketing Strategy, the palette aims to meld the existing unique local heritage and character of Gympie and the contemporary aspirations of the community. The goal is to create a positive reputation and user experience, as well as community pride in place.

A key intent of this palette is to ensure that short term replacement of furnishings is cohesive with an overall preferred town centre palette and streetscape design direction that will be realised over a longer time frame. Key considerations for new materials and items in the palette included:

- Quality, Longevity and Continuity
- Maintenance and Sustainability
- Comfort and Functionality
- Contribution to achieving the preferred character
- Safety and Access.

The proposed design directions outlined in the Streetscape and Urban Design Palette should be adhered to for future landscaping, urban design, signage and wayfinding interventions recommended in the response implementation strategy.

2.3.5 Open Space and Recreation Plan 2016

The Gympie Regional Council Open Space and Recreation Plan is Council's key policy document for the planning, development and management of Council controlled open space. The Plan provides a strategic framework to ensure the ongoing protection and enhancement of the existing open space and responds to the open space needs of the future population while supporting the vision for the Gympie Region as the 'natural choice to live, work and play'. The Open Space and Recreation Strategy clearly highlights the community's desire for improved pedestrian and cycling connections between open spaces and improved access to the Mary River. **The Open Space and Recreation Plan 2016 is currently under review as part of the wider Gympie Planning Scheme Review Project.**

The Strategy presents an opportunity to strengthen connections between the CBD, Nelson Reserve and the Mary River through targeted pedestrian interventions that capitalise on the projected reduction in the volume of through traffic using the existing Bruce Highway when the Gympie Bypass opens.

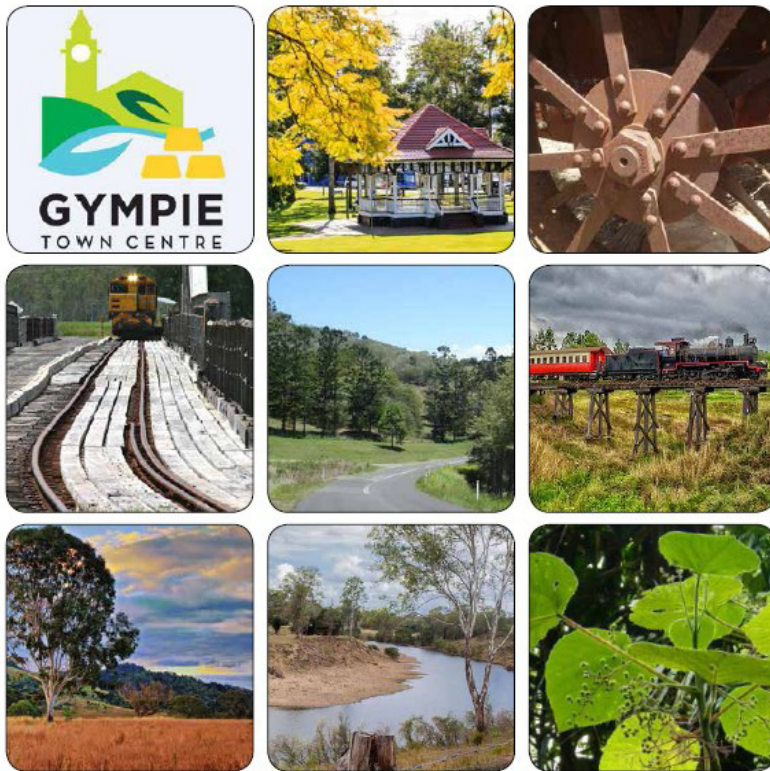


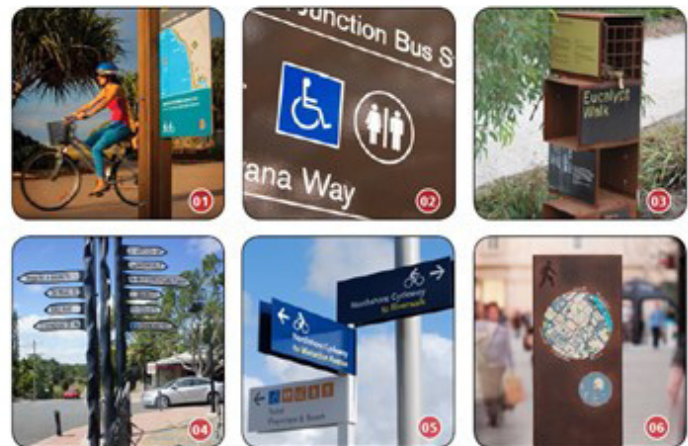
Figure 09: Suggested colour palette. Source; Gympie Town Centre Streetscapes and Urban Design Palette, 2015.

SIGNAGE AND LIGHTING

Signage

An overall signage strategy / style guide is required for the Town Centre to consider all types of signage including wayfinding, information, regulatory and interpretive signage. Signage should use universally recognised symbols and adopt particular colours dependant upon purpose. Wayfinding signage should focus on getting private vehicles to parking areas and pedestrians to amenities, parks, shopping areas and key services. There is room for creative approaches and to integrate artwork into signage elements. Signage should be robust and vandal resistant. Reverse-printed polycarbonate is an option that should be considered to reduce vandalism and ongoing costs.

- 01 Timber clad post with cantilevered sign panel
- 02 Wayfinding sign panel
- 03 Creative identity / interpretive signage element
- 04 Creative forged metal street directional signage
- 05 Post mounted wayfinding signage system
- 06 Wayfinding map panel



Lighting

Quality lighting of heritage building facades and colourful or patterned lighting effects on paving could be used to enhance night time vibrancy and interest.

Figure 10: Signage and lighting design guidance. Source: Gympie Town Centre Urban Design and Streetscape Palette

2.3.6 Gympie Region Tourism Strategy 2019 - 2024

As of 2017, Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast accounted for almost 70 per cent of all domestic holiday visitors to Gympie. The Bruce Highway plays an important role as a domestic tourist accommodation route.

The Gympie Region Tourism Strategy (2019 – 2024) aims to capitalise on the Sunshine Coast's growing reputation as a national and international cycling route that connects to other parts of the Gympie Region and to the Sunshine Coast.

A reduction in traffic volumes, and in particular, freight movements may facilitate a safer environment for cyclists on the existing Bruce Highway which could be added through interventions such as dedicated cycling lanes. Broader opportunities exist to improve regional cycling connectivity between the Gympie CBD, Mary Valley and Noosa. It is noted that a feasibility study is currently being carried out to extend the Mary Valley Rail Trail between Imbil and Amamoor.

2.3.7 Gympie Town Centre Revitalisation Stage 2 – Nelson Reserve and Memorial Park Master Plan

The intention of the master plan is to create a pedestrian friendly parkland precinct that links the Nelson Reserve and Memorial Park greenspaces with Mary Street. The Master Plan is important in the context of pedestrian linkages between Mary Street, green spaces and the Bruce Highway. **The Master Plan includes the proposal for a landscaped buffer along the southern edge of Nelson Reserve to improve views from the highway and to improve amenity within the parkland.**

2.3.8 Albert Park and One Mile Sport and Recreation Precinct

The Albert Park and One Mile Sport and Recreation Precinct called for improved pedestrian connectivity between the Mary River riverwalk, Albert Park and the CBD across the Bruce Highway. The Gympie Bypass may facilitate further opportunities for improved connectivity given the projected reduction in traffic volumes along the old Bruce Highway.

The report also noted that the paths linking Albert Park with the CBD are narrow and don't accommodate multi-use. This project presents an ideal opportunity to improve the pedestrian environment through targeted interventions that change the perception of the existing Bruce Highway from a highway to a 'busy suburban street'.

2.3.9 Gympie Region Walk and Cycle Strategy 2011

The Gympie Region Walk and Cycle Strategy was prepared by GHD in 2011 on behalf of Gympie Regional Council and DTMR and identified a strategic plan for the Gympie Region's future walking and cycling network based on a 20 year timeframe. One of its core aims was to integrate paths and bikeways with other projects e.g. urban expansion, road construction, parks/ open space.

The strategy referenced additional safe crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists as a key priority. The Gympie Bypass is likely to result in an improvement to the feasibility of new pedestrian crossings and on-road bike lanes given the projected 30% (approximate) decrease in traffic volumes along the existing Bruce Highway.



Figure 11: Master Plan of Gympie Town Centre Revitalisation Stage 2

2.3.10 Curra Business Case

The development of a new interchange in the Curra region surrounded by land zoned rural has led to the GRC seeking to define the opportunity to deliver industrial land at this location.

The Draft Curra Business Case (2022) prepared by Development Directive and Better Cities Group identifies Curra as having a strategic potential opportunity to facilitate a regionally significant industrial precinct with the potential to provide:

- Large sites;
- Flexible and customised sites;
- Direct highway/interchange access;
- A future intermodal facility capitalising on the junction between road and rail; and
- A site for potential development of a State Government Industrial Estate (Stage 4 - significant tract of DTMR land holdings) as estates further south are largely built out.

A range of stakeholders were engaged as part of the Business Case including DTMR, Queensland Rail, Pacific National and Economic Development Queensland

The Study recommends that consideration should be given to other land uses around the Curra interchange that could support worker requirements, leverage off the investment in the transport infrastructure and offset infrastructure servicing costs.

Development of a concept plan indicates an ability to manage flood impacts on the site and provide over 300 Ha of developable land in 5 stages. The first stages, 1A and 1B could offer highway industry and industrial land respectively. Industrial development of the site does not align with the Wide Bay Regional Plan or the Gympie Planning Scheme. These documents are both under review and there is the potential opportunity to amend these documents to facilitate this development.

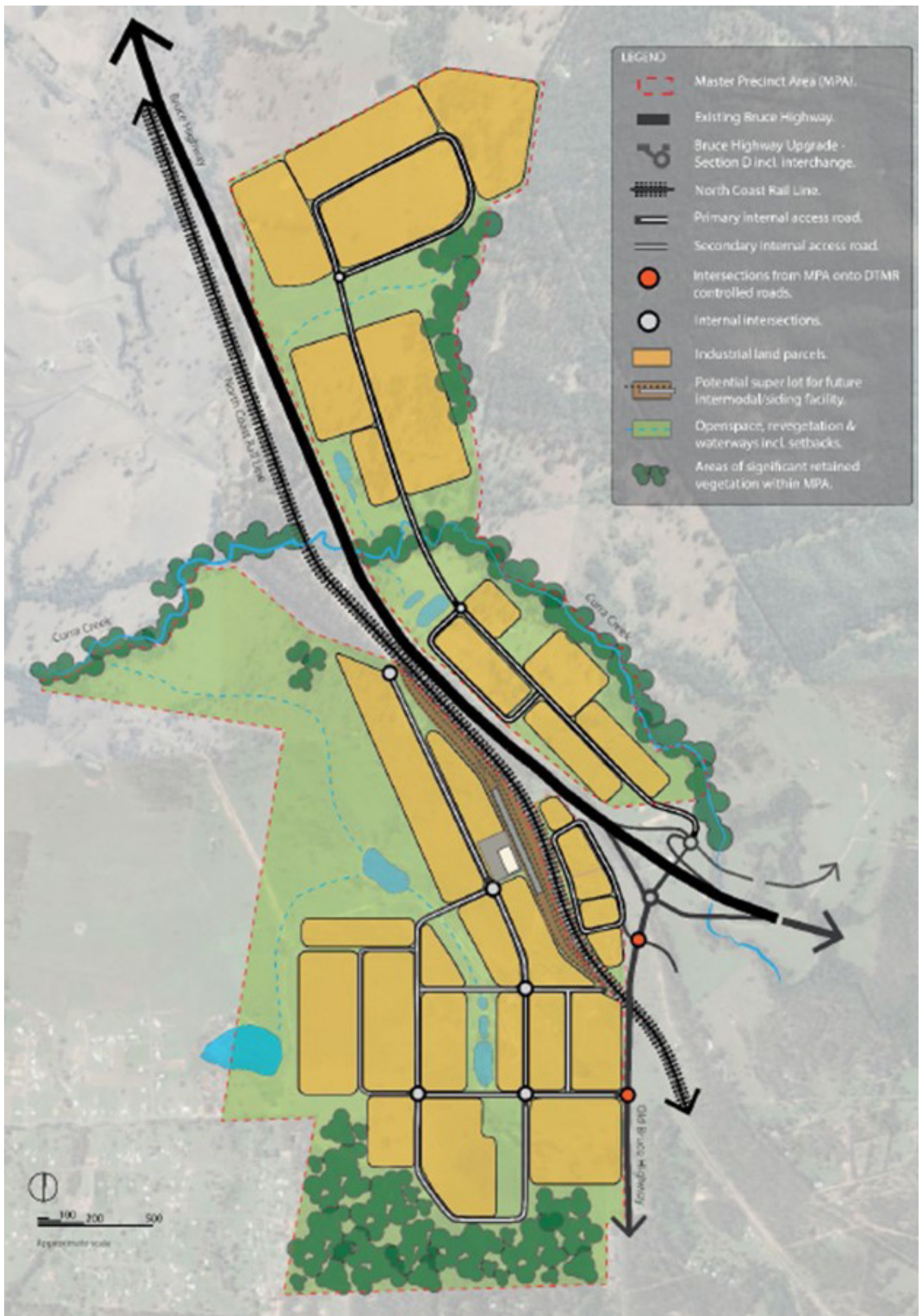


Figure 12: Concept Plan of Master Precinct Area (Source: Curra Business Case, pg. 54)

3.0 TRAFFIC MODELLING ANALYSIS

In September 2018 Pekol Traffic and Transport (PTT) prepared the Gympie Traffic Study. The primary goal of that study was to develop a calibrated peak period traffic model that GRC could use on an ongoing basis to assess the impact of future land use and transport initiatives on traffic operations around Gympie. This was used to identify and prioritise a series of solutions to current and emerging traffic related issues including:

- Intersection upgrades
- Car parking issues around key facilities
- Active transport (i.e. walking and cycling) routes
- Potential new routes
- Local area traffic management (rat running) on selected local streets
- Other local investigations, including local impacts of the new Gympie Bypass

Of particular importance to this project, is the work undertaken to investigate the local impacts of the new Gympie Bypass. Modelling undertaken as part of the Gympie Traffic Study Report was reviewed to inform preparation of this Strategy to better understand the potential impacts and appropriate land use and urban design responses.

3.1 Summary of findings from Gympie Traffic Study Report

With the Gympie Bypass in place, the outputs of the modelling indicated significant traffic volume reductions at the 2036 horizon on the following roads:

- Bruce Highway (length of the Highway in the CBD)
- Tin Can Bay Road (between Station Road and Rifle Range Road)
- Tin Can Bay Road (between Station Road and the Bruce Highway)
- Station Road (between Baker Street and Tozer Street)
- Tozer Street (between Station Road and Stewart Terrace)

The actual changes in traffic volumes from the traffic modelling for both the morning and evening peak periods are shown in Table 1. The morning peak period covers time from 8:00am – 9:00am with the evening peak period covering 3:00pm – 4:00pm. The modelled traffic volumes indicate a significant reduction of traffic on the existing Bruce Highway and connecting roads, such as Tin Can Bay Road. This shift will impact the role and function of the existing highway and change the environment within and directly adjacent to the road corridor.

The report further notes that it will largely be through traffic using the bypass, rather than any local traffic accessing the Gympie CBD. This indicates that the interchanges at Woondum and Curra will play an important role in wayfinding filtering through traffic onto the new Bruce Highway alignment and local or stopping traffic onto the existing Bruce Highway through Gympie.

A diagram illustrating the change in traffic volumes for the morning peak period with the Gympie Bypass is shown in Figure 13.

Figure 14 shows a close-up of the Gympie CBD with the change in traffic volumes as a result of the Gympie Bypass.

Road Section	Morning Peak Period		Evening Peak Period	
	Change in Volume	% Change	Change in Volume	% Change
Bruce Highway (length of Highway in CBD)	-710	-31%	-940	-34%
Tin Can Bay Road (between Station Road and Rifle Range Road)	-130	-34%	-130	-33%
Tin Can Bay Road (between Station Road and the Bruce Highway)	-200	-17%	-230	-16%
Station Road (between Baker Street and Tozer Street)	-60	-8%	-80	-8%
Tozer Street (between Station Road and Stewart Terrace)	-60	-12%	-80	-12%

Table 1: Effect of Gympie Bypass in 2036 (Source:PTT)

3.2 Potential Impacts

Based on the results of the modelling undertaken, more detailed analysis has been undertaken to determine any potential impacts on the amenity of the local road network as a result of the Gympie Bypass. The absolute and percentage change in vehicle volumes on affected roads (as provided by PTT) have been used to calculate the overall vehicle volumes both with and without the Gympie Bypass. Hourly traffic volumes (vph) have been converted to daily traffic volumes (vpd) based on the assumption that peak hourly traffic volumes are generally 10% of daily traffic volumes. Table 2 shows the typical vehicle volume of each affected road section (based on hierarchy) as well as the hourly and daily vehicle volumes for the with and without Gympie Bypass scenarios in 2036.

Based on the outputs of the modelling work undertaken by PTT, it can be seen that by 2036, most of the affected roads will have daily vehicle volumes which are higher than the typical daily vehicle volumes specified in the Gympie Regional Council Planning Scheme. The inclusion of the Gympie Bypass reduces the daily vehicle volumes, however these reduced volumes still exceed the typical vehicle volumes expected based on road hierarchy. It is likely that an overall review of the road hierarchy will need to be undertaken prior to 2036 (the design horizon year of the modelling).

The Gympie Bypass project will also involve the construction of a new Gympie Interchange which will provide access from the new Bruce Highway alignment into Gympie via Gympie Connection Road. Despite the claim made in the PTT report that the bypass will likely only carry through traffic, it is considered likely that there will be a proportion of local traffic also using the Bypass. Although vehicles can access the existing Bruce Highway at the Curra Interchange, it is considered likely that vehicles travelling from the north may remain on the new Bruce Highway alignment and access Gympie via the new Gympie Interchange to avoid traffic lights. This is likely to increase traffic flows between the Gympie interchange and the Gympie CBD along Gympie Connection Road, Stewart Terrace, Horseshoe Bend and Channon Street. These roads are already constrained in terms of their existing design and capacity.



Figure 13: Change in 2036 Morning Peak Period with Bypass (Source: PTT)

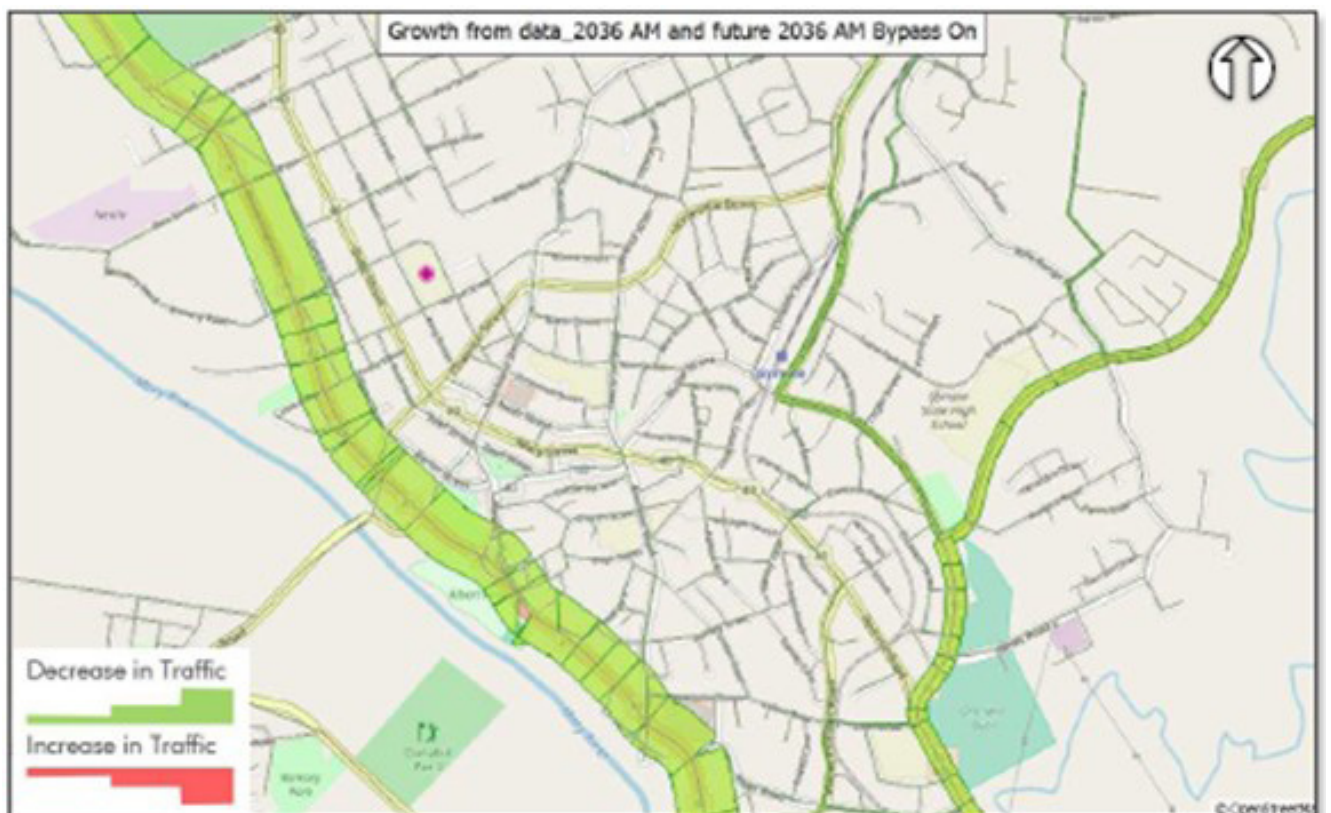


Figure 14: Change in 2036 Morning Peak Period in Gympie CBD with Bypass (Source: PTT)

Road Section	Road Hierarchy	Typical Vehicle Volume (vpd)	Vehicle Volume (without Gympie Bypass)		Vehicle Volume (with Gympie Bypass)	
			AM Peak Period	PM Peak Period	AM Peak Period	PM Peak Period
Bruce Highway (length of Highway in CBD)	State Road	-	2,290 vph	2,765 vph	1,580 vph	1,825 vph
			27,650 vpd		18,250 vpd	
Tin Can Bay Road (between Station Road and Rifle Range Road)	State Road	-	382 vph	394 vph	252 vph	264 vph
			3,940 vpd		2,640 vpd	
Tin Can Bay Road (between Station Road and the Bruce Highway)	State Road	-	1,176 vph	1,438 vph	976 vph	1,208 vph
			14,380 vpd		12,080 vpd	
Station Road (between Baker Street and Tozer Street)	Urban Arterial	6,000	750 vph	1,000 vph	690 vph	920 vph
			10,000 vpd		9,200 vpd	
Tozer Street (between Station Road and Stewart Terrace)	Urban Sub-Arterial	3,500	500 vph	667 vph	440 vph	587 vph
			6,670 vpd		5,870 vpd	

Table 2: Impact of Gympie Bypass on Local Roads (2036) (Source: GRC, PTT, PSA)

4.0 EXISTING SITUATION

The existing Bruce Highway corridor alignment traverses a range of land uses ranging from large tracts of Rural and Rural residential zoned land in the northern extent of the study area corridor from Curra to Chatsworth through to Centre, Open Space, Residential living, Industrial and Limited development (Constrained land) zoned land in proximity to the Gympie CBD. The existing corridor passes through a mix of Medium impact industry, Rural, Open space, Environmental Management and Conservation and Industry Investigation zoned land south of the Gympie CBD from Hall Road to Kybong.

The new 26km Gympie Bypass alignment predominantly traverses Rural, Rural residential and Environmental Management and Conservation zoned land in the northern and southern extents of the alignment. Notably, the alignment passes through the East Deep Creek Local Development Area which is a strategically important industrial precinct consisting of a mix of Medium and High impact industry zoned land parcels. This precinct will benefit from improved access via the new highway interchange at Flood Road.

Low impact industry, Rural residential and Residential living areas in proximity to Tin Can Bay Road and Gympie Connection Road will benefit from improved vehicular access associated with the new Gympie Connection Road Highway interchange.

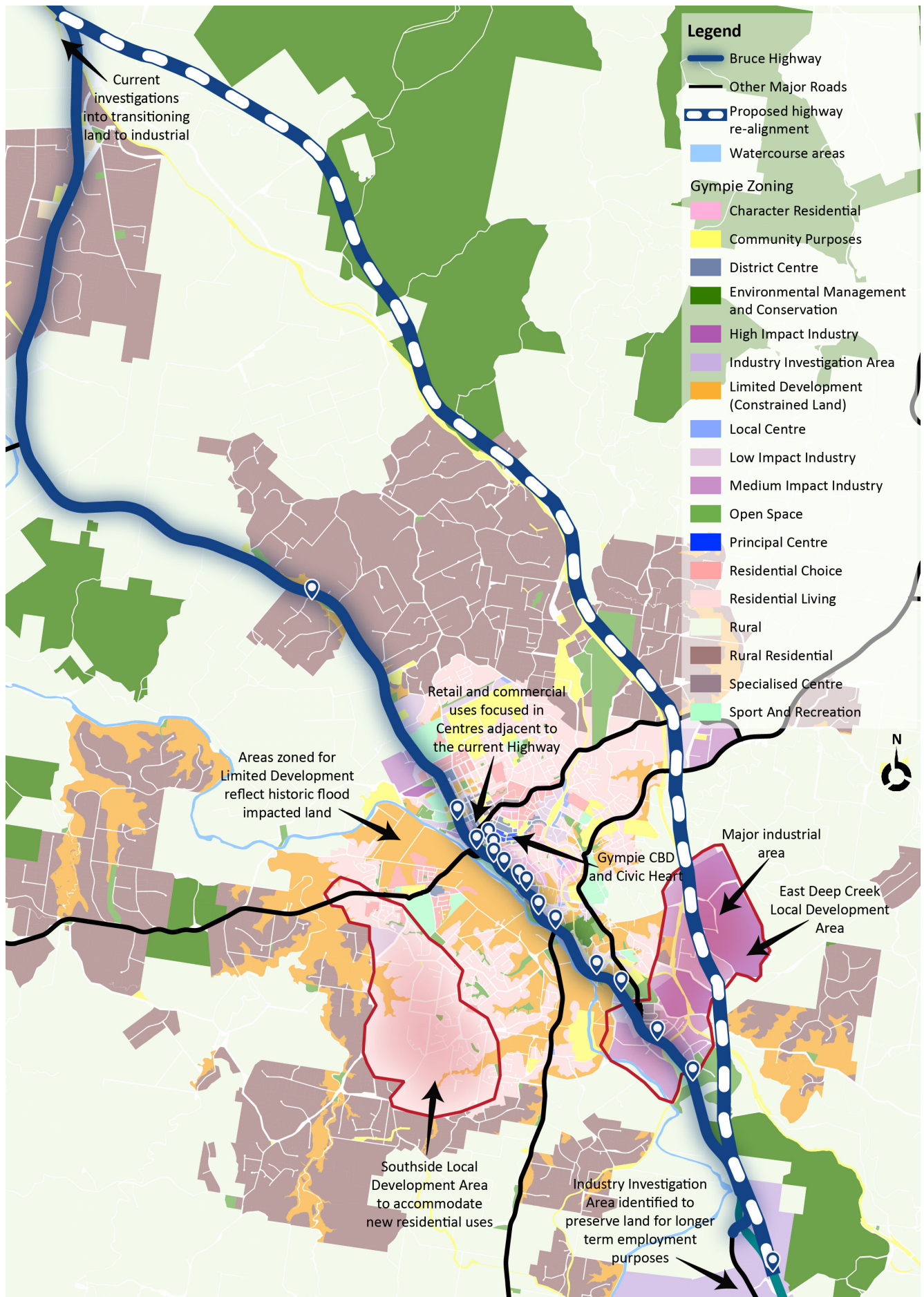


Figure 15: Existing Bruce Highway corridor and new Bruce Highway alignment

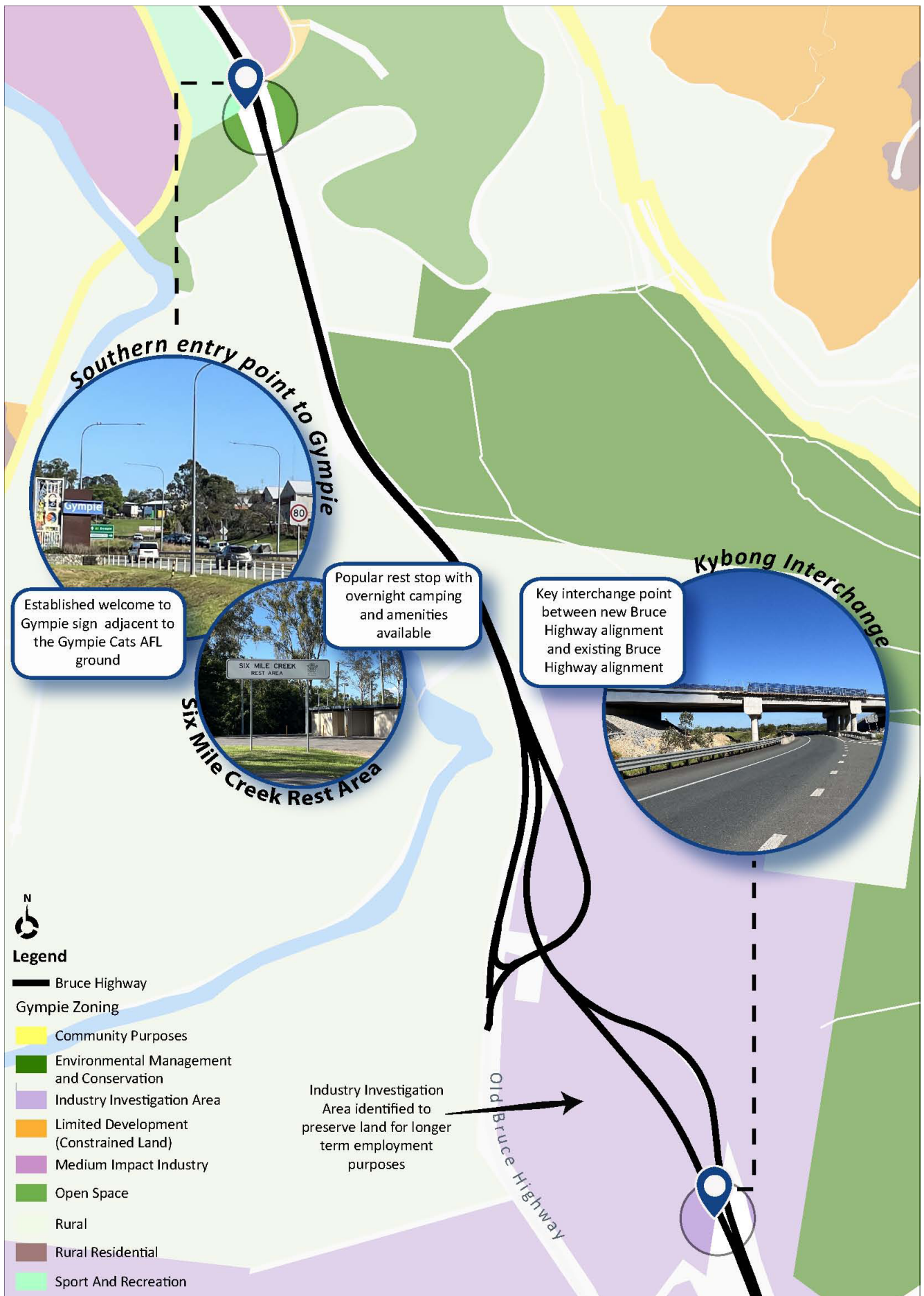


Figure 16: Existing features along the Bruce Highway corridor – Kybong Interchange to Six Mile Creek

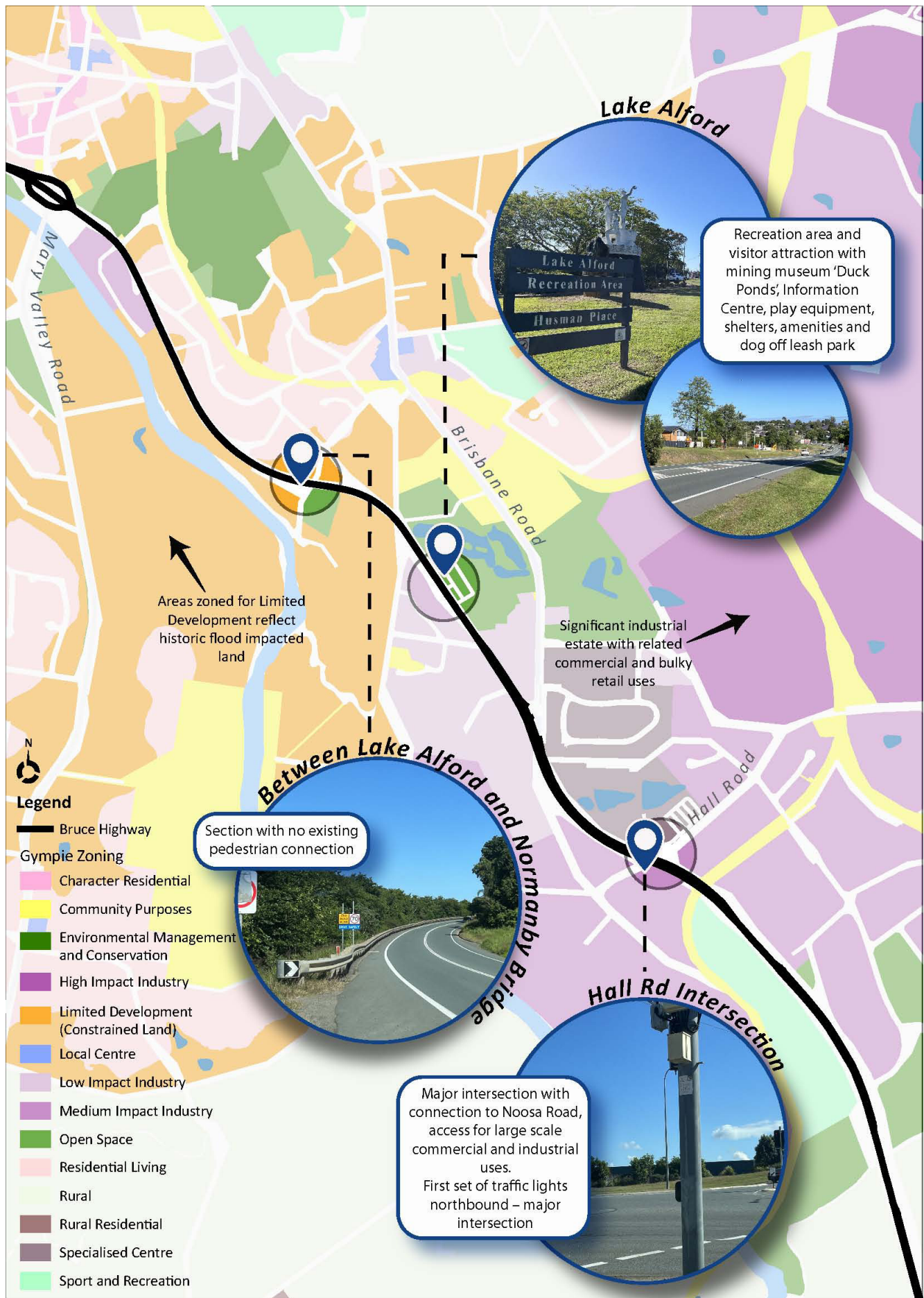


Figure 17: Existing features along the Bruce Highway corridor – Hall Road Intersection to Mary Valley Road

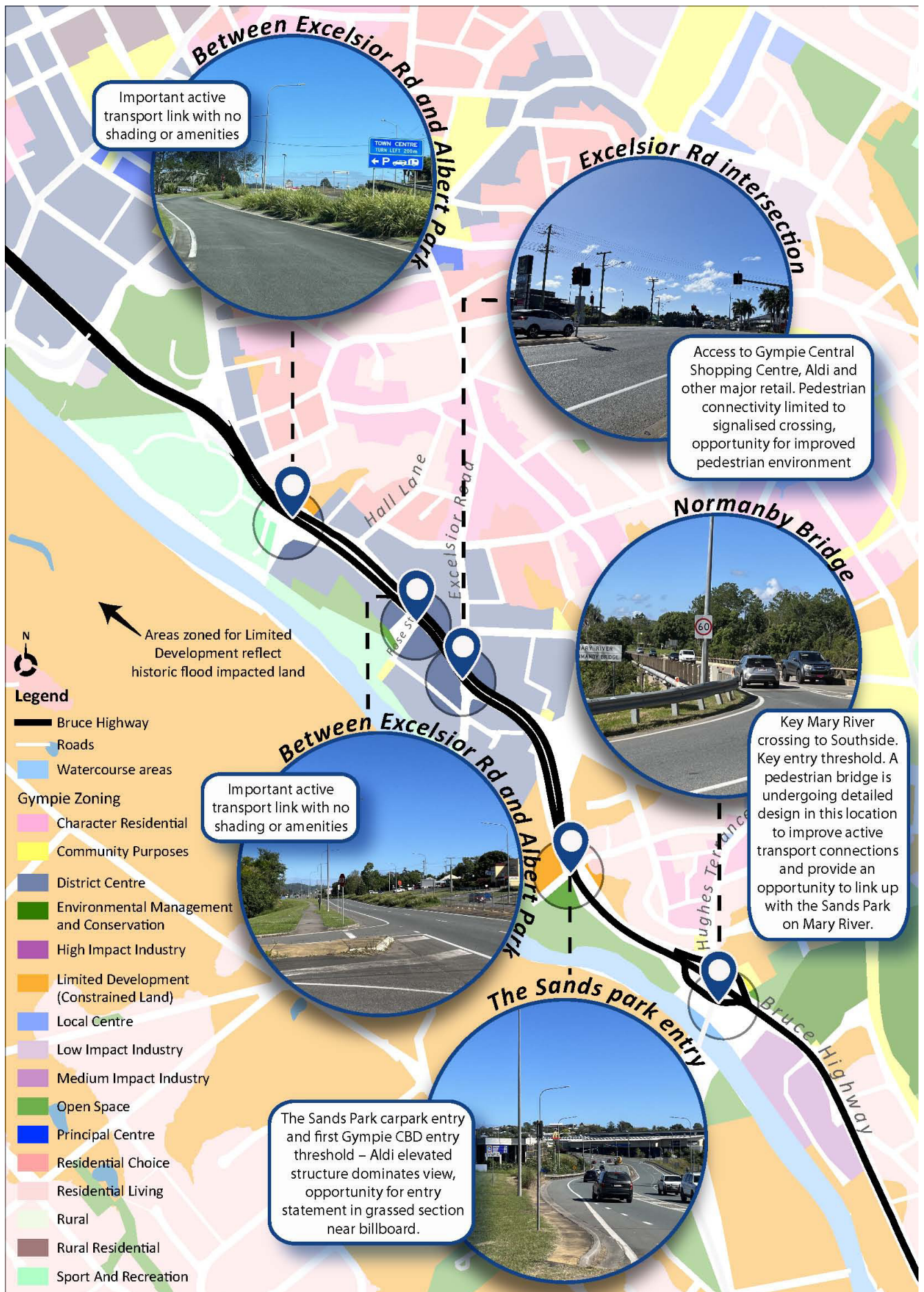


Figure 18: Existing features along the Bruce Highway corridor – The Sands to Excelsior Road Intersection



Figure 19: Existing features along the Bruce Highway corridor – Albert Park to Queens Park



Figure 20: Existing features along the Bruce Highway corridor - Chatsworth Park

5.0 CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Bruce Highway alignment serves both an important regional and State-wide function as a major road freight corridor and tourist route as well as an important local function for access and movement of local residents. It is also recognised that there are a range of local businesses that rely on the Bruce Highway in terms of its generation of through-traffic including service stations, short-term accommodation, freight and logistics, service industries and food and drink outlets. Whilst reduced traffic volumes may have some adverse impacts, opportunities are likely to arise as the role and function of the existing Bruce Highway corridor changes and the physical features and character of the road shift.

A summary of key constraints and opportunities associated with the Bruce Highway Bypass are summarised in Section 5.

LAND USE CHANGES

The realistic opportunities for land use changes as a direct result of the Gympie Bypass is limited to catalyst locations in proximity to key intersection and new Highway interchanges. Opportunities have been identified for land use changes and intensification in proximity to the Flood Road Interchange (industrial), Gympie Interchange (centre) and Curra interchange (industrial and freight and logistics hub) as a result of improved access and increased through-traffic in the case of the Gympie Interchange. In many instances the potential for land use changes are constrained by flooding, vegetation and the absence of urban services i.e. water and sewer. It is recommended that a focussed land use planning exercise is undertaken for the new interchanges and primary access corridors from the Bypass to understand how everything is functioning once the bypass is operational.

IMPROVED PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLING CONNECTIONS

The existing highway corridor is currently being regularly used as a pedestrian linkage with consistent pedestrian usage observed along much of the corridor. This study has identified a clear opportunity for improvements to the pedestrian environment (both in terms of safety and comfort) and active transport connections both along and across the existing Bruce Highway corridor which could capitalise on the projected reduced traffic volumes associated with the Bypass and decrease in heavy vehicle traffic movements. Whilst Gympie boasts an impressive green space network and range of recreational spaces, in many instances, the existing Bruce Highway severs key connections or creates an environment that is not conducive to active transport options. The existing Bruce Highway currently acts as a barrier between the Gympie CBD and the Mary River including the Sands Park and the River to Rail Trail.

There are other constrained 'missing links' that are seen as key opportunities in the context of the project, most notably the section along the highway between Lake Alford and the Sands Park on the Mary River which currently does not have a safe pedestrian connection. It is acknowledged that this location is highly constrained by topography and flooding; however, there may be the opportunity to include an elevated pathway directly alongside the formed road edge.

The Brooloo Road pedestrian bridge currently undergoing detailed design by DTMR is a key opportunity project that should be leveraged in the context of the overall pedestrian network which will improve active transport connections between the Southside alongside Normanby Bridge and the Mary River and Gympie CBD.

Reduced traffic volumes and particularly the reduction of heavy vehicle movements through town should act as a catalyst to improve the pedestrian environment alongside and crossing the major arterial at key locations in conjunction with targeted landscaping treatments. A key opportunity to be capitalised on is strengthening the connection and relationship of Gympie with the Mary River.

SOFTENED LANDSCAPING TREATMENTS

The opportunity exists to soften the current Bruce Highway hardscape through native vegetation landscaping treatments along targeted sections of the road that reinforces the suburban street character and provides shading and urban greening outcomes.

The current pedestrian environment alongside the Bruce Highway is largely inhospitable. While pedestrian pathways exist along sections of the alignment, they are typically devoid of shading and other amenities such as seating. This is typified by the key pedestrian link between the Gympie Central Shopping Centre District Centre Zone and Albert Park / Nelson Reserve which is an important connection in the context of the local active transport network but is not a pedestrian friendly environment given its exposure to the elements alongside the highway.

Asset maintenance represents a challenge along the existing Bruce Highway alignment, particularly in the abovementioned section, which is flood prone. Particular consideration should be given to selecting native tree and shrub species that are compatible with temporary inundation and a hot and exposed built form environments including:

- Bottle brush (*Callistemon* sp.)
- Water Gum (*Tristania* sp.)
- Lilly Pilly (*Acmena* sp.)

It is recommended that Council seeks to undertake a targeted landscaping and softscaping strategy for key sections of the existing Bruce Highway corridor including entry thresholds, major pedestrian pathways / crossing points and commercial centres. (Recommended action 11 in the response implementation strategy).

ENTRY STATEMENTS, SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING

Current signage and wayfinding interventions don't make you feel like 'you have arrived'. The existing welcome to Gympie landmarks are located at Six Mile Creek rest stop when entering from the south and Chatworth rest stop from the north. There are opportunities at other entry thresholds (i.e. Lake Alford and between the Sands carpark and Aldi heading north) to make people feel welcome when arriving at Gympie. New strategically located signage and wayfinding interventions in the vicinity of the new proposed Bypass interchanges will be important, particularly in the context of the Gympie Connection Road interchange which will see an increase in local traffic entering the Gympie CBD and will also be the new key exit point for vehicles accessing coastal settlements including Tin Can Bay, Cooloola Cove and Rainbow Beach.

ROAD HIERARCHY AND TRAFFIC FLOWS

As highlighted by the traffic data analysis in Section 3, the Gympie Bypass will result in changes to traffic flows in the State controlled and local road network that need to be factored in when considering the road hierarchy and potential future road upgrades. Roads that are likely to see an increase in traffic movements including Gympie Connection Road and Hall Road are already constrained in terms of design and capacity.

GYMPIE CONNECTION ROAD INTERCHANGE TO THE GYMPIE CBD

The traffic modelling undertaken to date suggests that there will be negligible changes in traffic along Gympie Connection Road resulting from the new Gympie interchange. However, it is highly likely that this route will become the main entrance to the Gympie CBD for highway traffic from the north. It is also possible that some drivers from the south will elect to use this interchange to access Gympie rather than the Woondum or Flood Road interchanges as this interchange provides an easier path of travel.

Horseshoe Bend and Channon Street (both State-controlled roads) will effectively replace the current function of Tin Can Bay Road and will need to be upgraded to accommodate this higher order function. As constructed, the roads that form part of this route do not meet the desired standards in terms of alignment, geometry, carriageway width, shoulder width and intersection design to reflect the demands expected to be placed upon it.

The following key issues have been identified along this route:

- Several intersections along Gympie Connection Road through to Channon Street are insufficient for the current traffic situation, being difficult to use at times with limited visibility. The new interchange will only compound these issues.
- The shoulder width along Horseshoe Bend is tight in its existing formation and the route is meandering. The verge is limited in its ability to provide safe pedestrian pathways, property access and car parking on the road.
- Most of the residential properties that have frontage to Horseshoe Bend are included within the Character Residential zone under the Council's current planning scheme (refer to zoning map figure alongside). This residential strip contains several historical dwellings that are significant to the established character of the area. Further widening of this section of road may impede on heritage values, pedestrian pathways, landscaping, building setbacks and the alignment of overhead powerlines.
- Alternative access routes might be possible, but are not without challenges arising from topography, current road design, land tenure and the need to ensure legibility (ease of wayfinding).

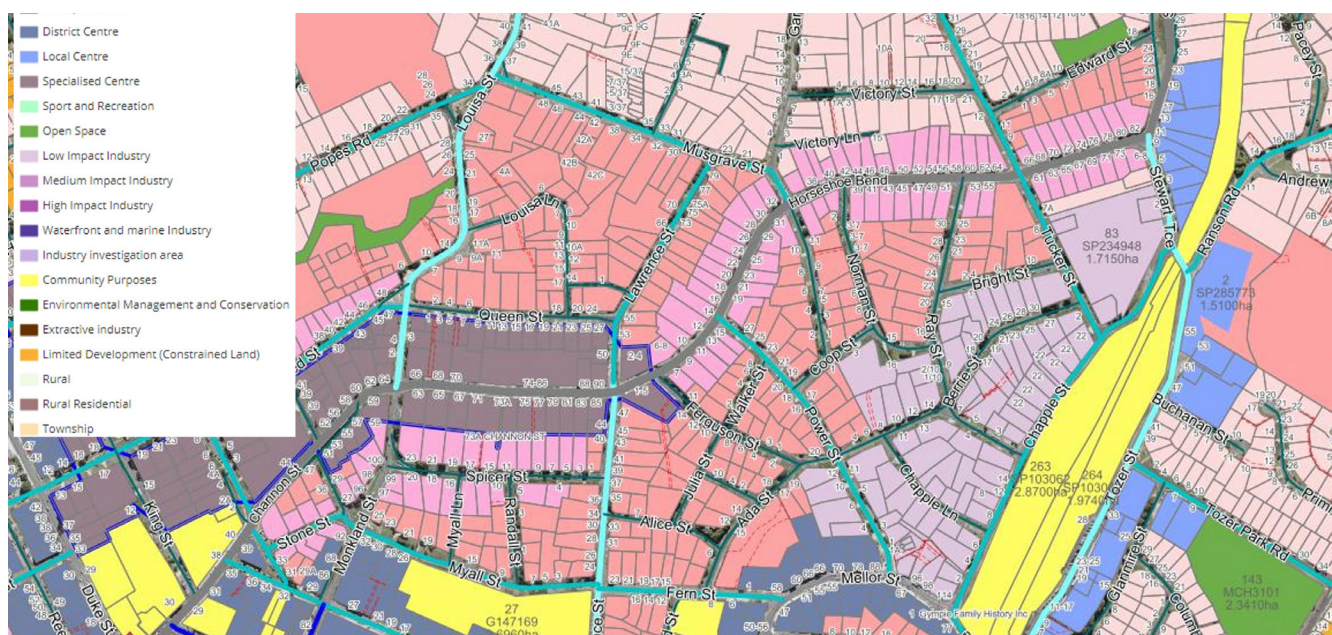


Figure 21: Zoning along Horseshoe Bend is predominantly Character Residential and Zoning along Channon Street is predominantly Specialised Centre (Gympie Medical Precinct) under the Gympie Regional Council Planning Scheme 2013

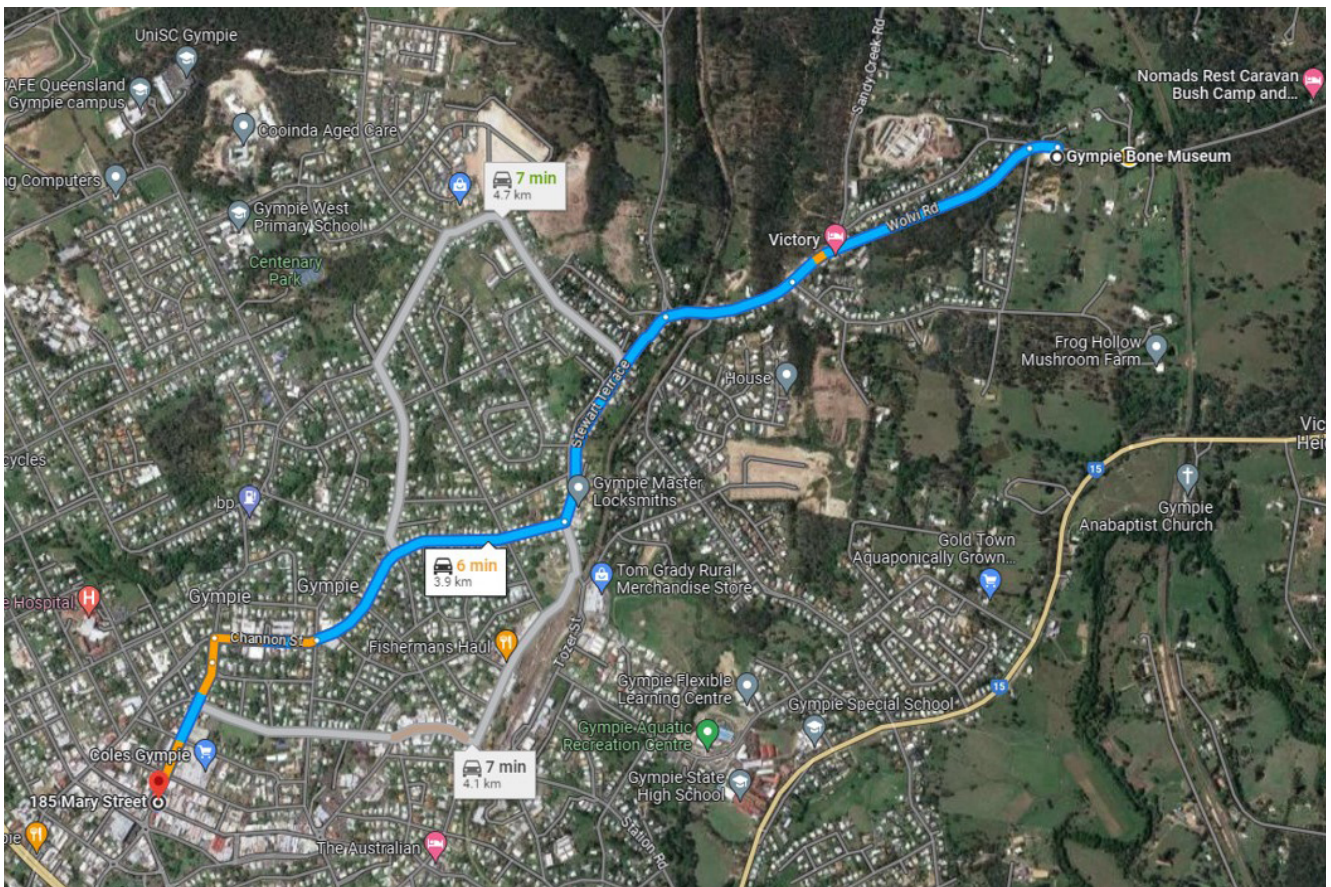


Figure 22: Route options analysis between Gympie Connection Road and the Gympie CBD using Google Maps

A route options analysis from 12 Gympie Connection Road, Victory Heights through to the Gympie CBD (intersection of Mary Street and Monkland Street) illustrates that the route via Stewart Terrace, Horseshoe Bend and Channon Street is the fastest and shortest route via vehicle (approximately 3.9km and six minutes).

While this route is the most direct route, it is highly constrained (particularly the section of Channon Street and Horseshoe Bend in proximity to the Gympie Private Hospital shown in Figure 23 below).

The road reserve width is approximately 20m in this section with the curved geometry, on-street parking and pedestrian footpaths leaving little room for any future upgrade to this section of road to account for additional traffic coming into the CBD from the bypass.



Figure 23: The section of Channon Street and Horseshoe Bend in proximity to the Gympie Private Hospital is constrained by its narrow width, on-street parking and curved geometry

Alternative routes have been considered through the route options analysis and the routes via Tozer Street or Chapple Street both have merit (4.3km and 4.1km respectively and approximately seven minutes travel time). This would avoid the most constrained sections of Horseshoe Bend and Channon Street from a road upgrade perspective and would also provide through-traffic along the Tozer Street and Mellor Street commercial strips. It is acknowledged that prioritising one of these routes as the 'primary access' to the CBD would require an intersection upgrade with Mellor Street and a deliberate wayfinding strategy to reinforce the use of Stewart Terrace over Horseshoe Bend for inbound traffic.

It is noted that the Tozer Street railway overpass and associated retaining wall is an identified constraint for the intersection of Tozer Street and Station Road / Mellor Street. As such, a detailed engineering assessment would be required to understand what works would be achievable to facilitate additional traffic loading at this intersection. Further consultation with Queensland Rail and landowners will also be necessary for any proposed changes to this part of the corridor.

It is recommended that a detailed study is undertaken that determines a preferred route into the CBD and specific road upgrade requirements and costs to account for increased traffic flows.

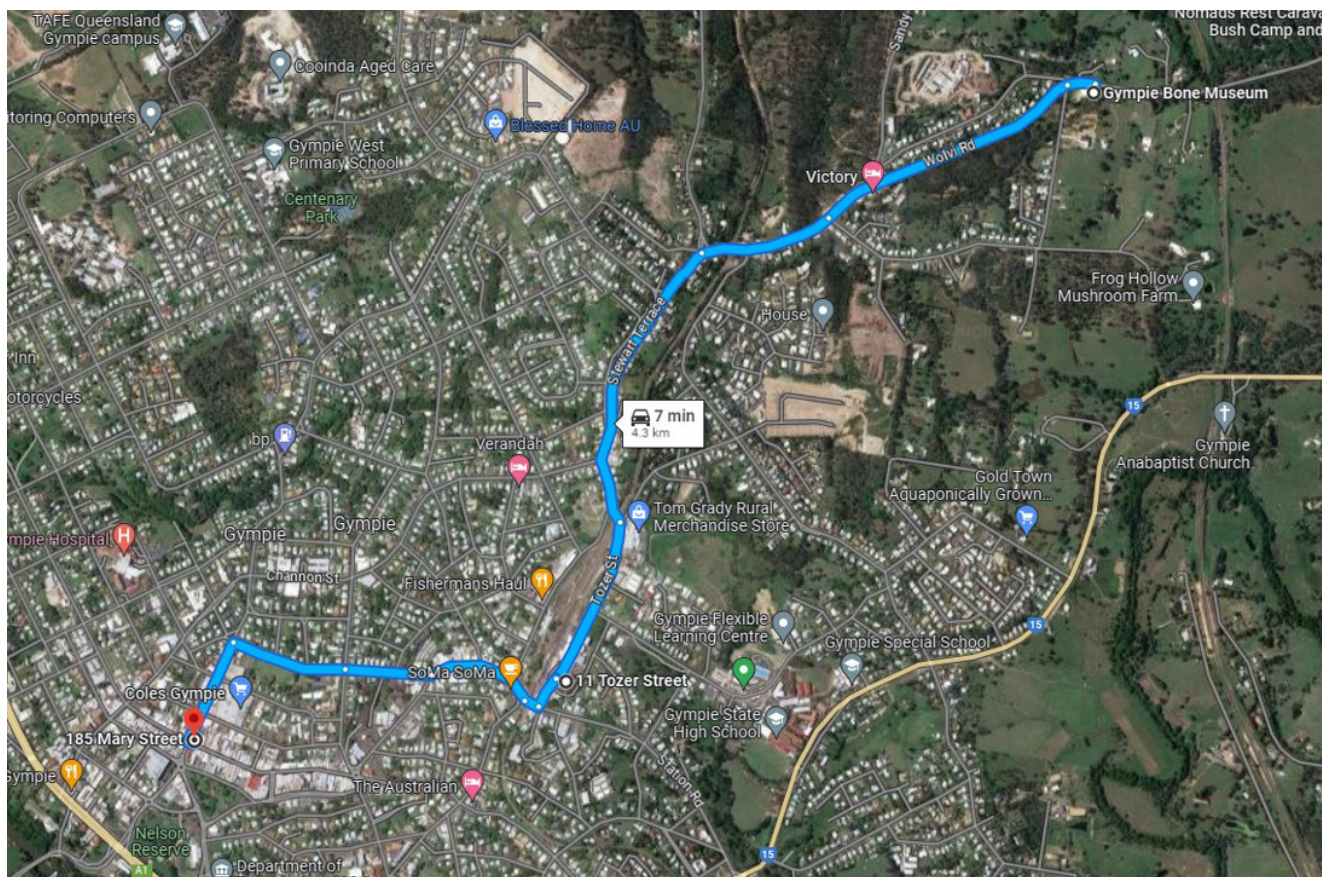


Figure 24: Route options analysis between Gympie Connection Road and the Gympie CBD via Tozer Street using Google Maps

HALL ROAD ONE-WAY RAIL OVERPASS BRIDGE

This study has identified the upgrade of the one-way rail overpass bridge at Hall Road, in consultation with Queensland Rail, as a key priority in the short-term. This route is likely to accommodate increased freight and local traffic accessing the Monkland Showroom Precinct and southern Gympie urban area. Use of this bridge as part of a new access route to the Monkland Showroom Precinct is likely to be an issue

as the bridge is already a 'pinch point' and is not to a standard appropriate to carry heavy vehicle industrial traffic. Once the Flood Road interchange connection is complete, Hall Road will provide flood free access to Monkland (up to Q100 flood events), thus generating further pressure for the bridge to be upgraded to a two-way bridge.

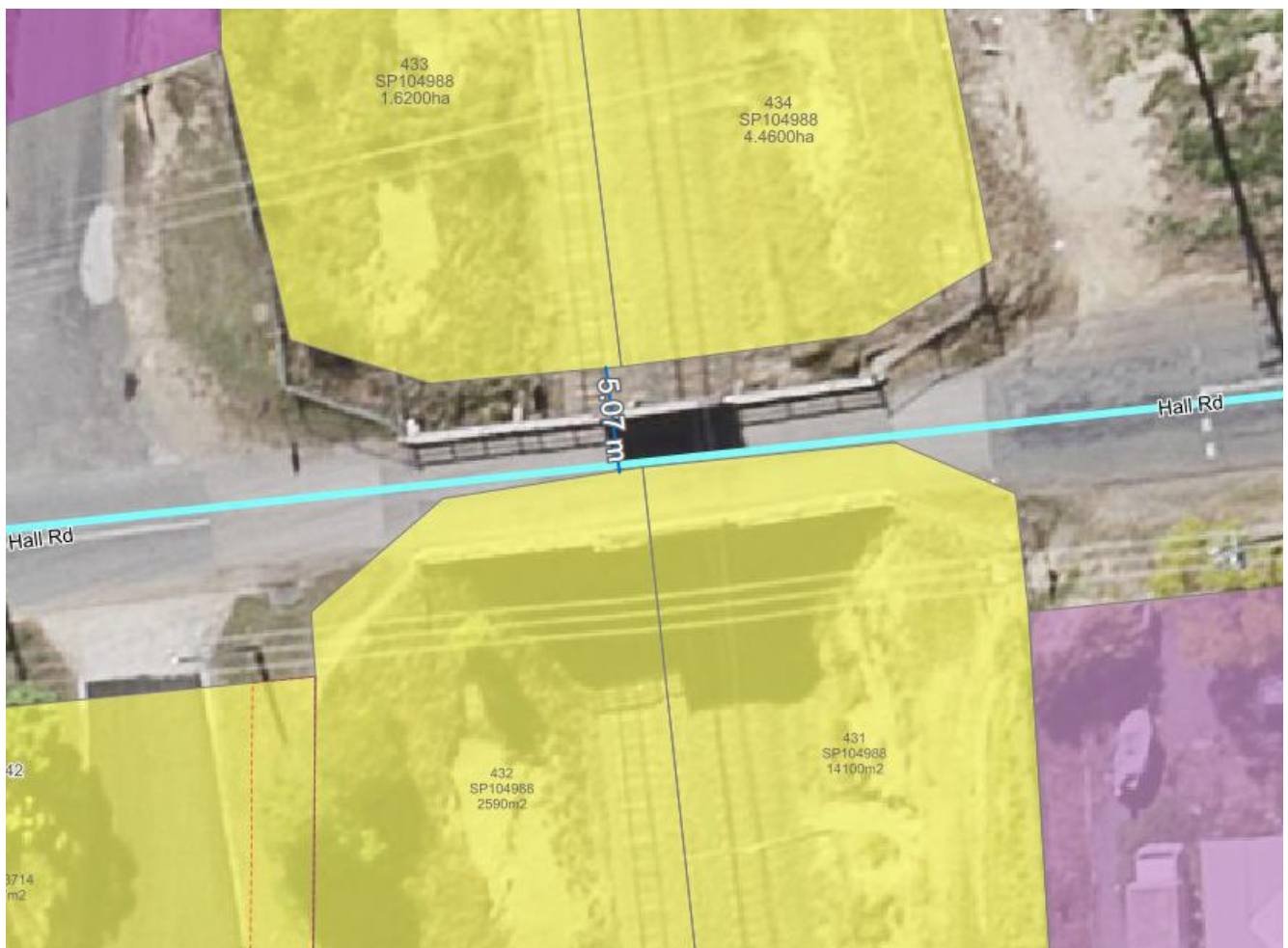


Figure 25: The upgrade of the Hall Road one-way rail overpass bridge has been identified as a key priority requiring action in the short-term

6.0 EXISTING BRUCE HIGHWAY CORRIDOR RESPONSE

6.1 Corridor Wide Responses

The soon-to-be-bypassed section of the Bruce Highway that runs through Gympie will become an active suburban street that generates a feeling of arrival to the township, whilst also connecting the disparate community and environmental elements of the town. Three key response category criteria are developed to guide this transformation; improving the town's infrastructure, increasing the Gympie community's access to active recreation, and connecting the town to its abundant natural surrounds – particularly the Mary River.

Having identified 14 existing key sites along the existing highway, the road is split into five precincts of distinct character with unique opportunities and constraints. These five precincts come together to form an exciting, multimodal, main thoroughfare for a new-look lush and social Gympie. The different precincts encourage active outdoor recreation, develop new commercial and industrial areas, improve way finding and the feeling of arrival to town, and create a well-connected belt of social green spaces throughout the town that maximise the existing natural landscape features, such as the Mary River.

The most significant intervention that will help transform the character of the Bruce Highway from a traffic-laden route to a pleasant, safe human-centred space can be achieved through greatly increased canopy tree planting. A range of species can be utilised along the corridor depending on the soil profile and flooding impacts to increase biodiversity, landscape resilience and provide habitat. Canopy trees also absorb heat, provide shade, support evaporative cooling and promote active transport by providing cool and shaded routes for people to walk and cycle.

Tree planting will then be supported by improved pedestrian and cycle amenity and safety through new and improved paths. This may include shared paths where appropriate to cater for pedestrians, cyclists and motorised scooters/mobility chairs. Encouraging more people to use active transport modes increases community physical and social health outcomes.

New infrastructure, including street furniture and signage, should adopt the approved Gympie Town Centre material palette to ensure consistency along the corridor and into the town.

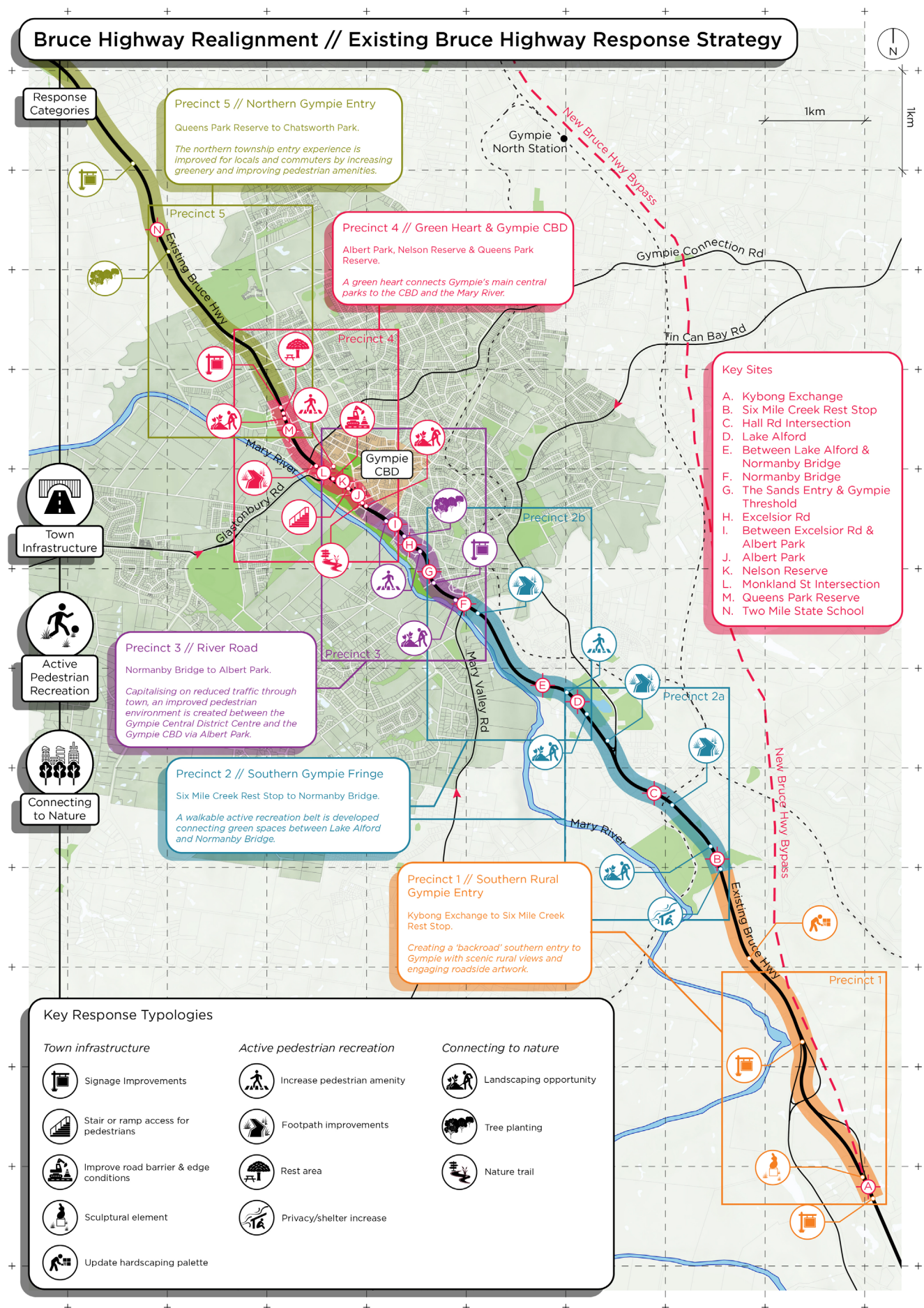


Figure 26: Existing Bruce Highway Response Framework

6.2 Site Specific Responses

6.2.1 Precinct 1 – Southern Rural Gympie Entry

Precinct One is the Southern Rural Gympie Entry, running from Kybong Exchange – the interchange that commences the new Bruce Highway alignment – to Six Mile Creek Rest Stop. This precinct provides lush, green panoramic views and establishes the connection between Gympie and its subtropical and rural surroundings. A ‘backroad’ feel here will exaggerate the contrast between choosing to turn off towards Gympie and staying on the new Bruce Highway.

Improved signage and wayfinding is required at the offramp point including a specific sign for the Six Mile Creek Rest Stop. The planting of canopy trees within the road reserve at this entry threshold would help establish a unifying language along the road corridor that enhances amenity and environmental outcomes. Increasing tree planting also reflects the changing nature of the road, including slower traffic speeds. Existing panoramic views across the countryside in this location should be maintained. In this regard, Council should give consideration to prioritising the retention of long range view corridors and visual buffering for new developments may be visually obtrusive. Ensuring the infrastructure at the road edges serves both a safety function as well as a place-making function may include introducing material types and colours already identified through the Gympie Town Centre Streetscape and Urban Design Palette.

Creating a 'backroad' southern entry to Gympie with scenic rural views and engaging roadside artwork.

Consider introducing the approved town material palette to road infrastructure elements (e.g. mosaic on existing concrete barriers).

- Rural views display the peaceful, lush Gympie surroundings.
- Road edge conditions should be maintained to ensure they enhance safety and do not obstruct existing panoramic views.
- The existing greenery could be exaggerated by planting along road edges.

- The visual identity for Gympie is established by applying the approved hardscaping finishes (paving, mosaic, bricklaying etc.) to existing bare concrete road barriers.
- This will increase town connectedness if a consistent material palette is used.
- A palette of materials was suggested by Place Design Group in 2015.

- Create a landmark entry point signifying the turnoff to Gympie through signage and landscaping.
- Large canopy trees and local sandstone boulders could combine to create a visual feature announcing arrival to Gympie.

- Maintaining a lush entry enhances first impressions of Gympie.
- Planting low-maintenance local grasses will increase greenery and filter road runoff.

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6.2.2 Precinct 2a – Southern Gympie Fringe

Precinct 2 is split into two sections that combine to form the Southern Gympie Fringe. The first part of Precinct 2 is located between Six Mile Creek Rest Stop and Lake Alford. This precinct affords the first real impression of Gympie as a town. This impression will show a town with abundant accessible green space.

Landscaping around Lake Alford will turn this site into a Gympie landmark, encouraging residents to spend their day in this active recreation area as well as providing excellent amenity for visitors arriving from the south.

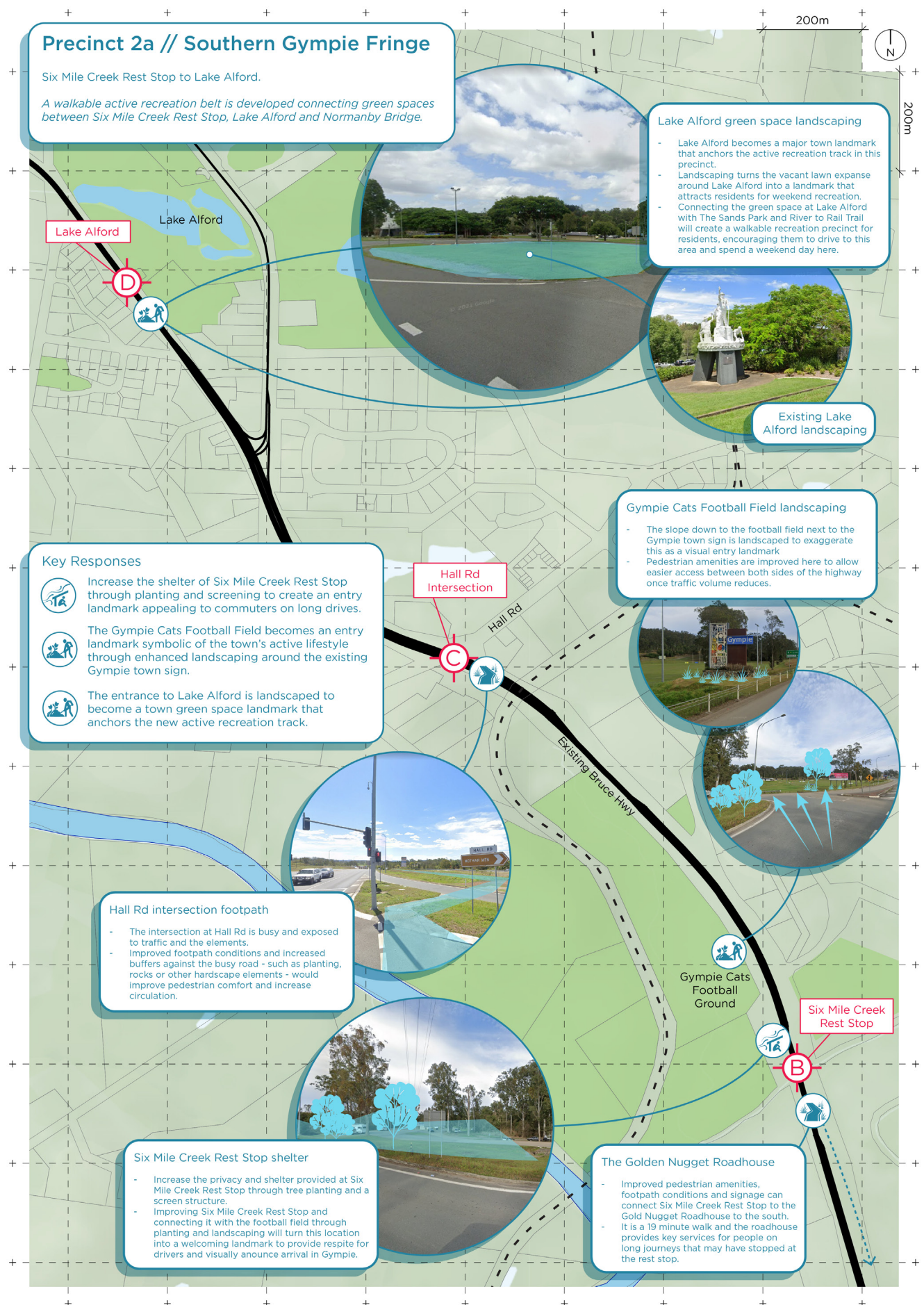


Figure 28: Precinct 2a – Southern Gympie Fringe

6.2.3 Precinct 2b – Southern Gympie Fringe

The second part of Precinct 2 spans north from Lake Alford to Normanby Bridge. This area focusses on the development of a walkable, recreation track alongside the Highway to enhance the pedestrian-friendly feeling of this southern fringe precinct. There are less green space landmarks in Precinct 2b than Precinct 2a, but there are residential clusters that could be joined by better footpath conditions to enhance walkability and connectedness.

The slowing of traffic here makes pedestrian access more feasible and connecting the northern and southern sides of the Highway will strengthen the community connection to the Mary River. It is important to improve signage in this precinct to indicate to pedestrians when the Highway will become inaccessible and to indicate a sense of impending arrival to drivers entering Gympie from the south.

The occurrence of invasive weed species along this section of the road corridor is prominent, particularly between the Bruce Highway and the Mary River. Maintenance of landscaping and vegetation should be used as a tool to help contribute positively toward the visual amenity of the streetscape.

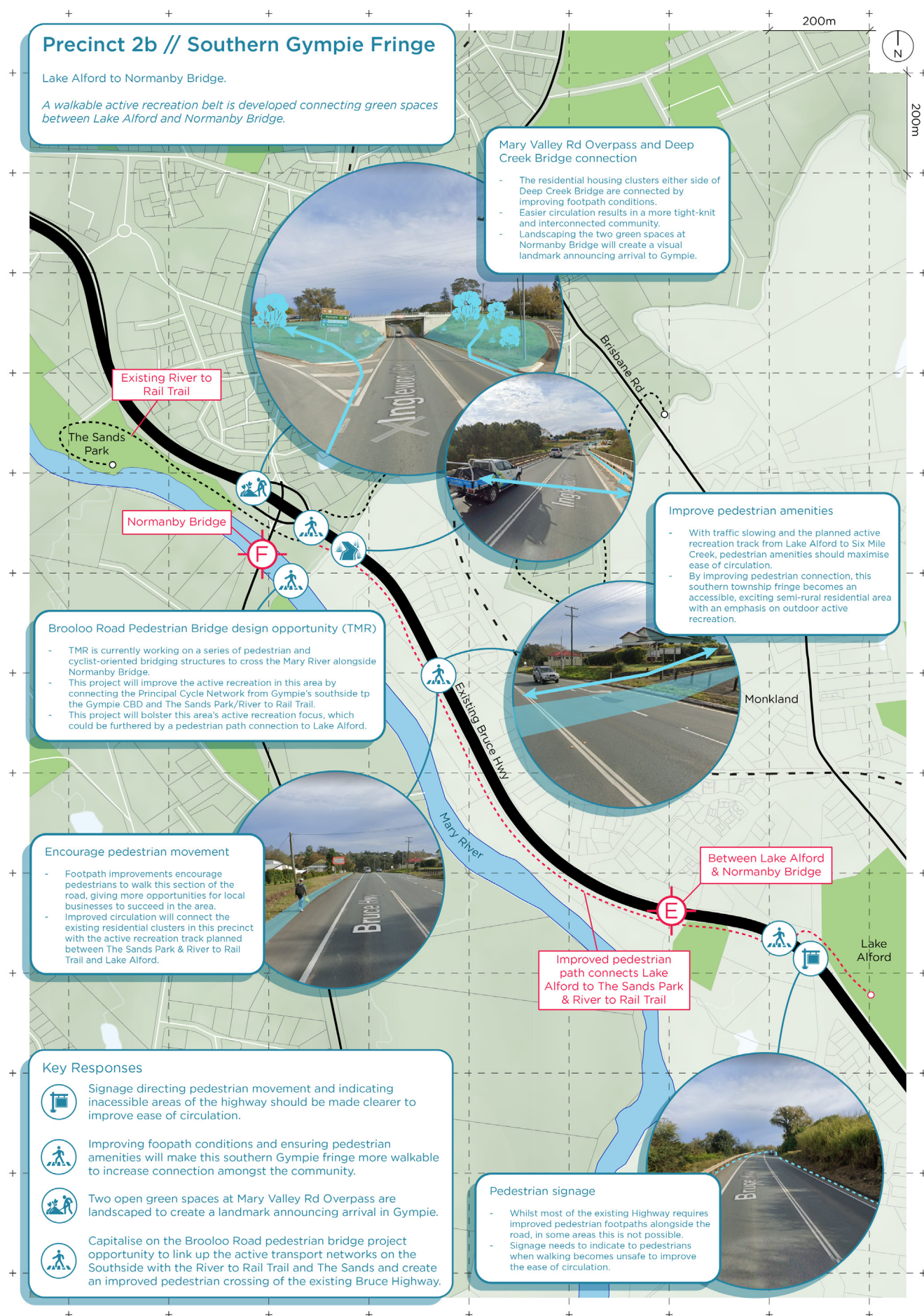


Figure 29: Precinct 2b – Southern Gympie Fringe

6.2.4 Precinct 3 – River Road

Precinct 3 marks the entry to the urbanised area of Gympie. The River Road precinct will continue to develop between Normanby Bridge and Albert Park. This area, particularly around the intersection of Excelsior Road, is busy with commercial land use and is very car-oriented. By improving the pedestrian experience, an active, accessible commercial hub can form here, just south of the CBD.

To improve the pedestrian experience, more shelter is required as a buffer against the traffic and the weather. Shade structures and verge tree planting could provide this, as well as improved footpaths and increased pedestrian amenities including seating. Diversifying and intensifying landscape planting and connecting the north and south sides of the Highway between Excelsior Rd and Albert Park will enhance the amenity of the area increasing commercial opportunities in this well-located precinct.

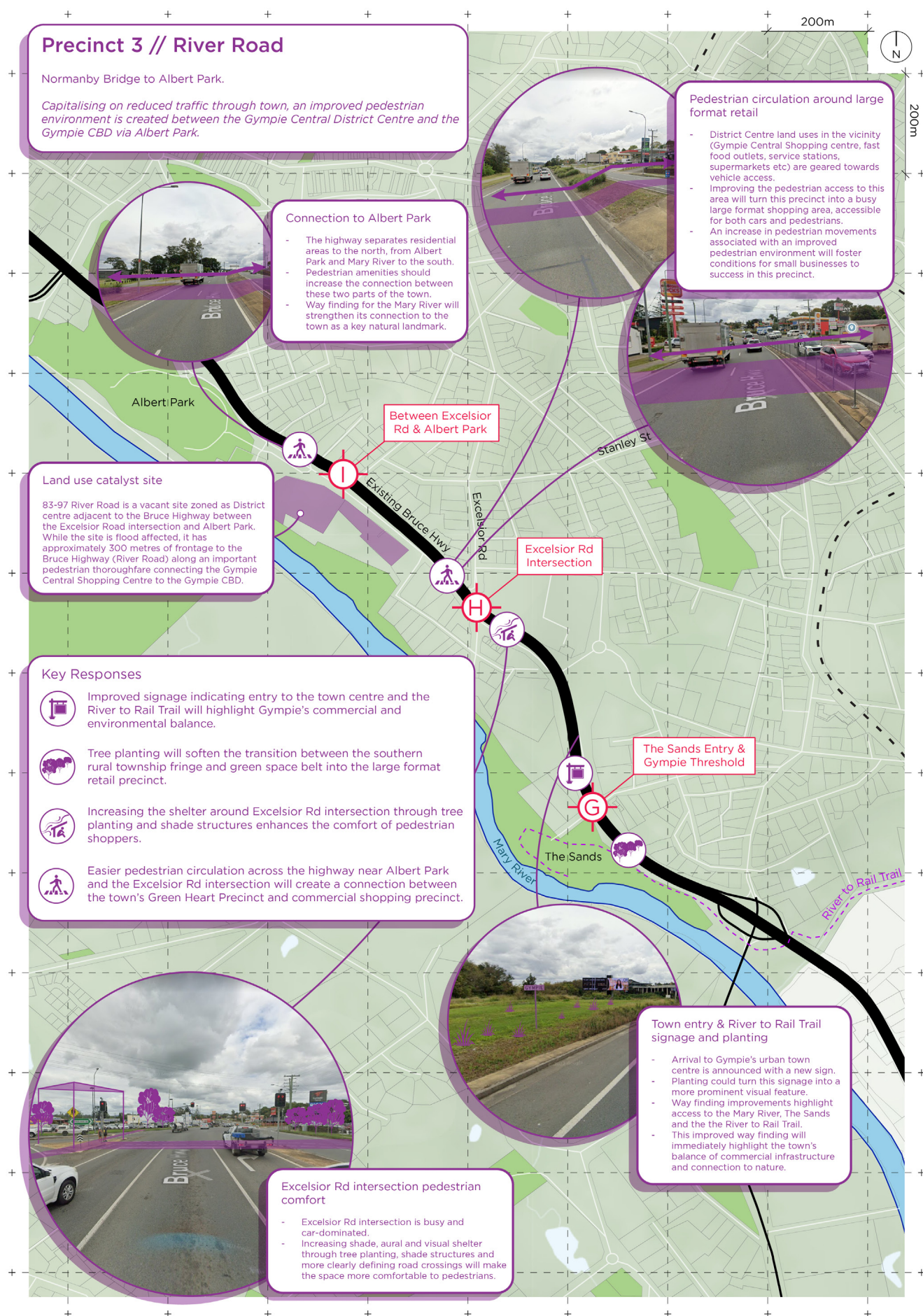


Figure 30: Precinct 3 - River Road

6.2.5 Precinct 4 – Green Heart & Gympie CBD

Precinct 4 is where the Highway passes through the centre of Gympie. There is great potential here to connect the existing green spaces, as well as the Mary River, to create a thriving, active and social Green Heart for the town. A nature trail could be landscaped around the drain running into Mary River, which would improve the town's river access, increase local knowledge of the town's environmental context and could mitigate flood damage. Improving the entrances to Nelson Reserve through landscaping, sculptural elements and planting will emphasise this location as one of the town's key central points.

A staircase or ramp could reduce the steep gradient that prevents pedestrian access to Albert Park from Nelson Reserve across the Highway. By joining these two key green spaces, and improving the pedestrian amenities around the Monkland Street intersection, a key location for social congregation and river access is developed. Further planting could connect this Green Heart to Queens Park Reserve further north, which will provide more active recreation area for those that venture out from the key meeting point at Nelson Reserve. The Monkland and Channon Street intersections then become key parts of the CBD which could help to spread the town towards the riverbank and better integrate Gympie's lush surrounds.

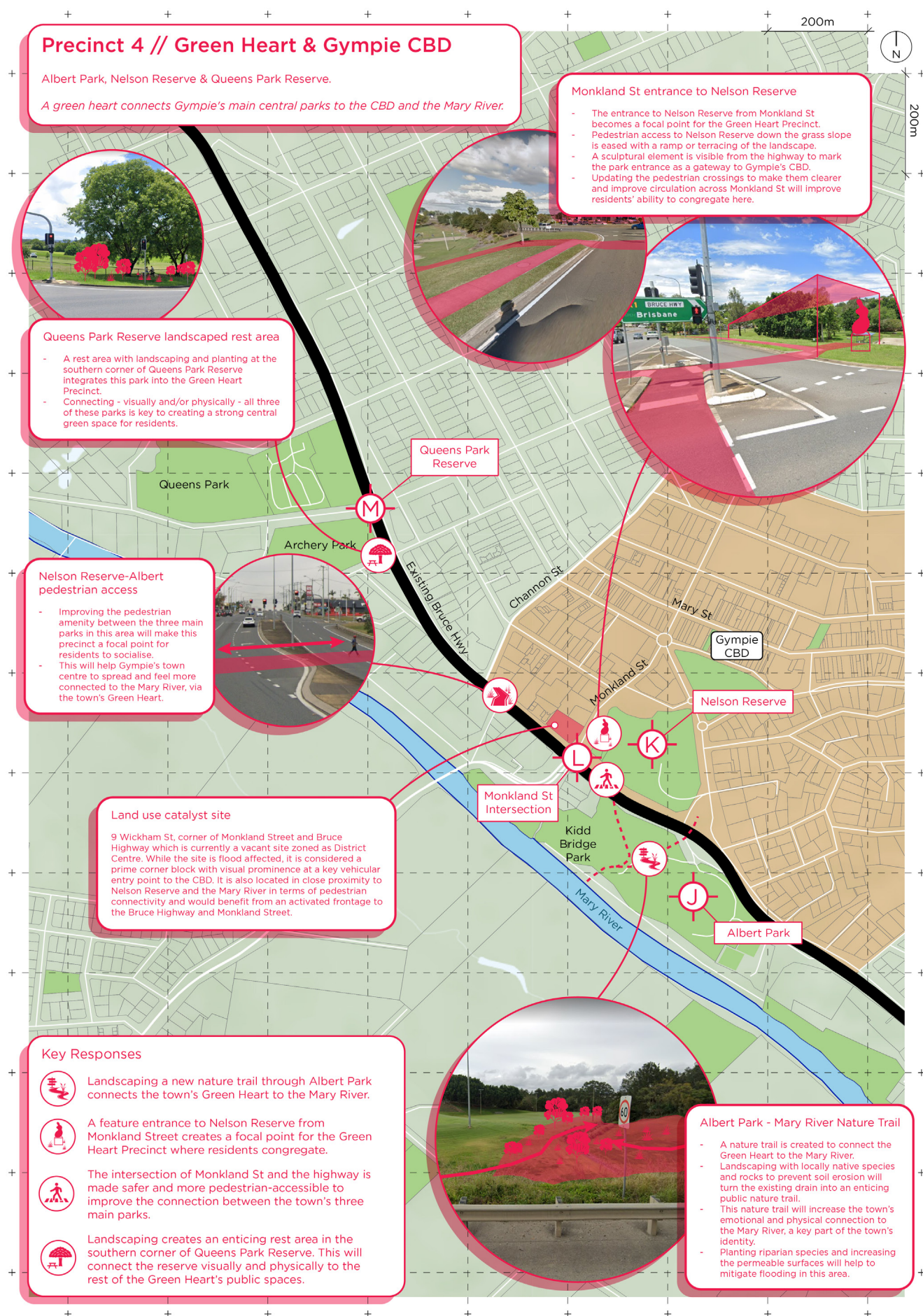


Figure 31: Precinct 4 - Green Heart & Gympie CBD

6.2.6 Precinct 5 – Northern Gympie Entry

The northern entry to town differs slightly from the south, with more dominant industrial areas. Improved pedestrian amenity including increased canopy tree planting and the possibility for a shared path would help connect the residential area to the town and the Two-Mile State School and increase pedestrian safety. Improved signage to key destinations such as the CBD, Gympie Hospital, and recreation spaces will enhance the entry experience from the north.

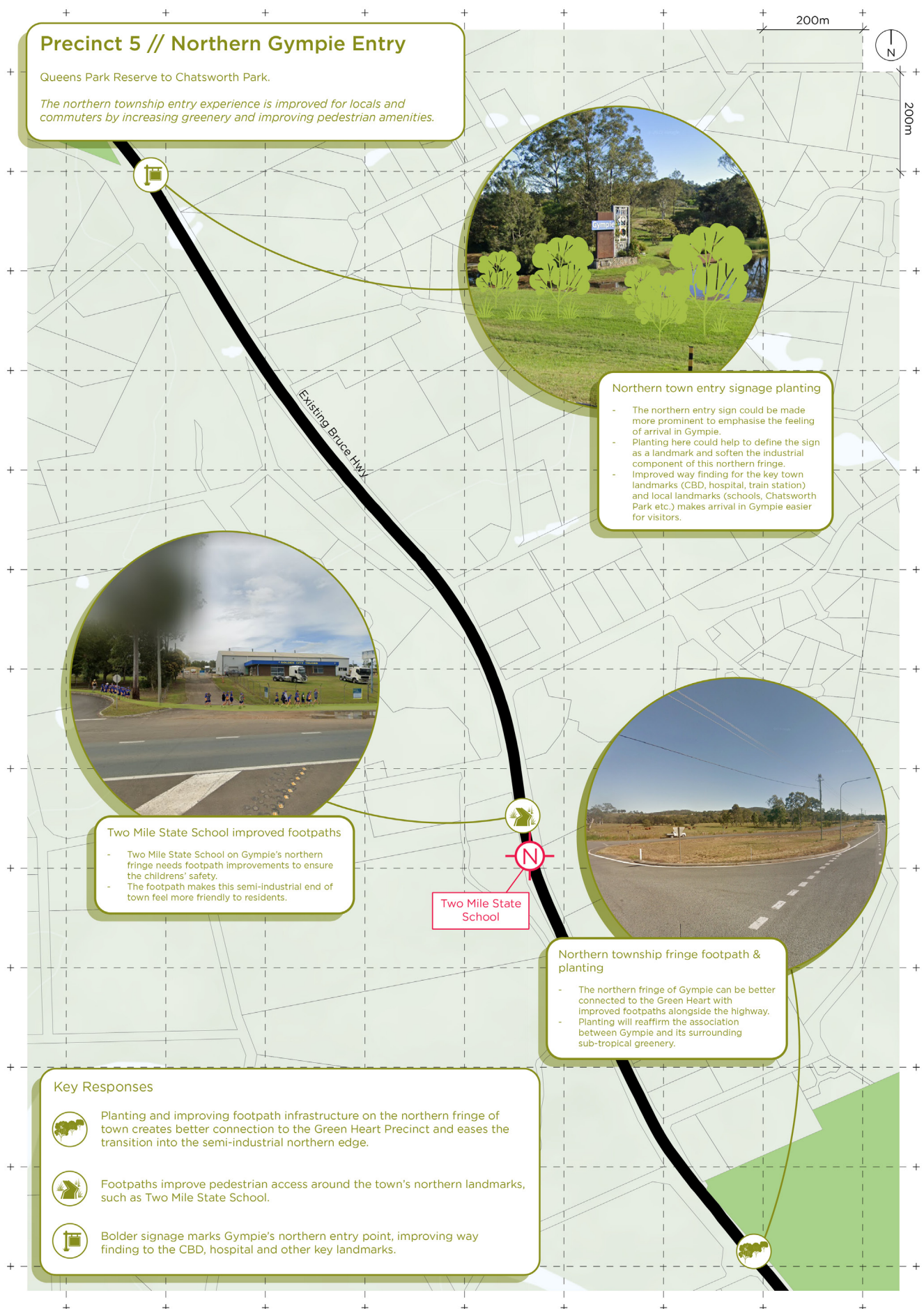


Figure 32: Precinct 5 – Northern Gympie Entry

7.0 NEW BRUCE HIGHWAY CORRIDOR (GYMPIE BYPASS)

7.1 Corridor Wide Responses

The New Curra-Woondum Bruce Highway realignment has four key interchanges that provide access to Gympie. These interchanges have unique land use contexts that make them important for different reasons. All four interchanges should be carefully embedded into their immediate surrounds through site-specific landscaping and planting. Improving the signage and way finding around these interchanges will also be critical for ease of circulation into Gympie, as well as indicating Gympie's connection to other towns and cities in Queensland. It is important to consider the potential for land use to change/intensify into the future in these rural areas surrounding Gympie.

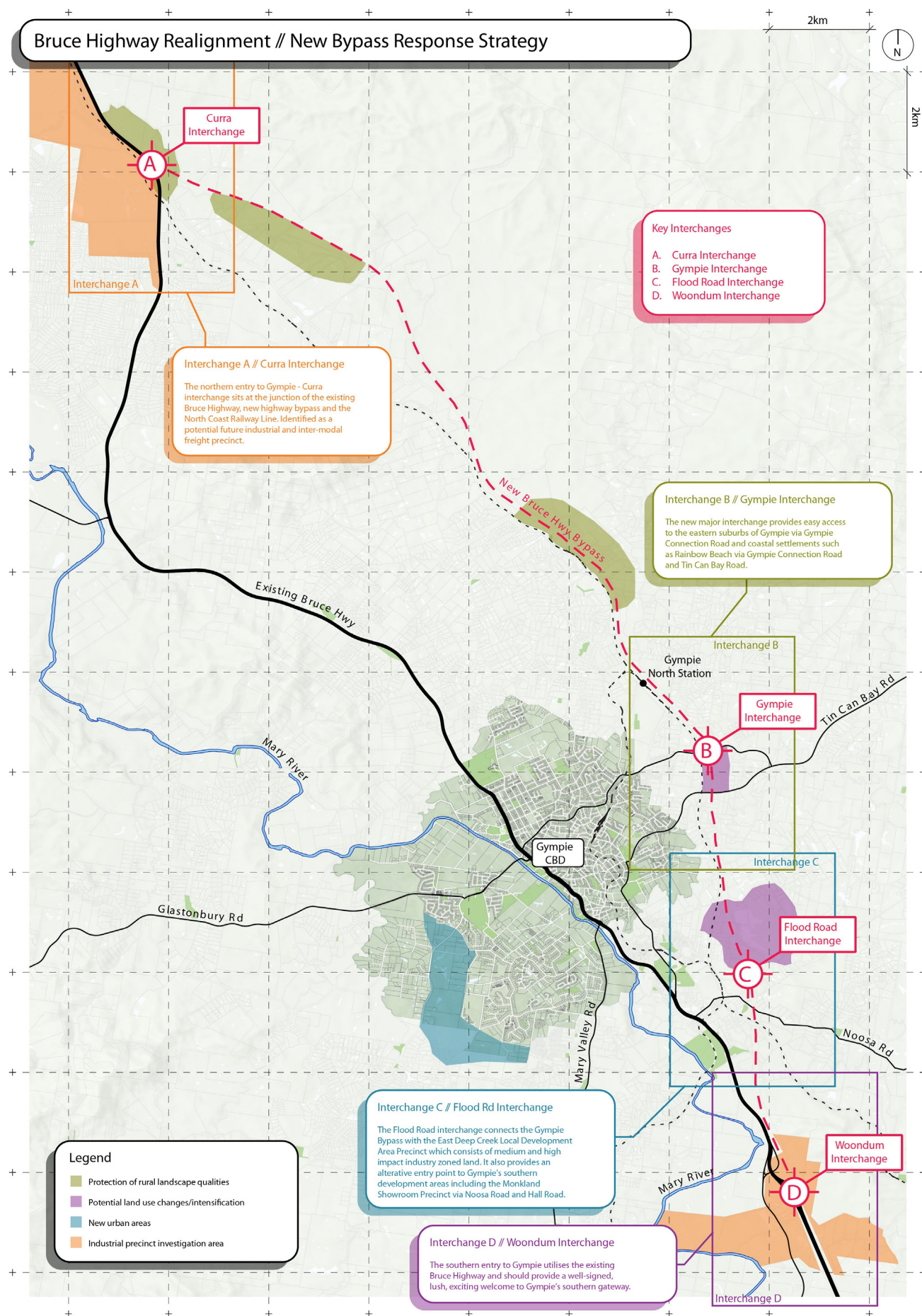


Figure 33: New Bruce Highway Bypass Response Framework

7.2 Site Specific Responses

7.2.1 Interchange A – Curra Interchange

The Curra Interchange north of Gympie sits in the middle of an area under investigation for development as an industrial precinct. However, there are also areas north of the Highway around Curra Creek that offer significant landscape qualities and should be conserved to improve this area's visual and ecological worth. This interchange could develop as a multi-modal hub that sits at the juncture of many land use typologies. Signage will be crucial to make this interchange user friendly for all passers-by, especially given this is the first opportunity for south-bound drivers to turn off towards northern Gympie. Wayfinding for the Wide Bay Highway (Great Bunya Tourist Drive and connection to western townships including Kilkivan and Goomeri) will also be important for people using this interchange.

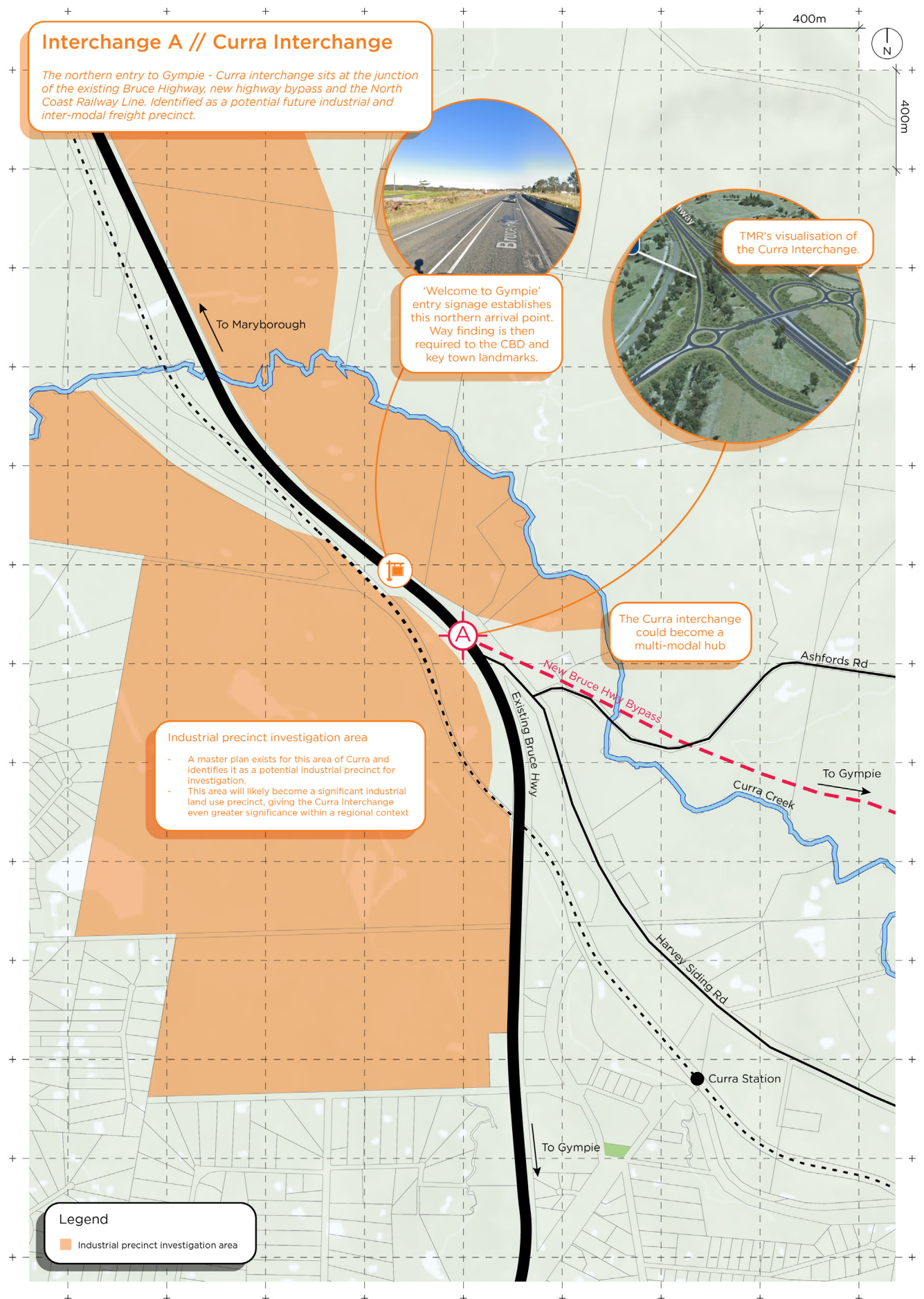


Figure 34: Interchange A - Curra Interchange

7.2.2 Interchange B - Gympie Interchange

The Gympie Interchange is the key turnoff to access the Gympie CBD and residential and commercial areas to the north of the CBD. It is crucial to improve signage around the turnoffs and to ensure users can find key landmarks within Gympie, such as the CBD and the hospital. TMR's visualisation of this interchange shows the potential for site-specific landscaping and planting to embed this interchange into its site, and create a lush, green first impression of Gympie. This is particularly important for the Gympie Interchange given it will likely be used more by residents than industrial traffic. It is also important to provide signage for the Cooloola Coast to the east of Gympie via Tin Can Bay Road.

The section of Gympie Connection Road between the new highway and Browns Road presents an opportunity for a new boulevard (streetscape and tree planting) to create a well-defined arrival point to Gympie.

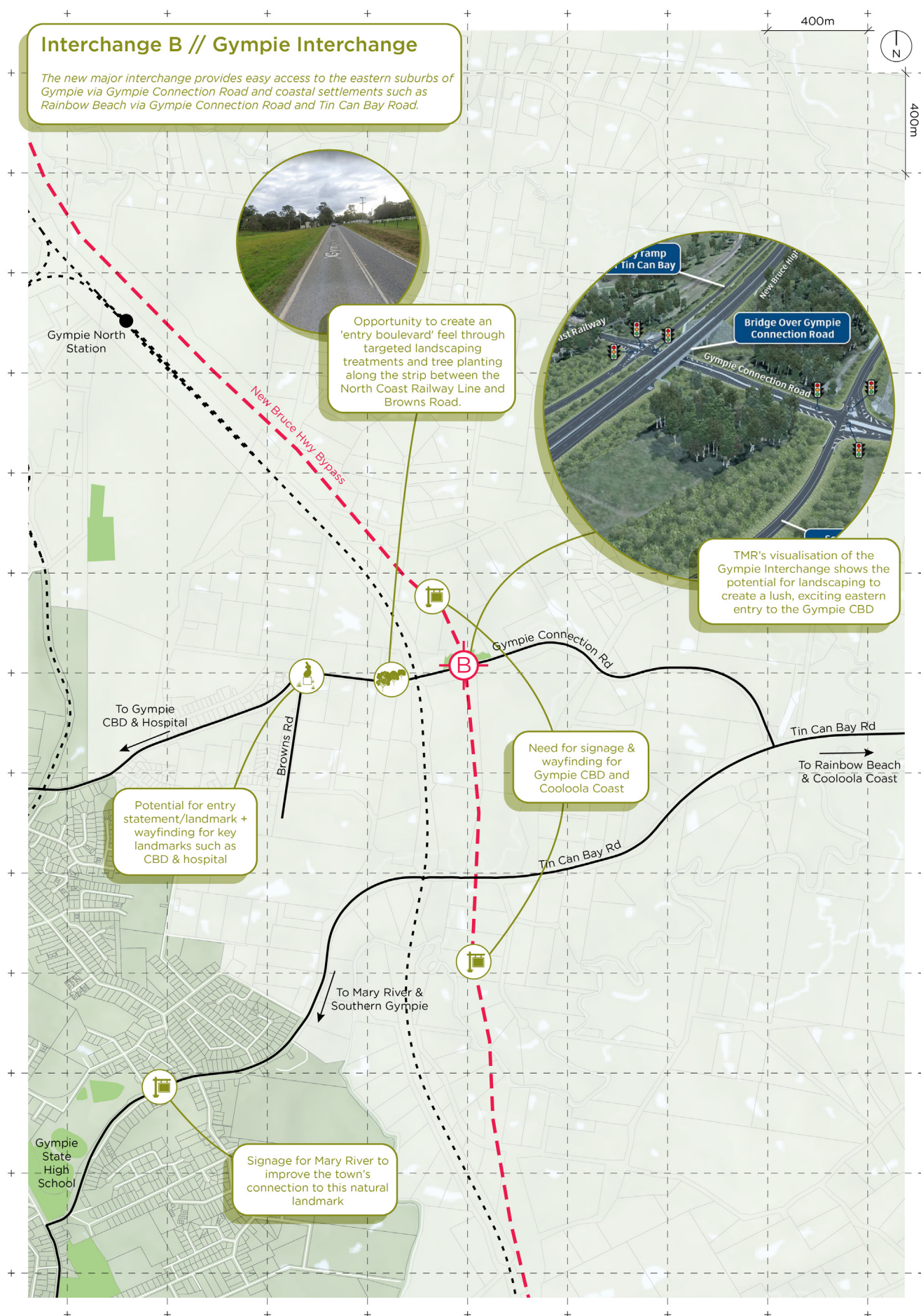


Figure 35: Interchange B - Gympie Interchange

7.2.3 Interchange C – Flood Road Interchange

The Flood Road Interchange provides crucial access for the East Deep Creek Local Development Area (industrial precinct), north of Penny Rd. It will be an important connection for both residents and heavy industry vehicular access alike. Signage and way finding should direct users towards Gympie's CBD, East Deep Creek as well as the key green space landmarks of this southern fringe; Mary River, Lake Alford and the Six Mile Creek Rest Stop.

Flood Road is of a lower standard construction yet forms the key connection from the new highway alignment to the East Deep Creek industrial area, including the abattoir. The current formation includes a single sealed centre lane with gravel shoulders. It is not considered suitable to accommodate frequent use by heavy vehicles for industrial or stock transport purposes. Once the interchange is in operation Flood Road will need to be upgraded to a sub-arterial road standard.

It is anticipated that the Flood Road interchange will add additional traffic volumes to Noosa Road at its intersection with Brisbane Road. Driver sight distance to the north of this intersection is compromised by both the horizontal and vertical alignment of this section of Brisbane Road. Upgrading of this intersection to address this issue is required.

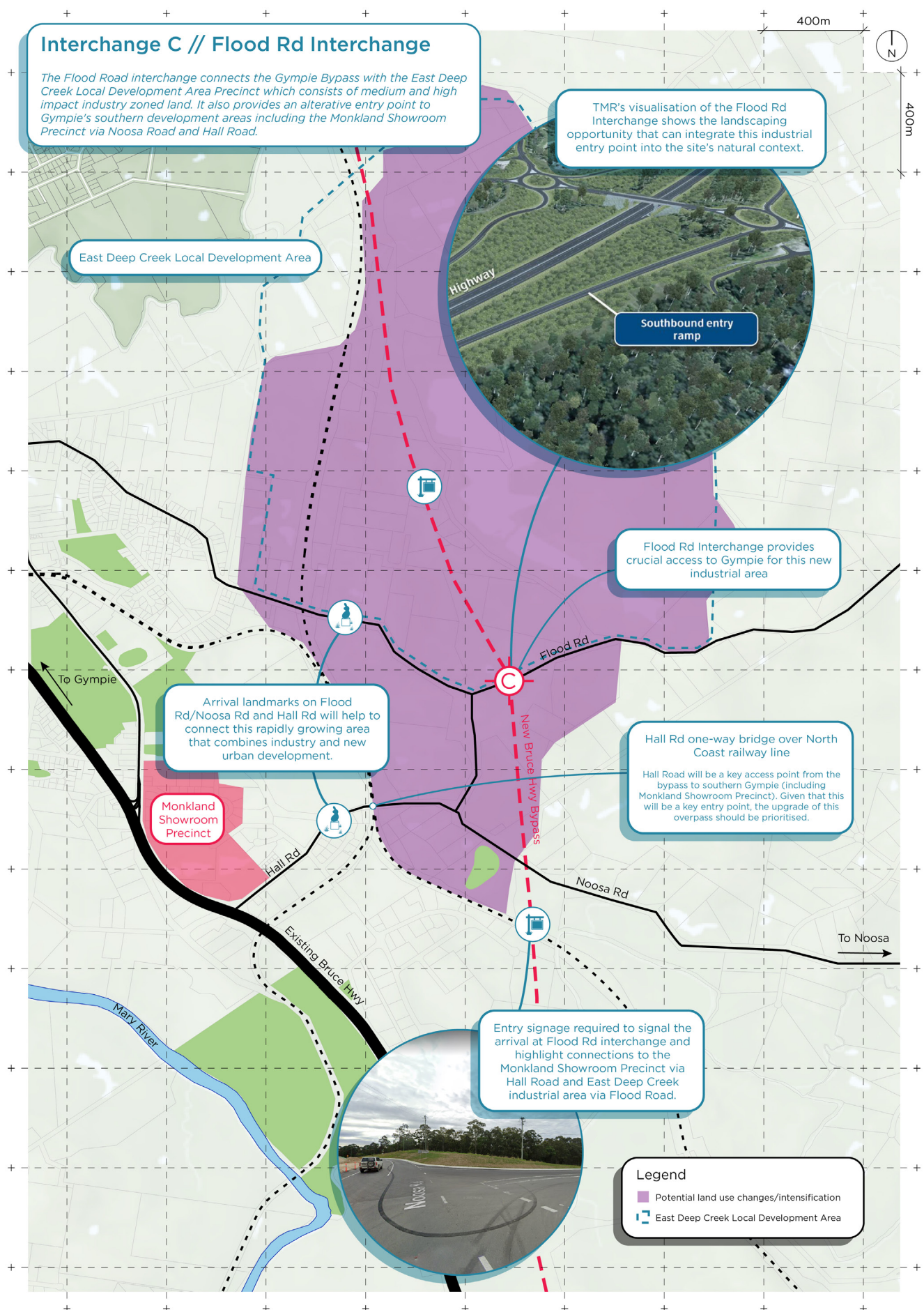


Figure 36: Interchange C - Flood Rd Interchange

7.2.4 Interchange D - Woondum Interchange

The southern Woondum Interchange offers the opportunity for commuters to turn off onto the Existing Bruce Highway. This turnoff will offer a 'backroad' feel that contrasts to the Highway bypass. Exaggerated panoramic views, lush green planting, sculptural landmarks, signage and updated hardscaping all combine to form a visual identity for Gympie as you arrive. Signage for the Woondum State Forest and Mary River would also help to highlight the area's access to active recreation spaces and environmental features. This is especially important given access to nature will become a more prominent part of the Gympie township's identity after the construction of the bypass.

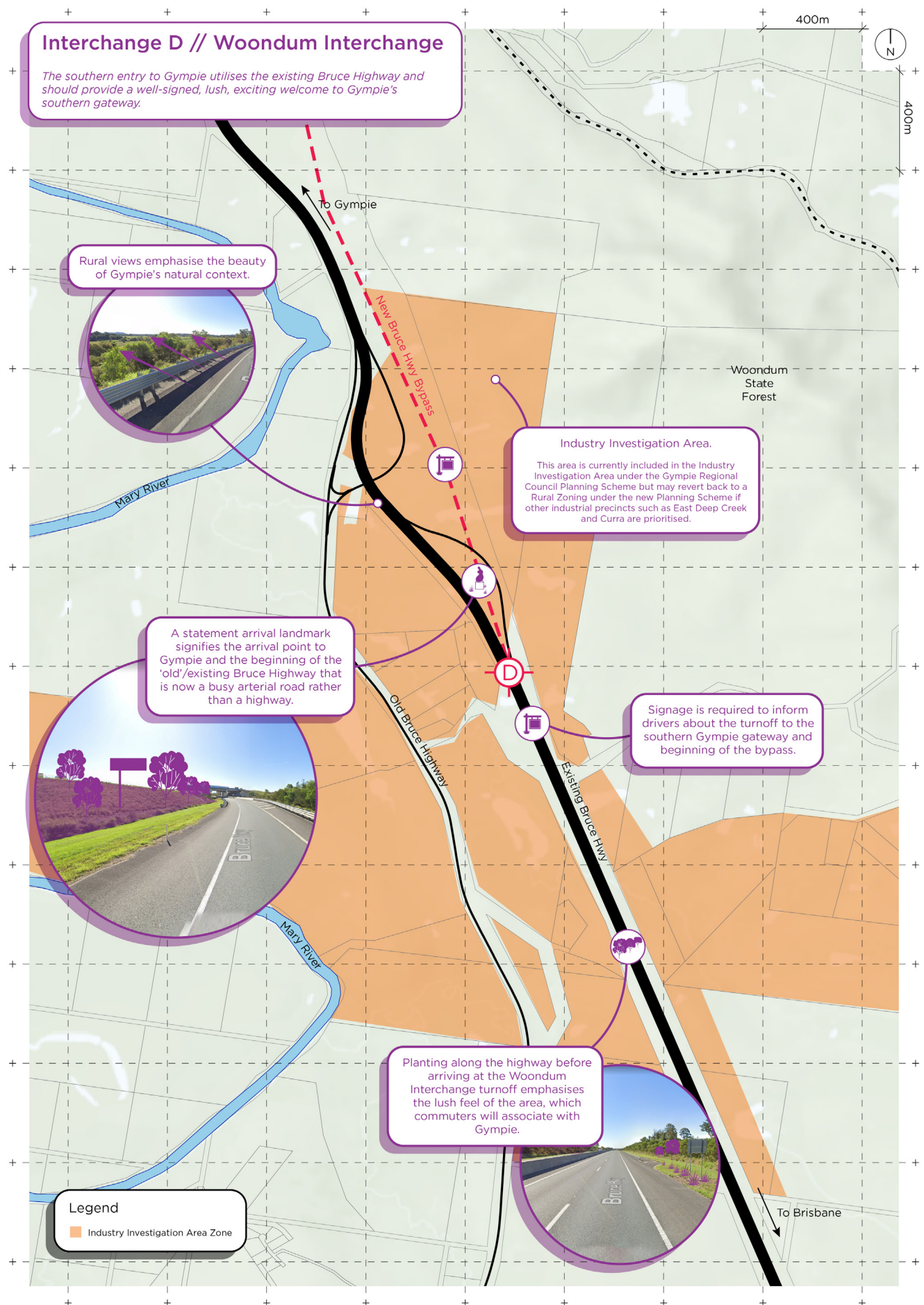


Figure 37: Interchange D - Woondum Interchange

8.0 RESPONSE IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

A response implementation strategy has been developed which outlines the actions recommended as part of the response framework for the existing and new Bruce Highway corridors detailed within Section 6 and 7. The recommended actions identified in Section 8.1 seek to address the constraints and realise opportunities associated with the new bypass highlighted in Section 5.

As highlighted in Section 5.11 the realistic opportunities for land use changes as a direct result of the Gympie Bypass is limited to catalyst locations in proximity to key intersection and new Highway interchanges. In many instances the potential for land use changes are constrained by flooding, vegetation and the absence of urban services i.e. water and sewer.

8.1 Action Plan

The Action Plan seeks to provide a structure for delivery of the Strategy through realisation of the response frameworks. A range of actions have been recommended across a number of elements including land use, design and landscaping, signage and wayfinding, road upgrades and planning scheme changes.

Further guidance is provided for each action in terms of an implementation timeframe and stakeholder responsibilities. Where relevant, other considerations and indicators of success are also provided to support the implementation of each action.

Table 3: Implementation Table

#	Recommended Action	Justification	Land Use	Design & Landscaping	Signage & Wayfinding	Roads & Active Transport Connections	Planning Scheme Change	Implementation timeframe	Stakeholder responsibility	Considerations
1	<p>Review and update the local road hierarchy to reflect changes to through-traffic from the proposed Gympie bypass. Likely changes to result from the bypass in response to traffic modelling include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flood Road to become a Rural/sub arterial road Horseshoe Bend and Channon Street to become a higher order road Current Bruce Highway Corridor 	The inclusion of the Gympie Bypass reduces the daily vehicle volumes, however these reduced volumes still exceed the typical vehicle volumes expected based on road hierarchy. It is likely that an overall review of the road hierarchy will need to be undertaken prior to 2036 (the design horizon year of the modelling).				✓	✓	Medium term	Gympie Regional Council TMR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reliant on changes to the planning scheme Requires engagement with DTMR

#	Recommended Action	Justification	Land Use	Design & Landscaping	Signage & Wayfinding	Roads & Active Transport Connections	Planning Scheme Change	Implementation timeframe	Stakeholder responsibility	Considerations
2	<p>Investigate replacement of one-way timber bridge on Hall Road with two way rail overpass to accommodate increased traffic along this route from/to the Flood Road interchange. The Bridges Renewal Program (BRP) and the Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program (HVSPP) are Federal programs designed to provide funding to State and Local Governments for projects which will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade and replace bridges to enhance access for local communities and facilitate higher productivity vehicle access (BRP) and; Increase the productivity and safety of heavy vehicle operations (HVSPP) <p>The Hall Road one-way bridge upgrade is identified as a potentially eligible candidate for this program and it is recommended that Council pursues this as a key short term priority by applying for the grant:</p> <p><i>Bridges Renewal Program, Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program, and Remote Roads Upgrade Pilot Program - Resources Infrastructure Investment Program</i></p>	<p>Based on the outputs of the modelling work undertaken by PTT, it can be seen that by 2036, most of the affected roads will have daily vehicle volumes which are higher than the typical daily vehicle volumes specified in the Gympie Regional Council Planning Scheme.</p> <p>It is considered that planning for upgrade of these roads will support improvement movement of vehicles through Gympie and connections to key features such as the CBD and industrial estate.</p>				✓		Short term	Gympie Council and Queensland Rail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires engagement and coordination with Queensland Rail
3	<p>Investigate upgrade of roads between the new Gympie Interchange and the Gympie CBD including Gympie Connection Road, Wolvi Road, Stewart Terrace, Horseshoe Bend and Channon Street to factor in increased traffic volumes.</p> <p>It is recommended that Council engage with the Minister for Transport and Main Roads with a view to reaching agreement on the design and delivery of upgrades to this corridor.</p>	<p>Based on the outputs of the modelling work undertaken by PTT, it can be seen that by 2036, most of the affected roads will have daily vehicle volumes which are higher than the typical daily vehicle volumes specified in the Gympie Regional Council Planning Scheme.</p> <p>Horseshoe Bend and Channon Street will effectively replace the current function of Tin Can Bay Road and will need to be upgraded to accommodate this higher order function.</p> <p>As constructed, the roads that constitute this route do not meet the desired standards in terms of alignment, geometry, carriage way width, shoulder width and intersection design to reflect the demands expected to be placed upon it.</p> <p>It is considered that planning for upgrade of these roads will support improvement movement of vehicles through Gympie and connections to key features such as the CBD and industrial estate.</p>				✓		Medium term	TMR Gympie Regional Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State controlled road corridor
4	<p>Prepare a detailed structure plan for the proposed industrial precinct and intermodal terminal adjacent to the Curra interchange to enable inclusion of the area identified in the Curra Business Case as an Industry Investigation Area Zoning or similar within the new Planning Scheme.</p>	<p>The new Curra interchange presents a significant opportunity to earmark future industrial land in this location in the new planning scheme. This land is well located to benefit from high accessibility to the Bruce Highway and the availability of large industrial lots impacted by fewer constraints.</p>	✓				✓	Short term	Gympie Regional Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reliant on changes to the planning scheme Land ownership

#	Recommended Action	Justification	Land Use	Design & Landscaping	Signage & Wayfinding	Roads & Active Transport Connections	Planning Scheme Change	Implementation timeframe	Stakeholder responsibility	Considerations
5	<p>Review current zoning of the identified catalyst site at 83-97 River Road to identify opportunities for increased activity and density to reflect the to accommodate growth within the surrounding vicinity.</p> <p>Consider rezoning to Open Space or Outdoor Sport and Recreation zoning to facilitate land use compatible with the hazard that would activate this section of the existing Highway.</p>	83-97 River Road is a vacant site zoned as District centre adjacent to the Bruce Highway between the Excelsior Road intersection and Albert Park. While the site is flood affected, it has approximately 300 metres of frontage to the Bruce Highway (River Road) along an important pedestrian thoroughfare connecting the Gympie Central Shopping Centre to the Gympie CBD.	✓				✓	Medium term	Gympie Regional Council	
6	Review current zoning of the identified catalyst site at 9 Wickham Street, consider zoning to District Centre, to maximise opportunities for increased activity on a prominent corner site.	9 Wickham Street is currently a vacant site zoned as District Centre. While the site is flood affected, it is considered a prime corner block with visual prominence at a key vehicular entry point to the CBD. It is also located in close proximity to Nelson Reserve and the Mary River in terms of pedestrian connectivity and would benefit from an activated frontage to the Bruce Highway and Monkland Street.	✓				✓	Medium term	Gympie Regional Council	
7	<p>Revise the Strategic Framework of the Gympie Region Planning Scheme to reflect construction of the new Bruce Highway alignment (bypass) and the new role and function of the current Bruce Highway alignment; including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Including the bypass in the updated Road Hierarchy and showing as the Bruce Highway alignment on the Strategic Framework Map; Removing reference to the "Proposed Highway" in Strategic Framework maps and text; and Including reference to the changed role and function of the current Bruce Highway alignment as it shift from a Highway and through road to an urban-arterial with improved active transport connectivity. 	<p>The current planning scheme was prepared when section D of the Cooroy to Curra project was not completed and as a result is outdated.</p> <p>It is important to recognise the new alignment for the Bruce Highway and the opportunities that this will bring along with the opportunities that will arise from the shift in role and function of the current Bruce Highway alignment.</p>					✓	Medium term	Gympie Regional Council	
8	Investigate feasibility of provision of new and improved active transport routes alongside and across the existing Bruce Highway including but not limited to.	The removal of through traffic on the current Bruce Highway alignment presents an opportunity to improve the safety and experience for pedestrians and cyclists using the corridor. This will also provide for improved connectivity for walkers and cyclists with the intent to encouraging more people to walk and cycle more often.								
8a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a pedestrian pathway between the Six Mile Creek Rest stop and the Gold Nugget Service Station to the south. 				✓	✓		Short term	Gympie Regional Council TMR	
8b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capitalise on the opportunity presented by the Brooloo Road pedestrian bridge project (DTMR) to link up the active transport networks on the Southside with the River to Rail Trail and The Sands Park 				✓	✓		Medium Term	DTMR and Gympie Regional Council	

#	Recommended Action	Justification	Land Use	Design & Landscaping	Signage & Wayfinding	Roads & Active Transport Connections	Planning Scheme Change	Implementation timeframe	Stakeholder responsibility	Considerations
	and create an improved pedestrian crossing of the existing Bruce Highway.									
8c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> new pedestrian pathway between Lake Alford and The Sands Park on the Mary River alongside the 'Old' Bruce Highway adjacent to the Mary River. This would require a safe pedestrian crossing in the vicinity of the northern extent of Lake Alford. 				✓	✓		Long Term	DTMR and Gympie Regional Council	Requires GRC to engage with DTMR and seek consent for interventions within the State controlled Road Corridor
8d	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> new pathways to improve pedestrian access around Gympie's northern landmarks, such as Two Mile State School. 				✓	✓		Short term	Gympie Regional Council	
9	Investigate upgrading of amenities at the Six Mile Creek Rest Stop and improved planting and screening.	Improvement of amenities and landscaping will play an important role in creating an entry landmark appealing to tourists on long drives.		✓	✓					
10	Investigate new signage and wayfinding interventions at interchange entry/exit points including Woondum Interchange, Flood Road Interchange, Gympie Interchange and Curra Interchange.	Signage and wayfinding will be key in guiding visitors to key attractions and features within Gympie. It is intended that new signage and wayfinding would be designed and delivered in line with Council policy.			✓			Short-term	DTMR and Gympie Regional Council	Requires GRC to engage with DTMR and seek consent for interventions within the State controlled Road Corridor
11	Undertake a targeted streetscape improvement project between Gympie Central Shopping Centre and Albert Park to improve the active transport environment alongside the existing Bruce Highway. This should include an additional north to south pedestrian crossing with central pedestrian refuge, shade planting and seating.	This section of road is a key link and has significant potential to provide for improved active transport connectivity if it is made more attractive to walkers and cyclists.		✓	✓	✓		Short-term	DTMR and Gympie Regional Council	Requires GRC to engage with DTMR and seek consent for interventions within the State controlled Road Corridor
12	Undertake planning for the Albert Park – Mary River Nature Trail.	This nature trail will increase the town's emotional and physical connection to the Mary River, a key part of the town's identity. It would be intended to link up with Nelson Reserve via the River Road Highway underpass and the intersection of Monkland Street and the existing Bruce Highway with an improved pedestrian crossing		✓	✓	✓		Medium Term	Gympie Regional Council	
13	Undertake planning for an entry statement at the Monkland Street Entrance to Nelson Reserve	The entrance to Nelson Reserve from the Monkland Street Precinct becomes a focal point for the Green Heart Precinct. Pedestrian access to Nelson Reserve down the grass slope is eased with a ramp or terracing of the landscaping. A sculptural element is visible from the highway to mark the park entrance as a gateway to Gympie's CBD.		✓	✓			Medium Term	Gympie Regional Council	
14	Undertake planning for a landscape rest area Queens Park Reserve.	A rest area with landscaping and planting at the southern corner of Queens Park Reserve integrates this park into the Green Heart Precinct and provides a feature for visitors to enjoy.		✓	✓			Medium Term	Gympie Regional Council	

#	Recommended Action	Justification	Land Use	Design & Landscaping	Signage & Wayfinding	Roads & Active Transport Connections	Planning Scheme Change	Implementation timeframe	Stakeholder responsibility	Considerations
15	Review signage marking Gympie's northern entry point to improve way finding to the CBD, hospital and other key landmarks.	Signage and wayfinding will be key in guiding visitors to key attractions and features within Gympie. It is intended that new signage and wayfinding would be designed and delivered in line with Council policy and complement existing entry signage.			✓			Short term	Gympie Regional Council	
16	Investigate opportunities for targeted landscaping treatments and tree planting along the existing Highway section between the North Coast Railway Line and Browns Road.	There is an opportunity to create an 'entry boulevard' feel from the Gympie Interchange arriving in Gympie.		✓	✓			Long term		
17	It is recommended that Flood Road is upgraded to reflect its new function as a heavy vehicle route and key access to the East Deep Creek industrial area.	It is anticipated that the Flood Road interchange will add additional traffic volumes to Noosa Road at its intersection with Brisbane Road. Driver sight distance to the north of this intersection is compromised by both the horizontal and vertical alignment of this section of Brisbane Road. Upgrading of this intersection to address this issue is required.				✓		Short term	DTMR and Gympie Regional Council	Council will need to engages with the Minister for Transport and Main Roads with a view to securing State government commitment to the delivery of the road improvements.
	.It is recommended that a focussed land use planning exercise is undertaken for the new interchanges and primary access corridors from the Bypass to understand how everything is functioning once the bypass is operational.	It is difficult to ascertain the true impact the bypass will have from a land use perspective until it is operational.	✓					Long term	Gympie Regional Council	