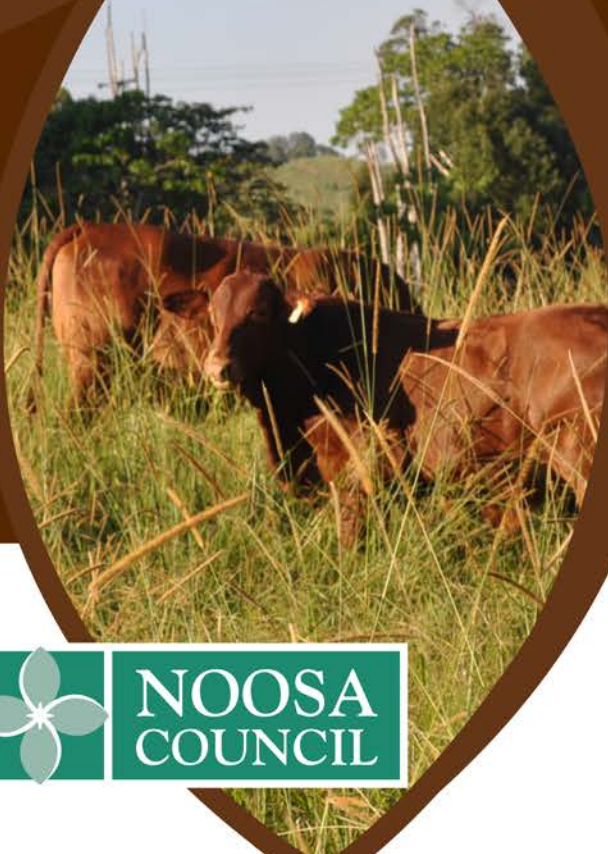


Agriculture and Agricultural Land in Noosa Shire 2016



PO Box 141 Tewantin QLD 4565
P (07) 5329 6500 | F (07) 5329 6501
mail@noosa.qld.gov.au
www.noosa.qld.gov.au

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www.noosa.qld.gov.au

General Enquiries:

By telephone: (07) 5329 6500

By email: mail@noosa.qld.gov.au

Fax: (07) 5329 6501

Street Address: 9 Pelican Street, TEWANTIN

Postal address: PO Box 141, TEWANTIN QLD 4565

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Disclaimer

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Executive Summary

Historically, Noosa Shire was founded on an agricultural economy. Timber, beef and dairy cattle, as well as vegetable and tree crops, have all contributed significantly to the economy, the landscape and the local heritage.

Today the economic role played by agriculture has decreased. In part this can be accounted to significant changes within agricultural industries such as the closure of butter factories, deregulation of the dairy industry, closure of timber mills and sugar mill. However the nature of agricultural production has also evolved and the focus in peri-urban areas like Noosa is increasingly on smaller agribusinesses, many of which include value adding and complementary activities. Landholders put considerable effort into resource management and rehabilitation with considerable support and information available from local and on-line networks.

Consumer expectations are also shifting with an increasing number of people willing to pay a premium for locally produced fresh foods including organic fruit and vegetables and free range or pasture fed meat products.

Noosa's Local Economic Plan has identified Rural Enterprise as a priority sector moving forward. It suggests that Noosa is already well known for food with a growing number of smaller producers, some of whom specialise in boutique or gourmet produce. The increasing demand for clean, green, sustainably produced local food and beverages would suggest there are opportunities to build on the local agriculture sector and establish a premier food and beverage brand.

The attractiveness of the Noosa hinterland has led to it accommodating an increasing number of residents drawn to the rural lifestyle but with no farming interest. The biodiversity values of the hinterland are greatly appreciated and clearing of bushland for new pastures or orchards is generally unsupported, especially considering there are already many underutilised cleared properties.

Population growth as well as differing values can lead to conflicts within the rural setting and careful planning is required to protect the rights of primary producers while preserving the amenity and biodiversity of the hinterland. Likewise intensive rural pursuits have the potential to diminish the lifestyle expected by residents of the hinterland.

Since the early 1990s various pieces of state and local planning regulation have sought to protect the agricultural industry and particularly protect agricultural lands or other resources on which agriculture depends.

The purpose of this study is to examine the context and role of agricultural uses in Noosa Shire and to establish their potential significance for the Shire's future. It examines the capacity of rural lands to support agricultural production and the extent to which land should be protected for that purpose and activities encouraged.

This report specifically brings forward recommendations for the next planning scheme.

The Strategic component of the planning scheme should acknowledge the value of agriculture to the Noosa Shire, not just in terms of production but in terms of heritage and amenity. It should reinforce the sentiment of the State Planning Policy in protecting the long term agricultural capacity of the hinterland and particularly good quality agricultural lands. However the strategic framework must also acknowledge other values within the hinterland, for instance the importance of biodiversity, landscape and ecosystems.

The clean, green credentials of the Noosa brand dictate that farming enterprises, particularly food production should take a more environmentally sensitive approach to farming. Sustainable agricultural systems that are less reliant on synthetic agro-chemicals (such as fertilisers and

pesticides) and reduce the potential to impact on downstream waterways, atmosphere and neighbours. Statements should explain what is expected of rural enterprises in terms of their impact on the environment including the land, water and air. For instance, the planning scheme should be supportive of pasture fed and free range livestock and high value sustainably produced crops.

To meet the growing market demand for local produced food and increased connection to the farmers who produce it the planning scheme can also look at mechanisms to foster the growth in on-farm diversification through value-adding and direct to consumer marketing.

Mapping within the scheme should clearly delineate an urban footprint or boundary for urban growth and development. Urban uses with no association to primary production should be avoided outside of this boundary. The hinterland towns and villages are well serviced and make logical locations for value chain industries and service industries that support agriculture and food production.

An overlay should be applied to show lands that are to be reserved for agricultural to the general exclusion of any development that would fragment, alienate or result in loss or diminished productive capacity of agricultural land. This mapping should be based on the State's Agricultural Land Classification Class A or Class B but be further refined to reflect local circumstances, removing lands that are either already committed to other purposes or lands which are more important for other purposes such as biodiversity and waterway protection.

Land use zones, supported by desired outcomes should explain the intention for land and the uses and development that would be supported thereon. Ideally it would be clear where the preferred dominant land use is for agricultural pursuits or associated rural enterprises as opposed to rural living or conservation purpose.

Subject to the agreement of land owners, Council might consider using a land use zone such as "environmental management" rather than rural where the intent is to protect bushland or enhance wildlife habitat rather than carrying out farming.

It is suggested that the new planning scheme adopt as best as practicable standard definitions consistent throughout Queensland through the planning reform process. These might be modified slightly if necessary for local circumstances.

On rural properties (including rural residential properties) over a certain size, non-intensive agricultural pursuits should be allowed without being subject to planning approval. More intensive agricultural uses should have an appropriate level of assessment applied but industrial farming uses which are not in keeping with the expectations of the Noosa community such as feedlots, intensive piggeries and intensive broiler sheds or battery cage egg production should be avoided in Noosa Shire and clearly identified as inconsistent with the scheme.

Opportunities should be provided for complementary land uses that support the viability of agriculture and do not alienate or diminish agricultural productivity on the same or surrounding lands. Priority sectors that could successfully co-exist with agriculture include certain health and wellness uses, rural or nature based tourism, creative industries and environmental industries. Low impact home based businesses or home-hosted visitor accommodation in particular should be allowed without needing planning approval.

The creation of new allotments outside the urban footprint and the rural living areas should continue to be tightly limited and the minimum lot sizes be enforced to enable continued agricultural viability and a range of farming options long term, whether it is good quality soils or not. The only exception to the minimum lot size should be made where a portion of land is being excised for conservation purposes and transferred to public ownership.

There is a sufficient supply of small to medium sized rural properties and there would seem to be no reason to reduce the minimum lot size from 100 hectares as has been the case for over 10 years.

1. Introduction & Context

1.1 Previous Planning Study

In the past Noosa Council endorsed a planning study prepared by the Town Planning Department in 1995, called “Agriculture & Agricultural Land in Noosa Shire”. This report examined agriculture in the Shire and provided an assessment of the Shire’s land resources based on a number of data sources and with the assistance of the Department of Primary Industries.

The 1995 report found that agriculture contributed to the Shire in economic, cultural heritage, visual amenity, lifestyle and character terms. It suggested that Noosa Shire could have an agriculturally productive future, based on more specialised activities conducted on a smaller scale, instead of in the traditional farming areas. Specifically the report identified two significant agricultural growth activities being sugar cane and farm forestry.

The report led to the protection of good quality agricultural land in the 1997 Strategic Plan.

Many factors over the last two decades have changed the agricultural landscape and momentum in Noosa Shire in a way not predicted in the 1995 study. These include the closure of two timber mills at Cooroy, the closure of Moreton (sugar) Mill at Nambour, deregulation of the dairy industry and the high demand (and consequentially high cost) of rural land for lifestyle purposes.

With the preparation of a new planning scheme commencing it is timely to review the earlier report and particularly concentrates on changes in the agricultural sector since the 1990s. This report will not repeat aspects of soil analysis or pedology, as it is unlikely to reveal different results than the earlier studies.

1.2 Planning Scheme Review

The 2006 Noosa Planning Scheme had a horizon year of 2015. While it has been amended a few times already it is due for comprehensive review and replacement. The 2006 scheme was prepared under the Integrated Planning Act and the Sustainable Planning Act has now been in place since 2009. New planning legislation is now anticipated before the end of 2016.

In 2016 Council will commence work on a new Planning Scheme for Noosa Shire. Through this process Council will need to give consideration to how it identifies and treats agricultural lands and facilitates agriculture. The planning scheme could encourage certain forms of agriculture while specifying forms that are not considered appropriate. Rural land owners, residents and proponents will expect clarity and transparency in the regulatory / policy framework to guide investment and lifestyle decisions.

2. Agriculture in Noosa Shire

2.1 Historical Production

Historically, Noosa Shire's economy was founded on an agricultural base, with timber, beef cattle and dairying comprising major industries in the area, followed by significant fruit and vegetable production. **Appendix A** provides detail of the agricultural history of the Shire. More recently traditional agriculture has decreased but alternative forms of farming (such as organic farming, permaculture, multi-species pasture-based farming e.g. 'regenerative' farms and mixed farms supplying local markets) have gained some momentum.

2.2 Current Production

Today local agricultural operations are small scale but diverse. A survey of the Noosa hinterland reveals that land is being used for the farming of:

Beef cattle	Poultry	Pigs
Goats	Fish & Crayfish	Horses
Lettuce	Culinary herbs	Garlic
Ginger	Vegetables	Macadamia nuts
Bananas	Tomatoes	Citrus fruits
Avocados	Olives	Bush tucker and rainforest foods
Custard apples	Nashi pears	

Provided as **Appendix B** are maps indicating where land is accommodating agriculture¹. There were 238 properties found to be used for beef cattle, 47 used for horticulture and at least 70 containing horses².

There are over 200 properties throughout Noosa Shire which are identified within the rates system as being used for agriculture, a majority of these for cattle grazing (including breeding or fattening)³. It is unlikely these figures remain an accurate representation of land use.

2.3 Contribution to the Local Economy

According to the 2015 Noosa Economic Profile prepared by AEC Group⁴, the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing Sector makes a minimal contribution to the Shire's economy in terms of both employment and finances. As a sector it is comparatively under-represented and with negative growth. Local employment in this sector reduced by 74 jobs in the 2006-2011 period accounting for 1.2% of Noosa jobs in 2011 (compared to 2.7% for the State). For the former Statistical Local Area of "Noosa Hinterland" which excludes all the coastal urban communities, the percentage was still just 3.4%. AEC Group's Economic Profile suggests that for sectors, such as Agriculture, that are forecast to contract nationwide, local growth is unlikely without a focus in very niche industries. It should also be noted that these figures may not include a number of smaller farming enterprises earning less than \$22,500 per annum, which may represent around one third of growers in the region. These enterprises tend to be focussed on local value chains, be part-time and be supplemented by off-farm income.

¹ Survey work done by Country Noosa through second quarter of 2015

² It's recognised that only a fraction of the properties accommodating horses have any form of income generated through an equine business.

³ If all or part of a property is used solely for the business of primary production (agriculture, pasturage or dairy farming), the land owner may seek a primary production exemption for the purpose of land tax and Council rates.

⁴ Noosa Economic Profile dated July 2015 prepared by AEC Group

Average weekly incomes for this sector are lower than most other sectors represented locally and the Industry Value Added figure is less than 1%.

At June 2014 there were 286 local businesses of the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing Sector. Of these:

- 232 were non-employing;
- 39 employed between 1 and 4 people;
- 12 employed 5 - 19 people; and
- 3 employed 20-199 people.

The value of a scenic rural landscape including cattle and fruit trees to the tourism sector is unmeasured but possibly quite significant.

2.4 Land Investment

Property values in Noosa hinterland are considerably higher than regional areas further to the north and west and land purchase is unachievable for many, particularly younger people.

Land values are influenced by proximity to services and attractions, lifestyle opportunities available, views and amenity and the style of houses on the block. The more affordable locations were generally around Federal, Kin Kin, Cootharaba and Cooran. Lake Macdonald, Mt Cooroy and Ridgewood are generally the more expensive locations.

Appendix C includes a summary of data from property sales between 1 January 2014 and 31 December 2015. As might be expected it revealed that the largest properties (40 hectares and over) were at the lowest per-hectare cost but still averaging over \$9,000/hectare. Medium sized blocks (between 10 hectares and 40 hectares) increased in per-hectare cost, averaging over \$42,000/hectare. Anything less than 10 hectares in area is significantly affected by the style and size of the house and other improvements on site. The average price per hectare for blocks between 5 and 10 hectares was over \$88,000 /hectare. Even vacant blocks can be quite expensive.

2.5 Social Trends

According to the 2011 census a total of 340 employed persons 15 years and over, residing in Noosa Shire were employed in the industry sector of "Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing". This represented less than 1.7% of the local workforce. Fifteen years earlier the 1996 census data suggest there were 555 persons in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector which represented over 3.9%. Therefore there has been a fall in numbers and proportion of people employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing.

In 1996 just over 45% of the 555 persons employed in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector were aged between 35 and 54 years while just over 30% were 55 years and over. Less than 24% were 34 years or younger. By the 2011 census the proportion between the ages of 35 and 54 dropped slightly to 43.53% the proportion 55 years and over rose to 45%, while the proportion 34 years and younger dropped to 11.47%. Noticeably in 2011 over 18% were over 65 years and 8 people of between 75 and 84 years stated they were still employed in the sector.

At both census counts the male to female employees within this sector was roughly two thirds male to one third female.

In 2011, of those employed in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector, 169 people identified themselves as a manager and 102 people identified as a labourer. Smaller numbers of people

identified as having other occupations for example technicians & trade workers (21) and professionals (18).

Further detail on national social trends for the agricultural sector are provided in **Appendix D** of this report.

2.6 Networks

A major development since the 1995 planning study has been the ability for farmers or prospective farmers to access information on essentially any plant or animal including necessary growing conditions, trouble shooting and potential markets very quickly through the internet and there is no shortage of government and private research sites on agriculture, specific to Queensland or at least Australian conditions. The internet also provides the most accessible platform for linking suppliers with markets and educating consumers about local products.

Country Noosa, established in 2014 is a community group aimed at promoting agriculture, horticulture and other rural enterprises in the Noosa Shire and its surroundings. It runs workshops and field days and connects interested people. One of the services it is offering is connecting landholders with people wanting access to land for such purposes as agistment and crop growing. *Noosa & District Landcare*, established in 1991, is another well-established organisation committed to achieving long term environmental outcomes through improved land management practices and assistance with land restoration.

Both Gympie and Sunshine Coast Regional Councils support showcasing networks of regional produce including directories of local food producers/growers. *Gympie Gold Regional Produce* has an interactive regional food trail map detailing produce and visitor experiences available. *Seasons of the Sun* directory includes a few producers within Noosa Shire but generally secondary producers rather than farmers. Additionally, *Local Harvest: The Sunshine Coast Regional Food Directory* is a private directory of producers and growers and includes listings from within Noosa Shire.

Noosa Farmers Market website includes a directory of traders and Noosa Food Etrail provides suggestions for discovering local produce while exploring the region, however only a small portion are agricultural businesses from within Noosa Shire.

2.7 Opportunities and Constraints for Agriculture

2.7.1 Climatic Considerations

Noosa has a subtropical climate highly suitable for agriculture. It has warm to hot, humid summers with mild winters. Frosts are particularly rare. Rainfall is relatively plentiful and can be received in all months of the year but peaks between mid-summer and early autumn. On occasion severe storm events occur with localised flooding.

Given these characteristics much of Noosa's hinterland is suitable for grazing pastures and parts of it are also suitable for horticulture. In particular the landscape and conditions are suitable for subtropical fruits and there is opportunity to target harvest windows earlier or later than peak supplies from northern areas. Similarly, low chill stone fruit could be produced out of season to more traditional growing districts to the south.

In 2010 Sunshine Coast Regional Council released a Strategy containing climate change predictions for the region⁵. In broad terms this predicted the following between now and the year 2100:

⁵ Sunshine Coast Climate Change and Peak Oil Strategy 2010-2020, Chapter 2.

- Fewer cold days and more hot days with associated shifts in annual and seasonal means and extremes;
- A decline in average annual rainfall volumes;
- Seasonal shift with rainfall increasing in winter but decreasing in other seasons;
- More intense rainfall events with increased potential for flooding
- An increase in the number of severe storm events
- An increased risk of large hail storms
- More frequent and longer lasting droughts
- Increased risk of bushfire

Climate change is already impacting on agriculture in the shire with increased heat stress in dairy cattle, reduced horticultural productivity from seasonal fluctuations and increased soil erosion from storm events. Best practice adaptation measures such as minimum till farming, breed and cultivar selection are likely to be able to offset these impacts for the life of the planning scheme.⁶ While this poses obvious threats to agriculture it may also present opportunities. For instance it might improve the local prospects for production of tropical fruits that have traditionally been grown further to the north.

2.7.2 Land Management

While agricultural activities have some level of impact on the natural resources relied upon for their production, contemporary farming practices generally seek to minimise these impacts and advance sustainability of the resource base. This means that where appropriate native vegetation is retained, water resources are well managed, soils are protected from degradation and loss, and the use of synthetic agro-chemicals (such as fertilisers and pesticides) are minimised wherever possible.

Agriculture that relies on agricultural soils requires that the soil has suitable fertility, structure, water holding capacity, drainage capacity, and sufficient depth. Some areas such as steep slopes may be too erosion prone to sustain horticulture and are better left vegetated.

Horticulture production is generally limited to land where soil depth, structure and fertility are suitable for cultivation of horticultural crops and the reliable source of irrigation water is available. Annual crops such as vegetables and many cut flowers require soils suitable for regular cultivation. Orchard developments (e.g. fruit or nut trees or olives) are suitable for a wider range of sites and soil types including slopes.

Vegetation management is a critical component of sustainable agriculture, particularly in its contribution to biodiversity, protection of soils and management of water tables. Ideally farmers will locate farming production on the most suitable parts of their property while retaining native vegetation on parts best suited for conservation.

There are numerous examples within the Shire where commercial agriculture occurs on a site also registered as Land for Wildlife or with a Voluntary Conservation Agreement over parts of the site with fencing separating cattle from bushland or wetlands.

Local assistance is available on optimum land management practices. As mentioned earlier, Noosa & District Landcare works with landowners in areas of horticulture, vegetation management and ecosystem restoration.

2.7.3 Land Area

⁶ NCCARF Creating a climate for food security: The businesses, people and landscapes in food production

The historical fragmentation of the rural areas has created a large number of smaller properties which effectively rule out some uses but facilitate others. Various produce such as ginger, strawberries, hydroponic vegetables and cut flowers can be grown quite profitably on small lots.

Traditional Queensland cattle grazing relies on very large land areas however case studies have shown successful models of rearing smaller numbers of pasture fed beef cattle. This high value beef is increasingly popular with consumers and the local restaurant industry would potentially be an ideal market.

The Queensland Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning in 2012 acknowledged the typical minimum area required for a commercially viable dairy operation is about 100 hectares, with a trend toward increasing farm size⁷.

2.7.4 Protein Production Chain

The Queensland dairy industry is so tightly controlled by the limitations of existing milk quotas the establishment of new commercial dairies is most unlikely unless it was for a value-add product other than domestic milk supply.

Country Noosa recently commissioned research into the local beef industry with a view to increasing sustainable production from grazing lands (both existing and under-utilised land resources)⁸. This research found that a majority of locally produced beef is meeting the growing consumer preference for relatively chemical free pasture-fed meat and that opportunity existed to develop a local beef production system focussed on the local/regional food market.

Opportunities also exist for free range poultry, pig farming and aquaculture assuming the scale is appropriate for its setting and the production chain is in place.

Given the strict guidelines necessary for meat processing, it is not legal for primary producers to process their own meat for sale. Accredited meat processing operations are complex and represent substantial investment. The nearest meat processing plant taking beef cattle is in Gympie however there is nowhere in the vicinity of Noosa that processes pigs.

It is unlikely that individual producers could meet the accreditation requirements for commercial slaughtering and processing on-farm and nor would it be feasible to meet these standards with a mobile operation. Additionally the various infrastructure and locational requirements for such operations make them difficult to locate. Criteria would include convenient access to the highway, reticulated water and a buffer distance from sensitive environments (such as waterways) and urban settlement.

There is considerable distinction in facilities for poultry compared to larger meat animals and it would be most unlikely one plant could achieve accreditation for both.

Intensive animal husbandry, such as high density poultry farms, feedlots and piggeries have repeatedly been opposed by the Noosa community. While smaller scale intensive, free range systems may be consistent with the desired outcomes for our rural landscapes, larger industrial scale enterprises are considered to be inconsistent and will not be supported in Noosa Shire given the focus on lifestyle and environmental sustainability..

⁷ Mary Valley Economic Development Strategy addresses the dairy industry in some detail.

⁸ Dr Brian Stockwell, Watershed Australia (2015) Noosa Beef & Local Food System Research: Project Report & Action Plan

3. State Policy Context

Since 1992 various State regulations and policies have sought the protection of good quality agricultural land and prevented the fragmentation of rural landscapes. In addition remnant vegetation has been protected and increased protection afforded to waterways and wetlands.

In response Noosa's planning schemes, past and present have nominated agricultural land resources to be protected, have removed opportunity to subdivide rural lands, have mapped biodiversity values and have ensured urban land uses are inconsistent in rural areas.

A detailed chronology of State and Local regulation of specific relevance to agriculture and rural lands is provided within **Appendix E**.

This evolution of policy has undoubtedly curbed the development momentum not only on Noosa's hinterland but on the rural lands and natural landscapes of South East Queensland and the whole State.

The introduction of the South East Queensland Regional Plan in 2005 had a particularly significant impact on containing population growth to designated urban footprints, rural living areas and nominated rural villages while protecting regional landscapes and rural production areas from further subdivision and inappropriate land uses.

Looking forward, in reviewing its policy framework and preparing a new planning scheme, Council should advance various State Interests and Plan Making Policies as set out in the State Planning Policy of 2014.

The state's interest in planning for agriculture is to:

- *reduce the potential for conflict between agricultural land and other uses;*
- *protect resources from inappropriate development;*
- *minimise encroachment to ensure viable tracts of agricultural land are maintained; and*
- *improve opportunities for increased agricultural investment, production and diversification.*

The State Interest for Agriculture and its relationship to planning schemes is further detailed in the shaded box on the following page.

Planning protects the resources on which agriculture depends and supports the long-term viability and growth of the agricultural sector.

In making or amending a planning scheme and designating land for community infrastructure, the planning scheme is to appropriately reflect the State interest by:

- (1) considering the strategic economic significance of important agricultural areas by promoting and optimising agricultural development opportunities and enabling increased agricultural production in these areas, and
- (2) protecting Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Class A and Class B land for sustainable agricultural use by:
 - (a) avoiding fragmentation of ALC Class A or Class B land into lot sizes inconsistent with the current or potential use of the land for agriculture, and
 - (b) avoiding locating non-agricultural development on or adjacent to ALC Class A or Class B land, and
 - (c) maintaining or enhancing land condition and the biophysical resources underpinning ALC Class A or Class B land, and
- (3) protecting fisheries resources from development that compromises long-term fisheries productivity and accessibility, and
- (4) facilitating growth in agricultural production and a strong agriculture industry by:
 - (a) considering the value and suitability of land for current or potential agricultural uses when making land use decisions, and
 - (b) considering the planning needs of hard-to-locate intensive agricultural land uses, such as intensive animal industries and intensive horticulture, and
 - (c) locating new development (such as sensitive land uses or land uses that have biosecurity risks for agriculture) in areas that minimise potential for conflict with existing agricultural uses through the provision of adequate separation areas or other measures, and
 - (d) considering model levels of assessment and including agriculture development codes (or similar development assessment requirements), and
 - (e) facilitating opportunities for mutually beneficial co-existence with development that is complementary to agriculture and other non-agricultural uses that do not diminish agricultural productivity, and
 - (f) considering the infrastructure and services necessary to support a strong agriculture industry and associated agricultural supply chains, and
 - (g) protecting the stock route network from development (both on the stock route and adjacent) that would compromise the network's primary use or capacity for stock movement and other values (conservation, recreational).

The State has released guidelines, including model codes, to assist Local Governments with integrating the state interest into planning schemes. The State Planning Policy Interactive Mapping Tool⁹ shows areas to be protected:

Important Agricultural Areas are defined as “land that has all of the requirements for agriculture to be successful and sustainable, is part of a critical mass of land with similar characteristics and, is strategically significant to the region or the state”. A representation of the Important Agricultural Land Areas in Noosa is provided on **Map 1**. It includes land in the southern part of Noosa Shire around Black Mountain, Ridgewood and Doonan as well as a small number of properties to the north west of Kin Kin.

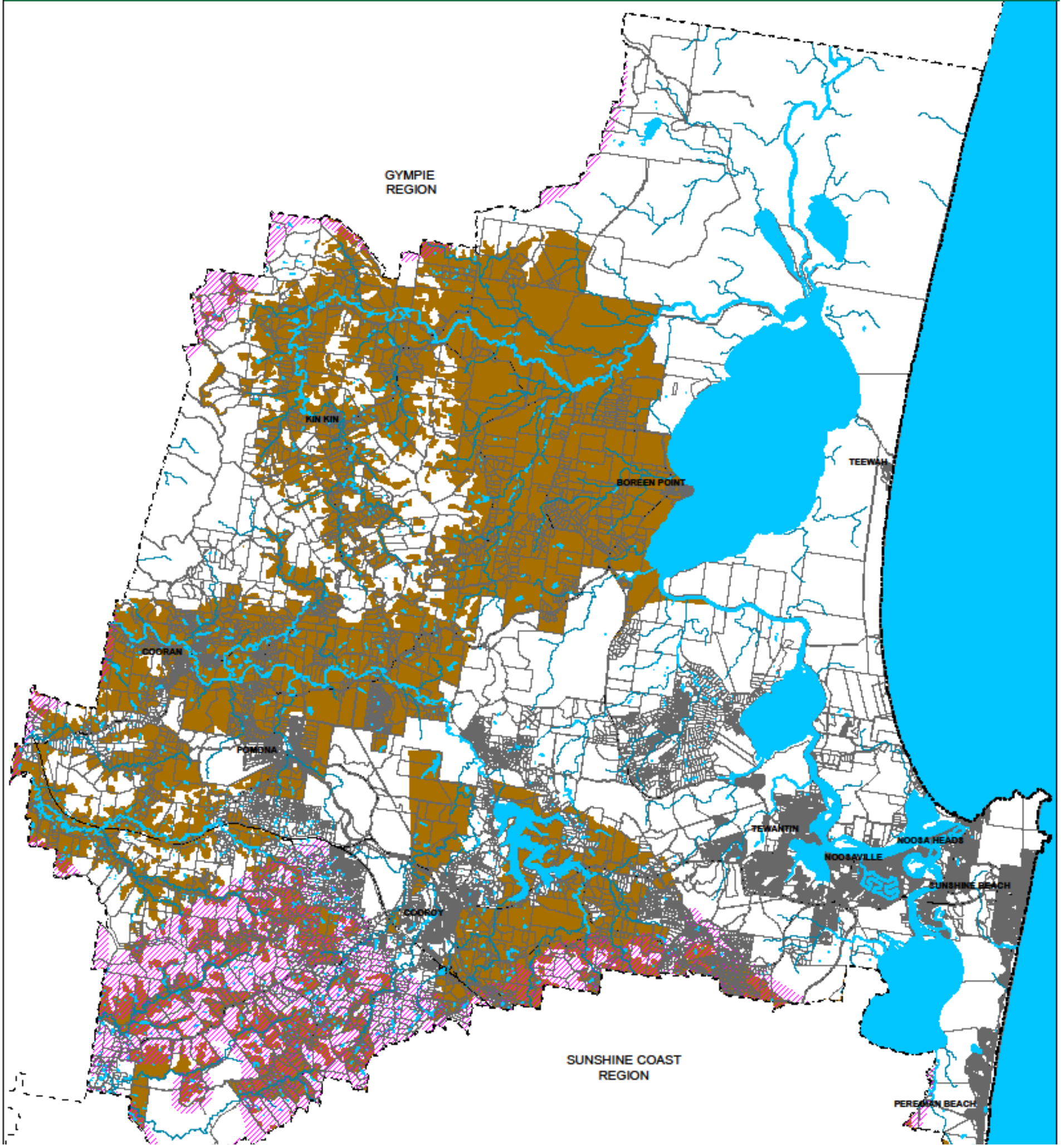
Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) – Class A and Class B in Noosa is also included on **Map 1**. It includes much of Noosa Shire and is discussed further in Section 4 of this study.

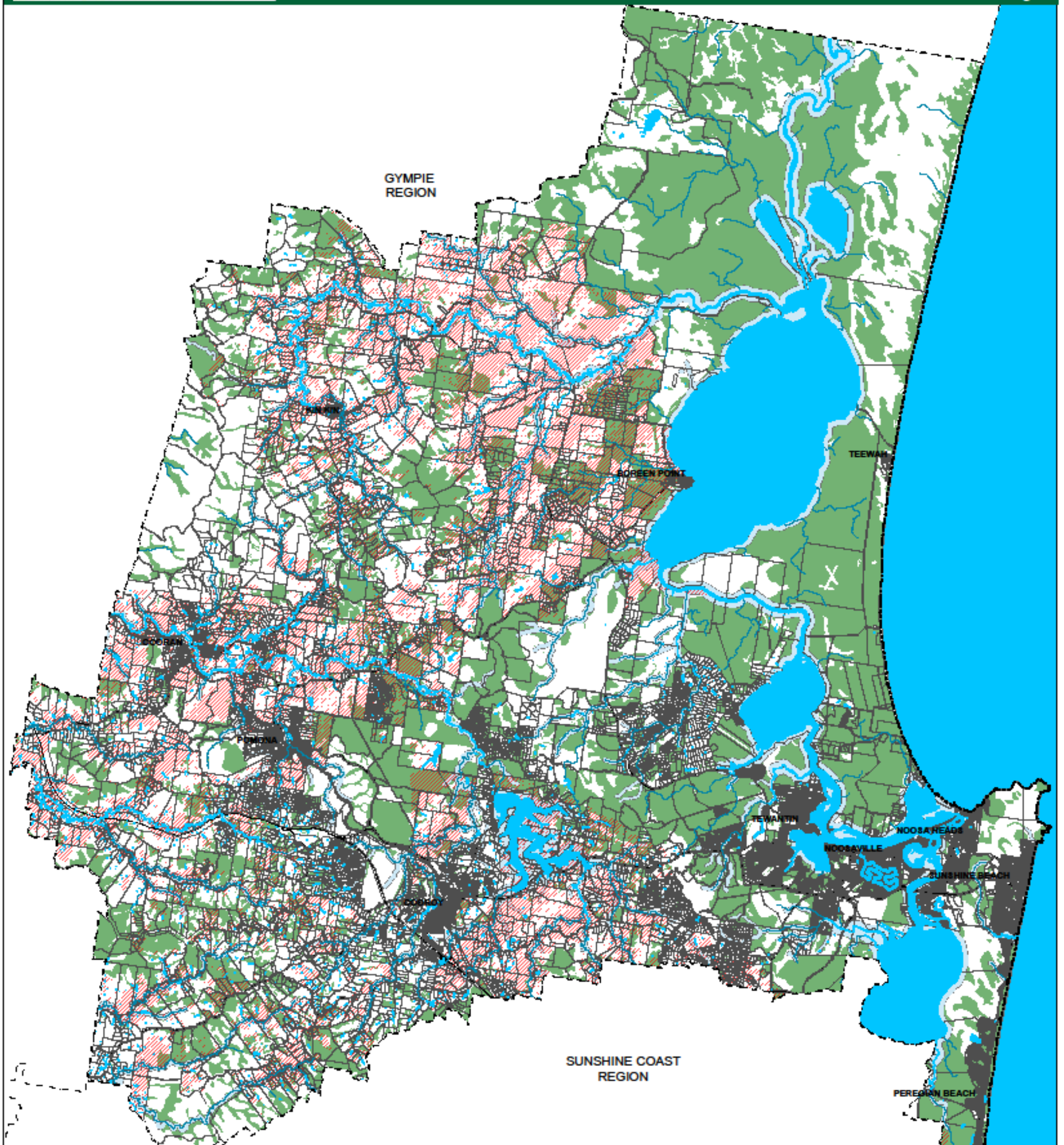
As shown on **Map 2** there is some disparity between the extent of the ALC – Class A and Class B and the part of Noosa Shire traditionally considered good quality agricultural land (currently mapped as Agricultural Land Conservation Area in the planning scheme). Of more concern however are overlaps with:

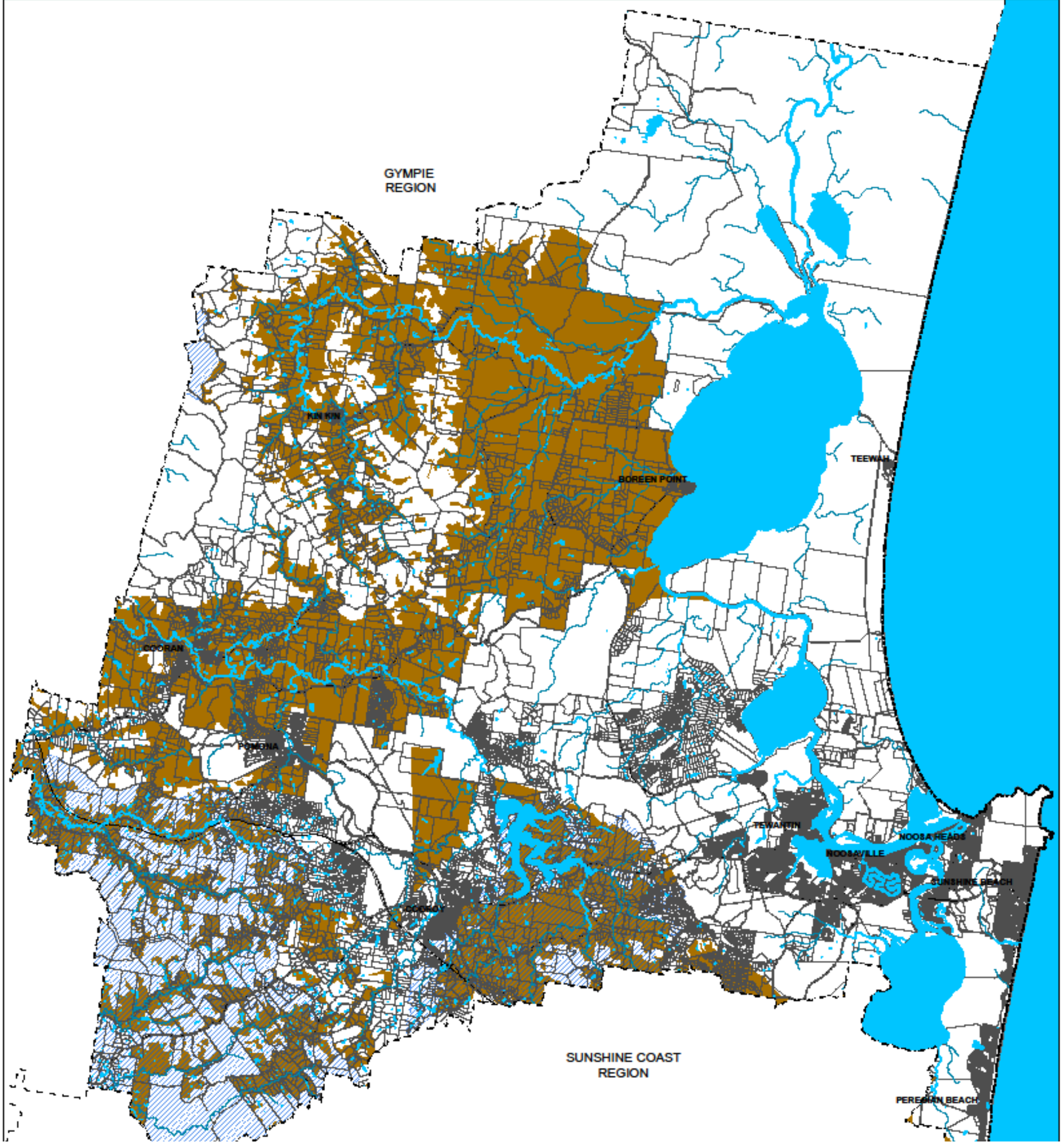
- areas of remnant vegetation requiring protection for biodiversity values such those mapped in the planning scheme as Environment Protection, Environment Enhancement or Riparian Buffer (refer **Map 3**) where clearing of land for farming practices would not be supported
- areas requiring protection for water quality where agriculture is assessable development and must meet Seqwater Development Guidelines: Development Guidelines for Water Quality Management in Drinking Water Catchments (refer **Map 4**)
- land already committed to other purposes such as land within the Urban Footprint, Rural Living Area or already developed for rural residential purposes (refer **Map 5**).

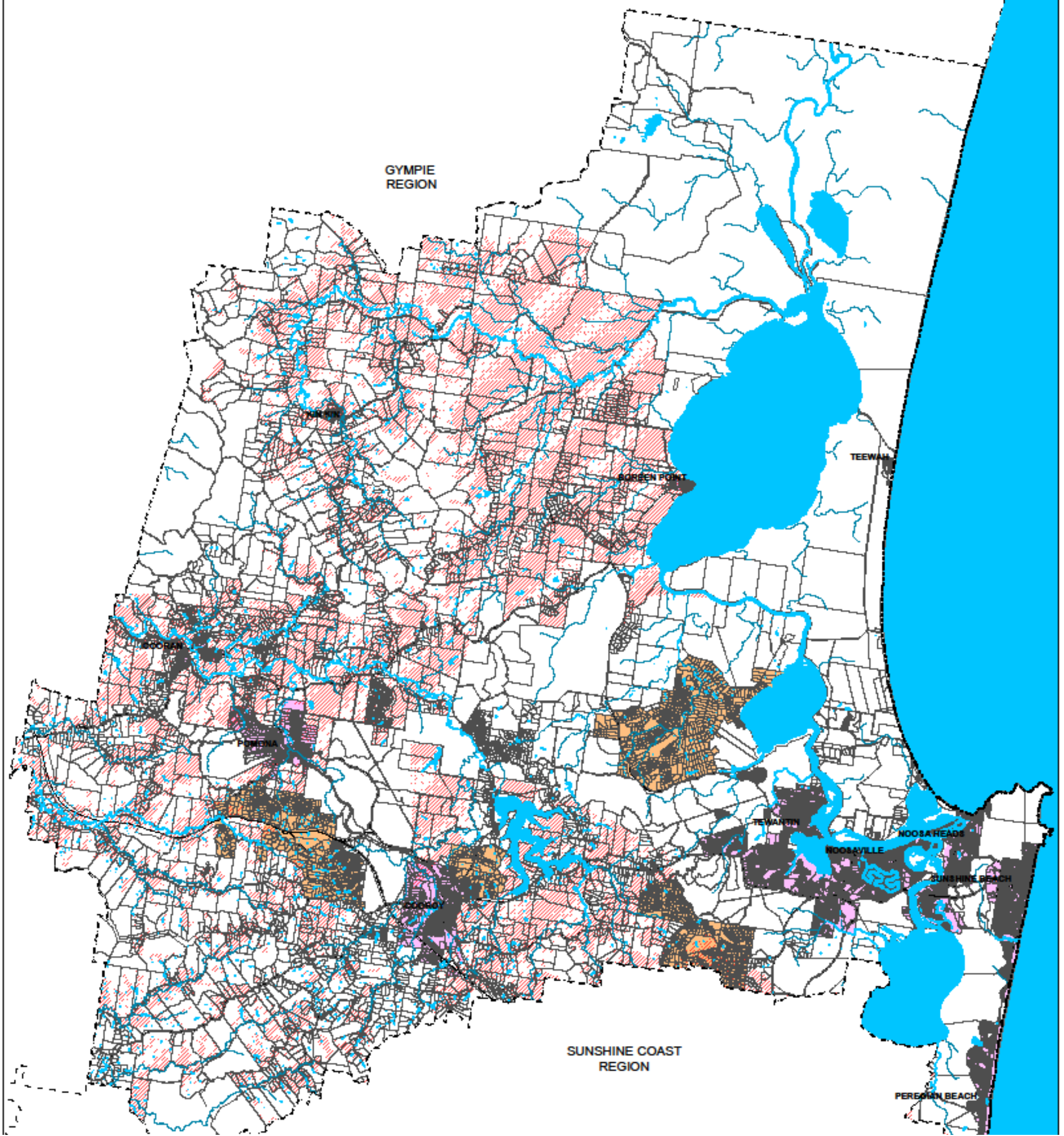
Council has the opportunity to refine mapping to ensure it reflects the role and importance of agriculture to this local area.

⁹ This is accessible at <http://www.statedevelopment.qld.gov.au/about-planning/spp-mapping-online-system.html>









4. Land Evaluation Schemes

It is not the intention of this study to test and analyse the soil of Noosa Shire. This has been done by both

local and state government in the past and is not likely to have changed considerably over time albeit that scientific research and modelling tools may have advanced, and there are still gaps in data.

4.1 Early 1990s

In 1990 when the State first released Planning Guidelines for the Identification of Good Quality Agricultural Land, it relied on a system of classification whereby:

Class A = Crop land - Land that is suitable for current and potential crops with limitations to production which range from none to moderate levels.

Class B = Limited crop land - Land that is marginal for current and potential crops due to severe limitations; and suitable for pastures. Engineering and/or agronomic improvements may be required before the land is considered suitable for cropping.

Class C = Pasture land - Land that is suitable only for improved or native pastures due to limitations which preclude continuous cultivation for crop production; but some areas may tolerate a short period of ground disturbance for pasture establishment.

Class D = Non-agricultural land - Land not suitable for agricultural uses due to extreme limitations. This may be undisturbed land with significant habitat, conservation and/or catchment values or land that may be unsuitable because of very steep slopes, shallow soils, rock outcrop or poor drainage.

Class A land was always considered good quality agricultural land but Classes B and C lands might also be considered good quality agricultural land dependent on the local circumstances and prevailing agricultural industries.

4.2 Previous Noosa Planning Studies

Prior to 1995 there was little soils data available for Noosa Shire at a suitable scale for strategic agricultural assessment to be undertaken. Two Noosa Council planning studies were carried out to correct this. The Geology & Soils of Noosa Shire contained an assessment of agricultural suitability (specifically for horticulture). Having consideration to soil type including rockiness, soil depth and wetness it judged land as falling within one of the following categories:

- Suitable for all horticultural uses
- Suitable for orchard crops, but may be marginal for annual crops
- May be marginal to unsuitable for horticultural use, but further testing required
- Unlikely to be suitable for horticultural use

The map of this analysis is reproduced as Figure 1. It suggests the most suitable land is concentrated around Pomona, Ringtail Creek, Cooroy and Cooroy Mountain, as well as in the valleys to the north and west of the Shire.

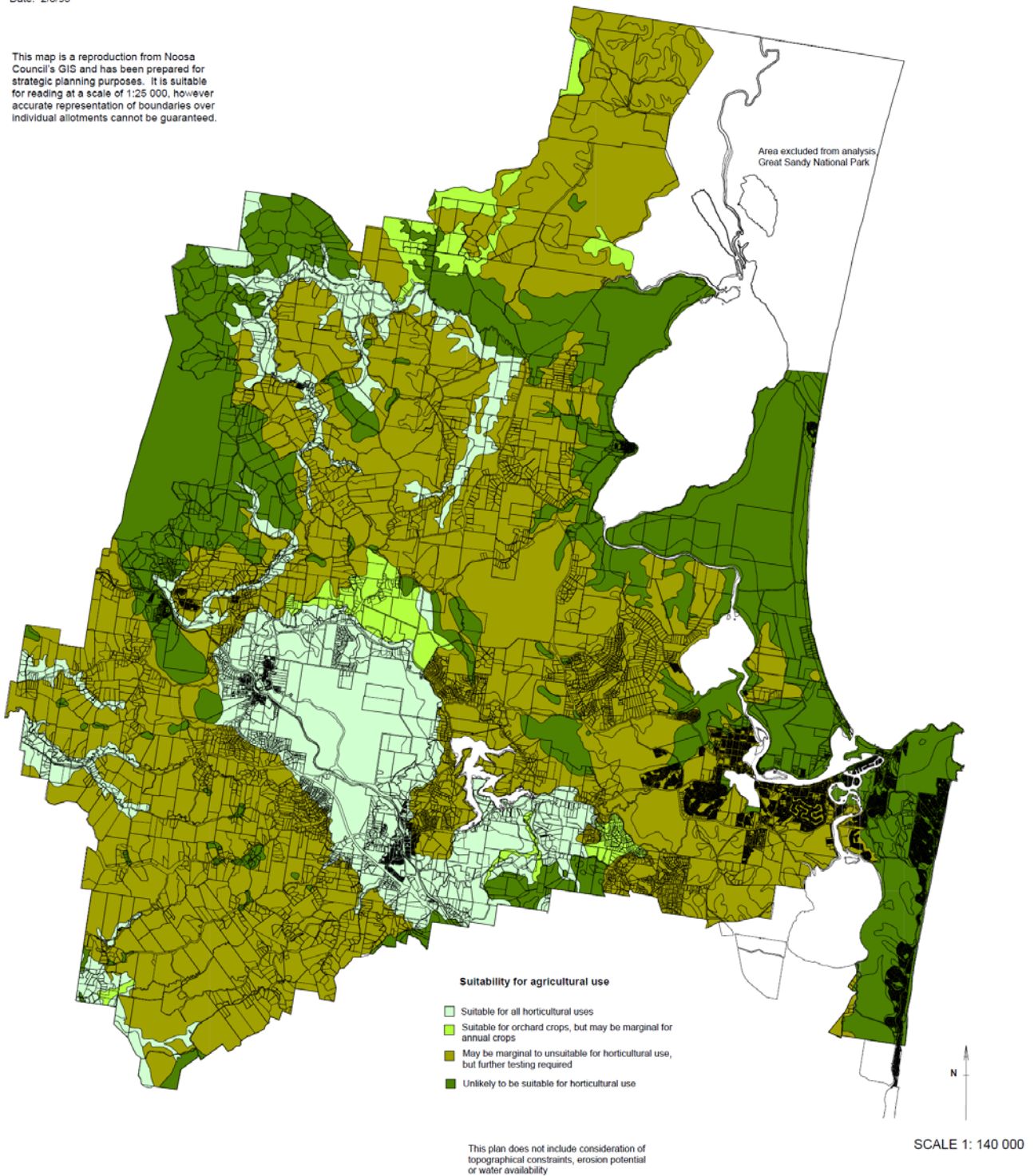
Figure 1 Suitability for Agricultural Use Map from Geology & Soils of Noosa Shire 1995

PLANNING SCHEME REVIEW: Geology/Soils Project

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Date: 2/8/95

This map is a reproduction from Noosa Council's GIS and has been prepared for strategic planning purposes. It is suitable for reading at a scale of 1:25 000, however accurate representation of boundaries over individual allotments cannot be guaranteed.



As part of the Agriculture & Agricultural Land in Noosa Shire study of December 1995 Department of Primary Industry officers and professional consultants were able to build on the findings of both the newly completed Geology & Soils project and the Topography and Slope project to identify areas of good quality agricultural land in the Shire. A comprehensive classification of Agricultural Land Classes was established as follows:

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASS DESCRIPTION

Crop Land

Class A Land suitable for all crops (small crops, tree and vine crops and sugar cane) with limitations to production which range from none to moderate levels.

Class A^{T&V} Land suitable for tree and vine crops on sloping land with moderate limitations.

Limited Crop Land

Class B Land which is either:-

- A complex combination of variable land types which may contain all classes of land, but including significant areas of Classes A and A^{T&V}; or
- Land which may be suitable for a limited range of crops, but may also have moderate to severe limitations

Class B^S Land which may be suitable for sugar cane, though further testing would be required due to moderate to severe limitations.

Pasture Land

Class C¹ Land suitable for improved pastures due to a range of limitations which preclude continuous cultivation for crop production.

Class C² Land suitable for only natural pastures due to a range of limitations which preclude cultivation.

Non-Agricultural Land

Class D Land not suitable for agricultural uses due to extreme limitations.

The map of these Agricultural Land Classes is reproduced as Figure 2. The assessment indicated that minor areas of the Shire could be considered to be Class A land, but more extensive areas were considered to be Class AT&V land on steeper slopes up to 25%. Additional areas of the Shire were considered to be Class B land and Class BS land, ie. land potentially suitable for sugar-cane production. Classes A, AT&V, B and B^S were collectively considered to be good quality agricultural land and these, shown in Figure 3 were then recommended as the basis of the Agricultural Land Conservation Area adopted within the 1997 Strategic Plan and which carried onward to the 2006 Noosa Plan.

It should be noted that a considerable amount of this was made up of B^S being land potentially suitable for sugar cane. Since the closure of the Moreton Mill the argument for protecting this land, focussed around Cootharaba and Como as well as pockets at Doonan, is significantly weakened.

Figure 2 Agricultural Land Classes from Agriculture and Agricultural Land 1995



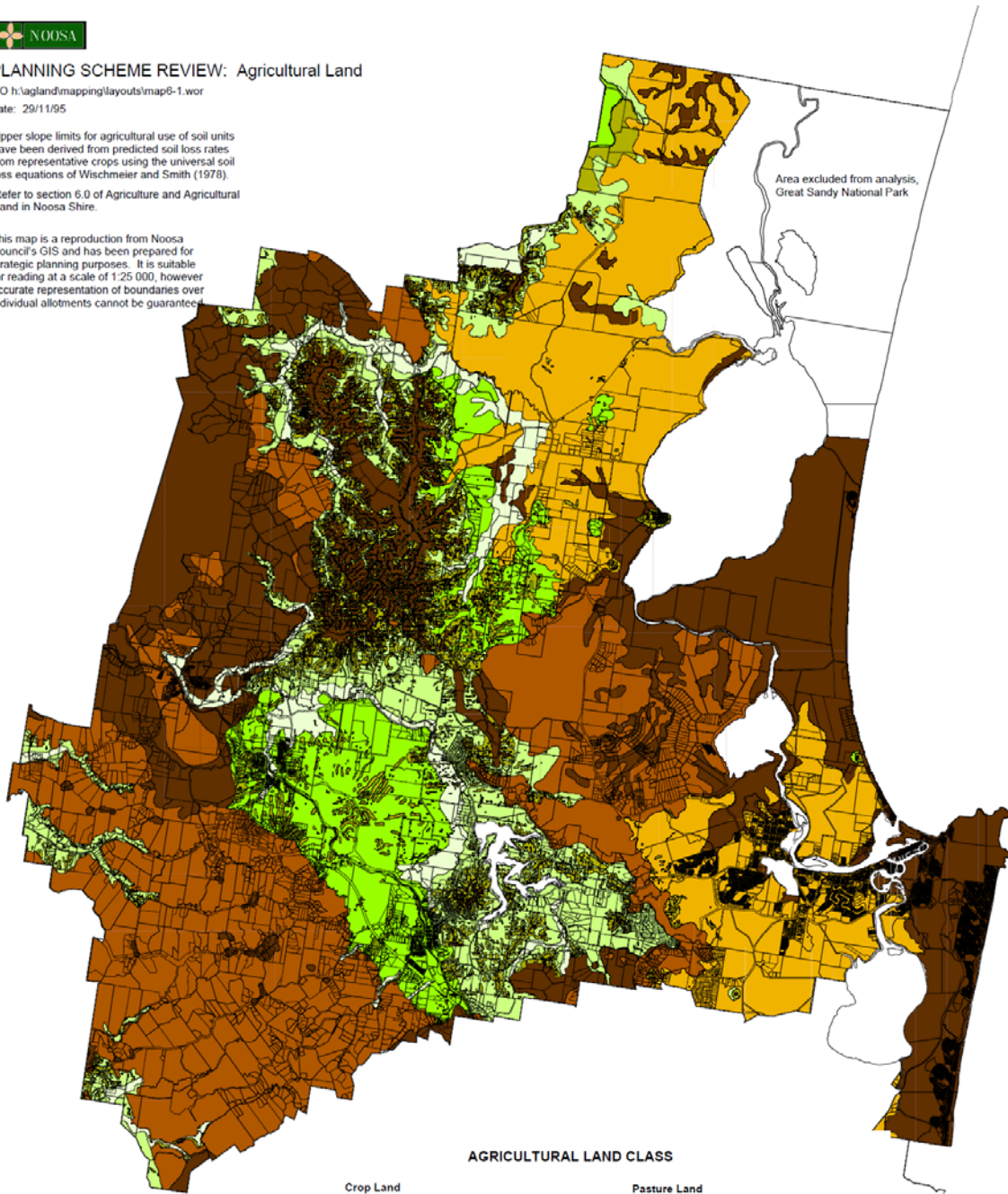
PLANNING SCHEME REVIEW: Agricultural Land

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Date: 29/11/95

Upper slope limits for agricultural use of soil units have been derived from predicted soil loss rates from representative crops using the universal soil loss equations of Wischmeier and Smith (1978).

Refer to section 6.0 of Agriculture and Agricultural Land in Noosa Shire.

This map is a reproduction from Noosa Council's GIS and has been prepared for strategic planning purposes. It is suitable for reading at a scale of 1:25 000, however accurate representation of boundaries over individual allotments cannot be guaranteed.



AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASS

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>Crop Land</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class A
Land suitable for all crops (small crops, tree and vine crops and sugar cane) with limitations to production which range from none to moderate levels. Class AT&V
Land suitable for tree and vine crops on sloping land with moderate limitations. <p>Limited Crop Land</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class B
Land which is either:
A complex combination of variable land types which may contain all classes of land, but including significant areas of Classes A and AT&V; or
Land which may be suitable for a limited range of crops, but may also have moderate to severe limitations. Class BS
Land which may be suitable for sugar cane, though further testing would be required due to moderate to severe limitations. | <p>Pasture Land</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class C1
Land suitable for improved pastures due to a range of limitations which preclude continuous cultivation for crop production. Class C2
Land suitable for only natural pastures due to a range of limitations which preclude cultivation. <p>Non-Agricultural Land</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class D
Land not suitable for agricultural uses due to extreme limitations. |
|---|--|



SCALE 1: 140 000

Figure 3 Potential Areas for the Conservation of Good Quality Agricultural Land from Agriculture and Agricultural Land 1995

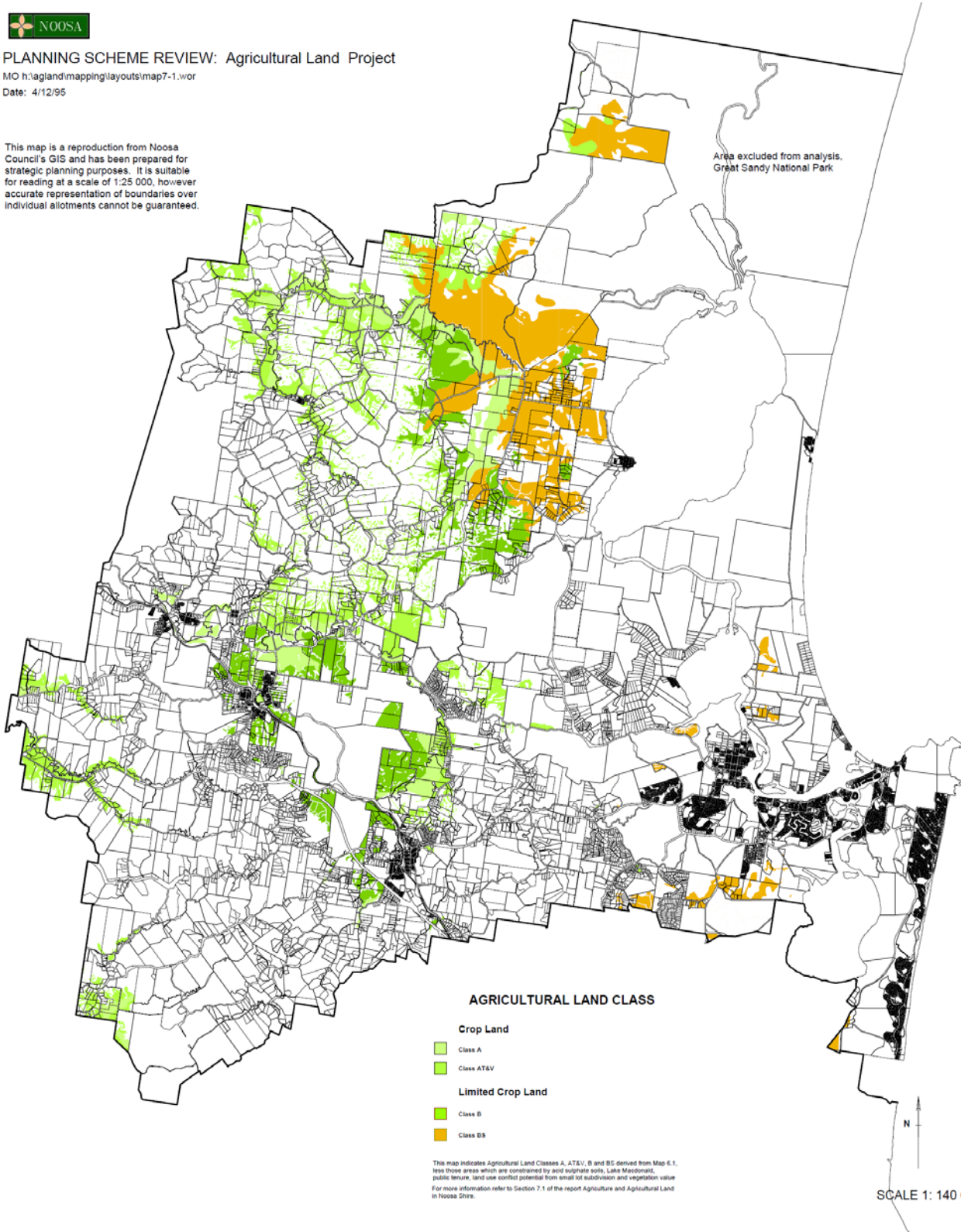


PLANNING SCHEME REVIEW: Agricultural Land Project

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Date: 4/12/95

This map is a reproduction from Noosa Council's GIS and has been prepared for strategic planning purposes. It is suitable for reading at a scale of 1:25 000, however accurate representation of boundaries over individual allotments cannot be guaranteed.



AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASS

Crop Land

- Class A
- Class AT&V

Limited Crop Land

- Class B
- Class BS

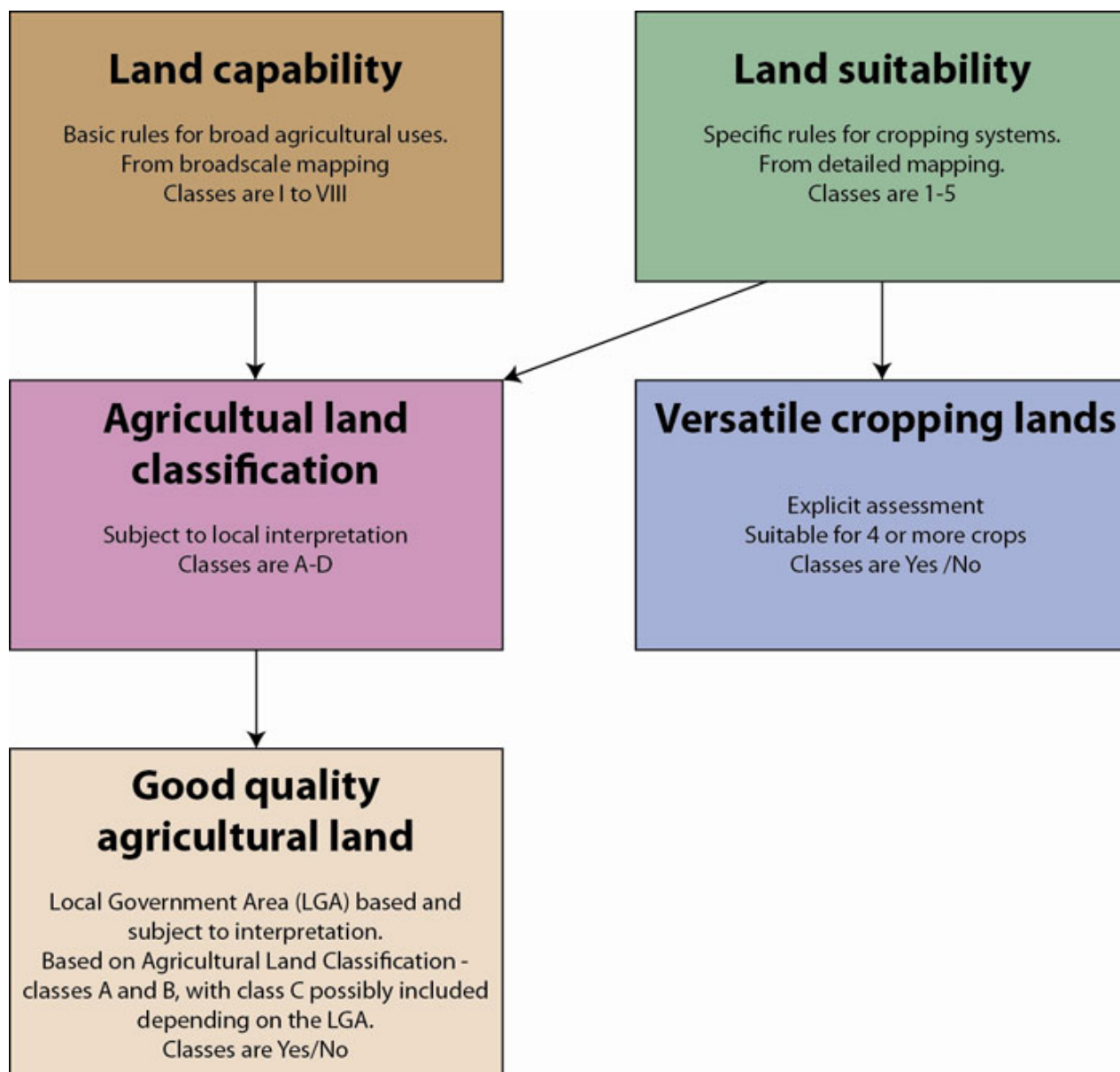
This map indicates Agricultural Land Classes A, AT&V, B and BS derived from Map 6.1, less those areas which are constrained by acid sulphate soils, Lake Macdonald, public tenure, land use conflict potential from small lot subdivision and vegetation value. For more information refer to Section 7.1 of the report Agriculture and Agricultural Land in Noosa Shire.

SCALE 1: 140 000

4.3 Queensland Government Evaluations

The Queensland Government relies on various land evaluation schemes when estimating the potential of land for agricultural purposes. An illustration of the interaction of these methods is provided as Figure 4 Land evaluation methods employed by the State. Figure 4. Differentiation is made between Land Capability and Land Suitability, both of which inform Agricultural Land Classification.

Figure 4 Land evaluation methods employed by the State.



The State's Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) is based on the suitability of land for specified agricultural uses. It rates the ability of land to maintain a sustainable level of productivity. The factors used to assess agricultural land suitability are the soil, topographic and climatic limitations. The classification ranges from A to D and the descriptions (updated in 2012) are:

Class A = Crop land - Land that is suitable for a wide range of current and potential crops with nil to moderate limitations to production.

Class A1 = Land that is suitable for a wide range of current and potential broadacre and horticulture crops with limitations to production that range from none to moderate levels.

Class A2 = Land that is suitable for a wide range of current and potential horticultural crops only, with limitations to production that range from none to moderate levels.

Class B = Limited crop land - Land that is suitable for a narrow range of current and potential crops. Land that is marginal for current and potential crops due to severe limitations but is highly suitable for pastures. Land may be suitable for cropping with engineering and/or agronomic improvements.

Class C = Pasture land - Land that is suitable only for improved or native pastures due to limitations which preclude continuous cultivation for crop production. Some areas may tolerate a short period of ground disturbance for pasture establishment

Class C1 = Suitable for grazing sown pastures (with ground disturbance for establishment) or has native pastures on higher fertility soils

Class C2 = Suitable for grazing native pastures with or without the introduction of pasture species - not suitable for ground disturbance to establish pastures

Class C3 = Suitable for light grazing of native pastures in accessible areas, and includes steep land more suited to forestry or catchment protection

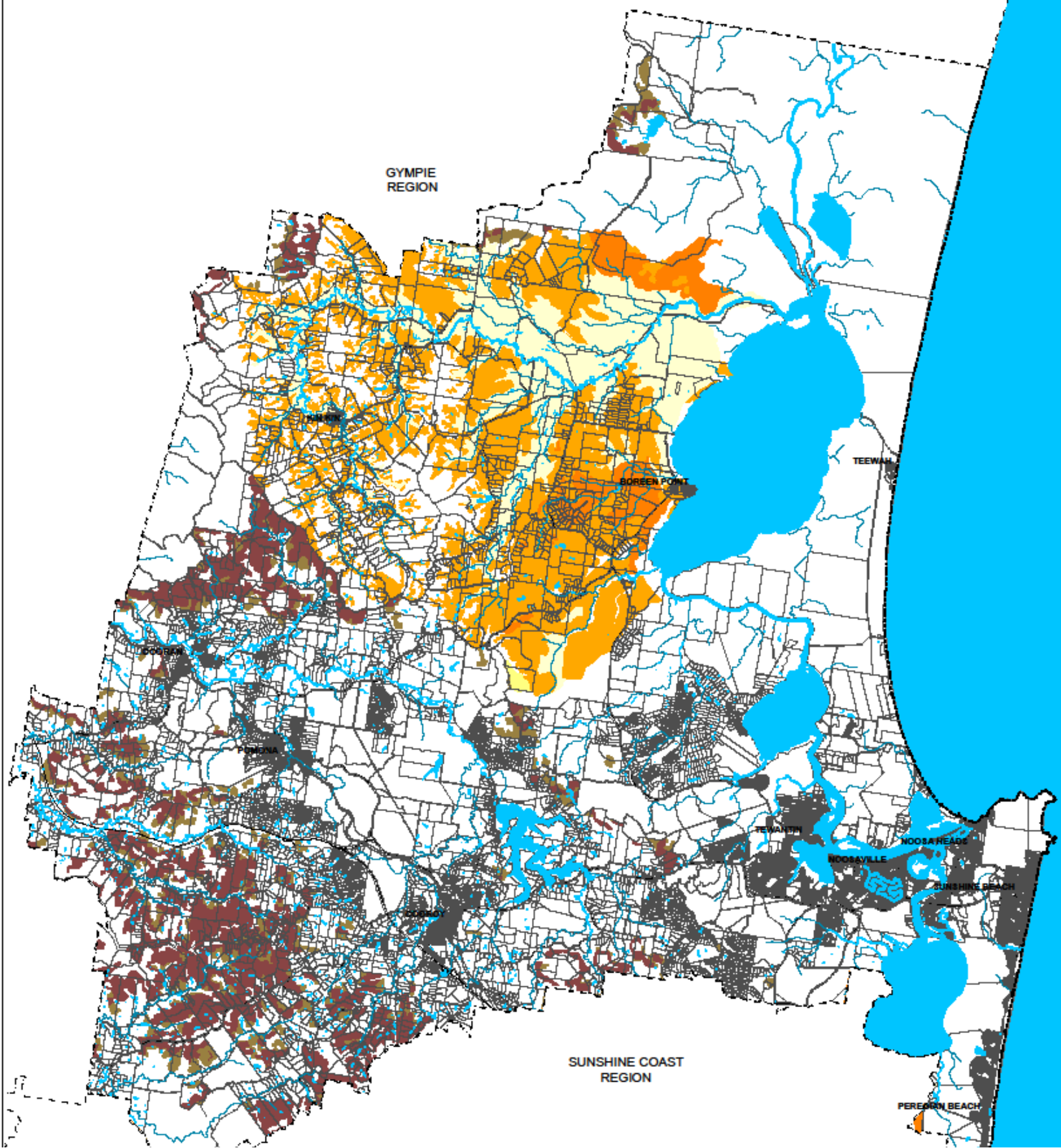
Class D = Non-agricultural land - Land not suitable for agricultural uses due to extreme limitations. This may be: undisturbed land with significant conservation and/or catchment values; land that may be unsuitable because of very steep slopes, shallow soils, rock outcrop, poor drainage, salinity, acidic drainage; or is an urbanised area.

Having consideration to the classification and to land suitability, land is considered either good-quality agricultural land (GQAL) or not. GQAL is capable of sustainable agricultural use without causing land degradation or degradation to other natural resources. Land may also be considered versatile cropping land where land is suitable for 4 or more crops (based on the combination of crop requirements and the physical limitations of the soil type).

The 2013 State Planning Policy states that ALC Class A and Class B land requires protection in a Planning Scheme. However the State Interest Guidelines specify that Local governments must ensure that the mapped areas of Class A and Class B land accurately reflect the role and importance of agriculture in the local area. A locally appropriate methodology to verify the location of soils important for agriculture in a local area could result in either greater or lesser area of land identified in an 'agricultural land' overlay or similar.

Queensland Department of Natural Resources & Mines has advised that there is a considerable gap in the soil data for Noosa Shire and they have provided their latest agricultural land data from November 2014. **Map 6** shows the agricultural land classes A to C. A significant amount of Noosa Shire is Class D, non-agricultural land. The largest concentration of A1 and A2 soils is centred around Cootharaba, extending from the west of Lake Cootharaba through to the foothills near Kin Kin and south to Ringtail Creek. This area is much poorer for grazing with better pastures being in the western portion of the Shire.

There is little chance that there will be a completion of the State data in the short term before the Noosa Planning Scheme review.



5. Queensland Agricultural Land Audit

The Queensland Agricultural Land Audit identifies land important to current and potential future agricultural production across Queensland. The audit was released in May 2013 and while it is planned to be updated each year¹⁰ it remains based on data available at that point in time.

The Audit assessed current land use and importance of land for agriculture based on the following Agricultural Land Use Categories (ALUC)¹¹:

- **Broadacre cropping:** Rainfed or dryland cropping such as wheat or sorghum and irrigated broadacre cropping such as cotton.
- **Annual horticulture:** Irrigated horticulture crops that live for less than one year such as carrots and tomatoes.
- **Perennial horticulture:** Irrigated crops such as nuts and fruits from woody and semi-herbaceous plants (trees and vines) that are cropped over a period longer than one year.
- **Intensive animal industries:** Such as cattle feedlots, piggeries, poultry, eggs and aquaculture.
- **Grazing (sown pasture):** Pastures where there is more than 50% exotic species such as rhodes or buffel grass.
- **Grazing (native pasture):** Pastures where there is more than 50% native species such as blue grass communities.
- **Plantation forestry:** Establishment and management of plantations (native or exotic) for commercial production of timber.
- **Native forestry:** Commercial production of timber from existing native forests.
- **Sugarcane:** Rainfed or dryland and irrigated cropping of sugarcane

5.1 Current Agriculture

The State has a database of “current” agricultural land uses derived from the Queensland Land Use Mapping Project (QLUMP), purportedly correct to 2009 for Noosa but with some 2011 updates. Accuracy is questionable given, for instance it still shows sugar cane production which has not been produced locally for some time.

This dataset shows various softwood forestry plantations and to a lesser degree hardwood.

It categorises pasture production into high, medium and low. Areas of “high” production, include areas around Kin Kin, Cootharaba, Pinbarren, Federal and Cooroy Mountain. Balance areas around Como, Ringtail Creek, Cooran, Pomona, Ridgewood and Doonan are shown as “medium” production.

Unfortunately this mapping does not correlate with either the survey of agricultural land uses conducted in 2015, or with the advice of local graziers. Further, rural residential estates at Tinbeerwah, Doonan, Black Mountain, Pomona and Cooran are shown as either medium or high pasture production under the current agriculture assessment. Even parts of Noosa Heads, Noosaville and Tewantin are shown as medium pasture production.

For grazing purposes the State has categorised predominant land types. Very broadly:

- Ridgewood is characterised by tall open forests on steep hills with pockets of softwood scrub and hoop pine scrub.
- Black Mountain, Federal, Pinbarren and Kin Kin are dominated by softwood scrub

¹⁰ The 2015 Annual Addendum was released in August 2015.

¹¹ These categories are based on generally accepted commodity and farming system groupings.

- Alluvial blue gum flats dominate to the north of Cooroy, around Lake Macdonald, Cootharaba and on lower lands between Cooran, Pinbarren and Pomona.
- At the very north of the Shire Como has a mix of mixed open forest, softwood vine scrub and tall open forests
- To the north of Cooran, west of Kin Kin there are (closed) rainforests.
- Ringtail Creek and Cooroibah have a combination of mixed open forest, coastal sand dunes, tall open forests and Blue gum, ironbark and bloodwood.

5.2 Potential Agriculture

Using a method of matching biophysical and socio-economic data with the requirements of each of the above ALUCs, agricultural potential has been mapped for cropping and horticulture, for native forestry and for grazing.

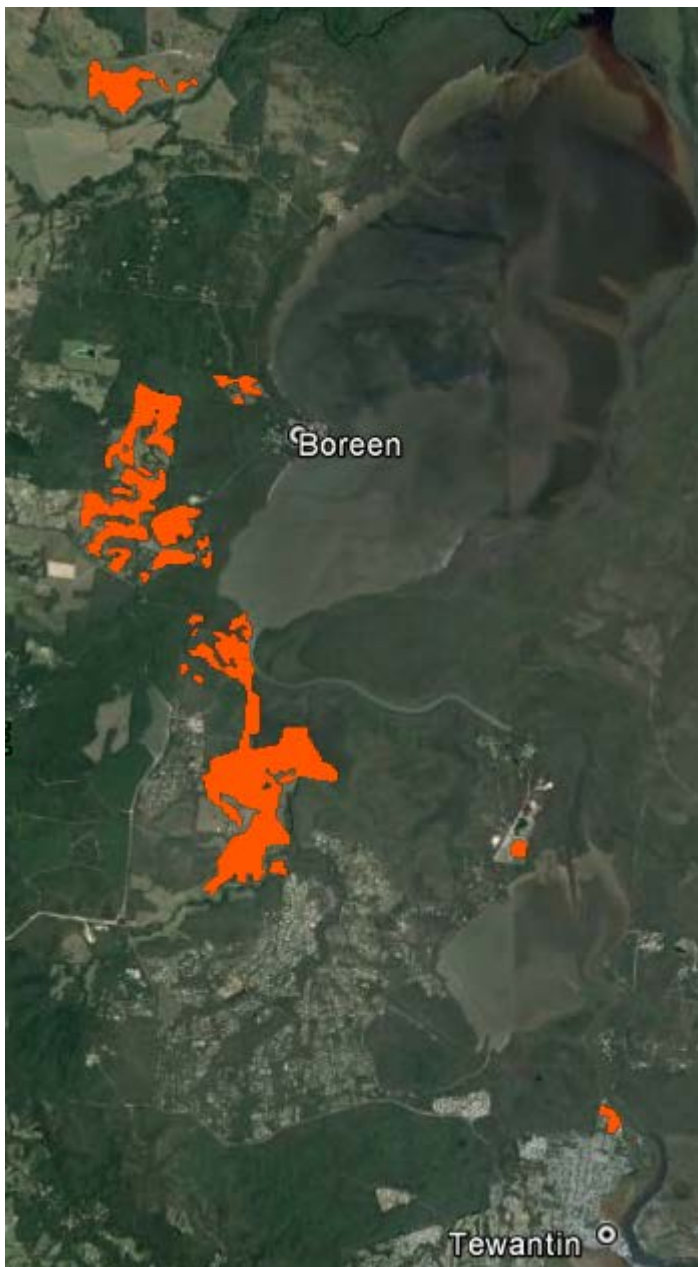
For each ALUC, the potential area for expansion was overlaid on current land use. This information can be used to identify areas where there is significant potential for increased production and to help plan for the expansion of certain industries at a local scale.

While the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries advise that it could be as a result of incomplete soil data for Noosa area, the mapping shows very little potential for broadacre cropping, annual horticulture, perennial horticulture or sugarcane. It also shows no potential for intensive livestock with the exception of a patch at Doonan (which being throughout a rural residential estate is unlikely to be realised).

It shows very little potential for hardwood plantation forestry, however shows potential for softwood plantation forestry, particularly around Pinbarren, Black Mountain and south west of Cooroy.

The State suggests considerable potential for marine aquaculture in areas to the west of Boreen point extending down through Cooloothin and to the east of Ringtail Creek as shown in Figure 5. Spots of potential are also shown near Lake Cooroibah and Tewantin. One of these properties has been purchased by Noosa Council for conservation purposes and some others are also of interest for long term conservation protection. Some of the properties are low-lying affected by flood hazard or with riparian values. Therefore it is uncertain how much aquaculture would be realised.

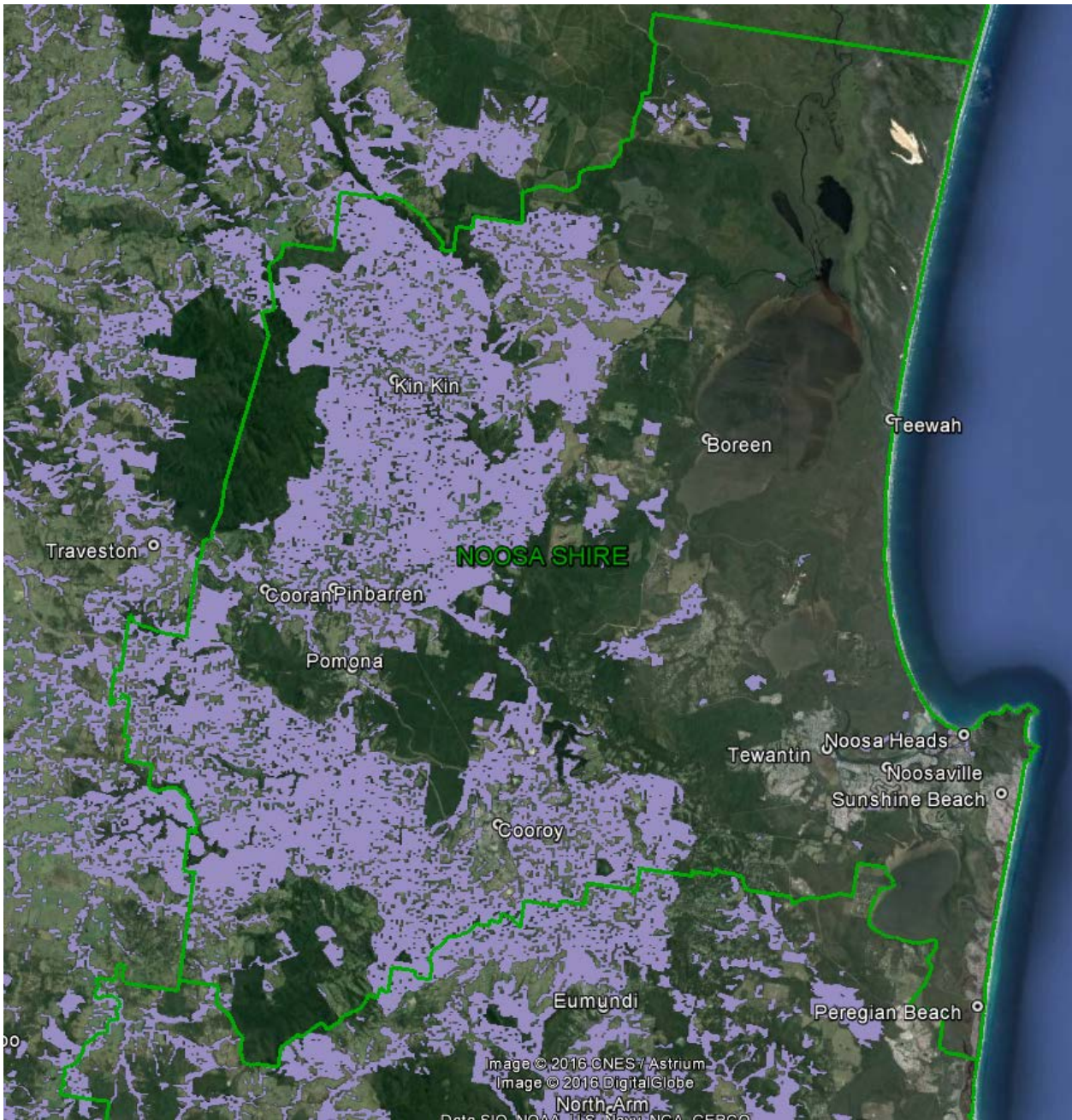
Figure 5 Agricultural Land Audit - Potential for Marine Aquaculture



On balance, the Agricultural Land Audit would suggest the greatest potential is for sown pasture and Figure 6 shows the extent of this. Again, this data should be used with care because the mapping includes urban and semi-urban areas.

There is overlap in areas shown as having potential for sown pastures with areas designated as Urban Footprint or Rural Living Area on the SEQ Regional Plan, with areas mapped as regulated vegetation, wildlife habitat and high ecologically significant wetland and with areas within the catchment of the water supply. Therefore this mapping is at best a guide for areas worthy of protection for grazing purposes.

Figure 6 Agricultural Land Audit - Potential for Sown Pastures



6. Size and Number of Rural Lots in Noosa Shire

6.1 Minimum Lot Sizes

The Noosa town planning scheme of 1973 specified a minimum lot size of 10 acres (roughly 4 hectares) applied for the Rural Zone, provided that this could be reduced to 5 acres wherever Council considered it reasonable. The 1986 Policy for Subdivision of Land in Rural Areas allowed for a minimum lot area of 2 hectares providing that the original lot had to be at least 8 hectares to allow one additional lot and 12 hectares to allow two additional lots. In addition a lot as small as 2,000m² could be excised from a farm for a family member to build a house.

Following the introduction of the 1997 Strategic Plan the minimum lot size was determined on both the zone and the Preferred Dominant Land Use. In the Rural Catchment and Rural Preservation Zone the minimum lot size was 40 hectares (approximately 100 acres) while in the Rural Pursuits Zone and the Rural Settlement Zone a relatively complex analysis of land constraints was meant to determine the number and size of lots that could be achieved. A range of lot sizes was applied for each Preferred Dominant Land Use designation in each locality. Average lot sizes could be as low as 0.5 hectares or as large as 20 hectares or even 40 hectares where there were conservation values, good quality agricultural land or physical constraints on the land.

Since the introduction of the SEQ Regional Plan in 2005 and the IPA-based planning scheme in 2006, the minimum lot size for the Rural Zone has been 100 hectares, and the minimum lot size in the Rural Settlement Zone is typically 2 hectares although it is 1 hectare in Boreen Point and Kin Kin and 1.5 hectares in Tewantin and Doonan and it cannot be further subdivided on Noosa North Shore or within the Lake Macdonald water supply catchment.

6.2 Current Pattern of Lot Sizes

Outside of the urban areas of Noosa Shire much of the land is zoned Rural or Rural Settlement. As at March 2016 there are over 2,600 properties in the Rural Zone and approximately to 3,400 properties in the Rural Settlement Zone. Land in public ownership dedicated to vegetation protection is more typically in the Open Space Conservation Zone, however Toolara, Ringtail and West Cooroy State Forests are included in the Rural Zone.

The Rural Settlement Zone is generally intended for the lifestyle acreage blocks. Lots are typically quite small so could include small scale agricultural uses but typically not commercial agribusinesses. In very general terms these lots have better access to urban settlements and are less remote. The Rural Zone is more specifically intended to accommodate agricultural uses, protection of scenic and environmental values and locally appropriate rural enterprises. Many lots in the Rural Zone are still quite small.

Maps 7A and 7B illustrate the distribution of different sized freehold properties in the Rural and Rural Settlement zones. Within the Rural and Rural Settlement zones, excluding properties owned by the State or local government, there are:

- 3300 properties less than 2 hectares in area (over 2,000 of these are less than 1 hectare in area);
- 1426 properties between 2 hectares and 5 hectares in area;
- 477 properties between 5 hectares and 10 hectares in area;
- 348 properties between 10 hectares and 20 hectares in area;
- 226 properties between 20 hectares and 40 hectares in area;
- 218 properties between 40 hectares and 80 hectares in area; and
- 68 properties of 80 hectares or more

Smaller properties dominate close to the towns of Cooroy, Pomona, Cooran and Kin Kin as well as around Black Mountain, Cooroibah, Doonan, Lake Macdonald and Tinbeerwah. However, because of a history of family transfers there are small rural lots scattered throughout the Shire.

Excluding State Forests at West Cooroy, Yurol, Ringtail Creek and Toolara, remaining large lots are generally around Ridgewood, Cootharaba, Kin Kin and Como. Some of these larger lots comprise bushland and have not been farmed for many years, if ever.

For sustainable horticultural pursuits a site needs certain physical criteria:

- Sufficient space for physical infrastructure such as equipment sheds, packing or loading facilities, greenhouses, water storage, worker facilities, access and manoeuvring etc.
- Space for optimum operation (for instance if mechanical harvesting is relied upon space for the machinery between crops)
- Effective waste and stormwater management which may require diversion banks and holding ponds to capture, store, treat and reuse run off
- Allow for rotation of crops to protect soil resources, control weeds and minimise pest and/or disease risks
- Provide effective buffers to protect biodiversity and catchment values
- Provide effective buffers to minimise amenity impacts on neighbours or any nearby sensitive receptors

While it is well evidenced that with the right factors and enough enterprise small lots can accommodate successful agricultural pursuits, there are already well over 2,000 lots of between 2 hectares and 20 hectares in area and creating more is unlikely to increase agricultural productivity. The Queensland Farmers Federation caution that special care must be taken in setting lot sizes based on intensive horticulture enterprises because whilst high-value enterprises such as strawberries, amenity horticulture and hydroponic vegetable production are profitable on small lots, these small lots will be attractive to the residential market and lead to conversion to residential use and conflict over land use practices¹².

¹² QFF 2013, Planning for Healthy Agriculture, Page 18

Legend

-  Noosa Shire
-  Water Bodies
-  Watercourses
-  Major Roads
-  Cadastral

Freehold Lots in Rural and Rural Settlement Zones

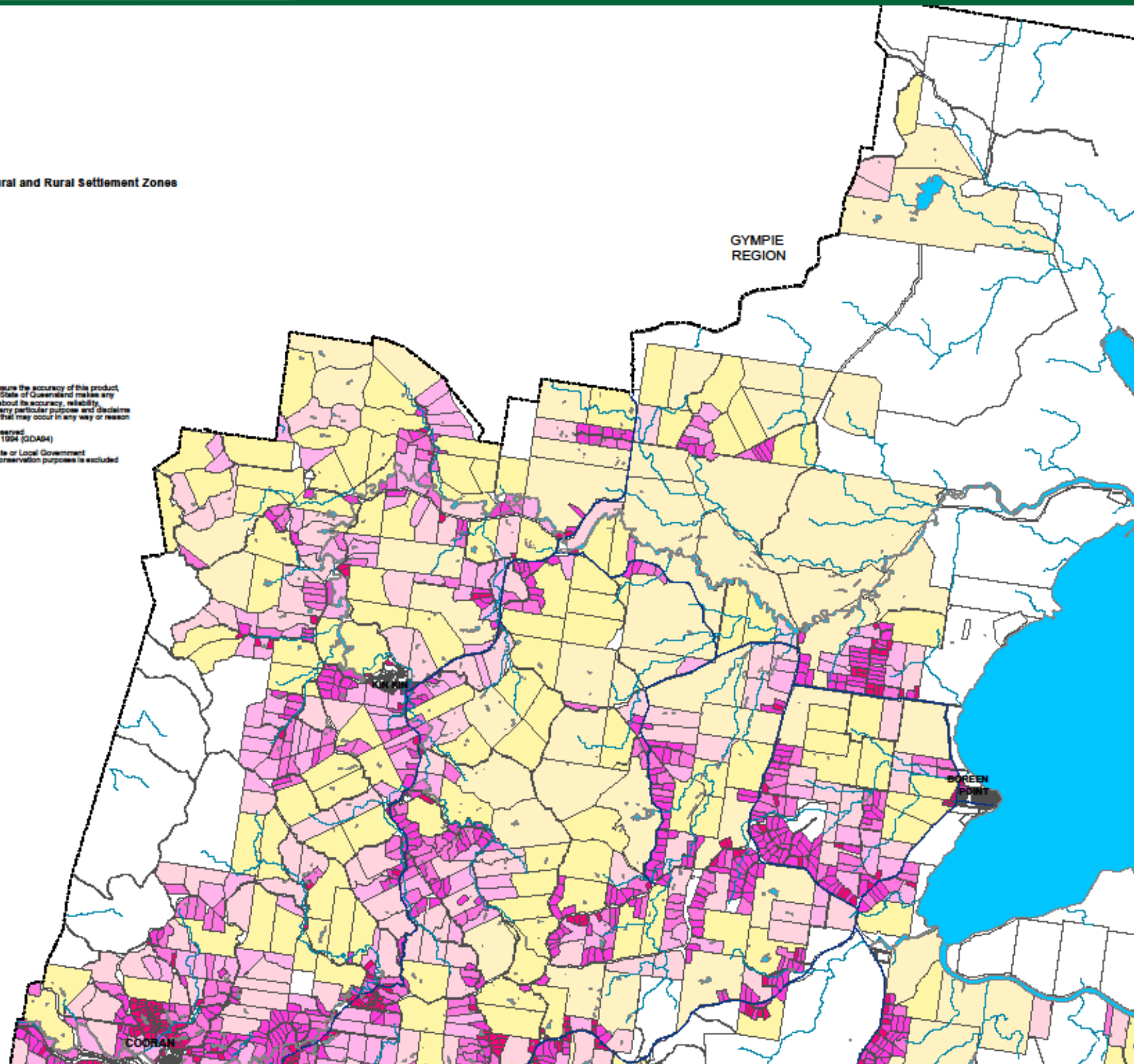
Lot Area

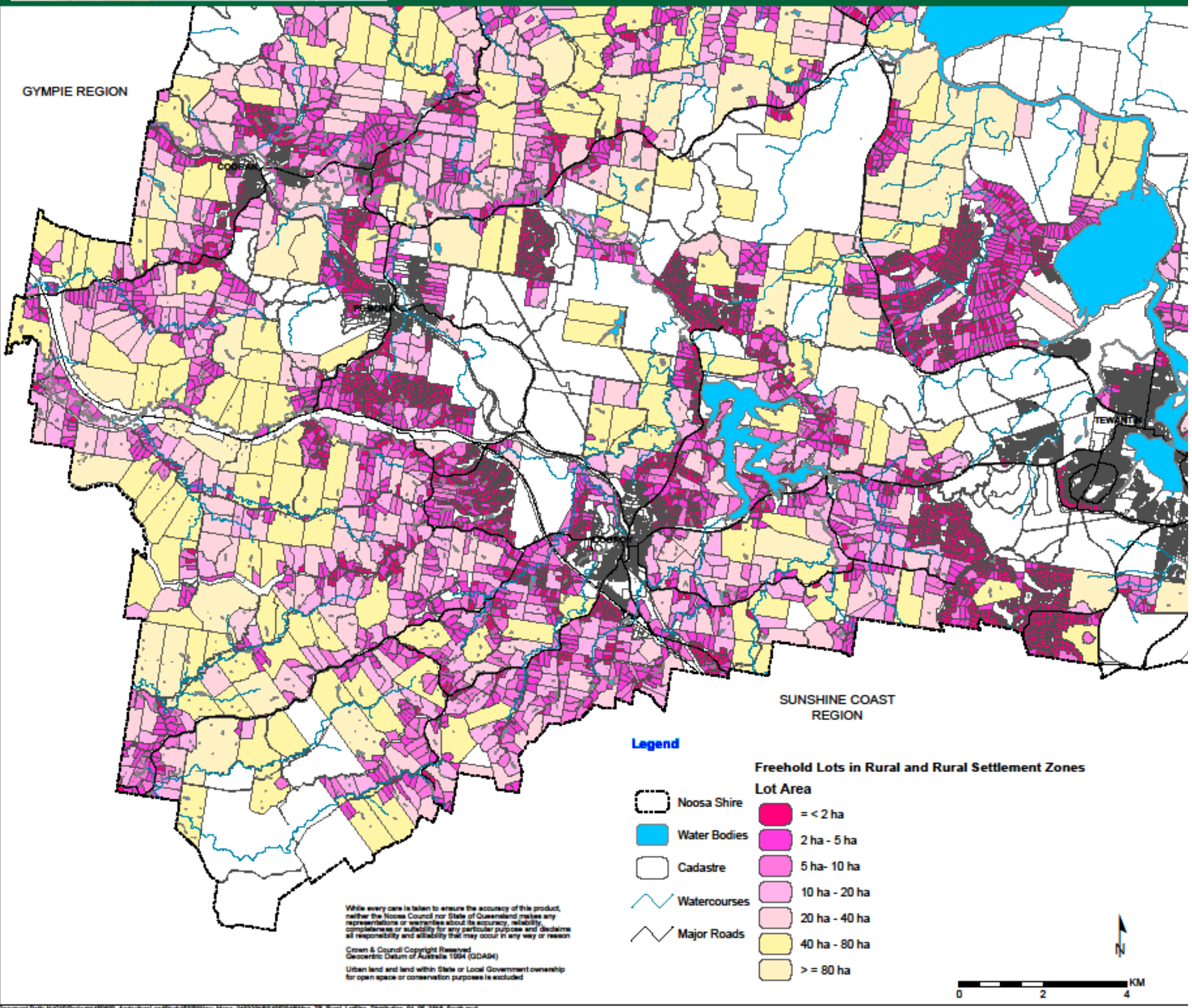
-  < 2 ha
-  2 ha - 5 ha
-  5 ha - 10 ha
-  10 ha - 20 ha
-  20 ha - 40 ha
-  40 ha - 80 ha
-  > 80 ha

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Geocentric Datum of Australia 1994 (GDA94)

Urban land and land within State or Local Government ownership for open space or conservation purposes is excluded.





Source: Path: N:\GIS\Projects\182604_Agriculture_Land_Use\182604_Map_11022018\452218Map_18_Rural_LotSize_Distribution_04_08_2018_South.mxd

7. Competing Values

Rural lands are valued by local residents, visitors, community groups, investors and government agencies for many various reasons. At times these competing values and interests create friction within the community; at times they are even helpful.

7.1 Biodiversity & Nature Conservation

Noosa Council has a policy of protecting environmentally significant lands and Strategic Biodiversity Corridors¹³ are being identified where broad tracts of both public and private land can contribute to biodiversity and habitat protection. Within these corridors it is preferred that previously cleared lands not committed to agricultural pursuits be revegetated rather than left in an unproductive state, although existing agricultural pursuits would be protected.

The State Planning Policy (SPP) has identified matters of state environmental significance and mapped these. It is a requirement of the SPP that the planning scheme gives protection to these natural values. There are extensive areas where parcels are mapped as both ALC Class A and Class B and as being regulated vegetation and wildlife habitat of State significance (Refer back to **Map 3**).

In some instances there is overlap with formerly protected lands. Instances include the Dangerbridge Nature Refuge at Cootharaba; the Penda Scrub and Alyxia Nature Refuges, also at Cootharaba; the Bellbird Stud Nature Refuge at Ridgewood; The Burrawingee and Haven Nature Reserves at Federal; The Yurol and Symplocus Nature Refuges both near Pomona and Whipbird and Golden Gully Nature Refuges, both near Kin Kin.

Nature refuges and farming are not necessarily mutually exclusive and property owners may use fences or other means of delineating different purposes for their land. If privately owned nature refuges are only partly vegetated and still partly farmed such as is the case with the Dangerbridge Nature Refuge, retention of the agricultural land protection may be valid on the cleared portion.

Closely aligned to the remnant vegetation and the waterways is the Planning Scheme's Biodiversity Overlay. The use of agriculture becomes assessable development subject to code assessment within the Biodiversity Overlay where clearing or interfering with vegetation. Portions of the site already cleared or with non-remnant regrowth could be farmed but clearing of remnant vegetation would not be allowed and stock proof fencing would be required to keep livestock away from waterways and riparian buffers.

There would seem to be little benefit in identifying land for agricultural purposes if the land is covered by protected vegetation and clearing for agriculture would not be supported. It potentially confuses prospective investors and the community.

7.2 Water Supply Catchment

While now the responsibility of Seqwater, the Noosa Council has had a long history of protecting the catchment of Lake Macdonald (the local drinking water supply). The 1996 Impact of Land Use on the Surface Runoff Quality in the Lake Macdonald Catchment found that agricultural use of land (including dairying, small crops and tree plantations) within the Lake Macdonald catchment was having the greatest level of impact on water quality within the lake and it led to amendments to the planning whereby planning approval was necessary for agriculture and animal husbandry in the catchment.

¹³ These are being identified through the Biodiversity Plan concurrently underway and anticipated by the 3rd quarter of 2016.

As was shown earlier in **Map 4** much of what the State maps as the Water Supply Buffer Area is also mapped as Agricultural Land Class A and B. The use of agriculture is assessable development within the water supply catchment, requiring code assessment against the Natural Resources Overlay Code. Specific Outcomes dictate that development does not have an adverse effect on the quality or quantity of water entering Lake Macdonald, Cedar Pocket dam or their tributaries or on the Mary River drinking water intake. Development, including new agricultural uses or operational works associated with agriculture would need to comply with the Seqwater Development Guidelines: *Development Guidelines for Water Quality Management in Drinking Water Catchments*.¹⁴

Specific requirements are included to prevent livestock from entering the riparian zone or Lake Macdonald and its tributaries, and to ensure stock watering points are not located on watercourses.

7.3 Lifestyle Blocks and Rural Amenity

The rural lifestyle of Noosa Shire is much valued by rural residents and the envy of many urban dwellers for various reasons. Amenity-led migration, popularly known as the 'sea change' and 'tree change' phenomena has been influential in the Noosa Shire since the 1980s when the local area around Cooroy was one of the fastest growing in Australia. The momentum continued into the 1990s and years since with people escaping suburbia in favour of picturesque places particularly within a two hour drive from a capital city. Reasons for the shift include seeking out:

- A connection to the land
- Scenic amenity
- Peace and quiet - escape from hustle and bustle
- Greater sense of place and closer community
- More traditional attitudes
- Less crime
- More relaxed atmosphere
- Availability of large blocks to pursue hobbies and home businesses

The Queensland Farmer's Federation states that the subdivision of rural land to cater for rural living is one of the most insidious influences on maintaining productive agriculture because of the conflict of residential uses amongst working farms and because it forces up the price per hectare of rural land¹⁵.

Most of the rural towns and villages have outlying estates with many blocks as small as 4,000m² or even less. While within the State's ALC Class A and Class B designation, protecting them for agriculture would seem futile. By way of example Stratford Park off Louis Bazzo Drive consists of house blocks generally between 6,000m² and 8,500m². Doonan, Nandroya, Cooran, Black Mountain and Pomona all show other significant examples. Songbird Estate at Pomona, currently in the Rural Settlement Zone has house blocks less than 1,000m² in area and is partly within the ALC Class A and Class B designation.

Neighbourhoods of acreage lots which have been zoned for rural residential purposes for many years should not be protected for agricultural purposes as residents expect a certain lifestyle and amenity that would typically be at odds with commercial primary production. It should not however preclude small scale, sustainable farming that is sensitive to the amenity of neighbours.

¹⁴ Available from <http://www.seqwater.com.au/water-supply/catchments/planning-development>

¹⁵ Queensland Farmers' Federation (2013) Planning for Healthy Agriculture; section 5.3 p 18

7.4 Non-rural Businesses

Rural lots are also in demand for businesses that have no or little connection to agriculture but because of reasons of nuisance can't be located in urban areas. For instance the owners or operators of trucking or earth moving business where heavy machinery is kept, boarding kennels for dogs or cats, machinery servicing industries, manufacturing, etc.

Increasingly rural areas are also under pressure to accommodate land intensive uses better located within urban areas but where proponents can't readily find a suitable, affordable site, for example independent schools or places of worship.

Uses that would alienate agricultural production in the future should be avoided.

7.5 Tourism and Outdoor Recreation

The State Government has been promoting tourism in rural areas because it offers an opportunity for economic diversification and allows people to experience rural lifestyle and learn about farming. Visitor experiences in the rural setting range from small scale accommodation in farmstays and cabins, health retreats, meditation centres and eco-lodges, function venues for weddings and conferences and outdoor adventure activities such as quad bikes, trail bikes or horse riding. Given the strength of the grey nomad sector rural tourism can be as simple as parking self-contained RVs on a farm for a few nights.

Difficult-to-locate sports which are noisy or generate some form of nuisance are also located within the rural setting, as are land intensive sports such as golf courses.

There is an increasing interest in cycling both on the trail network and on rural roads and support infrastructure for events or more permanent recreational pursuits is in demand.

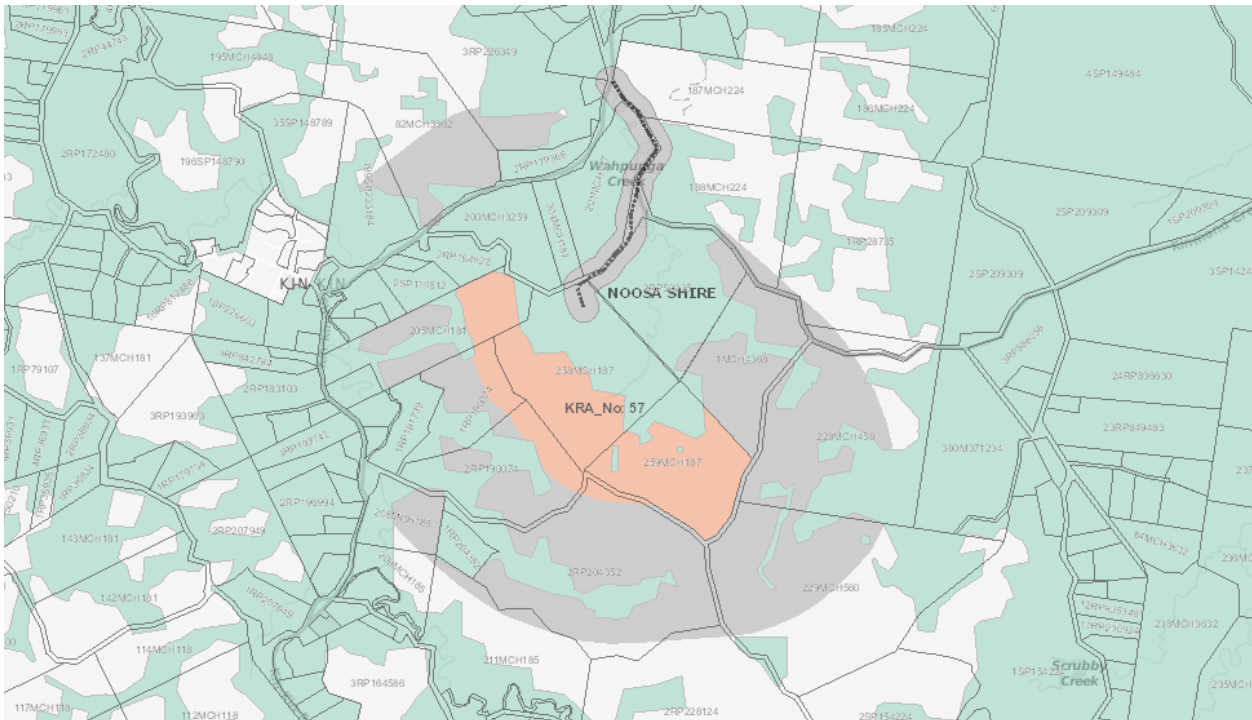
Ideally tourism in rural areas will co-exist with productive farming and not lead to conflict however in reality some farming activities and tourism activities are not compatible.

7.6 Extractive Industries

While not at this stage a significant issue in Noosa Shire, many parts of rural Queensland are facing serious conflicts between primary production and mining interests. The Regional Planning Interest Act 2014 was designed to ease some of this tension and protect high quality agricultural areas and strategic cropping land while still allowing for the co-existence of resources activities with other rural pursuits.

The State has identified Key Resource Areas (KRAs) for the hard rock quarry at Wahpunga Range and the hard rock quarry at Ringtail Creek. Figure 7 below shows the overlap of the SPP ALC Class A and Class B (in green) with KRA 57 (in orange).

Figure 7 - KRA 57 Wahpunga Range and associated separation area



In addition the planning scheme protects locally significant resources including hard rock and sand however these resource areas will be further examined as part of the next planning scheme review because some may not be viable.

Regardless of likelihood and viability there are several mining leases in the hinterland including various ones along or close to Lake Macdonald Drive and one at Holts Road Cooroy. There are also two Exploration Permits (Coal) which extend from Pinbarren north to the Shire border.

7.7 Renewable Energy Farms and Carbon Offsets

Recently there has been an increase in interest for using rural lands for renewable energy farms or for carbon offsets. There are various forms of renewable energy farms including solar, wind, and biomass (from plants and trees). In some instances it is just to provide the energy needs of the balance of an agricultural use, less so it is intended as a commercial operation selling to the grid.

In 2002 Noosa Council endorsed a planning study on “Planning for Greenhouse Gas Emissions”. It considered that while the coastal part of the Shire, such as Noosa North Shore has reasonable wind speed it is not as economically attractive as the resource on the coast of the southern states and it is unlikely any large commercial wind farms would be developed in this region, particularly given the value of scenic amenity and the cost of land.

It also suggested that solar power generation was far more expensive than other renewable options (such as hydro, wind, and biomass for grid supply) and is not a competitive option¹⁶. However, it did suggest there may be opportunities in Noosa Shire to establish tree plantations that could be used for biomass power generation.

The Sunshine Coast Energy Transition Plan 2010-2020 also ruled out large wind farms although it supported solar power stations and renewable energy generation as a complementary activity to primary production on rural lands.

¹⁶ It's worth noting that in the last fourteen years there have been substantial advances in technology and economies of scale substantially reducing the cost of alternative energy systems.

The commonwealth government administers a Carbon Farming Initiative that allows farmers or landowners to earn carbon credits by storing carbon or reducing greenhouse gas emissions on their land. They may do this by reducing livestock emissions, increasing efficiency of fertiliser use, enhancing carbon in agricultural soil or storing carbon through revegetation and reforestation.

For cleared properties within Noosa Shire such as previous dairy pastures this may be quite a popular option providing funding continues.

8. Complementary Activity, Value Adding and Dependencies

While agriculture or primary production includes the growing of crops, forestry and livestock industries (including aquaculture), value adding generally refers to the additional value created at a particular stage of production, for instance, turning milk into cheese or yoghurt, turning fruits into jams or chutneys, turning nuts into nougat, turning timber or bamboo into furniture or products.

Past consultation projects revealed a desire by many to be able to do both on-site value adding and complementary ventures to improve profitability of their agribusiness. This can range from packing and processing operations, food tasting, farm gate sales, cooking schools and even small scale visitor accommodation or facilities. In some instances the complementary activities help educate the broader communities on the realities of agriculture and grow an appreciation for fresh local produce.

Noosa's Local Economic Plan 2015 identified Rural Enterprise as a priority sector and noted an increasing demand for sustainably produced local food and beverages. Amongst other things the plan looks to

- develop efficient local supply chains
- establish a premier food and beverage brand
- increase employment and training opportunities (in the rural sector); and
- support wider visitor dispersal across the Shire.

Actions around rural enterprise include supporting the development of agribusiness networks, mapping supply chains and identifying gaps and establishment of a Noosa food and beverage brand synonymous with the destination.

Land within the towns and villages of Cooroy, Pomona, and Kin Kin, particularly, but not exclusively included in the Industry or Village Mix zones is well placed to accommodate value adding, manufacturing, processing, packaging and other functions to support rural production.

Arguments are repeatedly put forward for on-farm accommodation for farm workers whether they are seasonal, itinerant workers or more permanent caretakers. The accommodation of bona fide farm workers other than in the owners' house requires careful consideration and may be dependent on the property size and the scale and nature of the agricultural use. Proposed changes to the planning scheme facilitate small ancillary, secondary dwellings subject to certain acceptable criteria. There may be scope for multi-purpose facilities that cater for workers in busy seasons and paying guests the rest of the year. However, within Noosa most rural land is within reasonable distance from a town or village where short term worker or visitor accommodation could be provided if transport was available.

9. The Future of Agriculture in Noosa and the Broader Region

As indicated in Noosa's Local Economic Plan, already mentioned, rural enterprises include a variety of primary producers but also value-added boutique products, farmers markets, rural visitor accommodation and experiences, and businesses that provide support services to the sector. The rural sector has the opportunity to leverage a number of the region's competitive advantages and consumer trends:

- Noosa is well known for food
- Noosa Biosphere® Reserve status supports clean, green & locally produced food and beverages
- there are a growing number of boutique producers
- there is increasing demand for sustainably produced local food and beverages.

Ideally, the future of Noosa will include a continuation of food crops and animal husbandry so that a wide range of nutritious food is available locally in both raw form and through value adding (such as dairy products, cooked foods and condiments).

It is most likely that income derived through agriculture will continue to be supplemented by additional household or family income. This might include employment elsewhere, but might be derived on site through home-hosted visitor accommodation, home-based businesses or leasing of underutilised storage sheds or paddocks.

The connection between farmers and consumers could increase through continuation and expansion of farmers markets, roadside stalls and farm gate sales. Informing consumers, both local residents and visitors to the Shire, on the availability of high quality local produce is an ongoing exercise best done collaboratively.

At a regional level Noosa Shire is the northern-most local government of the SEQ Planning Region. To the north and west Gympie Regional Council is within the Wide Bay Burnett Planning Region. The Gympie Region relies heavily on agriculture and related industries including multiple piggeries, cattle feedlots and beef grazing in the western part of the region, poultry farms closer to the Noosa border and various timber mills. There are extensive forest reserves to the north east of Gympie. The Mary Valley has been known for its strong dairy industry.

In 2012 the Queensland Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning released an Economic Development Strategy for the Mary Valley in conjunction with incrementally releasing properties previously acquired by the State for the Traveston Crossing Dam. In marketing properties and developing the agribusiness economy of the Mary Valley the State was promoting new dairy enterprises, intensive livestock uses such as poultry farms, tree crops (such as pecan nuts), ginger, perennial horticulture, small crops and forestry.

Sunshine Coast Regional Council also has a strong agriculture industry which includes very substantial poultry operations in the south, pineapple plantations, avocado and macadamia crops; strawberries, ginger, mushrooms and small crops. Previously dairy and sugar cane were particularly big contributors to the local agricultural industry. In the south, substantial pine forests form part of the interurban break between the Sunshine Coast and Moreton Bay urban areas.

Lifestyle horticulture has become a strong sector around the Sunshine Coast with increasing markets for nurseries, turf farms and cut flowers.

The 2013 the Sunshine Coast Council adopted a Rural Futures Strategy. This strategy included an objective to maximise the use of land for agriculture and compatible purposes. Agriculture-relevant strategies from this document included

- Ensure the productive value of land is considered in all land use decision making
- Promote sustainable management practices and connect best practice, contemporary scientific and market research with existing and potential producers
- Examine and enhance the urban/rural interface to enable the continuation of existing rural activities, and allow for future additional rural activities and reduce conflict
- Improve the management of the incidence and spread of pests and weeds
- Support the introduction of appropriate new crop pilot schemes that contribute to enhanced landscape maintenance
- Promote mechanisms that support land owners and producers to easily transition from one crop to another crop in response to market demand
- Defining the region's competitive advantages in agricultural production
- Support share farming schemes that will connect owners of vacant farm land to potential producers
- Support the development of a skills mentoring program for new entrants to rural production
- Encourage food industry clusters at key rural centres such as Cooroy
- Assist in the promotion of the region through food branding projects and broader south east Queensland efforts to leverage the region's food produce as an economic opportunity for the region

10. Recommendations for the Planning Scheme

Accepting that the Council and the community in partnership are responsible for the protection of natural resources such as land form, soil and landscape, water, air and terrestrial and aquatic fauna and flora for future generations to enjoy and use, the planning scheme is the most appropriate mechanism to guide development in a manner that enhances the local environment and economy as well as the lifestyle of residents.

10.1 Strategic Component

The Strategic components of the new planning scheme should recognise that Noosa Shire is renowned for its landforms and landscape features, extensive open space and the clean environment. The hinterland communities have a strong affinity with these natural attributes, bushland settings and the rural heritage and history of the Shire. The combination of agriculture, open space, conservation reserves and rural living define the character of the hinterland.

The retention of agricultural activities, particularly in those areas where farming activities have been the traditional use and where environmental impacts may be successfully managed will assist the agricultural sector's role in defining the character of the Shire. In lifestyle terms, agriculture is also a significant contributor, with part time, small scale though often high value operations, serving as an attractor to the rural areas.

One of Noosa Council's sustainability principles is that ***Noosa's economy is prosperous, diverse and protective of its unique environment.***

Deriving a worthwhile income from agriculture is important to its continuation and contribution to the local economy. The economic contribution of agriculture is broader than just the direct benefits of food production. Agriculture provides indirect benefits to the local economy through the protection of landscape amenity and environment. The ongoing, productive use of good quality agricultural land for sustainable agricultural development is to be encouraged. The planning scheme should make a statement about recognising the contribution of agriculture to Noosa Shire in terms of economic diversification, food security, cultural (landscape) heritage and stewardship of the land.

The strategic components of the scheme should also include a statement about what is expected of rural enterprises in terms of their impact on the environment. The pursuit of sustainable agricultural initiatives and local food value chains with a focus on the adoption of best management practices, including sensible use of chemicals, ethical treatment of animals and appropriate vegetation management and catchment care should be synonymous with agriculture within the Noosa Biosphere¹⁷ Reserve.

The evolution of traditional agricultural sectors (such as beef production) and the emergence of new sectors should be supported and enhanced through opportunities for value-adding to occur, before agricultural produce leaves the farm gate or leaves the region.

The clean, green credentials of the Noosa brand dictate that farming enterprises, particularly food production should be through sustainable agricultural production, avoiding high impact or industrial farming but delivering high value, quality produce. Agricultural uses that pollute ground or surface water, pollute the air, create excessive noise or rely on lighting, traffic or signage levels above those generally accepted within the Noosa hinterland should not be supported. Livestock enterprises should generally be limited to pasture fed, free range operations or aquaculture.

¹⁷ "Noosa Biosphere" is a registered trademark of Noosa Council

While not actively controlling the management of agricultural enterprises, the planning scheme can assist in the facilitation of sustainable rural management, through land use approvals and identification and protection of wetlands and waterways. These issues are important for rural areas of the Mary and Noosa River catchments.

Good quality agricultural land is conserved by preventing encroachment or alienation by incompatible land uses. Where there is uncertainty about the likely effect of a land use on sustainable agriculture or good quality agricultural land, protection of agriculture or conservation of the good quality agricultural land should prevail.

The planning scheme should acknowledge the reliance of a successful agricultural sector on the appropriate planning of well serviced towns and villages. These local centres provide for rural industries, employment, community infrastructure, employee housing and services so as to improve the quality of life and overall level of sustainability of a locality.

Well defined boundaries to urban areas and rural residential estates should depict a clear distinction of where residential growth and non-rural uses will be supported.

Opportunities should be provided for complementary land uses that support the viability of agriculture and do not alienate or diminish agricultural productivity on the same or surrounding lands. Priority sectors that could successfully co-exist with agriculture include certain health and wellness uses, rural or nature based tourism, creative industries and environmental industries.

If the Strategic elements of the planning scheme suggest Noosa is to accommodate thriving sustainable agricultural businesses it is vital that the planning scheme encourages and facilitates that outcome, while respecting the other interests of the environment, catchment protection and the existing lifestyles of nearby residents.

10.2 Zones

The current Queensland Planning Provisions (QPP) provide a standard suite of zones and specify that only zones from the standard suite may be used in a planning scheme. The following examples are taken from the QPP:

Rural Zone where the purpose is to:

- provide for rural uses including cropping, intensive horticulture, intensive animal industries, animal husbandry, animal keeping and other primary production activities
- provide opportunities for non-rural uses that are compatible with agriculture, the environmental features, and landscape character of the rural area where the uses do not compromise the long-term use of the land for rural purposes
- protect or manage significant natural resources and processes to maintain the capacity for primary production.

Rural residential zone where the purpose is to provide for residential development on large lots where local government infrastructure and services may not be provided on the basis that the intensity of development is generally dispersed.

Conservation zone where the purpose is to provide for the protection, restoration and management of areas identified as supporting significant biological diversity and ecological integrity.

Environmental management zone where the purpose is to recognise environmentally sensitive areas and provide for houses on lots and other low impact activities where suitable. These areas are protected from inclusion of any urban, suburban, centre or

industrial land uses except quarries that are identified in the strategic framework.

It is likely that most properties outside the designated urban areas of Noosa Shire could be accommodated in one of these zones (in some instances split zoning may allow for a combination of these zones). The choice of zone should give a clear message to the community, property investors and business proponents as to the preferred dominant land use of the property. In combination with tables of assessment and zone codes the desired outcomes for each zone should be clearly specified.

Application of zones should be done with consideration to the preferred dominant land use in the locality, not only to the subject land but to the surrounding land. For instance, the current planning scheme places requirements on agricultural practices to keep them separated from land in a residential zone and the Rural Settlement Zone is considered to be a residential zone.

With the agreement of property owners the Environmental Management Zone might be applied where the priority is biodiversity enhancement rather than agricultural pursuits. For instance there are many landowners who actively protect and promote environmental outcomes on their property through Voluntary Conservation Agreements or through the Land for Wildlife Program. They may choose to have their efforts reflected in the zoning of all or part of their land. It should not however be imposed without consultation.

10.3 Agricultural Land Overlay

The SPP State Interest Guideline on Agriculture contains a model agricultural land overlay code which should provide a foundation for a tailored code. It is recommended that with the exception of agriculture and domestic uses, proposed development should be tested against this code where located on good quality agricultural land.

It is suggested that the State's ALC Class A and Class B land not be accepted in totality but that more locally accurate and appropriate mapping be adopted to clearly distinguish where the protection of agricultural land for agricultural purposes is the priority.

The option exists to add to the State's layer. For instance, if it were considered that pasture fed beef offered significant opportunity for the Shire and it was desirable to protect pasture lands (generally Class C land) these areas could be added to the overlay. However, certainty would be needed over the productive capacity of the land.

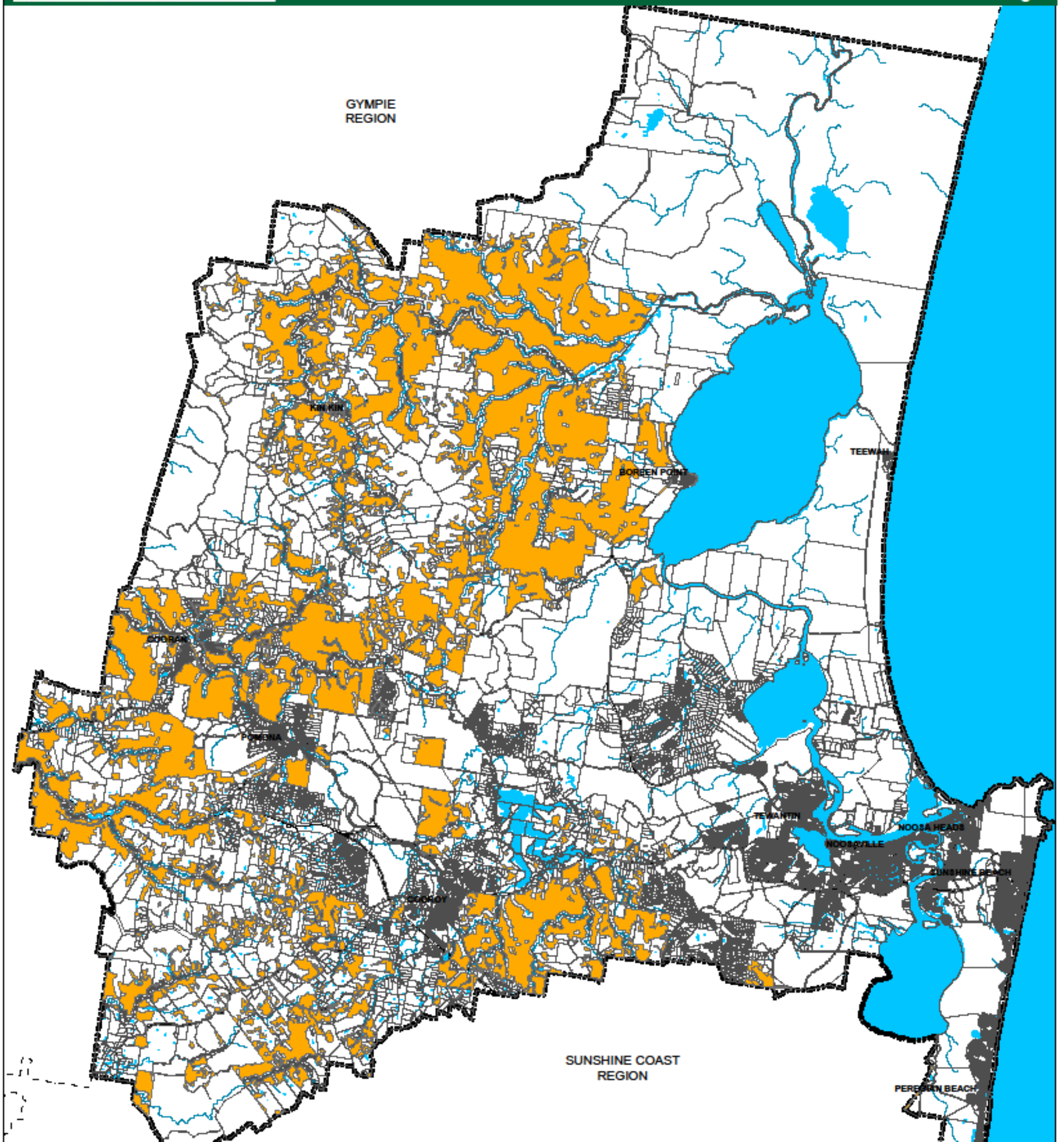
Given the effect of the overlay is to increase or add a layer of assessment to development proposals, it is not considered appropriate to include the mapping on land where agriculture is ultimately not the preferred land use.

Map 8 is derived by removing the following overlapping conflicts from the State's ALC Class A and Class B:

- Land within the Urban Footprint or the Rural Living Area as shown on the SEQ Regional Plan
- Land within any residential zone within the current planning scheme (this includes the rural settlement zone).
- Land included in the Biodiversity Overlay of the current planning scheme¹⁸ which includes remnant vegetation and riparian corridors
- Land identified as a Key Resource Area through the State Planning Policy

¹⁸ The Biodiversity Overlay is currently subject to review to inform the next planning scheme and the agricultural land layer would likewise be revised following this review.

Further, remaining polygons less than 5,000m² in area which are not contiguous with other polygons are also removed.



10.4 Agricultural Land Uses

The QPP includes a suite of use definitions that may be used in planning schemes. While this is currently a mandatory component it is possible that legislative changes allow for further flexibility. At any rate it is a good guide to the land uses that should be considered. The QPP also categorises the following 13 land uses as “Rural Activities”. They do not all qualify as agriculture but may be associated with agricultural production. The complete definition for each is contained in **Appendix F** of this report.

Agricultural supplies store	Permanent plantation
Animal husbandry	Roadside stall
Animal keeping	Rural industry
Aquaculture	Rural workers’ accommodation
Cropping	Wholesale nursery
Intensive animal industry	Winery
Intensive horticulture	

It is suggested that the new planning scheme adopt these use definitions but modify them or use development assessment tables and code provisions to clearly qualify thresholds that are considered acceptable. For example it should be clarified within the definition of animal husbandry that the grazing of livestock includes free range poultry and pigs so as to allow such operations, subject to maximum stocking densities, without it qualifying as intensive animal husbandry.

10.5 Tables of Assessment

Queensland planning legislation is currently under review but in terms of the proposed categories of development “accepted development” is development for which a development approval would not be required.

It is recommended that animal husbandry, cropping, roadside stall and wholesale nursery be made “accepted development” in both the Rural Zone and the Rural Residential Zone however the tables of assessment might be used to further benchmark the use or the qualifying property. For instance it is suggested these uses only be accepted development on lots greater than 2ha in area.

“Assessable development” would be development for which a development approval is required. Assessment is broken down further to

- code assessment - carried out only against the specified code benchmarks; and
- impact assessment - carried out against the broader planning scheme, other statutory planning instruments and any other relevant matter.

The Tables of Assessment might be used to qualify the scale or intensity of a use that is considered appropriate in an area. For instance it is recommended that up to 4 or 5 holiday cabins be subject to code or limited assessment but that beyond that number broader assessment and public notification be required.

It is suggested that intensive horticulture and aquaculture be assessable development subject to code assessment in the rural zone but that intensive animal husbandry be subject to impact assessment. No intensive agriculture should be supported in the rural residential zone.

Intensive poultry farms, piggeries (beyond small densities) and feedlots should be clearly shown as inconsistent within any zone in Noosa. Development applications for such uses require public notice and they can be very costly and stressful for both proponent and community.

“Prohibited development” would be development for which a development application may not be made. To date the use of prohibition has been very limited and applied only in a few instances as determined by the State. It is unlikely the planning scheme could make high intensity or industrial farming prohibited, although it is worth considering.

Rural industries might be assessable development subject to code assessment but extractive industries might be subject to impact assessment.

The planning scheme should also support the establishment of rural industries and enterprises associated with agriculture within the towns and villages of the hinterland.

10.6 Subdivision of Land

The creation of new allotments outside the urban footprint and the rural living areas should continue to be tightly limited.

Reconfiguring a lot on ALC Class A or Class B land should not be supported if it would result in allotment sizes that fragment, alienate or result in loss or diminished productive capacity of agricultural land. However it is not recommended that performance based planning result in applicants submitting agricultural land studies to disprove the agricultural value of lands. This approach has led to poor outcomes in the past.

Minimum lot sizes need to be enforced to enable continued agricultural viability and a range of farming options long term, whether it is good quality soils or not, especially as there are various farming practices less reliant on soil quality.

Despite continued pressure, the excision of titles for family members is prohibited by a State Planning Regulatory Provision, even where a second dwelling exists. The cumulative impact of small lot subdivisions on the rural countryside is severely adverse through the ultimate sale of these lots outside the original family and the introduction of new families with an expectation of a lifestyle free of nearby intrusions.

Exception to the minimum lot size should be made where a portion of land is being excised for conservation purposes. For instance, in an effort to protect remnant vegetation or riparian corridors a portion of a rural property might be cut off and sold to Council or the State. This is not currently permitted but is worth advocating for as part of the SEQ Regional Plan review.

Glossary

Agricultural land classification (ALC) is a land evaluation scheme used by the Queensland Government, based on the suitability of land for specified agricultural uses. It rates the ability of land to maintain a sustainable level of productivity. It rates the ability of land to maintain a sustainable level of productivity, based on the factors of soil, topographic and climatic limitations. The classification ranges from A to D.

Good Quality Agricultural Land (GQAL) is a 2-class system in which land is considered either good-quality agricultural land or not. GQAL is capable of sustainable agricultural use without causing land degradation or degradation to other natural resources. GQAL is assessed based on ALC but varies depending on the circumstances of an area (for instance Class A land is always considered to be GQAL, where agricultural land is scarce Class B land will also be considered GQAL and better-quality class C land may be considered GQAL where pastoral industries predominate).

Organic Agriculture is a form of sustainable agriculture that produces food and fibre without the use of artificial fertiliser or synthetic chemicals. Certified organic producers will also foster broader on-farm conservation through environmental management and rehabilitation.

Priority Agricultural Areas (PAAs) are areas of regionally significant agricultural production that are identified in a regional plan. There are no PAAs identified in the current South East Queensland Regional Plan.

Sustainable Agriculture is a primary production system that reduces land degradation and the off-site and downstream impacts of food and fibre production and improves the social and economic outcomes to farmers and the local community by adopting best management practices that:

- make the most efficient use of non-renewable and on farm resources;
- enhance environmental quality and conserving the natural resource base upon which production depends;
- integrate natural and biological cycles and controls, while maintaining on-farm biodiversity, and the health of wetlands and waterways;
- minimise the use of harmful agro-chemicals; and
- safeguard animal welfare.

Strategic Cropping Area (SCA) is an area of regional interest under the Regional Planning Interests Act 2014 (RPI Act). The SCA consists of the areas shown on the SCL Trigger Map as strategic cropping land.

Strategic Cropping Land (SCL) provided for in the (now repealed) Strategic Cropping Land Act 2011, is land considered to be highly suitable for cropping because of a combination of the land's soil, climate and landscape features, with no or little limitations to production.

Versatile cropping lands is a 2-class system in which land is considered either versatile cropping land or not. It is assessed based on the combination of crop requirements and the physical limitations of the soil type. Where the soil properties meet a crop requirement, the crop is deemed suitable. The greater the number of suitable crops, the more versatile the land.

Appendix A – History of Agriculture in Noosa Shire

Pastures

Cattle were first run in the area now Noosa Shire in the mid 1800's. While dairy farms became popular there has consistently been grazing of beef cattle even at a smaller scale. In the 1960s farms were being bought up by graziers for cattle pastures. In 1966 there were 200 producers of beef cattle in Noosa Shire. This number had halved by 1992.

Commercial dairying started in the late 1890s and became the major industry in the Shire and butter factories were established at Kin Kin, Cooroy and Pomona. The dairy industry in Noosa Shire peaked in the 1940s and 1950s with over 27,000 head of cattle across some 413 dairies, but then declined since the mid-1960s. The industry was based on butter production, a product which has experienced a relatively poor market since the increase of substitute products. The Pomona butter factory closed in 1970 and Cooroy closed in 1975. For some years whole milk from the Noosa Shire was sent to a distribution centre in Gympie. By 1980 the number of dairies in Noosa had dropped to 43 with less than 4,000 head of cattle and by 1992 there were 19 dairies.

The end of the 1990s saw the deregulation of the Queensland dairy industry which resulted in an overall decrease in the number of dairy farms throughout the State and subsequently there are no remaining dairies in Noosa Shire.

Crops

Prior to the 1920s the main crops grown in the Noosa Shire were potatoes, maize and hay. During the banana boom of around 1920, much land around Kin Kin was cleared to plant bananas. Growers were able to prosper quickly using lots as small as five acres of fertile soils. The banana sector declined rapidly in the 1930s due to falling prices and much cleared land was turned to dairies. In 1966 there was still some 79ha of land committed to bananas which had decreased to 11ha by the 1990s.

Early on in Noosa's history land around Kin Kin, Cootharaba and Cooran was found to be suitable for sugar cane and various farms transported cane to the Moreton Mill in Nambour. While this sector had a fairly limited history in Noosa there was a resurgence in the early 90s. At this time cane grown at Cootharaba, to the north of Pomona and between Pomona and Lake Macdonald represented about 4% of the assigned cane land in the Sunshine Coast and the Moreton Mill expressed confidence in the expansion of cane land in Noosa Shire. With the closure of the Moreton Mill in 2003 the local sugar industry dissolved.

Cooroy was a pioneer area for commercial green bean growing in Queensland and through the 1960s Noosa Shire produced up to 19% of the State's beans. In 1966 some 575ha of land in Noosa was committed to growing beans. This sector declined through the 1970s and 1980s.

Historical production of other fruit and vegetables in Noosa included noticeable quantities of tomatoes, melons, papaws, passionfruit and zucchini. However all traditional crops declined through the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s.

Since the 1980s there has been significant growth in less traditional areas of production, e.g. ginger, macadamias and wholesale nurseries. A growing appreciation for fresh flavours in both home cooking and dining out has led to an increased demand for salad greens, herbs, ginger, garlic, native foods, tree nuts etc. Weekly farmers markets and the strong local restaurant industry are markets for such produce.

Forestry

Early land holdings were taken up at Cootharaba and Kin Kin in the latter 1800s for timber. In the late 1860s sawmilling operations commenced next to Lake Cootharaba and timbergetters worked the area through the next four decades with portable sawmills relied upon. The timber industry was active at Cootharaba, Cooroy, Ridgewood, Tewantin, Ringtail Creek, Cooran and Pinbarren. The industry eventually declined with much cleared lands in the hinterland turning to dairies.

The banana boom of around 1920 led to a resurgence in makeshift milling operations where there were stands of good softwood timbers (including Kin Kin and Pinbarren) to construct banana cases.

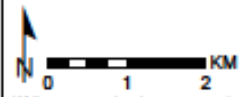
The timber industry survived for some time longer into the mid-1900s with sawmills at Cooroy, Kin Kin, and Cooran.

In the 1990's farm forestry gained momentum as a positive and sustainable use of rural lands. Incentives offered by the Government encouraged many rural land owners to plant timber on their otherwise unproductive properties. Eucalypt species particularly dominated in areas around Cooran and Pomona with lesser numbers of cabinet timbers. In lowlands where soils are less conducive to hardwood, softwoods like pines prevail. Non-native species such as bamboo, Paulwenias or Pongamia have also been planted although these require management to prevent weed spread.

The 1999 South East Queensland Forest Agreement led to the closure of the two mills at Cooroy as the supply of timber from Crown land would no longer warrant the operations. State plantation timber resources at Ringtail and Yurol Forests continue to be selectively harvested in small numbers.

Appendix B - Agricultural Land Uses

Land use survey conducted by Country Noosa in August 2015.

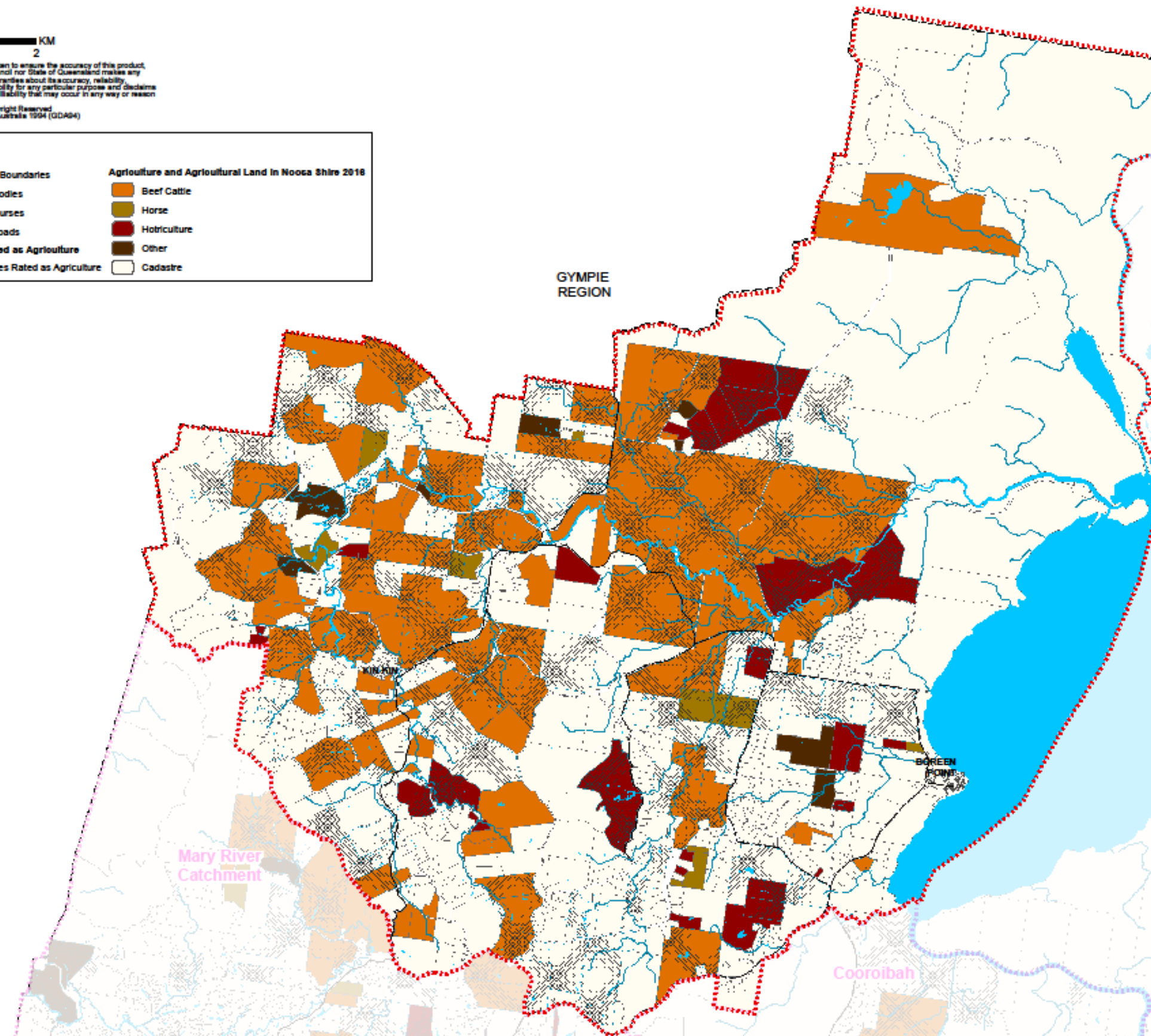


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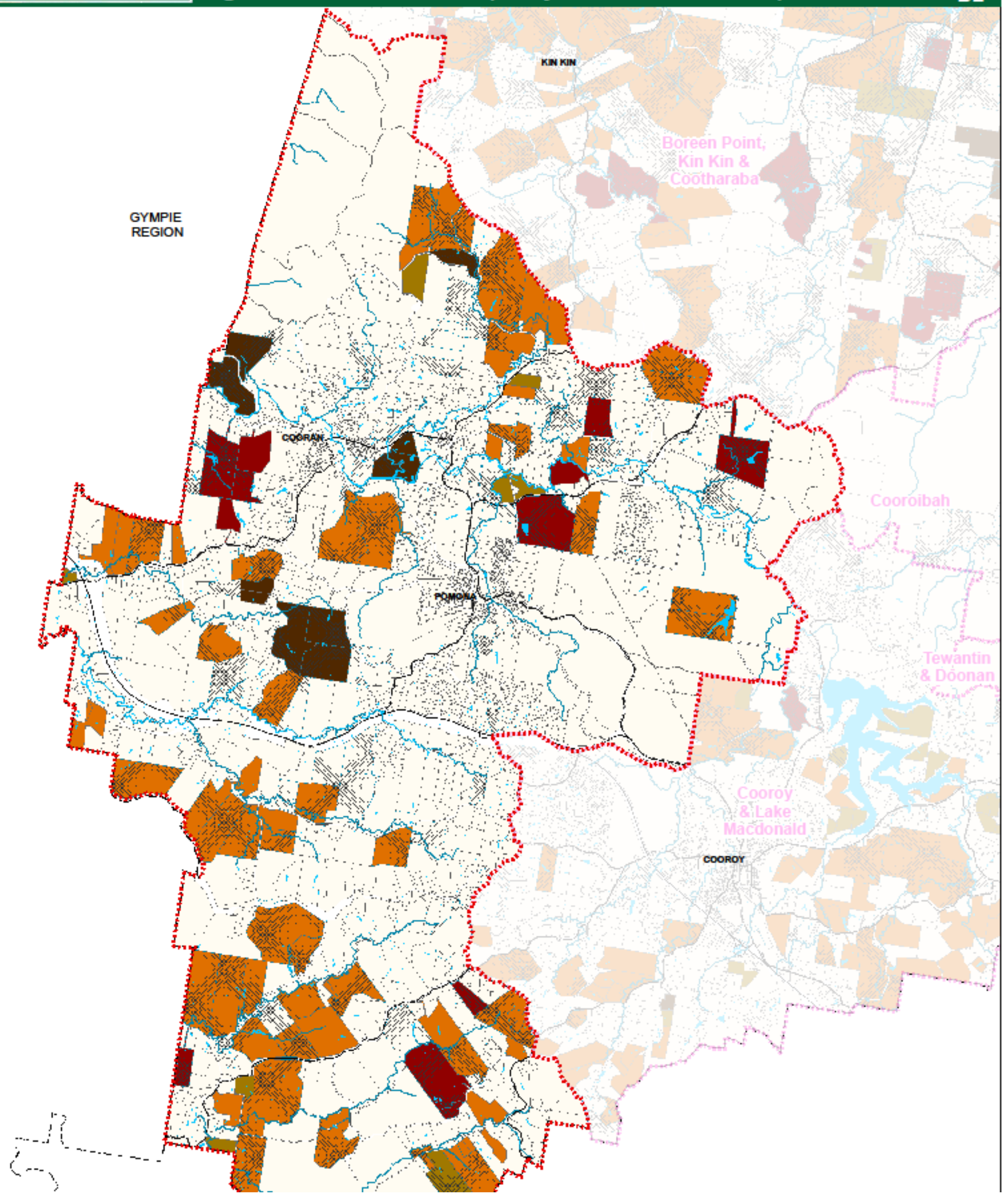
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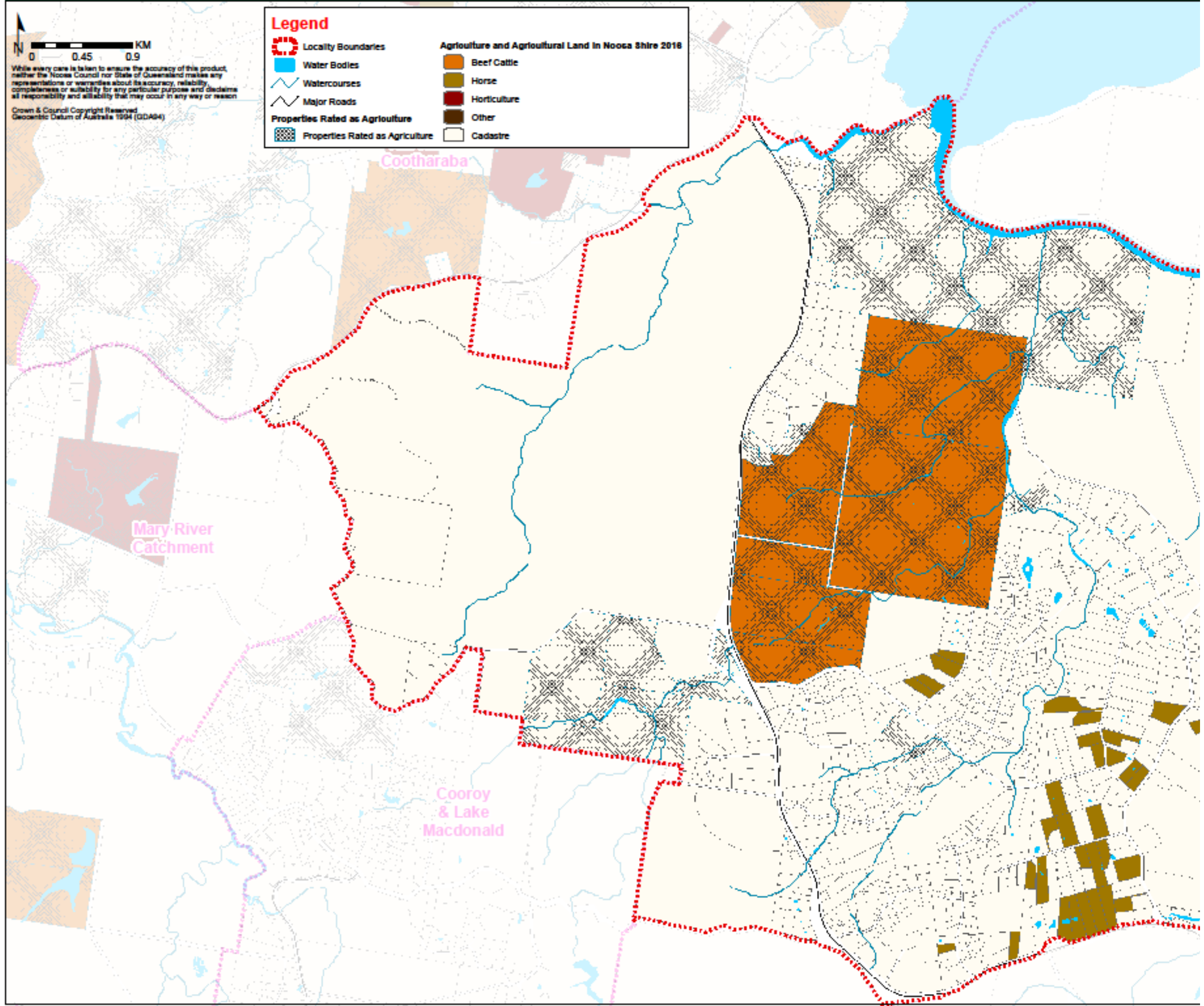
Legend

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Locality Boundaries | Beef Cattle |
| Water Bodies | Horse |
| Watercourses | Horticulture |
| Major Roads | Other |
| Properties Rated as Agriculture | Cadastre |
| Properties Rated as Agriculture | |

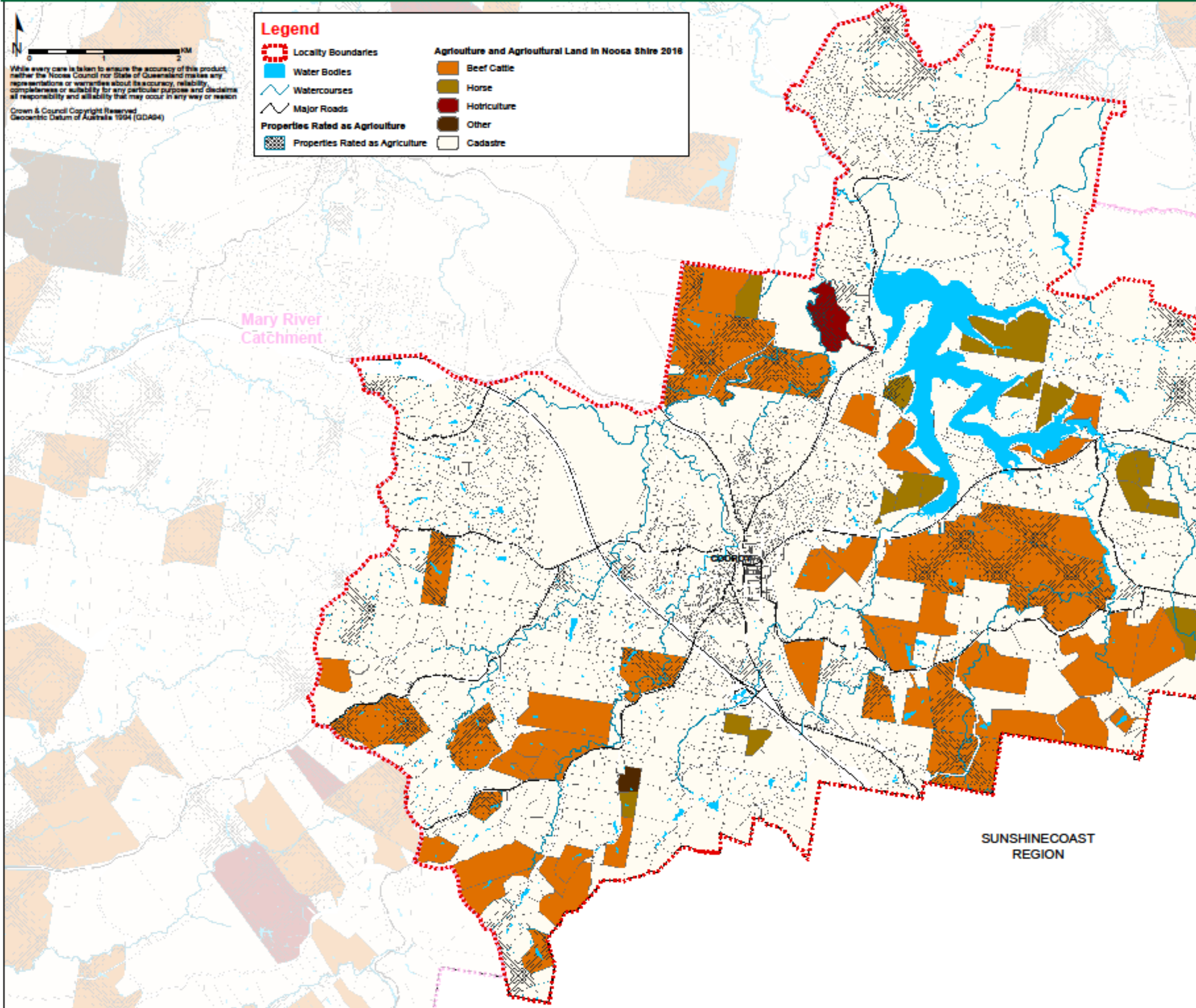


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Appendix C - Property Sales Review

In the period between 1 January 2014 and 31 December 2015, there were 133 transfers of 'Rural' zoned properties greater than 5.0 hectares. Analysis of this data showed:

LARGE PROPERTIES

- 20 properties were over 40 hectares in area, ranging from 41.60 hectares to 240.60 hectares.
- Median size was around 65 hectares and average size 82.58 hectares
- 3 were vacant and the level of improvements varied significantly.
- **Average sale price of \$753,610 and average price per hectare of \$9,018.**
- The least expensive at \$252,590 was a 44 hectare property at Kin Kin with a shed and dams
- The most expensive at \$1,850,000 was a 240 hectare property at Cootharaba with a small house, outbuildings, stockyards and dams.

MEDIUM SIZED PROPERTIES

- 61 properties were between 10 hectares and 40 hectares in area.
- Median size was 16.17 hectares and average size was 18.76 hectares.
- **The average sale price was \$694,957 with an average price per hectare of \$42,137.**
- 7 were vacant and the average sale price of the vacant blocks was \$447,685.
- The least expensive at \$203,000 was a 33.3 hectare steeply sloping vacant property close to the highway at Federal with approximately two thirds under protected bushland.
- The most expensive at \$3,100,000 was a 15.05 hectare property near Lake Macdonald with impressive views, a luxury home and substantial equestrian infrastructure.
- The level of improvements can have a considerable impact on the price of the property.

SMALL PROPERTIES

- 52 properties were between 5 hectares and 10 hectares in area.
- Median size was around 6.7 hectares and the average size 6.95 hectares.
- **The average sale price was \$603,731 with an average price per hectare of \$88,034.**
- The least expensive at \$110,000 was a 5.8 hectare property adjoining the Bruce Highway at Federal.
- The most expensive at \$3,085,000 was a luxury house with 7.4 hectares ha on the shores of Lake Macdonald with a private airstrip.
- The style of the house and the extent of infrastructure and improvements (such as pools, tennis courts, stables and equestrian yards) have more impact on the price variation than the area of land for smaller properties.

Appendix D - Nationwide Social Trending for Agriculture

In 2012, coinciding with the Year of the Farmer, the Australian Bureau of Statistics released a paper on social trends affecting Australian farming and farmers. It highlighted the following trends:

- The majority of Australia's farms are relatively small – in 2010/11 55% had an estimated value of agricultural operations of less than \$100,000.
- The majority of farms were also small in land area with 36% covering less than 50ha
- Queensland had the highest proportion of land devoted to agriculture (81% of the state)
- In 2011 there were 157,000 farmers in Australia
- The number of farmers in Australia has been declining for decades – the figure for 2011 represents a fall of 11% over the five years from the 2006 census.
- Men made up 72% of the farmers in Australia.
- Australian farmers tend to be considerably older than other workers. In 2011 the median age of farmers was 53 years compared to 40 years for people in other occupations.
- In 2011 23% of farmers were aged 65 years or older compared to just 3% of people in other occupations.
- Over the 30 year period of 1981 to 2011 the proportion of farmers aged 55 years and over increased from 26% to 47%.
- Farming as a vocation tends to be characterised by a high degree of self-employment and long working hours
- Despite the fact that 50% of farmers worked 49 hours a week or more the average weekly disposable income of farmers was considerably lower than that of people working in other occupations.
- Notwithstanding lower incomes the average "wealth" of farming households is much higher than other households (taking into account both assets and liabilities). However some farming households have quite low levels of wealth.
- Between 1981 and 2011 the proportion of Australian farmers with non-school qualifications rose from 15% to 38%. Non-school qualifications are more prevalent in the farmers aged 25-44 than in those aged 45 and over.
- People in farming families are more likely to volunteer than others, regardless of the size of the area in which they live.

Appendix E – History of Significant Planning Provisions Relevant to Agriculture

State Planning Policy 1/92 Development and the Conservation of Agricultural Land

In 1992 the Queensland Government introduced a State Planning Policy (SPP) aimed at using planning schemes to protect good quality agricultural lands from those developments that would lead to its alienation or diminished productivity. When preparing, reviewing or amending planning schemes local governments were expected to include provisions for the conservation of good quality agricultural land, regardless of the effect of market fluctuations on its viability.

The fact that existing farm units and smallholdings were not agriculturally viable was not considered justification for further subdivision or rezoning for non-agricultural purposes and Council was to minimise instances of incompatible uses locating adjacent to agricultural operations in a manner that inhibits normal farming practice.

Local Planning Policies

In complying with the above SPP Council prepared a 1995 planning study analysing soil types. This led to the adoption of Local Planning Policy (LPP) No. 26 Good Quality Agricultural Land adopted in May 1995, which was intended to define an appropriate approach to protecting good quality agricultural land from development that would lead to its alienation or diminished productivity.

This LPP included a map (provided as Figure 8) which showed four categories of land suitability:

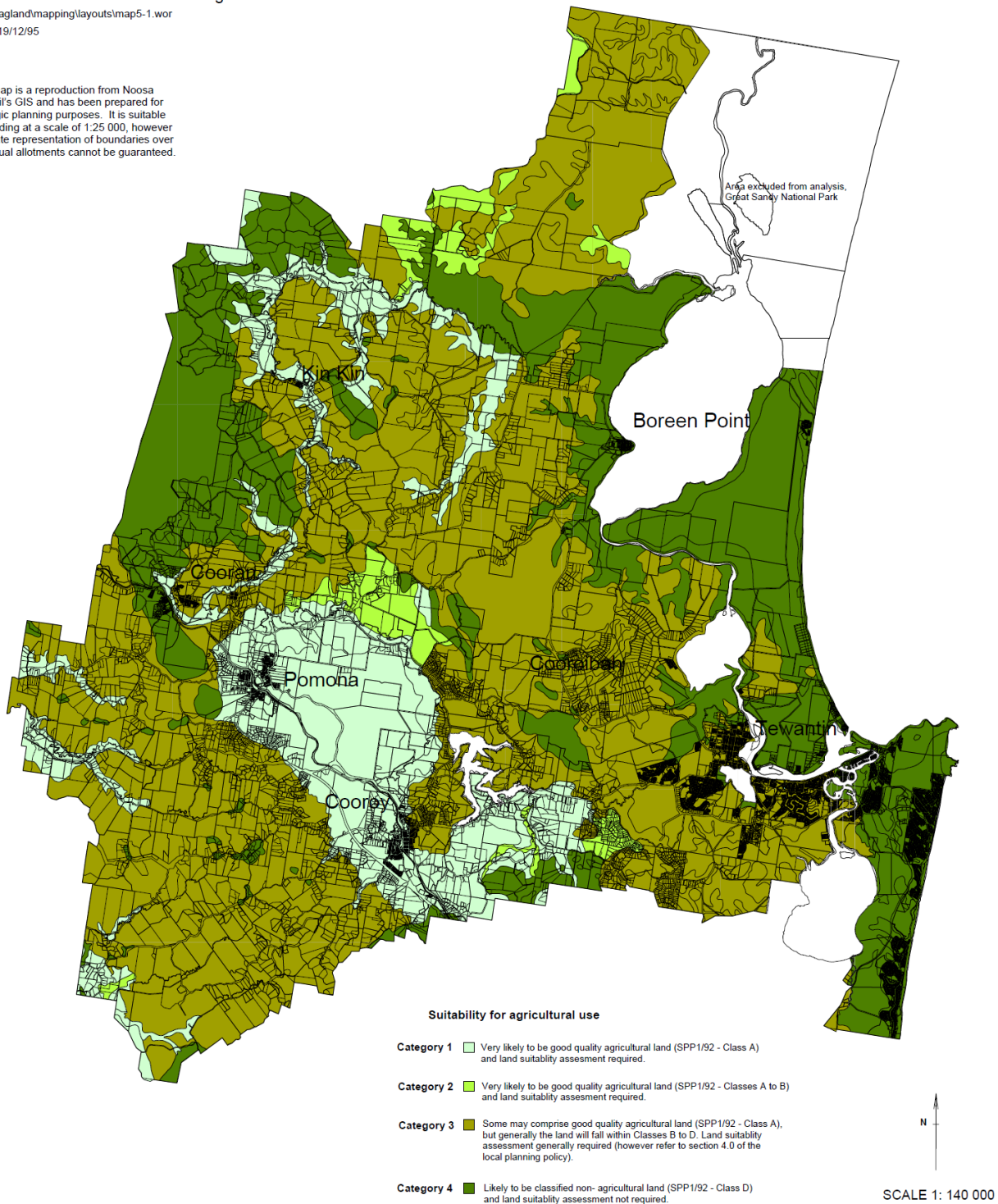
CATEGORY OF LAND	1992 STATE PLANNING POLICY STATUS
1. Land which is suitable for all horticultural uses	Very likely to be classified as good quality agricultural land, Class A
2. Land which is suitable for orchard crops, but may be marginal for annual crops	Very likely to be classified as good quality agricultural land, Classes A to C
3. Land which may be marginal to unsuitable for horticultural use, but further testing may be required	Some may comprise good quality agricultural land, but in general the land will fall within classes B to D
4. Land which is likely to be unsuitable for horticultural use	Land which is likely to be classified as non-agricultural land, Class D

Figure 8 Map Supporting LPP 26 Good Quality Agricultural Land

PLANNING SCHEME REVIEW: Agricultural Land

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Date: 19/12/95

This map is a reproduction from Noosa Council's GIS and has been prepared for strategic planning purposes. It is suitable for reading at a scale of 1:25 000, however accurate representation of boundaries over individual allotments cannot be guaranteed.



Development proposals involving categories 1, 2 or 3 land were thereafter required to be accompanied by an assessment of land suitability in line with the SPP and associated guidelines.

This policy was replaced by Local Planning Policy No. 26 Agriculture & Conservation of Agricultural Land in Noosa Shire, adopted in February 1998 which reflected the Agricultural Land Conservation Area adopted in the 1997 Strategic Plan.

Planning Guidelines: Separating Agricultural and Residential Land Uses

In 1997 the State released Planning Guidelines for separating Agricultural and Residential Land Uses. This document provided technical advice and guidance to local governments, developers and others on minimising conflicts and particularly on designing appropriate buffers to be incorporated into developments. It was intended that to comply with the guideline planning scheme provisions should minimise instances of incompatible uses locating adjacent to agricultural operations in a manner that inhibits normal farming practice. This guideline is still referenced in the Noosa Plan to date.

1997 Strategic Plan

The mid 1990s planning studies prepared in conjunction with and to support the 1997 Strategic Plan, mapped potential areas for conservation of good quality agricultural land.

The Strategic Plan included a mapping layer for Agricultural Land Conservation Area (ALCA) which indicated land which has been strategically assessed as having significant agricultural values and which has low environmental significance. At the strategic scale, the land has few or minor constraints to agriculture.

The Strategic Plan included the following Strategic Aims for Agriculture:

Character, Lifestyle & Environment Role

Agriculture is an important part of the rural heritage of the Shire and an integral contributor to the character of the Shire's hinterland. The retention of agricultural activities, particularly in those areas where farming activities have been the traditional use and where environmental impacts may be successfully managed will assist the agricultural sector's role in defining the character of the Shire.

Factors such as poor land management, poor management of fertiliser applications and inappropriate land clearing associated with agriculture have the potential to cause environmental harm through erosion, loss of significant habitat, visual scarring of significant landscapes or unacceptable impacts on downstream land or on surface and groundwaters. The potential environmental impacts of rural activities should be significant factors in determining land's suitability for agricultural use, with the goal of ensuring the sustainable use of the Shire's agricultural resources.

In lifestyle terms, agriculture is also a significant contributor, with part time, small scale though often high value operations, serving as an attractor to the rural areas.

Economic Role

Agriculture is an important contributor to the Shire's economy. The maintenance of an economically viable agricultural sector will require recognition of and response to changes to traditional markets and the emergence of new markets. Growth areas within the industry are expected to be in the areas of farm forestry, macadamias, sugar cane, small scale specialised crops and agricultural tourism. Economic performance can also be enhanced by providing opportunities for value-adding to occur, before agricultural produce leaves the farm gate.

Aims

- *Conserve good quality agricultural land by preventing encroachment or alienation by incompatible land uses.*
- *Encourage the ongoing, productive use of good quality agricultural land for sustainable agricultural development.*
- *Recognise that sustainable agriculture operates on land not identified as good quality agricultural land and protect that agriculture from encroachment or alienation by incompatible land uses.*

- *Where there is uncertainty about the likely effect of a land use on a sustainable agriculture or good quality agricultural land, ensure that protection of the agriculture or conservation of the good quality agricultural land prevails.*
- *Encourage agriculture to adhere to the Strategic Principles and Development Principles.*
- *Encourage the adoption of environmentally sustainable land management practices that ensure that agricultural development does not impact on surrounding or downstream environments or environmental processes.*

Vegetation Management Act 1999

The Vegetation Management Act 1999 regulates the clearing of remnant vegetation to conserve biodiversity values and maintain ecological processes. While there is a considerable amount of protected vegetation throughout Noosa Shire there are various exemptions for agriculture and grazing purposes. For instance farmers can clear to construct new infrastructure, build fences and tracks, clear watering points, clear firebreaks and reduce hazardous fuel load.

Subject to gaining a permit you can clear remnant vegetation for high-value agriculture or irrigated high-value agriculture. This includes broadacre cropping, annual horticulture, perennial horticulture and irrigated pasture (but not plantation forestry or unirrigated pastures). However in the application process the applicant has to demonstrate that

- the land is suitable for the proposed high-value or irrigated high-value agriculture;
- the development will be economically viable; and
- there is no suitable alternative site and clearing is limited to the extent necessary to establish and cultivate crops.

The Noosa Plan 2006

The Noosa Plan was introduced as the planning scheme for the Shire of Noosa in February 2006. This plan, prepared under the now repealed Integrated Planning Act adopted a Natural Resource overlay that included an Agricultural Land Conservation Area (ALCA) generally carried forward from the 2007 Strategic Plan. This overlay has implications for development within ALCA as well as development in the vicinity of ALCA so that the use of good quality agricultural land is not adversely affected by other forms of development and that uses that can be located elsewhere are. It is the intention of the scheme that land within the ALCA is not further subdivided.

SEQ Regional Plan

The first draft of the South East Queensland Regional Plan was released for public comment in October 2004 (shortly after Noosa's draft IPA-based planning scheme was released for consultation). The Regional Plan includes Urban Footprints over the various towns of Noosa Shire and Rural Living designations at Lake Cooroibah, Black Mountain, Doonan, Sunrise Hills and Lake Macdonald. The vast majority of Noosa Shire is included in the Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area.

The Regional Plan and its regulatory provisions prevented the subdivision of land in the Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area unless the resultant lots were at least 100 hectares in area.

This had an immediate effect on the subdivision potential of many properties within Noosa Shire and owners had a period of 2 years to make development applications under the planning scheme provisions.

The SEQ Regional Plan 2005-2026 also strengthened the stance against urban activities being approved in the Regional Landscape and Rural Production area and defined what was and was not considered an urban activity. It sought to maintain a viable rural production sector, capitalising on existing advantages and ready to meet changing circumstances. It acknowledged changes in

rural production and that land use policies influenced the ability for agriculture to remain competitive or to transition to something more competitive (such as niche agricultural products).

Within the SEQ Regional Plan 2009-2031 the regulatory provisions apply to the Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area and restrict further fragmentation of land holdings, urban development, except within established villages, and the expansion of rural residential development outside areas already allocated in local government planning schemes. In 2014 these regulatory provisions were amended.

In summary the SEQ Regional Plan became a powerful instrument for avoiding ongoing fragmentation and cluttering of the hinterland with development better located within urban areas.

South East Queensland Natural Resource Management Plan 2009–2031 is a non-statutory plan to support the SEQ Regional Plan 2009–2031. It contains various targets relevant to agriculture and associated land and water resources.

Rural Futures Strategy for South East Queensland 2009

In support of the SEQ Regional Plan the State released a Rural Futures Strategy which included both a strategy and action plan to improve the economic prosperity, environmental wellbeing and quality of life of rural South East Queensland. The document included a number of well-intentioned aspirations, for instance it included a target of maintaining 90% of 2004 levels of agricultural land for productive purposes in 2031 and to halt the fragmentation of land within the Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area.

The document acknowledged that the regulatory environment can have a negative impact on the profitability and sustainability of rural enterprises and that streamlining the planning process could assist economic diversification and allow primary producers to undertake normal daily productive activities without unnecessary red tape.

One of the Strategic Actions was to Improve the coordination of planning for agriculture and other rural land uses in the Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area. This included the following programs & projects:

- Rural precinct planning
- Developing a Regional Landscape Planning Framework for SEQ
- Reforming the Integrated Planning Act
- Reviewing State Planning Policy 1/92
- Developing a coordinated and consistent approach to agricultural planning in SEQ using a case study approach
- Shared rural planning specialist
- Transferable Development Rights pilot (at Ipswich City Council)
- Agricultural production precincts

While this document may have prompted State and Local Governments to turn their attention to rural planning it is not generally considered to have brought about significant change and in fact the State generally abandoned some of the concepts in favour of wide spread planning reform.

Sunshine Coast Rural Background Studies

In October 2009 the Sunshine Coast Council (inclusive of the Noosa area at the time) released for discussion, various background studies as part of preliminary consultation to inform the new planning scheme amongst other work.

The Rural Futures Background Study provided a commentary on the issues for the rural areas of the Sunshine Coast Region and background information for the preparation of a Rural Futures Strategy. It identified a number of opportunities for the rural economy, including:

- Taking advantage of the good quality soils, conducive climate and proximity to markets to diversify and trial new agricultural enterprises
- Building on the existing relationship between restaurants and producers and growing products particularly in demand (this may include expansion of aquaculture industry, diversification of poultry industry, and other gourmet meats as well as herbs, Asian greens and more unusual or difficult to find vegetables).
- Increasing the local consumer demand for local produce
- Expanding on food production and food processing capabilities
- Focussing on healthy foods
- Promoting organic/low spray/best practice production
- Supporting niche, small and specialised food ventures
- Increase plantation and farm forestry for sustainable local timber production
- Utilise carbon trading initiative to establish native vegetation on degraded areas not suitable for other agriculture
- Opportunities for increased animal husbandry including breeding of stud bulls, breeding and training of horses and breeding of domestic pets (as well as breeding and raising livestock for food production).

This document and the feedback from the community informed the preparation of the Sunshine Coast Rural Futures Strategy endorsed in April 2013, largely an economic development strategy for the hinterland.

The Rural Land Use Planning Background Study specifically reviewed the way the planning schemes regulated development in the rural areas of the Sunshine Coast. It highlighted a number of instances of arguably over-regulating rural production in the Noosa Plan.

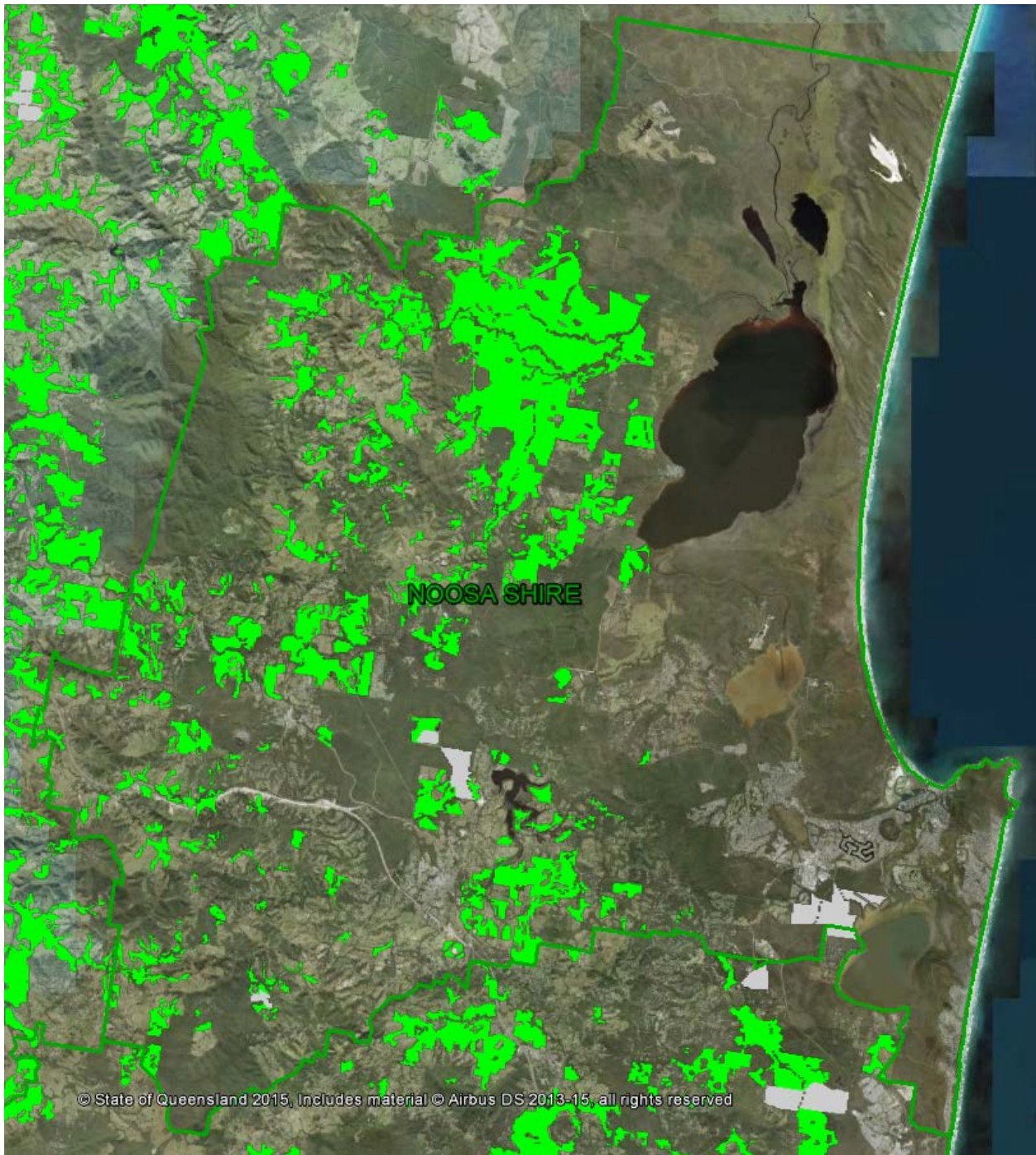
Following review of over one hundred submissions, recommendations were made to the drafters of the Sunshine Coast planning scheme, and these same recommendations were considered in proposing amendments to the Noosa Plan in 2014.

Strategic Cropping Land and Regional Planning Interests

The Strategic Cropping Land Act 2011 (SCL Act) was introduced in recognition that the State's important cropping land was being lost and further threatened by a range of non-agricultural uses. These competing land uses include resource developments, such as mining and coal seam gas projects, and urban expansion. The Act sought to protect land that is or is likely to be highly suitable for cropping due to a combination of the land's soil, climate and landscape features.

The Department of Natural Resources and Mines developed an electronic trigger map for Strategic Cropping Land that was prepared using the Class A Agricultural Land and Versatile Cropping Land data as well as the 1999 Queensland Land Use Mapping Program (QLUMP) data identified as productive for agriculture or plantations. The trigger map is illustrated in Figure 9 with the bright green depicting SCL.

Figure 9 - Strategic Cropping Land Trigger Map



Where the trigger map showed land to be SCL a development proponent could lodge a validation application with the Department of Natural Resources and Mines to have the land removed from the strategic cropping layer. In doing so they had to prove either that the physical criteria of the land was in fact not suitable for cropping (necessitating a very technical / scientific analysis) or they had to disprove a history of cropping on the site. The areas shown in grey on Figure 9 are where validation applications have resulted in land being removed from SCL designation.

The SCL Act was subject to many concerns claiming that the legislation was prescriptive and inflexible, adding significant costs and time delays to projects and development proposals. There seemed to be relatively few instances where an applicant did not ultimately succeed in having their validation application approved and therefore the whole purpose was questionable.

On 13 June 2014, the Strategic Cropping Land Act 2011 was repealed by the Regional Planning Interests Act 2014 (RPI Act) and the strategic cropping area is now an area of regional interest under the RPI Act. This Act seeks to manage the impact and support coexistence of resource activities and other regulated activities in areas of regional interest.

There are four areas of regional interests under the RPI Act:

- a priority agricultural area (PAA)
- a priority living area (PLA)
- the strategic cropping area (SCA)
- a strategic environmental area (SEA).

A PAA is a strategic area identified by the government as containing significant clusters of what are considered to be priority agricultural land uses — high value, intensive agricultural land uses. There is no PAA affecting Noosa Shire at this point but that could change with the next version of the SEQ Regional Plan.

Reef Plan

The Reef Water Quality Protection Plan (Reef Plan) is a collaborative program of coordinated projects and partnerships designed to improve the quality of water in the World Heritage Listed Great Barrier Reef through improved land management in reef catchments. The Mary Basin catchment (including the western portion of Noosa Shire) forms part of the Burnett Mary Region which is subject to a Water Quality Improvement Plan.

The Reef Plan is a joint commitment of the Australian and Queensland Governments. Its primary focus is to address diffuse source pollution from broadscale land use, such as grazing and horticulture. A catalogue of Best Management Practices is available to assist certain agricultural sectors within the Great Barrier Reef catchments. Solutions are offered to achieve cost effective pollutant reduction. The Plan also sets specific targets for the protection and management of wetlands and riparian corridors along the banks of waterways, as they play an essential ecosystem service buffering nutrients and sediments laden runoff from rural landscapes.

Appendix F - Rural Land Use Definitions from Queensland Planning Provisions

Column 1 Use	Column 2 Definition	Column 3 Examples include	Column 4 Does not include the following examples
Agricultural supplies store	Premises used for the sale of agricultural products and supplies including agricultural chemicals and fertilisers, seeds, bulk veterinary supplies, farm clothing, saddlery, animal feed and irrigation materials.		Bulk landscape supplies, garden centre, outdoor sales wholesale nursery
Animal husbandry	Premises used for production of animals or animal products on either native or improved pastures or vegetation. The use includes ancillary yards, stables and temporary holding facilities and the repair and servicing of machinery.	Cattle studs, grazing of livestock, non-feedlot dairying	Animal keeping, intensive animal industry, aquaculture, feedlots, piggeries
Animal keeping	Premises used for boarding, breeding or training of animals. The use may include ancillary temporary or permanent holding facilities on the same site and ancillary repair and servicing of machinery.	Aviaries, catteries, kennels, stables, wildlife refuge	Aquaculture, cattle studs, domestic pets, feedlots, grazing of livestock, non-feedlot dairying, piggeries, poultry meat and egg production, animal husbandry
Aquaculture	Premises used for the cultivation of aquatic animals or plants in a confined area that may require the provision of food either mechanically or by hand.	Pond farms, tank systems, hatcheries, raceway system, rack and line systems, sea cages	Intensive animal industry

Column 1 Use	Column 2 Definition	Column 3 Examples include	Column 4 Does not include the following examples
Cropping	<p>Premises used for growing plants or plant material for commercial purposes where dependent on the cultivation of soil.</p> <p>The use includes harvesting and the storage and packing of produce and plants grown on the site and the ancillary repair and servicing of machinery used on the site.</p>	Fruit, nut, vegetable and grain production, forestry for wood production, fodder and pasture production, plant fibre production, sugar cane growing, vineyard	Permanent plantations, intensive horticulture, rural industry
Intensive animal industry	<p>Premises used for the intensive production of animals or animal products in an enclosure that requires the provision of food and water either mechanically or by hand.</p> <p>The use includes the ancillary storage and packing of feed and produce.</p>	Feedlots, piggeries, poultry and egg production	Animal husbandry, aquaculture, drought feeding, milking sheds, shearing sheds, weaning pens
Intensive horticulture	<p>Premises used for the intensive production of plants or plant material on imported media and located within a building or structure or where outdoors, artificial lights or containers are used.</p> <p>The use includes the storage and packing of produce and plants grown on the subject site.</p>	Greenhouse and shade house plant production, hydroponic farms, mushroom farms	Wholesale nursery
Permanent plantation	Premises used for growing plants not intended to be harvested.	Permanent plantations for carbon sequestration, biodiversity or natural resource management	Forestry for wood production, biofuel production

Column 1 Use	Column 2 Definition	Column 3 Examples include	Column 4 Does not include the following examples
Roadside stall	Premises used for the roadside display and sale of goods in rural areas.	Produce stall	Market
Rural industry	Premises used for storage, processing and packaging of products from a rural use. The use includes processing, packaging and sale of products produced as a result of a rural use where these activities are ancillary to a rural use on or adjacent to the site.	Packing shed	Intensive animal husbandry, intensive horticulture, roadside stall, wholesale nursery, winery, abattoir, agricultural supply store
Rural workers accommodation	Any premises used as quarters for staff employed in the use of land for rural purposes, such as agriculture, intensive animal husbandry and forestry, conducted on a lot in the same ownership whether or not such quarters are self-contained.	Farm workers' accommodation	Short-term accommodation caretaker's accommodation, dual occupancy, dwelling house, nature or rural based tourist accommodation, non-resident workforce accommodation, multiple dwelling
Wholesale nursery	Premises used for the sale of plants, but not to the general public, where the plants are grown on or adjacent to the site. The use may include sale of gardening materials where these are ancillary to the primary use.		Bulk landscape supplies, garden centre
Winery	Premises used for manufacturing of wine, which may include the sale of wine manufactured on site.		Rural industry

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