

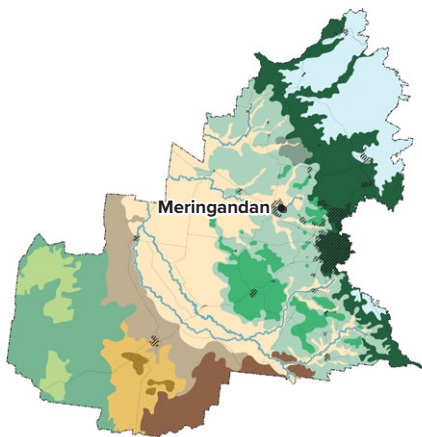


MERINGANDAN

Meringandan is a growing rural community centred on Meringandan Creek, in close proximity to emerging urban areas associated with Highfields and Meringandan West. The setting of the town is defined by views to the surrounding rolling and elevated agricultural farmland and vegetated hills, including the Kingthorpe, Gowrie and Goombungee Hills.

Location and boundaries

Meringandan is a small town located on the undulating and elevated western extent of the Great Dividing Range around 15km northwest of Toowoomba City centre and just over 1km from the existing urban edge of Highfields and less than 500m from residential development associated with Meringandan West. Meringandan is accessed via a network of roads including the Oakey Meringandan Road and Meringandan Shirley Road.



Legend

- Urban Extent
- Landscape Character Type (LCT) boundary
- ++++ Railway (dismantled/abandoned)
- ==== Highways and Secondary Roads
- ==== Local Connector Roads
- ==== Local Roads
- * Hills
- Ridgelines

- Contours (10m)
- Waterways
- Reservoirs
- Greenfield Areas
- Town Centre
- Gateways*

- * Key features
- Parks and open space
- Key views and directions*

*Legend item not to scale

Landscape and visual setting

- Meringandan is located in an elevated and undulating rural landscape that forms part of **LCT A: Elevated Ridges and Plateaus – LCA5: Toowoomba Settled Range** and also lies close to **LCA A1: Great Dividing Range (north)**.
- Meringandan also lies adjacent to **LCT C: Darling Downs Forested Peaks and Ridgelines – LCA C4: Kingthorpe, Gowrie and Goombungee Hills**.

Key character attributes

- Meringandan is a small town with a rural residential character located west of Highfields and the Great Dividing Range.
- The Meringandan UCL has a population of 327 in 113 private dwellings with the wider Meringandan SSC having a population of 487. However, this applies only to the northern part of Meringandan as the southern part is counted in the Meringandan West statistics. The Meringandan West UCL has 2,283 people in 768 private dwellings with the wider Meringandan West SSC having a total population of 2,211 (ABS, 2016).
- Meringandan is highly compartmentalised. The northern part retains a traditional town core with local services and more recent residential development located beyond. The southern part of Meringandan includes the school but also comprises very recent development and ongoing subdivision and appears almost as a satellite suburb to Highfields, which is located very close to and is visible from the eastern part of Meringandan.
- Parts of Meringandan enjoy extensive views over the Darling Downs.

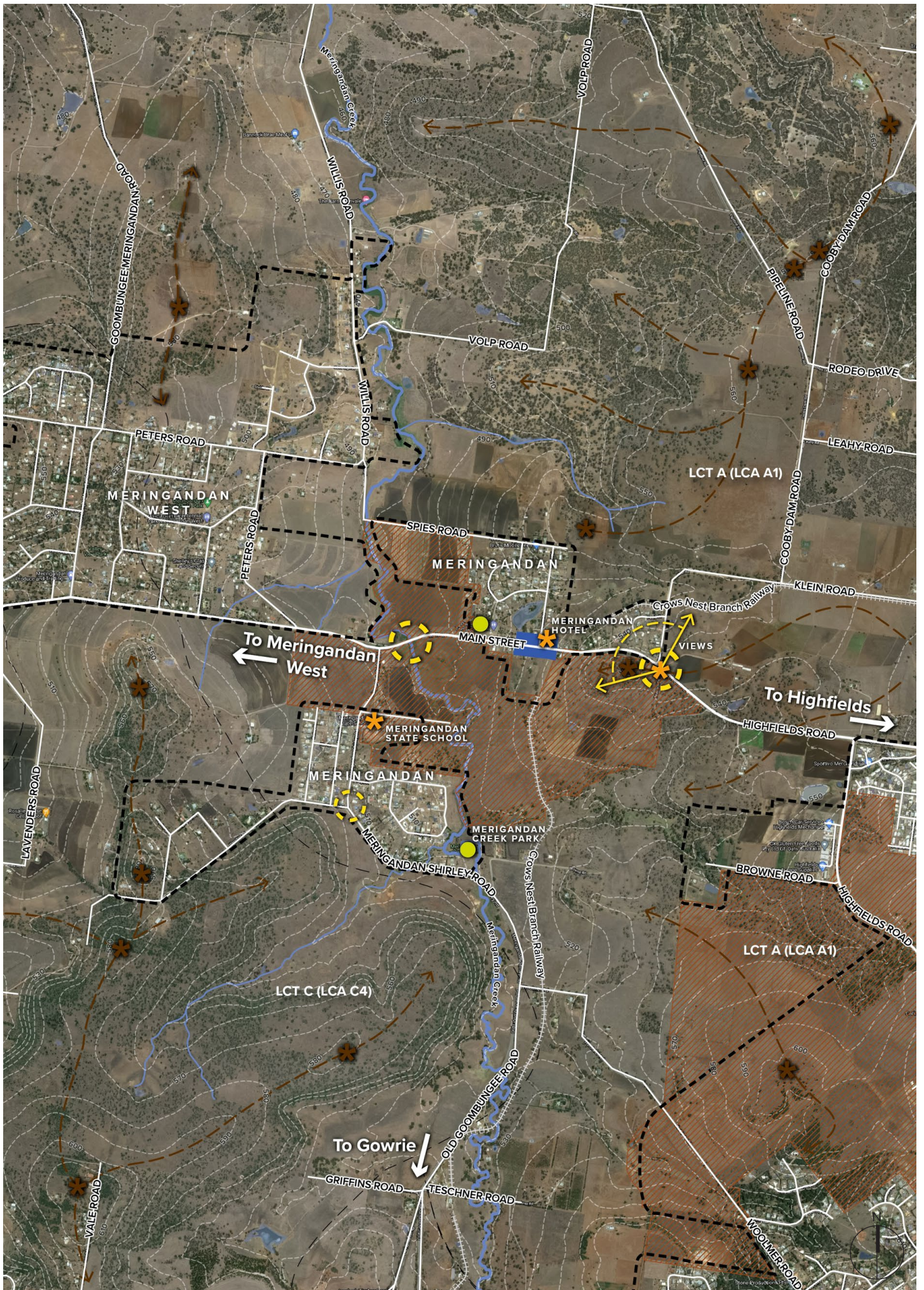
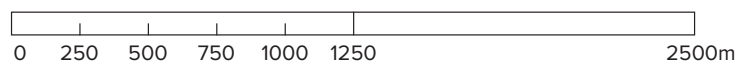


Figure 22: Key landscape and urban character features of Meringandan



Historical influences and typology

Key historic themes for Meringandan are:

The early Darling Downs: exploring the land and establishing settlements

Meringandan was first settled by Europeans in the 1870s, prior to the advent of a railway connection. The area was opened for selection as parts of the Gowrie pastoral run were resumed and made available, predominantly to German migrants. By 1887, Meringandan was a small rural village with Lutheran, Anglican and Congregational churches and a state school (est. 1875).

'Opening up' rural settlements: the advent of rail and establishing railway towns

In 1882, the railway line from Toowoomba to Crows Nest had been constructed as far as Meringandan and for a short period, the town grew rapidly as a railhead for the settlers around Haden and Goombungee, with produce being carted to Meringandan to then be railed to Toowoomba. However, by the early 1910s, the construction of the rail line from Kingsthorpe to Haden line resulted in Goombungee assuming a more dominant role in the district and as a result, Meringandan's prosperity declined.

Living off the land: developing primary and secondary industries

In the early twentieth century, Meringandan was the centre of an agricultural and dairying district with a focus on wheat, maize, barley and potatoes crops, and a growing cream and dairy industry. However, this contracted during the 1970s-90s.

Country living: establishing institutions and shaping community life

The peak of Meringandan's influence and growth was in the early twentieth century when, as a result of its thriving agricultural and dairying industries, its population experienced a boom and a number of new community facilities were built (e.g. a Masonic Hall, a bakery, a police station, three hotels, and a bank).

In more recent decades, much like other settlements on Toowoomba's fringe, Meringandan has experienced substantial growth as a consequence of urban expansion and residential subdivision development, with residents commuting to Toowoomba for work.



Meringandan has strong visual connectivity to the surrounding rural and natural landscape



View towards Meringandan from Meringandan West showing the towns contextual setting



Entering Meringandan along Oakey-Meringandan Road



Meringandan contains some character dwellings scattered throughout the settlement



Looking towards Meringandan across Meringandan Creek

Urban character and built form assessment

Natural environment

Geological features

- Meringandan is situated within a highly undulating rural landscape on the western side of the Great Dividing Range at elevations of up to around 540m AHD.
- The northern part of the settlement is nestled into and slopes towards a minor valley of Meringandan Creek. The southern part of the settlement is also nestled into and slopes towards another minor valley associated with Meringandan Creek.
- The northern (oldest) part of the settlement is predominantly located on an underlying basaltic geology associated with the Main Range Volcanics (Tm), whereas the southern (newer) part of the settlement is associated with the arenite-mudrock of the Marburg subgroup (Jbm).

Hydrological features

- The town is located around Meringandan Creek.
- As noted above, the northern part is focussed on an unnamed tributary that flows to the southwest to join Meringandan Creek. This has been dammed to create a significant lake located within an area of parkland.
- The southern part of the town is located around an unnamed tributary that flows to the northeast to join Meringandan Creek.
- Meringandan Creek is part of the Cooby Creek catchment and joins Oakey Creek and the Condamine River, forming part of the Balonne-Condamine Catchment.

Vegetation features & habitat values

- Meringandan is surrounded by farmland, much of which has been cleared of vegetation. However, older parts of the town retain elements of surviving bushland.
- Remnant areas of vegetation considered MSES are located north of Spies Road and in more elevated areas west of Meringandan located between the settlement and Highfields, including along the upper part of some drainage lines.
- The area to the north comprises White Box (*Eucalyptus albens*) and Narrow-leaved Ironbark (*E. crebra*) woodland on Cainozoic igneous rocks (RE 11.8.8).
- The area to the west comprises Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis*) and Yellow Box (*E. melliodora*) woodland on Cainozoic igneous rocks (RE 11.8.2).

Built environment

Settlement & land use pattern

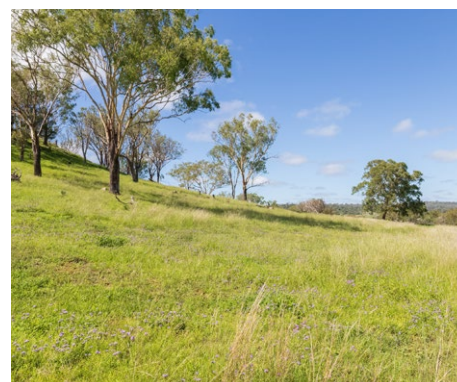
- Today, Meringandan is a small rural town that presents as a loose collection of residential and commercial buildings.
- The main thoroughfare, Main Street, contains residential buildings interspersed with a few commercial buildings, such as the Meringandan Hotel, and the Meringandan Store and Butcher.

Open Space & Recreation

- Meringandan includes a range of different types of open space areas.
- The key open space is Tom Volp Park located between Lake Drive and Main Street. This park includes formal sporting areas including a cricket oval and tennis court. There is a lake and drainage line within the park.
- The small Ted Franke Park is located adjacent to the old corner store in the town centre but no longer includes a children’s play area.
- Meringandan Creek Park includes a creek line and informal open space and is located in the south-eastern part of the settlement.

Built form mass, scale and density

- In terms of residential character, Meringandan contains a small collection of traditional character dwellings along Main Street (that becomes Highfields Road) which extend a short distance along Garrett Road that intersects at the Hotel. A contemporary urban subdivision to the north contains conventional, post 1970s, dwellings. To the north of the residential subdivision, a few early farm houses are located at the edge of the area that becomes rural agricultural land beyond.



Meringandan is located in a highly undulating rural landscape west of the Great Dividing Range



Meringandan Creek



Tom Volp Park



Existing car park in the town centre

Heritage elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In accordance with the categorisation adopted by Brannock & Associates (2010), Meringandan is designated as rural ‘village’ and is considered of ‘low priority’ (i.e. it has been subject to previous heritage investigation). • There are no State heritage listed places in Meringandan. • Key heritage places listed in the Toowoomba Regional Planning Scheme 2012 comprise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 32 Main Street (2/MER/0109) (residential property) - 10 School Road (2/MER/0110) (Meringandan State School). • The Meringandan State School, established 1876, is located at some distance from Main Street to the west of Meringandan Creek, and is situated within a modern residential area. • A legacy of the traditional built character of Meringandan is the former general store building, which is now closed and located adjacent to the Meringandan Hotel on Main Street. • The former police station and court house located at 25 Main Street also contribute to the character of the settlement. • Meringandan's former railway yards have been removed and a park stands where the railway station used to be.
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The former Meringandan general store

Streetscape

Gateways and landmarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key gateways into Meringandan relate to views over the settlement and to the surrounding rolling fields beyond. • The key gateway is arriving from Highfields driving west down Highfields Road over the rise in the hill and the panorama experienced of the town and its landscape context looking down Main Street. • Other gateways are more informal and simply relate to the transition from countryside into town, but often also including significant views of the setting of the town; for example, the eastern gateway down Old Goombungee Road.
Links and connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While physically well connected, the links between the northern and southern parts of Meringandan and to Meringandan West are not transparent and lead to a sense of disorientation in the landscape i.e. uncertainty as to which town one is in.
Façades, frontages and rhythm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relatively close spacing of buildings along Main Street creates a relatively tight traditional town character for the northern part of Meringandan.
Street trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meringandan lacks a formal landscape of street trees. However, significant native vegetation along creeks/drainage lines, largely Gum trees (<i>Eucalyptus</i> sp.) and in the relatively large gardens provides a strong vegetated context to most of the settlement. This is weakest in the more recent development area in the south of Meringandan.
Pavements and parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking areas relate to an informal gravel area to the south of Main Street in the town centre and associated with Tom Volp Park but are largely absent elsewhere • There is concrete pedestrian paving in the town centre.
Furniture and art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no significant on street artwork or furniture elements in Meringandan.



Meringandan State School, a local heritage listed place



Traditional character dwelling at 32 Main Street, a local heritage listed place



Disconnected pedestrian footpaths in the town centre

Cultural heritage

Urban/
character
precincts

- There are no neighbourhood character precincts.

Cultural
associations

- In the adjacent Meringandan West, Lilyvale Oval (now Lilyvale West Meringandan Park) was once used for an annual rodeo hosted by the P&C of Meringandan State School.

Scenic amenity

Scenic
lookouts
& views

- There are no formal scenic lookouts in Meringandan. However, more elevated parts of the landscape provide good views out over the surrounding farmlands.
- At some distance to the north of Meringandan lie the Lake Cooby (Cooby Dam) lookouts. This is one of the most significant regional destinations near Meringandan and is also Toowoomba's principal water supply.

View
corridors

- Key views within the town are linear views down Main Street and views over the surrounding farmland.
- No tourist drives pass through Meringandan, however a number of promoted motorcycle routes pass through the area.

Landmarks

- Landmarks in Meringandan comprise various buildings located along Main Street within the settlement.

Perceptions

- Meringandan is a growing residential community with a very small but pleasant traditional centre set within an attractive agricultural landscape that capitalises on stunning views across rural farmland and to the forested peaks beyond.



Linear views through town to farmland and Meringandan West beyond



Elevated parts of the town provide views across the surrounding landscape



Elevated parts of Meringandan offer views over the surrounding farmland, including towards emerging residential development associated with Highfields



View from near Tom Volp Park along Main Street towards the town centre



Meringandan is a quiet town with a growing residential community



View towards Tom Volp Park

Planning for the future

Sensitivities and forces for change

Key forces for change include:

- Identified as being within the Priority Living Area in *ShapingSEQ*
- Steady growth pressure, with growth to generally be accommodated in the existing township zone and within the identified Meringandan township extension area (Emerging Community Zone).

Strategy for this settlement

Natural environment

- Protect and enhance identified areas of vegetation that provide environmental and visual amenity values and contribute to the bushland character of Meringandan, especially through protection of areas that are currently in private ownership.
- Maintain and enhance the rural and vegetated character of prominent ridgelines and hills surrounding the settlement that contribute to the amenity of the town.
- Strengthen and enhance Meringandan Creek, including waterway health, its habitat value and riparian vegetation in recognition of its scenic amenity value and the contribution it makes to the character of Meringandan.
- Encourage private land owners to rehabilitate Meringandan Creek to improve the extent and quality of riparian vegetation and improve environmental and visual amenity values, in recognition of the contribution it makes to the character of Meringandan.

Built environment

- Support the development and consolidation of the existing Meringandan local centre, while retaining existing heritage character buildings that contribute to the character of the main street and settlement.
- Resist coalescence to maintain and enhance separation with Highfields and Meringandan West through land use planning to assist each community to retain its own identity as development pressures intensify in the future.
- Maintain the existing low-rise and fine grained scale of the town.
- Seek to enhance legibility and identity of the settlement through selective infilling with complementary buildings, while maintaining the setting and views out to the rural landscapes.
- Ensure new development and any redevelopment is sympathetic to the prevailing character of the surrounding area.

Streetscape character

- Seek opportunities to strengthen the arrival experiences into Meringandan, particularly from the east along Main Street, from the west along Goombungee-Meringandan Road and from the south along Meringandan-Shirley Road.
- Consider the introduction of street tree planting to assist in tying together the different parts of the settlement, in accordance with the *Street Tree Masterplan*.
- Identify key nodes within the settlement e.g. through artwork, rest stops or other interventions.

Tourism

- Improve awareness through signage and advertising of existing recreational opportunities at Cooby Dam, including the Lakeside Walk.
- Consider including Meringandan and Cooby Dam, including Cooby Dam Lookout on a new local tourist drive.

Scenic amenity

- Maintain and celebrate views to the surrounding farmland and prominent ridgelines and hills near Meringandan, particularly the Kingsthorpe, Gowrie and Goombungee Hills (LCA C4) and landscapes associated with the Great Dividing Range (LCA A1 and A5).





MERINGANDAN WEST

Meringandan West is a growing rural residential community located to the west of Meringandan Creek, in close proximity to emerging urban areas associated with Highfields and Meringandan. The setting of the town is defined by views to the surrounding rolling and elevated agricultural farmland and vegetated hills, including the Kingsthorpe, Gowrie and Goombungee Hills.

Location and boundaries

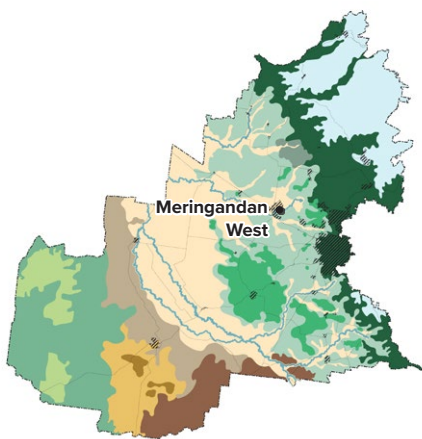
Meringandan West is a small town located on undulating and elevated land at the western extent of the Great Dividing Range very close to Meringandan and around 17km northwest of Toowoomba City centre and less than 500m from residential development associated with Meringandan. Meringandan West is accessed via a network of roads including the Goombungee Meringandan Road and Yalangur Lilyvale Road.

Landscape and visual setting

- Meringandan West is located in an elevated and undulating rural landscape that forms part of **LCT A: Elevated Ridges and Plateaus – LCA5: Toowoomba Settled Range** and also lies close to **LCA A1: Great Dividing Range (north)**.
- Meringandan West lies adjacent to **LCT C: Darling Downs Forested Peaks and Ridgelines – LCA C4: Kingsthorpe, Gowrie and Goombungee Hills** and **LCT B: Open Undulating Farmed Basaltic Uplands – LCA B3: Kingsthorpe, Pittsworth and Clifton**.

Key character attributes

- Meringandan West is a small town with a modern rural residential estate character located west of Highfields and the Great Dividing Range.
- The Meringandan West UCL has 2,283 people in 768 private dwellings with the wider Meringandan West SSC having a total population of 2,211 (ABS, 2016). However, it is noted that these figures include the southern part of the Meringandan town.
- Meringandan West is located north of the Yalangur Lilyvale Road and the Goombungee Meringandan Road, which also heads northwards bisecting the town. All parts of the town are relatively modern and the town appears almost as a rural satellite ‘suburb’ to nearby Highfields, which is located to the east.
- Parts of Meringandan West enjoy extensive views over the fields and hills of the Darling Downs.



Legend

- Urban Extent
- Landscape Character Type (LCT) boundary
- ++++ Railway (dismantled/abandoned)
- ==== Highways and Secondary Roads
- ==== Local Connector Roads
- ==== Local Roads
- ▲ Mountains
- ★ Hills

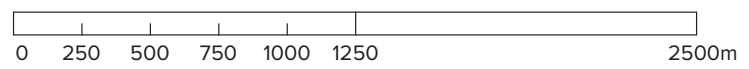
- Ridgelines
- Contours (10m)
- Waterways
- Reservoirs
- /// Greenfield Areas
- Town Centre
- Gateways*

- ★ Key features
- Parks and open space
- ↑↑↑ Extensive viewing opportunities*

*Legend item not to scale



Figure 23: Key landscape and urban character features of Meringandan West



Historical influences and typology

Key historic themes for Meringandan West are:

The early Darling Downs: exploring the land and establishing settlements

Meringandan West is a noticeably more recent phenomenon and its growth and development has not followed the classic norms of town inception.

While having some connections to the earlier settlement of Meringandan (see Meringandan description for details), Meringandan West is largely a recent development and represents the outer suburban expansion of existing settled areas.



Rosalie House and Cellar Door is a local attraction on the outskirts of Meringandan West



Views towards the surrounding rural landscape and elevated vegetated hills from Oakey-Meringandan Road



Meringandan West is largely a recent development

Urban character and built form assessment

Natural environment

- Geological features**
- Meringandan West is situated within a highly undulating rural landscape on the western side of the Great Dividing Range at elevations of up to around 550m AHD.
 - Most of the settlement is located on an underlying basaltic geology associated with the Main Range Volcanics (Tm), whereas the eastern (newer) part of the settlement is associated with the arenite-mudrock of the Marburg subgroup (Jbm).
 - Mount Muniganeen (614m HD) forms an important part of the setting of Meringandan West to the north of the settlement.

- Hydrological features**
- The town is associated with (unnamed) upper tributary valleys of Meringandan Creek. These drainage lines traverse the town and form the framework for open space across the settlement.
 - Meringandan Creek is part of the Cooby Creek catchment and joins Oakey Creek and the Condamine River, forming part of the Balonne-Condamine Catchment.

- Vegetation features & habitat values**
- Meringandan West is located on and is surrounded by farmland, much of which has been cleared of vegetation. However, remnant habitat areas remain around the town.
 - Remnant areas of vegetation considered MSES are located north of Sovereign Drive and include Queensland Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus teretecornis*) open woodland on alluvial plains (11.3.4) and White Box (*Eucalyptus albens*) and Narrow-leaved Ironbark (*E. crebra*) woodland on Cainozoic igneous rocks (RE 11.8.8).
 - Other areas of remnant habitat/MSES are located associated with the elevated hills south of Goombungee Meringandan Road and to the west of the settlement which comprise Mountain Coolibah (*Eucalyptus orgadophila*) open woodland on Cainozoic igneous rocks (RE 11.8.5).

Built environment

- Settlement & land use pattern**
- Meringandan West presents as a 'suburban' modern rural residential community.
 - The settlement is exclusively residential with no commercial centre.
 - While there is a small produce store and petrol station located at the south of the Goombungee Meringandan Road, Meringandan West lacks a distinct town centre.
 - Ongoing subdivision is occurring at the north-western parts of the settlement (Rosella affordable country living)

- Open Space & Recreation**
- Meringandan West has four key open space areas.
 - The key open space in the north of the area is Paramore Park located on Gardens Drive.
 - Valley View Park is located in the south of the settlement adjacent to the Goombungee Meringandan Road and enjoys pleasant views over the rural valley below.
 - Meringandan Bicentennial Park is centred around the drainage gully in the western part of the settlement between Neville Street and William Street. This includes many recreation facilities including play equipment, skate park, and basketball as well as facilities for informal picnicking.
 - Lilyvale West Meringandan Park is located adjacent to Yalangur-Lilyvale Road and includes an oval and range of facilities.

- Built form mass, scale and density**
- Meringandan West is a separate area west of Meringandan, which has developed recently as a satellite residential 'suburb' of the earlier settlement with no town centre buildings or services.
 - In terms of residential character, Meringandan West is typically dominated by modern residences built from the 2000s onwards, however a few early surviving farmhouses may be scattered amongst the subdivision layout.



Meringandan West is located in a highly undulating rural landscape



Meringandan West is surrounded by farmland, much of which has been cleared of vegetation



A 'suburban' modern rural residential area



Meringandan Bicentennial Park

Heritage elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In accordance with the categorisation adopted by Brannock & Associates (2010), Meringandan West is designated as rural 'village' and is considered 'high priority' (i.e. it has not been subject to previous heritage investigation and is experiencing development pressures). • There are no State or local heritage listed places in Meringandan West.
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Streetscape

Gateways and landmarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are three main entrances into the town and the gateways associated with these relate to views over the settlement and to the surrounding rolling fields beyond. • Arriving at Meringandan West from the east down Goombungee Meringandan Road, there is a pleasant approach with views to the edges of the town visible nestled into a wooded setting and south to the gentle wooded hill to the south. The actual transition is very low key. • A similar arrival is experienced travelling east along Yalungur Lilyvale Road. • The arrival driving south down Goombungee Meringandan Road is a simple rural to town transition enclosed by trees but with little to distinguish it. However, moving southwards more distant views open up to the landscape to the south.
Links and connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While physically well connected, the links between Meringandan and Meringandan West are not transparent and lead to a sense of disorientation in the landscape i.e. uncertainty as to which town one is in.
Façades, frontages and rhythm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the rural residential character of the landscape there are no cohesive streetscape façades in the settlement.
Street trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meringandan West lacks a formal landscape of street trees. However, significant native vegetation is located along creeks/drainage lines, largely Gum trees (<i>Eucalyptus</i> spp.) and in the relatively large gardens which provides a strong vegetated context to most of the settlement.
Pavements and parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no formal car parking areas. Pedestrian paving is restricted to parks and some of the newer subdivisions.
Furniture and art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no on street artworks or furniture elements in Meringandan West.



View of surrounding rural landscape and elevated peaks are very accessible



Meringandan West lacks a cohesive streetscape and entry



Rural dams are a common feature of the surrounding landscape



Scenic views out over the surrounding farmlands contribute to the setting of the town

Cultural heritage

- Urban/ character precincts
- There are no neighbourhood character precincts.
-
- Cultural associations
- Lilyvale Oval (now Lilyvale West Meringandan Park) was once used for an annual rodeo hosted by the P&C of Meringandan State School.
-

Scenic amenity

- Scenic lookouts & views
- There are no formal scenic lookouts in Meringandan West. However, many parts of the landscape provide scenic views out over the surrounding farmlands.
 - At some distance to the north of Meringandan West is Cooby Creek Dam (reservoir) with associated lookouts. This is one of the most significant regional destinations near Meringandan West and is also one of Toowoomba's water supply dams.
-
- View corridors
- Key views within the town are linear views down Goombungee-Meringandan Road, southerly views from the south of the town and views from within the open space areas over the rural landscape.
 - No tourist drives pass through Meringandan West.
-
- Landmarks
- The rural produce store is the only built landmark in Meringandan West.
 - Other local landmarks comprise the various wooded hills around the settlement, including transmission towers on the hill to the immediate south of the town.
-
- Perceptions
- Meringandan West is a growing modern rural residential satellite community which lacks a town centre set within and capitalising on stunning views out to the surrounding picturesque farmland.
-



Transmission towers on the hill south of the town



View towards Meringandan from the Meringandan Cemetery within Meringandan West



Emerging residential areas to the north of Highfields are evident from Meringandan West

Planning for the future

Sensitivities and forces for change

Key forces for change include:

- Identified as being within the Priority Living Area in *ShapingSEQ*
- Steady growth pressure, with growth to generally be accommodated in the existing township and rural residential zoned areas.

Strategy for this settlement

Natural environment

- Protect and enhance identified areas of vegetation that provide environmental and visual amenity values and contribute to the character of Meringandan West, especially through protection of areas that are currently in private ownership.
- Maintain and enhance the rural and vegetated character of prominent ridgelines and hills surrounding the settlement that contribute to the amenity of the town.
- Encourage private land owners to rehabilitate Meringandan Creek to improve the extent and quality of riparian vegetation and improve environmental and visual amenity values, in recognition of the contribution it makes to the character of Meringandan West.

Built environment

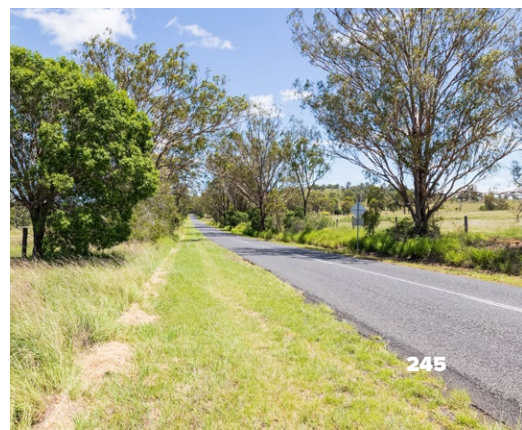
- Resist coalescence to maintain and enhance the sense of separation with Meringandan and Highfields through land use planning to assist each community to retain and reinforce its own identity as development pressures intensify in the future.
- Maintain the existing low-rise and fine grained scale of the town.
- Seek to enhance legibility and identity of the settlement through selective infilling with complementary buildings, while maintaining the setting and views out to the rural landscapes.
- Ensure new development and any redevelopment is sympathetic to the prevailing character of the surrounding area.
- Undertake heritage investigation to ensure everything of importance is identified to inform further development.

Streetscape character

- Seek opportunities to strengthen the arrival experiences into Meringandan West, particularly from the west along Yalangur-Lilyvale Road, from the east along Goombungee-Meringandan Road and from the north along Goombungee-Meringandan Road.
- Consider the introduction of street tree planting to assist in tying together the different parts of the settlement, in accordance with the *Street Tree Masterplan*.
- Identify key nodes within the settlement e.g. through artwork, rest stops or other interventions.

Scenic amenity

- Maintain and celebrate views to the surrounding farmland and prominent ridgelines and hills near Meringandan West, particularly the Kingsthorpe, Gowrie and Goombungee Hills (LCA C4) and landscapes associated with the Great Dividing Range (LCA A1 and A5).





WESTBROOK

Westbrook is a rapidly growing community on the outskirts of Toowoomba nestled to the west of the Mount Peel Bushland Park, with views to the Western Escarpment, surrounding rolling and elevated agricultural farmland and vegetated hills.

Location and boundaries

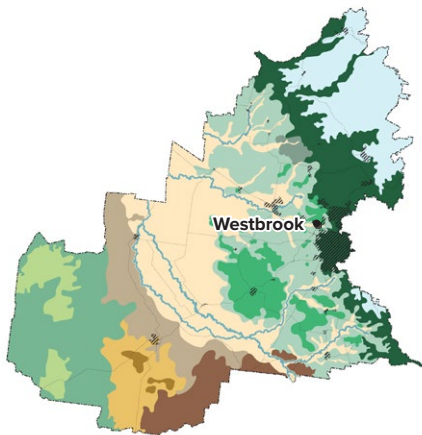
Westbrook is a significant and growing town. Westbrook is located less than 10km southwest of the centre of Toowoomba and is accessed primarily via Toowoomba-Athol Road and the Gore Highway (A39). Westbrook was one of the region's earliest sites of settlement but, due to the expansion of the city, the town appears in part as a satellite suburb of Toowoomba.

Landscape and visual setting

- The settlement is located on the slightly elevated and rising landscape of **LCT B: Open Undulating Farmed Basaltic Uplands – LCA B3: Kingsthorpe, Pittsworth and Westbrook**.
- The eastern part of the landscape setting of Westbrook includes the elevated landscapes of **LCT A: Elevated Ridges and Plateaus – LCA A5: Toowoomba Settled Range** associated with the western escarpment (particularly Mount Peel).
- The wider landscape around Westbrook includes **LCT C: Darling Downs Forested Peaks and Ridgelines – LCA C9: Sugarloaf** around 2.5km to the west, **LCA 10: Bunkers Hill** around 2.5 km to the southwest and **LCA C8: Wellcamp Hills** 5 km to the northwest.

Key character attributes

- Westbrook is a significant town. The Westbrook UCL (Urban Centres and Localities) is recorded as having a population of 3,448 people living in 1,118 private dwellings, with the wider Westbrook SSC (State suburb) having a population of 3,885 (ABS, 2016).
- The town is located to the immediate north of Toowoomba Athol Road (A139), which forms the southern boundary of the town and travels in a north-westerly direction towards Toowoomba. Other key roads include Ferguson Road, which forms a central spine running north-south through the settlement to connect to Toowoomba-Athol Road, and Main Street, which follows parallel to Toowoomba Athol Road (A139) and is the key commercial and retail centre of the town (including the few older buildings of the settlement).
- The settlement is bounded by a rectilinear grid of roads with Crocker Road to the west, Shoemith Road to the north, and Boundary Street (South) to the east.
- Mount Peel and associated hills, located to the east, provide an important backdrop in views from the surrounding landscape.
- The residential character is dominated by relatively modern estate development, particularly dating from around the 1990s and the early 2000s onwards, as well as very recent subdivisions.
- Collectively, the town characterises the rapid planned growth that has occurred in response to population pressure arising due to the ease of access and proximity of this area to Toowoomba, including future growth within Future Urban Areas to the north.



Legend

- Urban Extent
- Landscape Character Type (LCT) boundary
- ++++ Railway (dismantled/abandoned)
- ==== Highways and Secondary Roads
- ==== Local Connector Roads
- ==== Local Roads
- ==== Regional and Local Tourist Drives
- ▲ Mountains

- ▲ Hills
- Ridgelines
- Contours (10m)
- Waterways
- Reservoirs
- ▨ Greenfield and Future Urban Areas
- Town Centre
- ▨ State Heritage Listed Place

- Gateways*
- ★ Key features
- Parks and open space
- ★ Scenic lookouts
- ↗ Key views and directions*

*Legend item not to scale

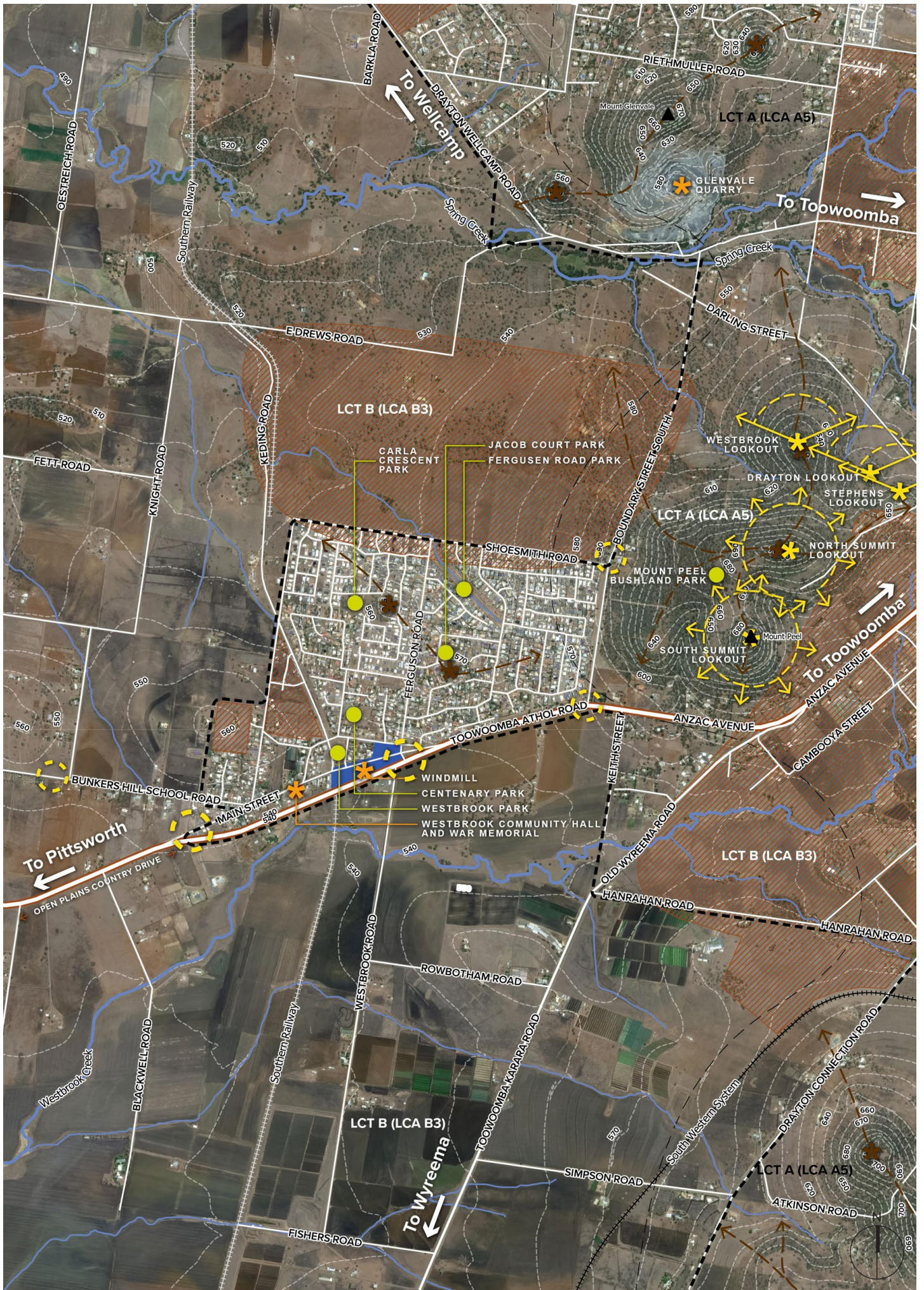
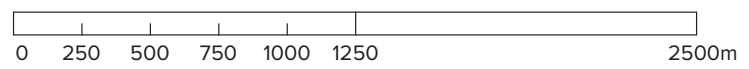


Figure 24: Key landscape and urban character features of Westbrook



Historical influences and typology

Key historic themes for Westbrook are:

The early Darling Downs: exploring the land and establishing settlements

The area known as Westbrook has its origins in the establishment of the Westbrook pastoral run, which was taken up by John 'Tinker' Campbell in 1841. By 1867, John Donald Mclean had taken ownership of the run and constructed Westbrook Homestead using locally quarried stone, replacing an existing building erected by Campbell. Beginning in the late 1870s, holdings that formed part of the Westbrook run underwent a progressive process of resumption and subdivision, leading to the establishment of smaller farms for closer settlement.

'Opening up' rural settlements: the advent of rail and establishing railway towns

Westbrook was formerly located on the branch rail line constructed from Gowrie Junction to Warwick in the late 1860s. By the late nineteenth century, following the construction of the railway, a small settlement developed near a rail siding constructed for the Westbrook pastoral station, taking its namesake from the pastoral run it serviced.

Establishing a regional centre: Toowoomba

The growth and development of Westbrook has not followed the classic norms of town settlement. Once a small rural town and one of Toowoomba's earliest sites of settlement, Westbrook is now an outlying suburb of Toowoomba, having been overtaken by the progressive growth of the city and the increased need for residential land.

Living off the land: developing primary and secondary industries

During the early years of the Westbrook pastoral run, the primary industry of the Westbrook area was the production of wool; however, following the establishment of a settlement at Westbrook Siding and the resumption of parts of the run for agricultural use, the population of the area grew rapidly. The area, which had been previously a primary producer of wool, diversified into other, newly thriving farming industries such as the cultivation of wheat, corn, and hay, as well as dairying, orchards and olive trees. By the 1920s, wheat had become the primary crop, with State experimental farms being established near at Westbrook. However, in subsequent decades, the farming industry subsided leading to the decline in the settlement's population.

Country living: establishing institutions and shaping community life

In the early nineteenth century, Westbrook was supported by two local primary schools, Bunkers Hill State School (est. 1899) and Westbrook Crossing State School (est. 1910 – closed 1969). A reformatory school for boys (later a farm home for boys) also operated at Westbrook (see Cultural Associations, below).



View towards Westbrook Homestead, water tower and windmill from the Gore Highway (A39)



Westbrook Homestead ca. 1877
Image: State Library of Queensland



Westbrook Homestead ca. 1877
Image: State Library of Queensland



Westbrook has a strong connection the surrounding hills and rural landscape



Rural properties adjacent to the western edge of Westbrook

Urban character and built form assessment

Natural environment

Geological features

- Westbrook is situated on sloping and gently undulating land that rises from around 540m AHD in the southwest and west of the settlement up to around 590m AHD in the east, close to Mount Peel Bushland Park. The settlement undulates around two low hills which rise up to 570m AHD near Carla Crescent and Jacob Court.
- Westbrook is located on the basaltic rock of the Main Range Volcanics (Tm).
- The wider setting of the town is created by the rolling rural landscape and an undulating backdrop of hills, including those associated with the Western Escarpment. Of particular significance is Mount Peel (711 m AHD) and the surrounding vegetated landscapes contained within Mount Peel Bushland Park that defines the eastern edge of Westbrook and forms a green backdrop to views from the west. A gentle spur of land extends westwards, which culminates in the distinctive peak of the Sugarloaf (600 m AHD). Further afield lie the landmark peaks of Bunkers Hill (633m AHD), the Wellcamp Hills, and elevated landscapes associated with the Great Dividing Range (LCA A5).

Hydrological features

- Westbrook is located north of Westbrook Creek, a tributary of Oakey Creek which is, in turn, a major tributary of the Condamine River. Westbrook Creek lies south of the Gore Highway (A39)/Toowoomba Athol Road (A139) and is not a feature of settlement. Westbrook does not have any notable hydrological features. The main features falling within the settled land are shallow drainage lines associated with the upper tributaries of Spring Creek, a tributary of Westbrook Creek which form part of the open space network between Tennyson Court and Bellclaire Drive.

Vegetation features & habitat values

- The land around Westbrook has been extensively cleared for agriculture.
- The main area of environmental significance close to Westbrook is the Mount Peel Bushland Park, to the immediate east of the settlement. This includes important MSES vegetation and habitat areas. Remnant vegetation includes communities of RE 11.8.8 comprising White Box (*Eucalyptus albens*) and Narrow-leaved ironbark (*E. crebra*) woodland on Cainozoic igneous rocks.
- Another significant area of RE 11.8.8 and 11.8.5 Mountain Coolibah (*E. orgadophila*) open woodland on Cainozoic igneous rocks is located north of the drainage line to the north of Shoemsmith Road around Drews Road.
- No habitat identified as MSES and no areas of remnant habitat are located in the town.
- Within Westbrook some areas of native trees have been retained on the 'hilltops' and vegetation (both exotic and native) is also located within parks, streetscapes and private gardens – including street trees.
- Planting within more recent developments comprises smaller-growing species and is currently immature.



Mount Peel and the surrounding vegetated landscapes contribute to the setting of Westbrook



Westbrook Creek near Westbrook Homestead, to the west of the town



Boundary Street South trail head and parking area for Mount Peel Bushland Park



View across the rural landscape from Shoemsmith Road towards Glenvale and remnant vegetation associated with RE 11.5.5 and 11..8.8



Native vegetation within Jacob Court Park and Carla Crescent Part provides visual relief within the settlement

Built environment

Settlement & land use pattern

- The presence of acreage properties along the Toowoomba-Athol Road (A139) on the approach to Westbrook decreases the sense of separation from the City and gives the impression that Westbrook is a satellite suburb of Toowoomba.
 - Despite this, the compact and relatively dense form of the settlement and the visual and physical separation from the western edge of Toowoomba created by the landform of the Mount Peel Bushland Park gives Westbrook a distinct identity.
 - Westbrook has a relatively large population (i.e. comparable to Millmerran) as a result of a recent residential development within easy commuting distance to Toowoomba.
 - The main commercial area of Westbrook comprises a range of relatively modern buildings: a service station/fast food restaurant, a small parade of shops, the Westbrook Tavern, and Westbrook Central (with services including a bakery, hairdressers and small supermarket). The extent of this commercial area is concentrated, marked at the east by the intersection of Ferguson Road and the Toowoomba-Athol Road, and at the west by the intersection of Main Street with Progress Avenue. It is noted therefore that Westbrook does not have a strong 'town' character due to its rather homogeneous building typology, and the concentration of the existing commercial buildings on Toowoomba-Athol Road along the southern edge of the town (rather than in a town centre).
 - The Westbrook Community Hall is located on Main Street but is not considered to be in the heart of the settlement. Bunkers Hill State School is located some 3km to the west of Westbrook and is divorced from the settlement.
 - Due to its proximity to Toowoomba, Westbrook has become a prime location for development. Westbrook appears to have developed from the south (Toowoomba-Athol Road) and west (in the vicinity of the old railway line) to the north in a series of coordinated master-planned estate releases. Additional imminent expansion of the town for future housing is evidenced by subdivision signage on rural land, e.g. the 'Fernleigh' estate to the north.
-



View from Toowoomba-Athol Road looking in the direction of Westbrook



Looking towards the key gateway to Westbrook at the intersection of Toowoomba-Athol Road and Ferguson Road



Westbrook Central situated on Main Street



Commercial shops on the northern side of Main Street, with views to Mount Peel in the background



7-Eleven and McDonald's at the service centre on Main Street near the key town gateway

Open Space & Recreation

- Westbrook has several open spaces spatially related to the commercial centre, elevated locations of the town and drainage lines.
- Westbrook Park, located on Progress Avenue is located in the heart of the settlement and includes a playground, shelter and skate facilities set amongst mature eucalyptus trees.
- Centenary Park on Barwick Street, also close to the town centre, includes play facilities, playing fields and tennis courts.
- The Ferguson Road Park comprises an informal open space located around the drainage line associated with Spring Creek. This is a linear parkland that includes a dog off leash area and walking paths.
- Informal open space/kick-about areas are also associated with the elevated 'hills' within the settlement on Carla Crescent and Jacob Court. These are characterised by informal grassy spaces with mature remnant eucalyptus trees that provide shade and provide visual relief, creating an important verdant backdrop to parts of the settlement.
- Mount Peel Bushland Park to the immediate east of Westbrook provides a variety of more active recreation trails (walking, horse riding and mountain bike) and attractive scenic lookouts, set within a pleasant mature bushland setting.



Westbrook Park is situated in close proximity to the town centre

Built form mass, scale and density

- The residential character of Westbrook is dominated by relatively modern estate development, particularly dating from around the 1990s and the early 2000s onwards, as well as very recent subdivisions. The housing stock is relatively homogeneous comprising contemporary low-set brick housing set along long streets (and adjoining cul-de-sacs) with regular setbacks. Some replica, traditional style buildings with character elements are found on large blocks surrounding the town, but these are relatively recent builds and do not contribute to the cultural heritage significance of the area.
- The majority of Westbrook's older housing stock is located primarily on Main Street and in close proximity to the Gore Highway (A39). Surviving traditional timber houses are rare and any surviving would make an important contribution to the traditional character and significance of the area.



Playground and amenities in Centenary Park



Character home situated on Main Street in the older part of Westbrook opposite the Westbrook Hall



Ferguson Road Park and dog off-leash area



View along Ferguson Road towards local hill associated with Carla Crescent Park showing typical housing character



Walking trails within the nearby Mount Peel Bushland Park

Heritage elements

- In accordance with the categorisation adopted by Brannock & Associates (2010), Westbrook is designated as rural 'settlement' and is considered of 'low priority' (i.e. it has been subject to previous heritage investigation). However, as Westbrook is currently experiencing development pressures, it may be prudent to consider Westbrook as a rural settlement of 'high priority'.
- Key listed heritage buildings listed on the Queensland Heritage Register are:
 - Westbrook Homestead (257 FGG Couper Road) (600636)
 - Westbrook War Memorial (114 Main Street) (600637)
- Key heritage places listed in the Toowoomba Regional Planning Scheme 2012 comprise:
 - Westbrook Hall and War Memorial – 114 Main Street (2/WEST/0174)
 - Westbrook Homestead Cemetery – 0 FGG Couper Road (2/WES/0172)
 - Westbrook Homestead – 57 FGG Coupers Road (2/WES/0173)
- As noted above, Westbrook has an indistinct 'town centre' and lacks a cohesive core of heritage character places. However, there are some notable exceptions:
 - The Westbrook Public Hall, located at 114 Main Street, is important as the only significant public building in the settlement. Since its establishment in 1974, the hall has played an important role (for nearly 50 years) in the social history and cultural life of this rural settlement.
 - The Westbrook War Memorial (QHR 600637), located adjacent to the Westbrook Public Hall, was unveiled in 1922. It bears the names of the 10 local men who died during World War I on the front face and the names of 37 local men who served on the side faces. The memorial has a strong association with the Westbrook community as evidence of the impact of war on rural communities and as a means of commemorating a major historic event, and also with the Toowoomba masonry firm, Bruce Brothers, as a fine example of their work.
- The Westbrook Homestead (QHR 600636) is identified as a place of State heritage significance and was built in 1867 by John Donald McLean using locally quarried stone. It illustrates the pattern of early European exploration and settlement of Queensland where the development of pastoral properties preceded agriculture and the establishment of towns. It is worth noting that the homestead is located some distance away from Westbrook (i.e. over 7 km away to the west on FGG Couper Road). As a result, it is less likely to be impacted upon by encroaching residential development in Westbrook itself.
- Although located around 3km west of the town, Bunkers Hill State School (est. 1889) is also significant as a surviving component of the early development of Westbrook. Although the school campus today contains more contemporary buildings and additions, given its long history providing educational services to this community (over a century), the school reflects the important role of the establishment of schools in the development of small rural communities such as Westbrook.
- Centenary Park and Westbrook Park provide public recreational facilities and open spaces that are spatially related to the main commercial area of Westbrook, but do not contain any heritage character elements.
- The Southern Railway that once passed through Westbrook has been dismantled and the Westbrook railway station is no longer extant; however, evidence of the railway exists in the wider landscape around Westbrook, as evidenced to the north of the town in the form of raised embankments and derelict timber bridge abutments (where the rail once passed over the upper tributaries of Spring Creek).



Westbrook War Memorial on Main Street adjacent to the Westbrook Public Hall, a State and local heritage listed place



Bunkers Hill State School situated to the west of the settlement



Westbrook Homestead Cemetery, a local heritage listed place



View towards Westbrook Homestead, a State and local heritage listed place

Streetscape

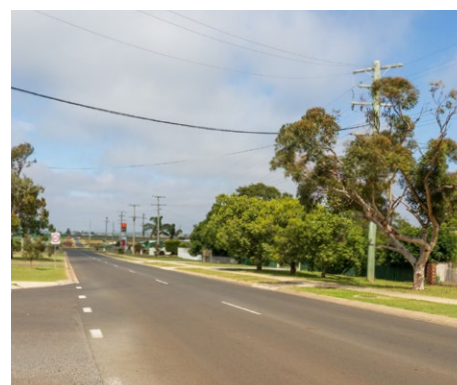
Gateways and landmarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None of the gateways into Westbrook are particularly striking, and most represent simple and relatively abrupt transitions from rural to town landscape. • The key gateway to the town is from Toowoomba-Athol Road (A139) onto Ferguson Street, which is mainly characterised by the service station and associated signage and presence of a formal row of immature <i>Brachychiton</i> (<i>Brachychiton rupestris</i>) trees to the north of the Toowoomba-Athol Road (A139). • The formal and neat fenced fields and formal hedges/street trees that are associated with the stud farms (Highgrove and Balmoral) to the west of the town create a distinct entrance from the west along Bunkers Hill School Road and the Toowoomba-Athol Road (A139). • The main local natural landmark is Mount Peel and associated hills, located to the east of the town which provides an important backdrop to the town in views from the surrounding landscape. • There are also several local points of interest worth noting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The 'Westbrook Junction' windmill sign, which serves as a local landmark in views to the settlement. Although in a state of disrepair, this sign is visible when travelling along the Toowoomba-Athol Road (A139) and signifies the presence of the town. - A highly decorative residence located on the eastern corner of Gore Highway (A39) and Boundary Street – this house is of traditional Queensland character and has been modified with eclectic, Moroccan style embellishments.
Links and connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Westbrook is very logical and easy to navigate due to the framework of roads in a grid and the sense of orientation provided by Mount Peel.
Façades, frontages and rhythm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Westbrook has a typical low rise streetscape character with regular setbacks and similar housing styles but lacks a distinctive streetscape character that makes it identifiable as 'Westbrook'. This is due to the indistinct 'town centre' and lack of a core of heritage (or other) cohesive buildings/places.
Street trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing trees retained in parks and verges and within older private lots make a significant contribution to the streetscape of Westbrook and tend to be mixed native trees such various Gum trees (<i>Eucalyptus spp.</i>). • A row of <i>Brachychiton</i> (<i>Brachychiton rupestris</i>) trees has been established along the northern side of the Gore Highway (A39) on the approach to the town, which will mature to enhance the entrance to the town in future years. • Elsewhere the town has a framework of street trees, although many are immature due to the age of the settlement. • The newer parts of town have been recently planted and immature street tree planting appears to be typically confined to small temperate street trees (such as <i>Pyrus</i> and <i>Prunus spp.</i>) and most are relatively small growing species due to the small lot sizes.
Pavements and parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are significant parking areas that service the commercial, community and retail buildings on Main Street including Westbrook Central, the Westbrook Tavern and the Westbrook Community Hall. • Paving in the centre and along main streets such as Ferguson Road and Shoemith Road comprises concrete pedestrian paths. Outside of the centre and main thoroughfares, grassy verges without footpaths are present. • Almost all houses have garages, so there is limited on-street parking.
Furniture and art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Westbrook has few artwork or sculptural features. • The Westbrook Junction windmill is visible from the Gore Highway (A39) and acts as a landmark to the town. • The Westbrook War Memorial, located adjacent to the community hall, was built at some stage prior to 1922. The memorial was designed by Bruce Brothers of Toowoomba and erected by the town's residents to commemorate those who served and fell during World War I.



Looking towards the key gateway to Westbrook at the intersection of Toowoomba-Athol Road and Ferguson Road



Westbrook Junction windmill is a key landmark and highly evident when viewed from Toowoomba-Athol Road (A139)



Trees within verges and private lots contribute to the character of older parts of Westbrook



Some of the newer parts of Westbrook have limited and/or immature street tree planting

Cultural heritage

Urban/
character
precincts

- As it is predominantly a new subdivision, Westbrook has no defined neighbourhood character precincts.

Cultural
associations

- Westbrook formerly had a notorious youth detention facility, established in 1900 and originally known as the Westbrook Reformatory School for Boys. It was later the Westbrook Farm Home for Boys (1919-1966), the Westbrook Training Centre (1966-1987), the Westbrook Youth Centre (1987-1994), and finally the Darling Downs Correctional Centre (1994-2012). The facility is located some 3 km south-west of the Westbrook and was among the institutions investigated as part of the 1998 Commission of Inquiry into Abuse of Children in Queensland Institutions. Since 2014, it has been split into parcels of land for sale for development and is now owned by the Pure Land Learning College Association who have plans to redevelopment the site as a Buddhist education facility.



Formal and neat fenced fields and plantings that are associated with the stud farms (to the west of the town)



The western part of Westbrook retains some agricultural fields within the urban extent



View north along the western boundary of Westbrook on Crocker Road showing new development to the east and rural properties to the west



Former church situated on Toowoomba-Athol Road on the outskirts of Westbrook has been converted to a residential dwelling



The former Westbrook Reformatory School for Boys that opened on 5 May 1900 is now owned by the Pure Land Learning College Association



The former Westbrook Reformatory School for Boys, Westbrook Youth Centre and Darling Downs Correctional Centre

Scenic amenity

- Scenic lookouts & views
- There are no formal scenic lookouts in Westbrook.
 - The informal parks located on the hills within the settlement do provide views across the town and the surrounding rural landscape.
 - Panoramic views across the town are also possible from a number of elevated locations on streets around the town, particularly from Boundary Road South near the western edge of Mount Peel Bushland Park.
 - Mount Peel Bushland Park has a number of walking tracks and scenic lookouts, some of which provide elevated views across Westbrook, including South Summit Lookout and North Summit Lookout. Views from Westbrook Lookout towards the settlement are limited due to the presence of vegetation.
 - As the other elevated hills around the settlement (such as Bunker Hill and the Sugarloaf) are in private ownership, these do not provide publicly-accessible views to the town.



View towards Westbrook from South Summit Lookout within Mount Peel Bushland Park

- View corridors
- The *Open Plains Country Drive* passes south of the town along the Toowoomba-Athol Road to the south of Westbrook and includes a diversion along Main Street.
 - Westbrook is also located on a promoted motorcycle route.
 - From within town, views out to the surrounding farmland and hills are possible with the views to Mount Peel, Mount Glenvale, Bunker Hill and the Sugarloaf being of particular note, as described previously. In particular, Mount Peel and vegetated landscapes associated with the western escarpment provide an important backdrop to views from the west along the Toowoomba-Athol Road, Main Street and Shoemsmith Road.



Views towards The Sugarloaf (600m AHD) from Westbrook contribute to the amenity of the town

- Landmarks
- The Westbrook Junction windmill sign acts as a local landmark in views to the settlement, passing along the Gore Highway (A39).
 - Views of distant hills lying outside of the settlement are important to the sense of place including Bunkers Hill, Mount Peel, Mount Glenvale, the Sugarloaf and parts of the Great Dividing Range.
 - The Glenvale quarry is a landmark, visible in views from parts of town, that somewhat detracts from the scenic quality of the town setting (for example looking north along parts of Ferguson Street).
 - A highly local landmark is the highly decorative residence located on the eastern corner of Gore Highway (A39) and Boundary Street– this is a notable point of interest on Toowoomba-Athol Road and illustrates how relatively small details like ornate fencing and fretwork can contribute significantly to the memorability of a place.



Views towards Bunkers Hill (633m AHD) from Westbrook contribute to the amenity of the town

- Perceptions
- Westbrook is a town that has become a satellite suburb of Toowoomba that is characterised by modern and well-maintained contemporary housing subdivisions and, due to population pressure, will continue to expand into the surrounding landscape. It would benefit from the introduction of new elements, for example in the town centre and/or in new developments, that would give it a stronger sense of identity and distinguish it from other parts of Toowoomba.



Views towards the rural land to the north of the town, the western escarpment and Mount Glenvale (694m AHD) with Gowrie Mountain (676m AHD), Mount Kingsthorpe and Mount Storey (688m AHD) evident in the distance



Elevated views across the settlement from Boundary Road South near Mount Peel Bushland Park

Planning for the future

Sensitivities and forces for change

Key forces for change include:

- Pressure for increased subdivision to accommodate Toowoomba's growing population along the fringe of Westbrook – with plans for the expansion of Westbrook to the north of the existing residential areas into the rural zone (identified in *ShapingSEQ* as falling within the urban footprint) and the provision of a new commercial centre in the expansion area. This expansion area features smaller parcels, which may change the character of Westbrook.
- Identified as being within the Priority Living Area in *ShapingSEQ* and Westbrook/Drayton is identified in *ShapingSEQ* as a planned expansion area.
- Steady growth pressure, with growth to be generally focused in existing planned areas.
- Proximity of Westbrook to Wellcamp Airport provides opportunities for employment growth and expansion pressure.
- The potential development of a rail trail between Westbrook and Wyreema which would unlock new and revitalised tourism opportunities.

Strategy for this settlement

Natural environment

- Maintain and enhance the rural and vegetated character of prominent ridgelines and hills surrounding the settlement that contribute to the amenity of the town.
- Determine the ultimate form of the settlement including with respect to local landform and hydrology and maintain this to protect features of interest, such as drainage lines and waterbodies associated with Spring Creek and avoid sprawl into the surrounding farmland.
- In particular consider the relationship between the edges of the town and intervisibility with the surrounding landscape, including visual buffering of hard edges through street tree planting.

Built environment

- Maintain the existing low-rise and fine grained scale of the town and ensure new development is sympathetic to the prevailing character of the surrounding area
- Seek to enhance the town centre to create a more distinct identity for the settlement and encourage a vibrant streetscape.
- Consider opportunities to create a community-focussed public space within the town centre.

Streetscape character

- Explore further opportunities to strengthen the arrival experience into the town, particularly arrival into the 'town centre' from the Gore Highway (A39).
- Create a framework of street trees within the town in accordance with the Toowoomba *Street Tree Masterplan*; particularly ensure that new subdivisions facilitate planting of large street trees at least at key nodes. Include native trees and temperate species as appropriate, in accordance with the *Street Tree Masterplan*.
- Additional tree planting within the parks and open spaces would also provide valued shade and enhance the character of the adjoining streetscapes.
- Consider artwork opportunities, as a means to bolster the streetscape appeal and memorability of Westbrook.

Cultural heritage

- Seek opportunities for enhancement of the landscape setting of Westbrook Community Hall and war memorial as a focus for the town.

Tourism

- Investigate opportunities to support the proposed rail trail between Westbrook and Wyreema, including through the provision of services to support users or through the provision of additional local cycle routes.

Scenic amenity

- Maintain and celebrate views to the surrounding farmland and prominent ridgelines and hills near Westbrook, in particular towards Sugarloaf (LCA C9), Bunkers Hill (LCA C10), Wellcamp Hills (LCA C8) and landscapes associated with the Great Dividing Range (LCA A5 and A6), particularly Mount Peel.
- Over the longer term, ensure appropriate rehabilitation of the Glenvale Quarry that is a backdrop to views from some parts of the town.



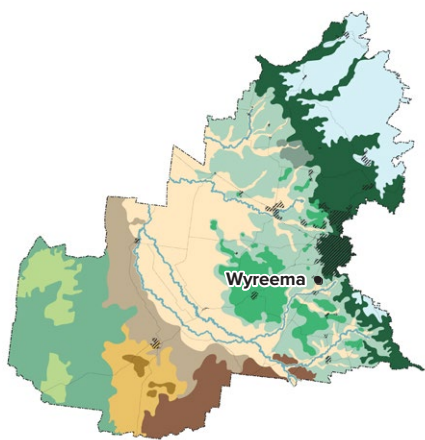


WYREEMA

Wyreema is a growing rural town, located on the South Western railway on a gentle rise within the open and undulating basaltic uplands, with views to the surrounding rolling agricultural farmland, vegetated hills and landscapes associated with the Great Dividing Range.

Location and boundaries

Wyreema is a significant town located around 14km southwest of the Toowoomba City centre and is accessed primarily via the Toowoomba-Karara Road.



Landscape and visual setting

- Wyreema is located in a semi-rural setting but close to Westbrook on the urban edge of Toowoomba.
- The settlement is located on the slightly elevated landscape of **LCT B: Open Undulating Farmed Basaltic Uplands – LCA B3: Kingsthorpe, Pittsworth and Wyreema.**
- Land to the south of the settlement is associated with the valley of **LCT G Alluvial Floodplain and Valley Floor Cropland – G1 (b): Condamine River**, which is centred on **LCT F: Alluvial Floodplain Riparian Corridor – LCA F2: Hodgson Creek.** The settlement of Cambooya is located on the other side of the Hodgson Creek valley from Wyreema.
- The wider landscape setting of Wyreema includes the elevated landscapes of **LCT A: Elevated Ridges and Plateaus – LCA A5: Toowoomba Settled Range** to the east as well as **LCT C: Darling Downs Forested Peaks and Ridgelines – LCA C10: Bunkers Hill** to the north, **LCA C15: Greenmount Hills (north) to the south** and **LCA C14: Pittsworth Hills** to the west.

Key character attributes

- Wyreema a significant town. The Wyreema UCL (Urban Centres and Localities) is recorded as having a population of 1,413 people living in 489 private dwellings, with the wider Wyreema SSC having a population of 1,834 (ABS, 2016).
- The town is located at the juncture of a number of roads and the old railway line, which passes in a north-south direction through the town. The Toowoomba-Karara Road (SR48) connects the town to Toowoomba in the north and continues south to Cambooya on the eastern side of the railway. A local road, the Wyreema – Cambooya Road, is located on the western side of the railway. These roads both connect to Umbiram Road to the west and Newman Road to the east, which has connections to the New England Highway (A3) around 5km to the east.
- Wyreema’s character relates to the somewhat eclectic mixture of older parts of the town with modern estate development, including recent subdivisions, which collectively signify the changing fortunes and pressure on the town in response to changes in the rural and settlement pressure due to its relatively close proximity to Toowoomba.

Legend

- Urban Extent
- Landscape Character Type (LCT) boundary
- +++++ Railway (operational)
- ==== Highways and Secondary Roads
- ==== Local Connector Roads
- ==== Local Roads
- ▲ Mountains

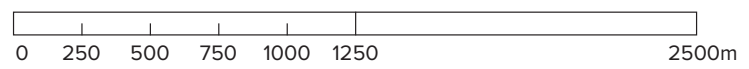
- ✳ Hills
- Ridgelines
- Contours (10m)
- Waterways
- Reservoirs
- ▨ Greenfield Areas
- Town Centre

- ⦿ Gateways*
- ✳ Key features
- Parks and open space
- ⦿ Extensive viewing opportunities*

*Legend item not to scale



Figure 25: Key landscape and urban character features of Wyreema



Historical influences and typology

Key historic themes for Wyreema are:

'Opening up' rural settlements: the advent of rail and establishing railway towns

The village of Wyreema was originally known as 'Beauraraba Junction', named after the point at which the Pittsworth rail line intersects the main southern line. Wyreema is located on the southern railway line, which was constructed from Toowoomba (from Gowrie Junction) to Warwick in the late 1860s. The site of the town was originally part of the Eton Vale pastoral station. A town site was surveyed in 1868 in association with the construction of the railway line. Once the line opened a small town, developed around it. A station, goods shed, and goods yards were constructed. Town allotments were sold in the 1870s and a small settlement emerged here. In 1892 the name of the town was changed to Wyreema. In 1914 the railway line and station were relocated some distance to the east with the construction of the Drayton deviation line. In 1915 a direct railway line to Toowoomba was constructed, Wyreema became the site of a four-way junction in the rail line. This new line greatly promoted the development of Wyreema.

Living off the land: developing primary and secondary industries

Following the construction of the rail line through Wyreema, rapid development of the settlement began. First, a dairy factory, stores and other facilities were established. A milk condensary was opened in the early twentieth century and During World War I cheese manufacturing also expanded in Queensland, prompting the co-operative to establish or acquire cheese factories at Wyreema (amongst other places) over the late 1910s and into the 1920s.

Country Living: establishing institutions and shaping community life

By the 1920s, Wyreema has a hotel, a state school, three stores, a public hall, and an Anglican and Catholic church. However, by the late twentieth century, the factories in the area had all been abandoned or closed. By the early 1960s following the destruction of the hotel by fire in 1959 and the closure of the rail line to Gowrie Junction the town began to decline. A second stage of urban residential development occurred during 1970s-1990s to the east of the small town across the rail line and south of Newman Road. In recent years, Wyreema has experienced another new period of growth with a residential subdivision constructed in the past 10 years and ongoing development today, probably a reflection of land prices in close proximity for the commute to Toowoomba and the University.



Wyreema State School, opened in 1895



New residential developments have emerged in Wyreema in the last 10 years



Rural landscapes surround the town



Entrance to the town along Toowoomba-Karara Road (SR48)



Land for sale

Urban character and built form assessment

Natural environment

- Geological features**
- Wyreema is situated on sloping and gently undulating land that extends from around 520m AHD in the south of the settlement up to up to around 550m AHD in the north.
 - Wyreema is located on basaltic rock of the Main Range Volcanics (Tm). South of the town are areas associated with fertile Quaternary alluvial deposits (Qa-QLD) in the creek valley.
 - The wider setting of the town is created by the undulating backdrop of hills. A particularly significant landmark peak is Bunkers Hill (633m AHD) in LCA C10, 4km to the northwest. Other notable features include the Great Dividing Range to the east including Mount Rascal (733m AHD) and Mount Shepperd (699m AHD) in LCA A5. To the west lie the Pittsworth Hills (LCA C14) and around 12km to the south are the Greenmount Hills (LCA C15 and C16).

- Hydrological features**
- Wyreema does not have any notable hydrological features within the settlement. The main hydrological features are drainage lines associated with Oaky Creek, a tributary of Hodgson Creek on the southern side of the town. Hodgson Creeks is a major tributary of the Condamine River. Westbrook Creek is located south of Bunker Hill some distance to the north of the settlement.

- Vegetation features & habitat values**
- The land around Wyreema has been extensively cleared for agriculture. Consequently, no habitat identified as MSES and no areas of remnant habitat are located in or immediately around the town.
 - Within Wyreema there are some areas of native and planted flora. This vegetation comprises trees (both exotic and native) located within parks and private gardens.

Built environment

- Settlement & land use pattern**
- Wyreema is surrounded by agricultural land, creating a distinct separation from the outskirts of Toowoomba.
 - While Wyreema has a relatively large population (i.e., comparable to Clifton and Millmerran or even smaller towns such as Nobby), it does not read as a 'town' due to its lack of commercial and community service buildings and physical form and layout. Its population is a result of a recent residential development located in easy commuting distance to Toowoomba.
 - The extent of Wyreema's main thoroughfare is marked at the east by the intersection of Umbiram road and Balfour Street, and at the west by the intersection of Umbiram Road and Margetts Street and comprises commercial and recreational facilities. The commercial heart of the settlement currently comprises only the small Wyreema Store which is located where the Umbiram Road bridge crosses the railway. Another local centre is focussed on Wyreema State School.
 - The town comprises four main residential sectors created by the intersection of Umbiram Road, Toowoomba Karara Toad, Newman Road and the old railway line.
 - The original and historical residential area of Wyreema is located on the western side of the railway and has a rural town feel.
 - The sector on the eastern side of the railway, south of Newman Road comprises conventional residential dwellings from 1970s-1990s.
 - To east of Toowoomba-Karara Road (SR48) and north of Newman Road, is a modern and contemporary residential area. A similar modern estate is currently under development between Toowoomba-Karara Road (SR48) and the railway. Both of these areas have a suburban residential aesthetic.



View across the gently rolling countryside



Agricultural production in Wyreema



Wyreema Store on Umbiram Road



Contemporary suburban residential development in Wyreema

-
- Open Space & Recreation
- Wyreema has several open spaces.
 - Obst Park is situated in the centre of town on the main thoroughfare of Umbiram Road in a prominent location. It includes formal facilities including a cricket oval, tennis courts and skate park. The park plays an important role in the cultural and social life of the town, particularly given the lack of a distinct town centre, and was established early in the twentieth century.
 - Wyreema Park located on High Street includes a playground, picnic facilities and numerous walking tracks.
 - Stratford Park on Stratford Drive and Barton Park on McDougall Court include informal sports facilities and recreation spaces.
 - Mia Street Park is currently under development.
 - It is understood that cyclists, motorcycle clubs and horse riding clubs undertake trail rides through the landscape in the vicinity of Wyreema, particularly along Umbiram Road.
-



Skate park in Obst Park on Umbiram Road

- Built form mass, scale and density
- In terms of residential character, Wyreema's housing stock is distinctively divided into the three areas of expansion. The historical area, west of rail line contains traditional timber character residences, some dating to c1900 which make an important contribution, identifying the original town area. The modest, conventional single storey, brick and steel/ tile roof dwellings to the east. To the north the contemporary urban subdivision features larger homes in brick or rendered masonry and little mature vegetation and subdivided land that will be developed imminently. These more modern areas have a 'ubiquitous' character that could be anywhere in Queensland.
-



Traditional timber character residences west of rail line

- Heritage elements
- In accordance with the categorisation adopted by Brannock & Associates (2010), Wyreema is designated as a rural 'village' and is considered of 'high priority' (i.e. it has not been subject to previous heritage investigation and is experiencing development pressures).
 - There are no State heritage listed places in Wyreema.
 - Key heritage places listed in the Toowoomba Regional Planning Scheme 2012 include:
 - 14-16 Umbiram Road (2/WYR/0175)
 - The Wyreema Public Hall, located at the intersection of Umbiram Road and Margetts Street, occupies a prominent position that makes a strong contribution to the built form and character of Wyreema. Since its establishment in 1911, the hall has played an important role in the social history and cultural life of this rural town.
 - Wyreema State School (est. 1895) is significant as a surviving component of the early development of Wyreema. Although the school campus today contains more contemporary buildings and additions, given its long history providing educational services to this small community (over a century), the school makes an important contribution to the character of the place and reflects the important role of the establishment of schools in the development of rural communities.
 - The Wyreema general store occupies a prominent position in the centre of the town's main thoroughfare, on the junction of Umbiram Road and Fisher Road to the west of the rail line. The store makes a strong contribution to the built form and character of the historical area of Wyreema. General stores were a vitally important part of rural life in Australian in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and in small places like Wyreema, these stores were frequently one of the first retail businesses established.
 - The majority of the Wyreema rail line station is no longer extant however, a brick siding and substantial tree survive and mark the location of the former station. The siding and tree are important surviving elements and attest the establishment and development of Wyreema as a result of the railway.
 - The Former factory in Wyreema survives as 'ruins' outside the town, originally built by the Darling Downs Co-operative Dairy Company, the remnants of the factory demonstrate the importance of dairying to the town's economy.
-



Wyreema Public Hall, on the intersection of Umbiram Road and Margetts Street



Wyreema State School

Streetscape

- Gateways & landmarks**
- None of the gateways into Wyreema are very striking and most represent simple transitions from a rural to town landscape. For example, the gateway from Toowoomba-Karara Road (SR48) to the north is currently marked by the presence of the new urban edge associated with contemporary estates. Similarly, from the east, along Newman Road the entry is marked by a roundabout and feels very abrupt.
 - Only the eastern approach currently has a strong sense of place, created by the long vista down Umbiram Road and Newman Road to the rural landscape and hills beyond.
 - The railway bridge acts as a key node within the heart of the settlement.
 - Within the town, character buildings, such as the Wyreema Hall are the key landmarks.

- Links & connections**
- Wyreema feels very compartmentalised and navigation is challenged by the single bridge connection across the old railway.

- Façades, frontages and rhythm**
- Due to the dispersed pattern of buildings, including in the 'town centre' and lack of a core of heritage (or other) cohesive buildings, Wyreema lacks distinctive streetscape character.
 - Hard fence lines, particularly associated with new developments located along key thoroughfares, create poor streetscape character and undermine passive surveillance.

- Street trees**
- The presence of street trees is highly variable across Wyreema with generally few avenues of street trees that would provide shade and create public amenity.
 - Existing trees tend to be mixed native trees such various Gum trees (*Eucalyptus* spp.).
 - It is evident that there has been an effort to address this deficiency in recent years and a strong avenue of Hoop Pine (*Araucaria cunninghamii*) has been established to complement the strong vista looking east down Umbiram Road.
 - The newer parts of town such as the Wyreema Ridge Estate have newly planted and immature street tree planting which appear to be typically confined to small temperate street trees.

- Pavements and parking**
- The only parking areas comprises bays within the centre of the town associated with the Obst Park and the general store and an area located adjacent to school.
 - Paving in the centre comprises concrete pedestrian paths.
 - Outside of the centre, parking is on street and grassy verges without footpaths are present.

- Furniture & art**
- Wyreema is not well endowed with artwork or sculptural features and lacks war memorials and other elements of interest typically found in other towns across the region.
 - A collection of rustic objects is located in the wedding gardens at Bracknell Lodge and is visible from the road.



Single bridge across the old railway



Poor streetscape character due to hard fence lines of newer residential developments



Informal parking adjacent to the general store



Young Hoop Pine avenue along Umbiram Road



No street tree planting in some newer developments

Cultural heritage

Urban/
character
precincts

- Wyreema has no defined neighbourhood character precincts. However, the area around the old station platform is interesting.

Cultural
associations

- Bracknell Lodge, located a few hundred metres to the south of Wyreema is a significant homestead and estate. The estate features the old Wyreema Anglican Church (c. 1904) which was relocated to the site. The estate plays an important role in the cultural and social life of this small town and is currently used for events such as weddings.
-



Old station platform showing mature Fig tree (*ficus* sp.)



Barton Park located in the south of the town



View along Hartvigsen Street showing the former Wyreema Station platform

Scenic amenity

Scenic lookouts & views

- There are no formal scenic lookouts in Wyreema. More surprisingly, given the more elevated nature of the surrounding hilly landscape, there are no scenic lookouts in the landscape immediately around Wyreema.
- The closest scenic lookout that provides views of Wyreema is associated with Mount Peel to the north-northeast of the town near Westbrook.

View corridors

- No tourist drives pass through the town. However, the settlement is located on several promoted motorcycle routes.
- From within town, some views out to the surrounding farmland and distant hills are possible with the views both east and west along Umbiram Road being of particular note, as described previously.
- Hodgson Creek is an important visual element within local views available within the town.

Landmarks

- A water tower located in the residential area on Cashmore Street acts as a local landmark within the settlement and in views to the settlement.
- Outside of the settlement, views of distant hills such as Bunkers Hill and the Great Dividing Range provide a sense of place.

Perceptions

- Wyreema is a town in flux. However, its character is threatened by indistinct modern development and new subdivision needs to forge a new direction for the character of this town, building on remaining heritage and its landscape context where possible.
-



The water tower on Cashmore Street acts as a local landmark



Eucalyptus spp. along watercourse near town



Views to the Greenmount Hills that contribute to the amenity of the town

Planning for the future

Sensitivities and forces for change

Key forces for change include:

- Identified as being within the Priority Living Area in *ShapingSEQ*.
- Steady growth pressure, with growth to be generally focused in existing planned areas.
- Potential for further industrial growth servicing the freight and logistics industry.
- Proximity of Wyreema to Wellcamp Airport.
- The potential development of a rail trail between Westbrook and Wyreema which would unlock new and revitalised tourism opportunities.

Strategy for this settlement

Natural environment

- Maintain and enhance the rural and vegetated character of prominent ridgelines and hills surrounding the settlement that contribute to the amenity of the town.

Built environment

- Seek to create a town centre to create identity for the settlement and encourage a vibrant streetscape.
- Maintain the existing low-rise and fine grained scale of the town.
- Ensure new development and any redevelopment is sympathetic to the prevailing character of the surrounding area.
- Determine the ultimate form of the settlement including with respect to local landform and maintain this to prevent sprawl into the surrounding farmland. In particular, consider the relationship between the edges of the town and intervisibility with the surrounding landscape, including visual buffering through street tree planting.
- Seek opportunities for restoration and reinvigoration of buildings in disrepair, including through economic incentives to reinvigorate the town.
- Undertake a full heritage assessment to ensure the recognition, celebration and protection of heritage values in Wyreema going forward.

Streetscape character

- Seek opportunities to strengthen the arrival experience into Wyreema, in particular from the north along Toowoomba-Karara Road (SR48), from the west along Umbiram Road and from the east along Newman Road, which provides access to the New England Highway (A3).
- Create a framework of street trees within the town, particularly within older streets and ensure that new subdivisions facilitate planting of large street trees at least at key nodes. Include native Gum trees (*Eucalyptus* and *Corymbia* spp.) and temperate species as appropriate, in accordance with the *Street Tree Masterplan*.
- Consider artwork opportunities, as a means to bolster the streetscape appeal and memorability of Wyreema.

Tourism

- Investigate opportunities to support the proposed rail trail between Westbrook and Wyreema, including through the provision of services to support users or through the provision of additional local cycle routes.
- Consider other opportunities associated with the dismantled Southern Railway that transects Wyreema, in particular with consideration of the Wyreema Station siding and tree which important surviving elements of the railway.

Scenic amenity

- Maintain and celebrate views to the surrounding farmland and prominent ridgelines and hills near Wyreema, in particular towards Bunkers Hill (LCA C10) and landscapes associated with the Great Dividing Range (LCA A5 and A6).



NORTHERN REGION

The northern region contains the large towns of **Crows Nest** and **Yarraman**, along with the following smaller towns:

- Cooyar
- Haden
- Hampton
- Goombungee
- Kulpi
- Maclagan
- Peranga
- Quinalow

The northern region is considered important in the role it plays in connecting the landscapes of the Great Dividing Range to the Bunya Mountains to the west, and celebrating the traditional rural character of the settlements within this region.

Development pressure within these settlements is minimal, with the exception of Crows Nest and Goombungee which are experiencing steady growth pressure.

The acknowledgement and ongoing management of the existing character and heritage values within these settlements in recognition of the contribution they make to the character and tourism appeal of the Toowoomba Region as a whole, is important. This includes protecting the vegetated, natural and rural setting of these towns.



Figure 26: Settlements within the northern region



CROWS NEST

Crows Nest is situated on the New England Highway (A3) to the east of the Great Dividing Range and has a pleasant and traditional rural town ambience. It is a gateway for accessing visitor destinations within the surrounding high country, including Crows Nest National Park, Lake Perseverance and Lake Cressbrook.

Location and boundaries

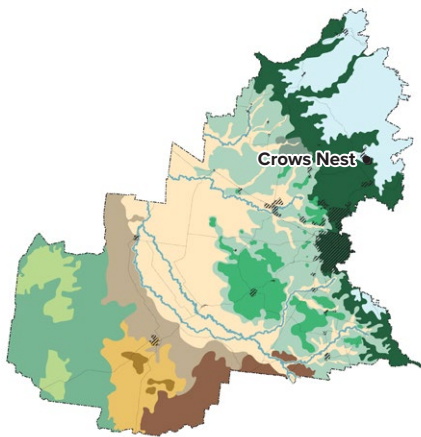
Crows Nest is a significant town located on the New England Highway (A3) near the Great Dividing Range in the high country, around 35km northeast of Toowoomba City centre. It falls within the 'High Country Hamlets' micro region.

Landscape and visual setting

- Crows Nest is located in the upper reaches of an undulating wooded rural valley that forms part of **LCT E: Steeply Undulating Foothills and Valleys – LCA E4: Cressbrook Creek**
- The wider landscape setting of Crows Nest is defined by the elevated landscape of **LCT A: Elevated Ridges and Plateaus** including **LCA A1: Great Dividing Range** and **LCA A4: Hampton to Ravensbourne**.
- Due to its elevated location and enclosure within the surrounding elevated and wooded landscapes, Crows Nest appears nestled in its landscape setting.

Key character attributes

- Crows Nest is one of the larger regional towns in Toowoomba Region.
- The town is accessed by and located around the New England Highway (A3) on gently sloping land around the vegetated corridors of Bald Hills and Crows Nest Creek.
- The town has a sense of enclosure within the wider landscape due to views out from the settlement to the wooded and grassy hills beyond.
- Crows Nest UCL is recorded as having a population of 1,713 people living in 804 private dwellings. The wider Crows Nest SSC has 2,160 people (ABS, 2016).
- As a regional town, Crows Nest has a mix of residential, retail and commercial buildings and facilities.



Legend

- Urban Extent
- Landscape Character Type (LCT) boundary
- +++++ Railway (dismantled/abandoned)
- Highways and Secondary Roads
- Local Connector Roads
- Local Roads
- National Tourist Drive
- Regional and Local Tourist Drives
- ▲ Mountains
- * Hills

- Mountain Ranges
- Ridgelines
- Contours (10m)
- Waterways
- Reservoirs
- Protected Areas
- Greenfield Areas
- Town Centre
- State Heritage Listed Place

- Gateways*
- Key features
- Parks and open space

*Legend item not to scale

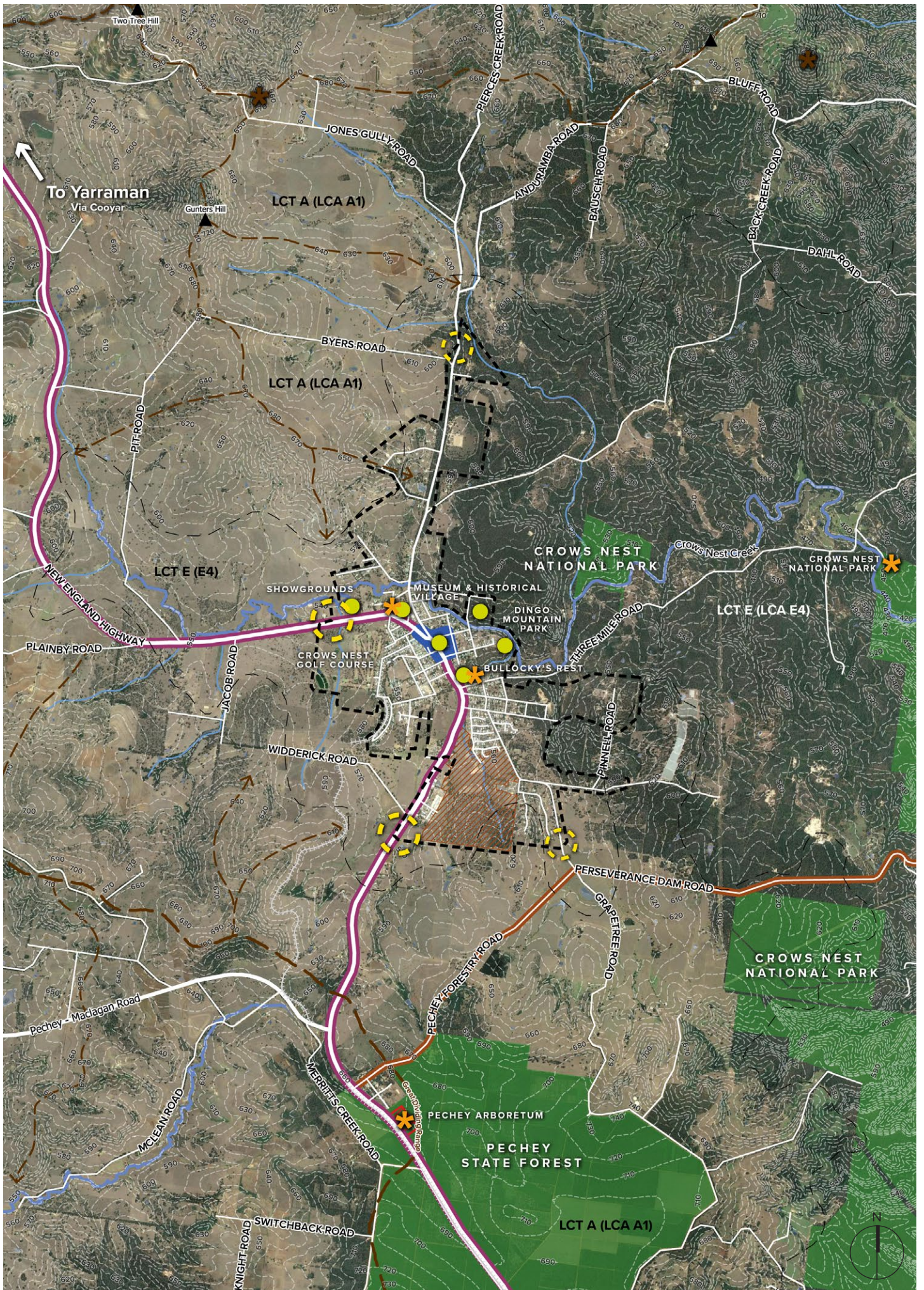


Figure 27: Key landscape and urban character features of Crows Nest

