



Submission to the Queensland Competition Authority – Aquaculture Regulation in Queensland – Draft report July 2014.

Submission by the City of
Gold Coast to the
Queensland Competition
Authority's Aquaculture
Regulation in Queensland
draft report dated July 2014.

Date 1st September 2014.



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1. City of Gold Coast Strategic Policy.

The City of Gold Coast (City) through its Economic Development Directorate has a strategic policy that is planned to build on the following initiatives for the city,

1. The best place to live and visit.
2. We live in balance with nature – We manage quality rural and urban living while looking after the future of the city's rainforest, bushland, waterways and open space.
3. We plan for the future of the city – We make good choices that create a better future for the Gold Coast community.
4. Develop and implement long-term plans working with key partners.
5. We manage the city responsibly – Our stewardship of the city provides value for money for ratepayers.
6. Deliver a wide range of high quality services to the Gold Coast community (supporting the performance measure of progressive social, economic and environmental policies).

2. Introduction.

Because of the reported relevant stagnant state of the aquaculture industry in Queensland compared to other states of Australia where the industry is expanding the Queensland Government directed the Queensland Competition Authority (QCA) to engage with a range of industry and authority stakeholders regarding the barriers being experienced with the potential future growth of the aquaculture industry in Queensland.

The engagement process led to the QCA issuing a draft report to industry, the community and government authorities in July 2014 called the Aquaculture Regulation in Queensland draft report dated July 2014.

QCA has requested that interested stakeholders submit their comments on the draft report by the 1st September 2014 to enable it to conclude its reporting process to State Government by mid-September 2014.

This enclosed submission by the City responds to that request for submissions, and this submission focuses on the area of the Gold Coast commonly known as the Northern Gold Coast Cane Land which is located generally in and around the suburbs of Stapylton, Alberton, Woongoolba, Steiglitz, Norwell and Jacobs Well herein called the "study area".

The issues of current land uses and existing industry uses are dealt with first in this submission as a background to why the City has interest in potential regulation reform for the aquaculture industry.

3. Study Area.

As stated this submission focuses on the Northern Gold Coast Cane Land which is an area of approximately 11,000ha.

The study area is clearly depicted in plans contained in the QCA draft report Annexures.

The specific QCA draft report plans that identify the study area are headed:

Draft Landbased Coastal Aquaculture Model – Queensland East Coast – Logan River,

- **Area of Interest.**
- **Preferred Aquaculture Areas.**
- **Commonwealth Constraints.**
- **General Planning Considerations.**
- **Qld State Government Constraints.**
- **General Planning Considerations.**

The study area is bounded by the M1 Motorway to the west, the Logan River to the North, the Tipplers Passage water way to the East, and urban development to the South.

The study area contains the suburbs of Stapylton, Alberton, Woongoolba, Steiglitz, Jacobs Well, Norwell, Pimpama and Gilberton, plus an eastern portion of Yatala.

The study area currently contains approximately 5,500ha of productive cane farming land, a sugar cane mill called the Rocky Point Mill, other minor areas of agricultural product farms, approx 8 existing aquaculture farms, motor sports facilities, extractive industries, a light aircraft airfield, pockets of urban development on the east coast, a large marine precinct on the mid-eastern shore, and other rural, turf and light industrial land uses.

The City is currently in the early stages of assessing whether the use of high quality Recycled Water (RW) from the Pimpama Sewerage Treatment Plant, which is located in the southern precinct of the study area, could be used to enhance the existing cane industry, expand other existing industries including aquaculture, and also add potential new industries to the area.

At present the City is uncertain whether the availability of a sustainable supply of high quality RW to the study area would support further investment in aquaculture because the investigations into this complex precinct are only in the early stages.

However initially it appears to be a sensible position to support the expansion of the aquaculture industry in the study area given that there is already a sound aquaculture industry operating in the area at present that might be enhanced and expanded.

4. Existing Industries.

The study area contains a matrix of various land uses, industries and businesses.

However it is important to focus on the main industries that will have an effect on future land uses in the area.

Cane Farming.

The future of the cane industry is a contentious issue in the study area at present.

There are some 61 cane growers currently operating in the industry in this location.

Many of those cane growers believe that there is little future in cane farming whilst others believe there may be a viable future if some assistance is given to them such as the supply of high quality RW at little or no cost, or that land use restrictions are eased to allow multiple small business uses to occur on their land, albeit that at present the cane growers with a positive mind set appear to be in the minority.

20 years ago the cane industry in the study area produced upwards of approx 400,000 tonnes of cane per annum, however currently it has dropped to approx 150,00 tonnes which is not a sustainable situation.

The status of the cane industry is part of the focus of the study just recently commenced by the City. IE: Will the provision of high quality RW assist the cane growing industry to remain viable, if not in total then maybe in part.

Sugar Cane Mill.

The future of the Rocky Point (sugar cane) Mill is also a contentious issue at present.

If growing cane is not sustainable then how will the mill survive.

This is another point of the study by the City.

Extractive Industries.

As shown on the QCA draft report map named “**Draft Landbased Coastal Aquaculture Model – Queensland East Coast – Logan River - General Planning Considerations**” there are extensive areas of extractive industry located in the study area.

Given that there appears to be a sufficient supply of natural resources in the study area it is likely that these extractive industry operations will continue for many years to come.

Marine Industry.

The Horizon Shores marina has been operating on the eastern shore of the study area for many years, and it appears to be a successful industry that will continue to operate for many more years to come.

In fact there appears to be some intentions by other coastal land owners to develop further marine based business on the shores of the study area along Tipplers Passage and / or the Logan river, albeit that the potential of this additional marine development will be investigated by the City in its current study.

Agriculture.

There are small pockets of agriculture located throughout the study area, such as sweet potato production.

The potential expansion of these existing agricultural uses, and the potential of adding new agricultural and horticultural uses to the study area has been the point of a number of studies undertaken by specialists in the past which have become the precursor to the investigations recently commenced by the City into the most appropriate future land uses for the area.

Aquaculture.

The City's unofficial count at present is that there are some 8 existing and thriving aquaculture businesses operating in the study area.

From a land use perspective it appears quite possible that this industry could grow substantially in the study area if an acceptable regulatory and economic environment exists that could be embraced by the industry.

Mixed Uses.

Other than rural based industries the study area also contains a mixture of the following uses / industries / businesses,

- Turf farming.
- Motor Sports.
- Composting & mulch.
- Fertilizer manufacture.
- Light aircraft airfield.
- Horse trotting and sprint training.
- Major light industrial uses in the Stapylton / Yatala industrial precinct.
- Materials recycling.
- Residential pockets.

5. Planning Scheme Land Uses & constraints.

SEQRP 2009 - 2031.

The study area is mostly designated as *Regional Landscape and rural Production Area* in the South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009 – 2031 (SEQRP), therefore it is not generally considered by the state planners to be land available for expansion of the urban footprint, albeit that pressure from interest groups may exist to convert some of the land into a form of urban use.

Study area Ref: pages 144 and 150 of the SEQRP.

City of Gold Coast – Draft City Plan 2015.

The majority of the study area is designated as *Rural* and *Rural, Rural Landscape and Environment Precinct* in the City's Draft City Plan 2015.

Public exhibition of the Draft City Plan 2015 recently closed and it is the intention of council to bring this plan formally on line in January 2015, hence it now has particular relevance to land use zones throughout the shire including the study area because planning applications will now be partly assessed against this Draft Plan.

Study area Ref: Zone Maps 2, 3, 7 & 8 - Draft City Plan 2015 – Attached in **Appendix 1**.

Planning outcome.

Based on the land use planning constraints contained in the SEQRP 2009 – 2031 and Gold Coast Draft City Plan 2015 it is evident that the study area is proposed to generally remain for the purpose of its current land uses.

6. Land Use Constraints.

Flooding.

The City of Gold Coast Draft City Plan 2015 designates the vast majority of the study area as flood prone land which determines that a Flood Assessment is required for any planning application.

In fact a large percentage of the study area land is either at or slightly above or below HAT and is therefore controlled and protected by the City's Flood Mitigation Scheme which includes an extensive range of flood relief canals and flood control gates which must be maintained on an annual basis by the City.

Therefore the City considers that the current general rural land use for the majority of the study area is the most appropriate use.

Study area Ref: Flood Overlay Map – Maps 1, 2 & 5 - Draft City Plan 2015 – Attached in **Appendix 1**.

Acid Sulphate Soils.

The City of Gold Coast Draft City Plan 2015 designates the vast majority of the study area as being prone to Acid Sulphates as the vast majority of the area is below 5.0m AHD.

Therefore again the City considers that the current rural land use for the majority of the study area is the most appropriate use.

Study area Ref: Acid Sulphate Soils Overlay Map - Maps 1 & 2 - Draft City Plan 2015 –Attached in **Appendix 1**.

7. Transport network.

The study area is extremely well positioned to support growth in the aquaculture industry, as well as other industries, through an existing effective transport network.

The ability for the aquaculture industry to transport its products quickly to market is greatly enhanced by the availability of the existing road transport network already located in the industrial precinct at the western portion of the study area around Stapylton and the Yatala Enterprise Area, and the study area is already serviced by an established good quality sealed road system.

This transport network, and hence the study area, has direct connection to the M1 Motorway which provides high speed direct road connection to,

- Brisbane Airport – 48kms.
- Brisbane CBD – 40kms.

-
- Gold Coast CBD – 36kms.
 - Gold Coast Airport – 65kms.
 - Sunshine Coast central – 145kms.
 - Sydney central – 890kms.

8. Support for Regulation Reform.

Considering the outcome of the stakeholder engagement process conducted by QCA to date as detailed in the QCA Draft Report dated July 2014 there can be little doubt that the aquaculture industry holds serious concerns about its member's ability to gain timely approvals for new or expanded aquaculture ventures in Queensland. These concerns appear to be seriously limiting investment by that industry in this state.

Therefore it seems appropriate that regulation reform for this specific industry should be seriously considered and possibly simplified and enacted by state government to allow the aquaculture industry to have much more confidence and certainty about investing in Queensland.

However it is also the City Officers view that, as is referenced in the QCA Draft Report, a proper and complete process of engagement between the state agencies and local governments must be undertaken to ensure that any new code produced specifically for the aquaculture industry accommodates all necessary local planning provisions.

The City Officers support the QCA proposal to form a working group to resolve a new code for this valuable industry because enhancement of aquaculture in the City of Gold Coast would accord with the policy of council to enhance and diversify industry and boost economic growth.

Should the City be requested in the future to become involved in such a working group any acceptance would be subject to approval by the full council.

9. Conclusion.

To paraphrase the QCA Draft Report,

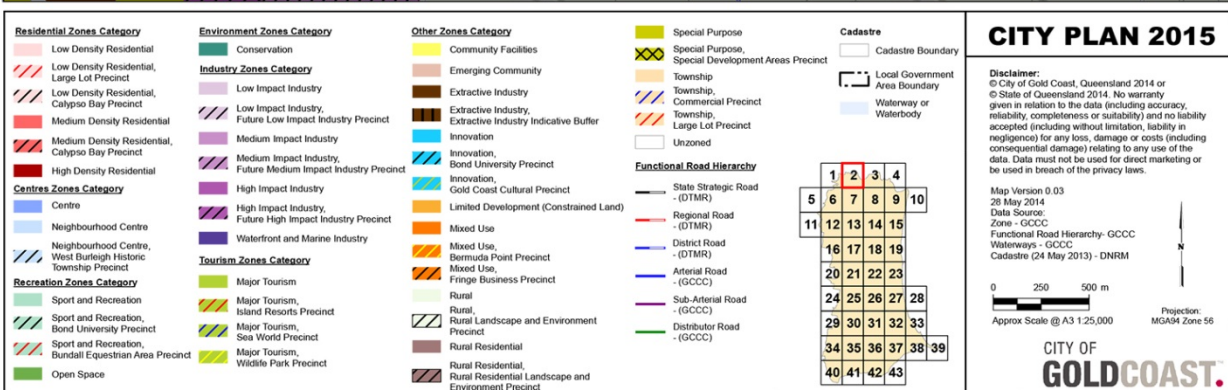
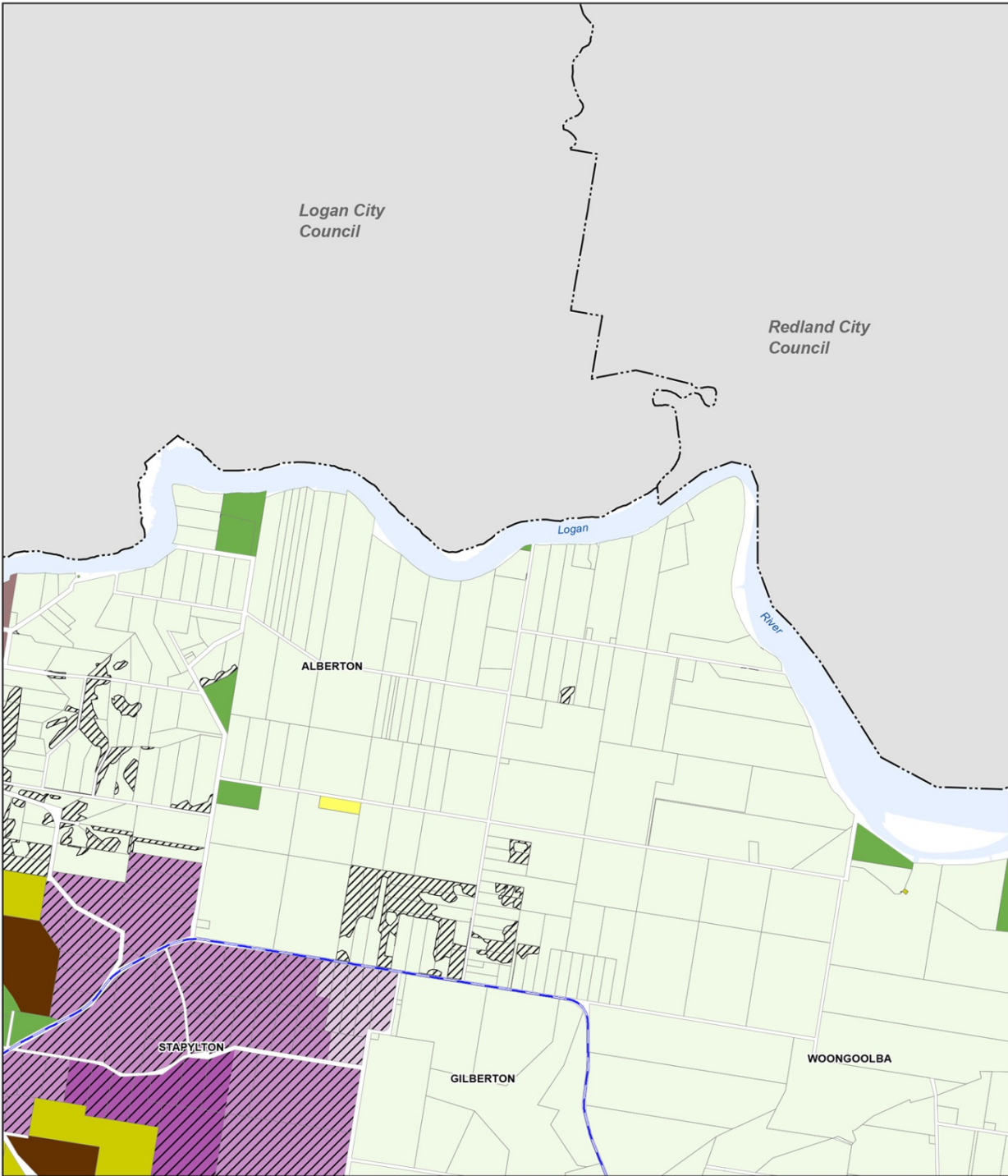
- Investment by the aquaculture industry in Queensland has been stagnant for 10 years.
- Queensland only represents 10% of the value of the national aquaculture industry.
- The Queensland Government aims to double the Queensland agricultural industry as a whole by 2040.
- QCA have a target of seeing the creation of an additional 450ha of aquaculture in Queensland within 2 years of acceptance of their final report by state government.
- The aquaculture industry appears ready to invest in Queensland conditional upon regulation reform being adopted and the approval system being dramatically simplified.
- A new development approval code should be created specifically for the aquaculture industry to allow for future applications to be Code Assessable, following a proper stakeholder engagement process.
- The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forests (DAFF) should be the state agency that has the primary responsibility for implementing regulatory reform.
- A further stakeholder engagement process must be undertaken to resolve regulatory reform, especially with relevant local government agencies because of location specific issues that must be addressed.

On this basis the City supports the continuation of the assessment of the QCA aquaculture industry regulation reform agenda.

Steve MacRae.
Principal Project Officer.
Major Projects Office.
Economic Development Directorate.

10. Appendix 1.

Zone Map - Map 2 ALBERTON



Draft for Public Consultation

ZM-2

Redland City Council

CITY PLAN 2015

Logan River

WOONGOOLBA

STEIGLITZ

Moreton Bay

SOUTHERN MORETON BAY ISLANDS

Residential Zones Category

- Low Density Residential
- Low Density Residential, Large Lot Precinct
- Low Density Residential, Calypso Bay Precinct
- Medium Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential, Calypso Bay Precinct
- High Density Residential

Centres Zones Category

- Centre
- Neighbourhood Centre
- Neighbourhood Centre, West Burleigh Historic Township Precinct

Recreation Zones Category

- Sport and Recreation
- Sport and Recreation, Bond University Precinct
- Sport and Recreation, Bundall Equestrian Area Precinct
- Open Space

Environment Zones Category

- Conservation
- Low Impact Industry
- Low Impact Industry, Future Low Impact Industry Precinct
- Medium Impact Industry
- Medium Impact Industry, Future Medium Impact Industry Precinct
- High Impact Industry
- High Impact Industry, Future High Impact Industry Precinct
- Waterfront and Marine Industry

Tourism Zones Category

- Major Tourism
- Major Tourism, Island Resorts Precinct
- Major Tourism, Sea World Precinct
- Major Tourism, Wildlife Park Precinct

Other Zones Category

- Community Facilities
- Emerging Community
- Extractive Industry
- Extractive Industry Indicative Buffer
- Innovation
- Innovation, Bond University Precinct
- Innovation, Gold Coast Cultural Precinct
- Limited Development (Constrained Land)
- Mixed Use
- Mixed Use, Bermuda Point Precinct
- Mixed Use, Fringe Business Precinct
- Rural
- Rural, Rural Landscape and Environment Precinct
- Rural Residential
- Rural Residential, Rural Landscape and Environment Precinct

Functional Road Hierarchy

- State Strategic Road - (DTMR)
- Regional Road - (DTMR)
- District Road - (DTMR)
- Arterial Road - (GCCC)
- Sub-Arterial Road - (GCCC)
- Distributor Road - (GCCC)

Cadastre

- Cadastre Boundary
- Local Government Area Boundary
- Waterway or Waterbody

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Map Version 0.03
28 May 2014
Data Source:
Zone - GCCC
Functional Road Hierarchy - GCCC
Waterways - GCCC
Cadastre (24 May 2013) - DNRM

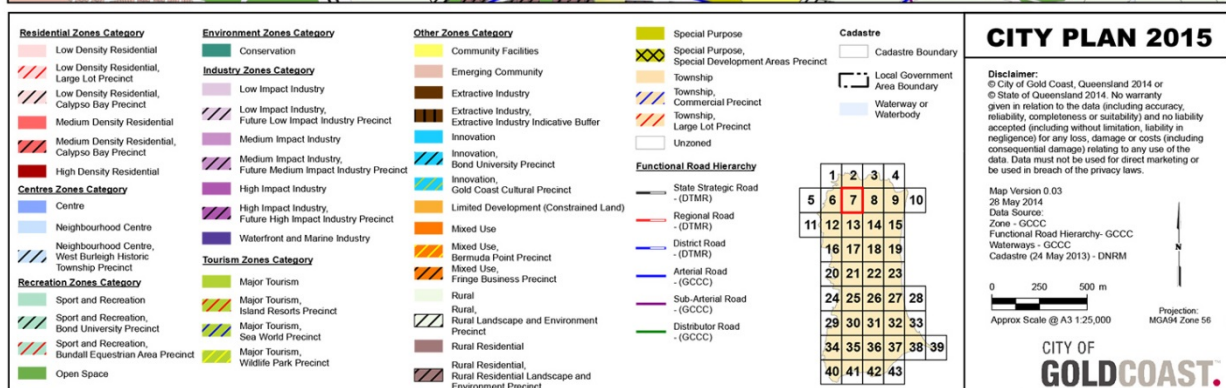
0 250 500 m
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Projection: MGA94 Zone 56

CITY OF GOLD COAST

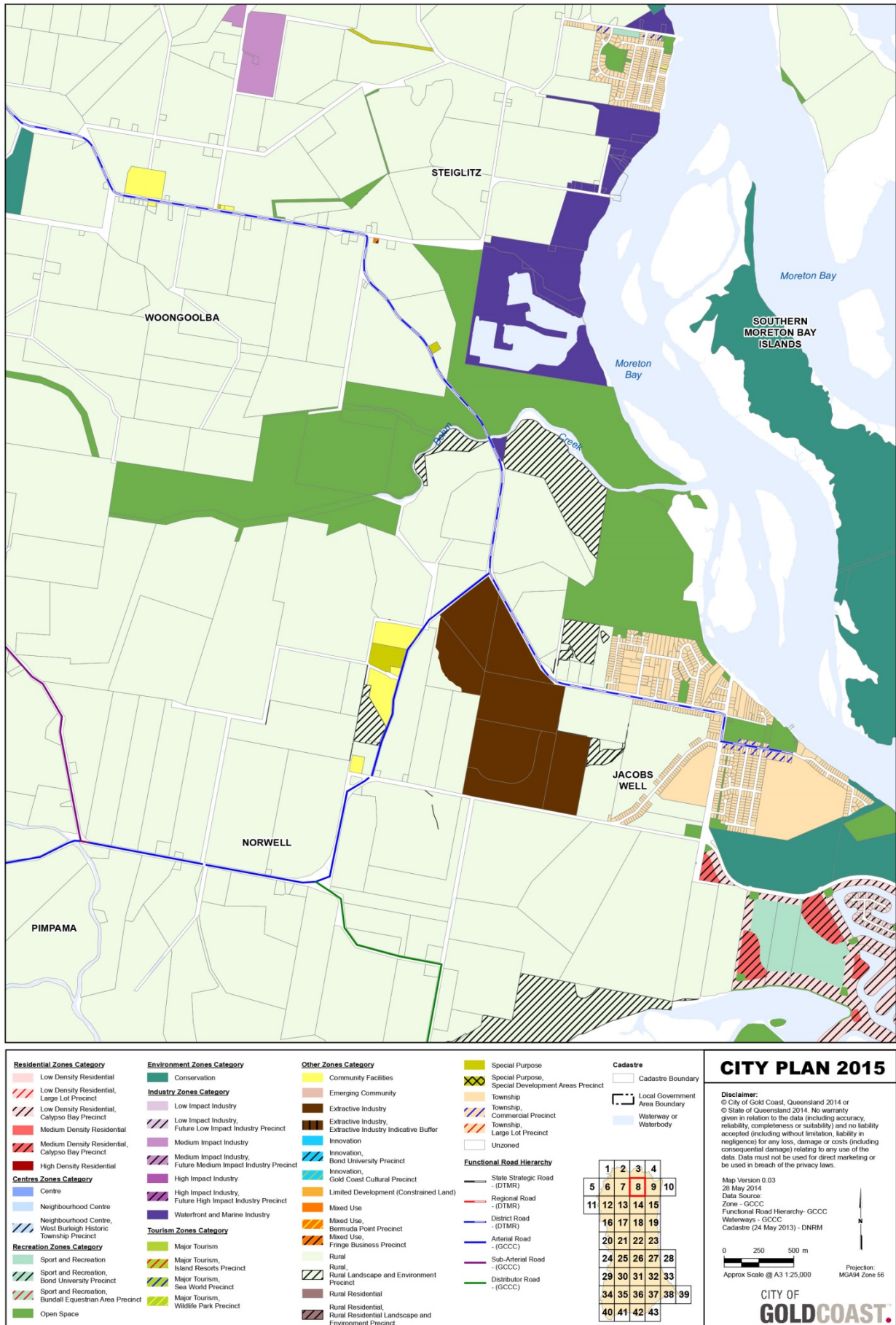
ZM-3

The map displays the Ormeau area, characterized by a mix of residential and commercial land parcels. The Ormeau town center is centrally located, surrounded by various colored zones. To the north, the Stapylton area is visible, and to the east, the Norwell and Woongoolba areas are shown. The Pimpama River flows through the southern part of the map, with the Pimpama area situated along its banks. The map also shows the Ormeau Creek and Sandy Creek. The Kingsholme area is located to the south of Ormeau, and the Ormeau Hills are to the west. The map includes a network of roads and highways, with the Pimpama Highway running through the area. The land parcels are color-coded, with shades of green, yellow, orange, red, and purple, indicating different land uses or ownership. The map is a detailed representation of the Ormeau area, showing the layout of the town and its surrounding regions.



ZM-7

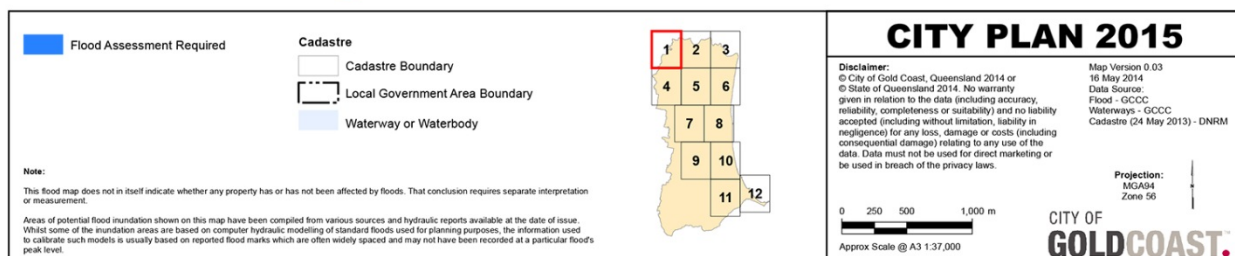
Zone Map - Map 8 ORMEAU



Draft for Public Consultation

ZM-8

Flood Overlay Map - Map 1



Draft for Public Consultation

OMF1-1

Flood Overlay Map - Map 2



Flood Assessment Required

Cadastre

- Cadastre Boundary
- Local Government Area Boundary
- Waterway or Waterbody

Note:

This flood map does not in itself indicate whether any property has or has not been affected by floods. That conclusion requires separate interpretation or measurement.

Areas of potential flood inundation shown on this map have been compiled from various sources and hydraulic reports available at the date of issue. Whilst some of the inundation areas are based on computer hydraulic modelling of standard floods used for planning purposes, the information used to calibrate such models is usually based on reported flood marks which are often widely spaced and may not have been recorded at a particular flood's peak level.

CITY PLAN 2015

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given in relation to the data (including accuracy,
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consequential damage) relating to any use of the
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be used in breach of the privacy laws.

Map Version 0.03
16 May 2014
Data Source:
Flood - GCOCC
Waterways - GCOCC
Cadastre (24 May 2013) - DNRM

Projection:
MGAG4
Zone 56

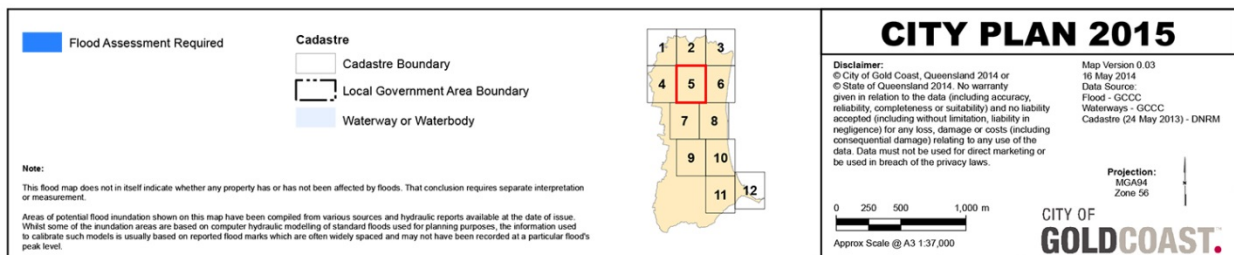
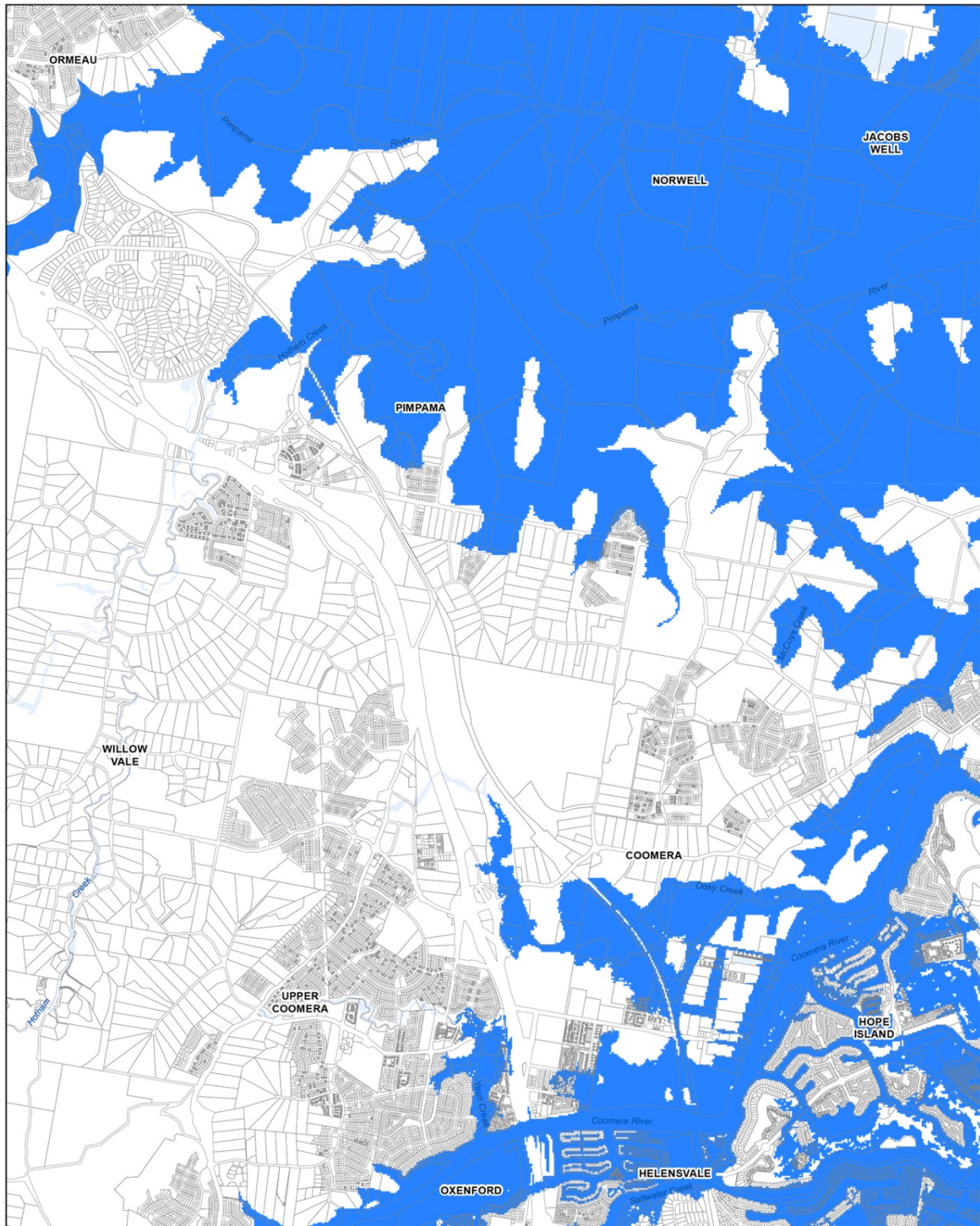
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Approx Scale @ A3 1:37,000

**CITY OF
GOLD COAST**

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OMF1-2

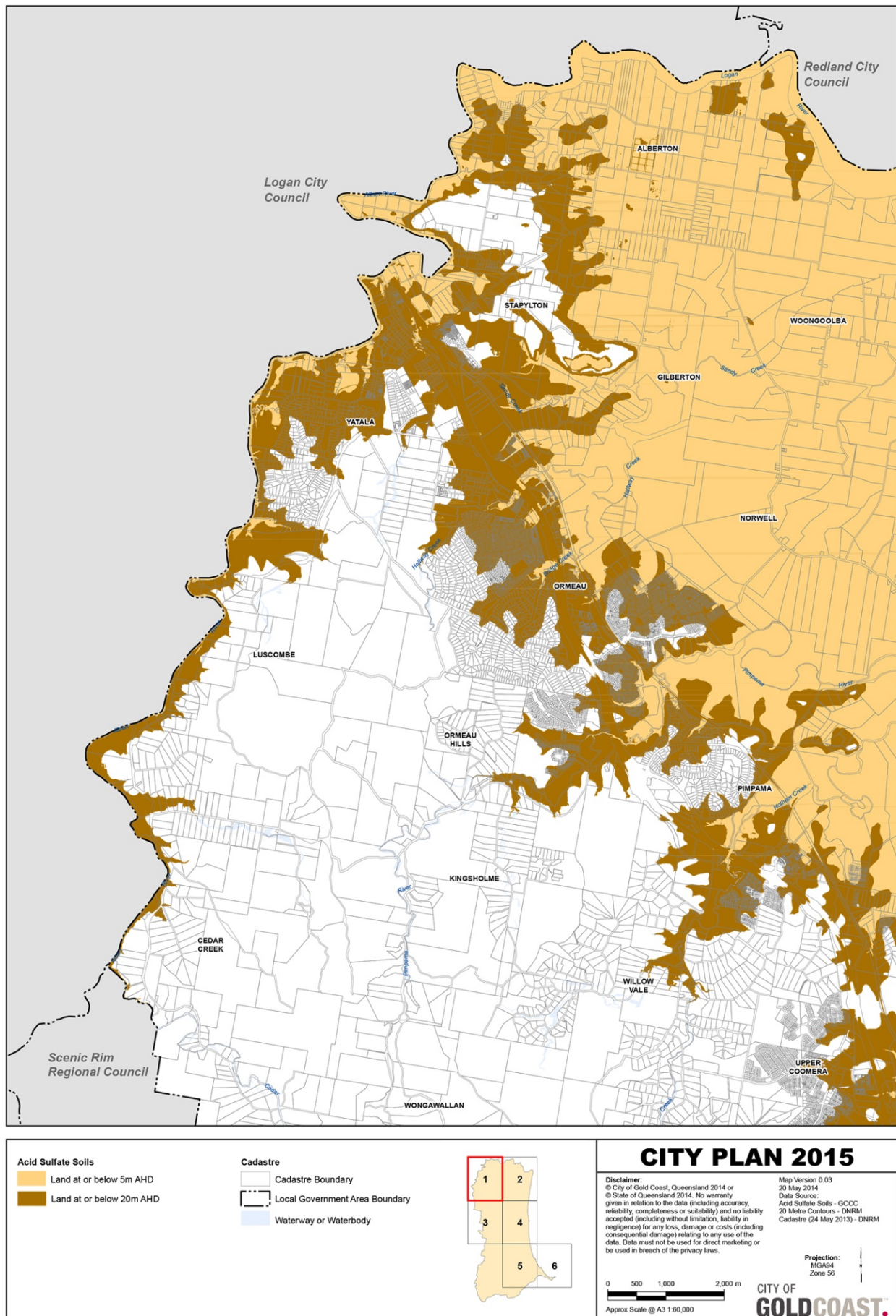
Flood Overlay Map - Map 5



Draft for Public Consultation

OMF1-5

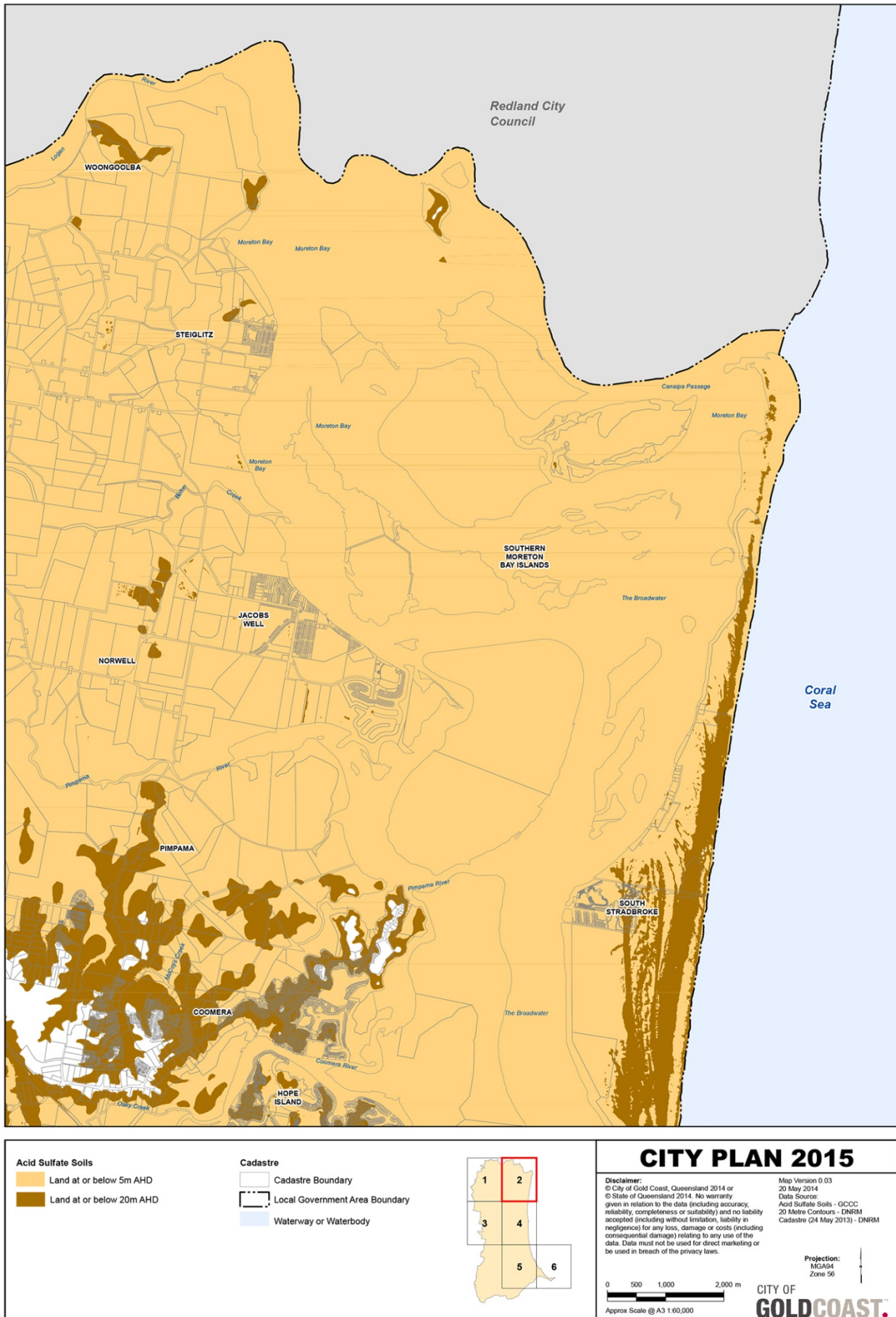
Acid Sulfate Soils Overlay Map - Map 1



Draft for Public Consultation

OMA1-1

Acid Sulfate Soils Overlay Map - Map 2



Draft for Public Consultation

OMA1-2



For more information

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