

North Stradbroke Island

An economic transition for North Stradbroke Island

Planning is currently underway to transition North Stradbroke Island towards a sustainable economic future.

This brochure provides a snap shot of the economic transition process, some potential priority actions, and how residents and other interested parties can get involved.

Background

In June 2010, the Queensland Government announced its strategy for North Stradbroke Island/Minjerribah (the island). This involved a number of key outcomes:

- the **resolution of native title** through an Indigenous Land Use Agreement with the Quandamooka People
- the **creation of national park** across 80 per cent of the island by 2027, including 50 per cent by the end of 2011
- the **cessation of sand mining**
- the transition towards a **sustainable economic future** for the island.

Early in 2011 an Economic Transition Taskforce (the taskforce) was established to lead and coordinate development of the island's long-term sustainable economic future strategy. A variety of economic stakeholders are represented on the taskforce, including the Straddie Chamber of Commerce, the Quandamooka People, Sibelco and the Social and Economic Development Association. Redland City Council, the Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM), the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI), Regional Development Australia and Tourism Queensland are also represented.

Rationale

Why do we need an economic transition process?

The economic transition process provides a pathway towards a sustainable economic future for the island. When the Queensland Government announced the timeline for the phase out of sand mining and its support for an economic transition, an unprecedented opportunity was provided for the community to reinvent its economic future—to support the community's aspirations and contribute to the environmental, social and cultural sustainability of the island.

Currently the island's economy is comparatively fragile. Over the past couple of years, the global financial crisis, combined with weather events in early 2011, exposed weaknesses in the island's economy—particularly the stress on local businesses when the holiday peak season is interrupted. While the economic issues faced by the island predate any decision about an early cessation of mining, it is recognised that its end will generate future issues that need to be addressed.

What outcomes are sought from the economic transition process?

Rather than provide an exact number of local jobs, or a single 'replacement' industry for mining, the draft economic transition documents aim to provide for a range of economic activities and projects that:

- support a **long term sustainable future** for the island
- are in keeping with **community aspirations**
- are compatible with and complement **existing market opportunities**.

The theme of sustainability has consistently been expressed by community members during discussions over the future of the island's economy. While sustainability can mean different things to different people, in the context of the island's economy it has been linked to achieving the following:

- creating economic **diversity** to help insulate the economy from fluctuations in the local and global economy
- increasing the economy's ability to **adapt** to new circumstances
- avoiding **public subsidies**
- building internal **economic capacity**
- encouraging the development of **local business**
- diversifying the range of **employment** and creating more full-time jobs
- supporting all **three townships**
- identifying economic pathways that provide an economic future for the **Quandamooka People and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents**
- encouraging economic activity which complements the island's **environment and culture**.

Planning for a sustainable economic future on the island has involved a comprehensive process of research, analysis and consultation in order to identify strategic and tactical priorities and actions that will meet the economic needs of the island and its community. The planning process has resulted in the development of three key documents:

- Draft Economic Transition Strategy
- Planning for Action (draft action plan)
- Situational Analysis.

The draft documents are now available for community input until **31 January 2012** (see back page for how you can get involved).

Draft Economic Transition Strategy

The North Stradbroke Island/Minjerrabah draft Economic Transition Strategy provides an overarching strategic framework for the island's economic future. It identifies the goal of creating a sustainable, diverse and resilient economy that will contribute to achieving the vision to become **Australia's most sustainable island community**.

The draft strategy identifies four action areas as the most viable options for contributing to long-term sustainable economic growth on the island:

- sustainable tourism
- education and training
- locally-based small business and industry
- Quandamooka People and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (QP&ATSI) business opportunities.

Vision

There are a number of core values and principles that have been articulated by island residents as critical in shaping their future vision for the island. The aspiration is for the island to become Australia's most sustainable island community where its unique and special qualities are treasured, and the character and culture of the island recognised as making it an attractive place to live and visit. For a more detailed list of specific values and principles, refer to the draft Economic Transition Strategy.

Tourism

Tourism already plays an important role in the island's economy. The expansion of the new national park will increase tourism opportunities. Therefore tourism has been identified as a key area for action. The draft action plan identifies some potential small-scale actions around:

- ways to better market the island as a tourism destination
- initiatives to extend the range of experiences available when visiting the island

- making the most of the nature-based opportunities created by the national park
- the cultural opportunities gained by the role of the Traditional Owners—the Quandamooka People—in the island's future.

For more information, refer to the draft action plan.

Potential future actions for sustainable tourism development

- Diversification of nature-based recreation facilities including walking trails and a dedicated whale watching platform
- Enhancement of accommodation facilities and built infrastructure including campground facility upgrades
- Development of a collaborative brand identity with dedicated marketing and event promotion programs
- Cultural tourism development and interpretation
- Development of communications infrastructure and online product distribution
- Development of industry capacity building programs and business mentoring

Education and training

The need to improve education and training outcomes for the island was recognised at an early stage as essential to support residents as the island's economy undergoes a transition process. It is also seen as making a positive contribution to the economy itself. Potential future education and training actions are focused around tertiary education and training opportunities for residents as well as commercial education opportunities.

For more information, refer to the draft action plan.

Potential future actions for education and training

- Development of a mechanism to broker and coordinate learning activities
- Establishment of a 'centre for island learning' to develop new learning products
- Development of an education and training facility at Dunwich State School and in the Community Education Centre with associated facilities
- Expansion of school camps and field study programs including investigating the potential for new student accommodation
- Improve public transport options for students including ticketing integration

Locally-based small business and industry

The need for diversity in the island’s economy highlighted the need for actions focused around ‘locally-based small business and industry’. Key investigation areas for potential development include the construction and housing industry, market development for cottage industries and seafood, commercial forestry and nursery production, as well as growth opportunities for other small scale local businesses that might succeed in coming years.

For more information, refer to the draft action plan.

Potential future actions for local small business growth

- Investigation of key industry sectors including building and construction, seafood, arts/craft, cottage industries and forestry
- Business case and feasibility assessments of proposed industry development opportunities
- Small scale actions to support industry growth

Quandamooka People and ATSI residents business

Potential actions are being developed around business opportunities for the Quandamooka People and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents (QP&ATSI community). Possible actions will look at the broad strategic needs of the QP&ATSI community, and will also identify key projects needed in the short-term to support existing and known QP&ATSI business needs. A targeted consultation process will be undertaken on potential actions.

The North Stradbroke Island situation

The draft Economic Transition Strategy recognises that North Stradbroke Island/Minjerrabah’s history, natural environment and culture will play a significant role in shaping its future. Moreover, any decisions about the future of the island need to be informed by an understanding of information including demographics, social indicators, existing infrastructure as well as critical economic and industry data. A detailed analysis of these issues as they relate to the island is provided in the Situational Analysis, which underpins the draft strategy and is now available for community review and feedback. For more information, refer to the Situational Analysis.

The role of the Economic Transition Taskforce

The Queensland Government has established an Economic Transition Taskforce to lead and coordinate the development of a long-term strategy for a sustainable economic future on the island.

The Economic Transition Taskforce comprises:

Ian Fletcher (Chair)	Director-General, Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation
Aunty Joan Hendriks	Quandamooka Combined Aboriginal Organisations Forum
Darren Burns	Quandamooka Combined Aboriginal Organisations Forum
Paul Smith	Sibelco
David Thomson	Stradbroke Ferries
Col Battersby	Fishes at the Point
Gary Stevenson	Redland City Council
Sharon Raguse	Tourism Queensland
Geoff Moore	NSI Social and Economic Development Association
Mariae Crawshaw	Regional Development Australia
Alice Langford	Business representative
Geoff Clare	Department of Environment and Resource Management
Malcolm Letts	Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation



Opportunities to get involved

The community's input and support in developing and implementing the economic vision for the island is essential in ensuring practical and relevant strategies are realised. Public feedback and comment on the draft documents is now welcomed from all community members, industry, government and interested stakeholders.

The potential actions in the planning document have been identified because they are considered to be able to make a positive contribution to the island's economic future and are feasible in the short term. Community input is being sought to assist in the identification and prioritisation of future actions.

We are interested in hearing your ideas:

- What are your aspirations or desired outcomes for the economic future of the island and its community—do the documents reflect this?
- Are there any additional actions that should be considered?
- Have any of the proposed actions previously been investigated and rejected by the community or industry?
- Which actions do you think will make the most difference to the island's economic future?
- Are there any other industry sectors or small business opportunities that should be considered in planning for a sustainable economic future?

To provide your feedback or obtain a copy of the documents, please contact DERM via:

- NSI Strategy:
phone: 1800 194 064 (freecall)
email: straddiestrategy@derm.qld.gov.au
website www.derm.qld.gov.au/stradbroke/
fax: 07 3330 5398
post: Straddie Strategy,
 GPO Box 2454, Brisbane QLD 4001
- NSI Information Centre,
 7 Stradbroke Place, Dunwich.

The consultation period for the documents will run until **31 January 2012**. A number of focus group sessions and consultation opportunities will be available throughout December 2011 for community members to attend, review and generate ideas, and provide feedback on the draft documents. Please contact the NSI strategy team for further details.

Following review of all public feedback, the draft Economic Transition Strategy, Planning for Action document and Situational Analysis will be finalised for release.

