

8.2.10 Landscape values overlay code

8.2.10.1 Application

This code applies to assessing development within the Landscape values overlay.

When using this code, reference should be made to Part 5.

8.2.10.2 Context

This section is extrinsic material under section 15 of the *Statutory Instruments Act 1992*.

The Cairns region is internationally renowned for its outstanding scenery, from the Great Barrier Reef and Wet Tropics World Heritage Areas to the forested hillslopes, rainforests, stunning seascapes, freshwater scenery and canefields. The region's landscapes and natural areas also have important cultural significance for the region's indigenous communities.

The Cairns region coastline is one of the few places in the world where two extensive natural World Heritage Areas meet. The Great Barrier Reef is the world's largest World Heritage Area and the most extensive coral reef system, of exceptional natural beauty. The Wet Tropics rainforest are also world-renowned for their biodiversity and natural beauty. Protection and enhancement of these World Heritage Areas and their biodiversity are aims of the Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031.

Within the Cairns region are large national park areas where steep mountain ranges with tropical rainforests and waterways meet the Coral Sea along a coastal interface of sandy beaches and rocky headlands. The steep hillslopes behind the generally narrow coastal plain are signature landscape features of the city of Cairns and the region generally, creating a dramatic backdrop of rich green vegetation, frequently with cloud capped ridges and peaks. Views to these natural forested hillslopes contribute significantly to the tourist image of Cairns, especially where viewed in combination with canefields, waterways and the coastline.

The coastline of the Cairns region includes many picturesque sandy beaches, attractive bays and visually prominent headlands, where scenic routes provide opportunities for views of the dramatic and largely natural combination of forested mountains and shoreline. Waterways of high scenic value include rivers and creeks, gorges, waterfalls, rockpools and a lake. Fed by the region's high rain rainfall, freshwater creeks and waterfalls flow from mountainous regions through attractive semi-secluded valleys, into gorges and drain into the major river catchments.

Between the coast and the mountains the rural landscape is characterised by distinctive patterns of canefields and other rural production areas, and this rural character is an important part of the region's scenic landscape values.

Numerous lookout and scenic route opportunities in the Cairns region offer view to attractive landscape features, the coastline, Coral Sea and offshore islands. Panoramic or long-distance view corridors are available across a diversity of landscape patterns, including extensive views across canefields and lowlands to distant mountains. The shoreline and seascape scenery is also unusually diverse, ranging from the distinctive Trinity Inlet mudflats and mangroves, to rocky headlands and the azure waters of sandy beaches and islands. The distinctive tropical character and scenic amenity value of these beaches and islands are irreplaceable, and face long term threats from the potential impacts of sea level rise.

Within this scenic context, the Cairns region is also characterised by the distribution and scale of urban areas, and their close visual relationship to the mountains and coastline. Cairns City is the principal centre, with wide streets, large canopied tropical streets and park trees, plus taller buildings and an urban esplanade overlooking the mudflats of Trinity Inlet. The Cairns region is also characterised by its coastal towns and villages and hinterland settlements, each with their own distinct character. There are many attractive places and available views within these settlements such as scenic watercourses, historic buildings, monuments, views and rainforest and water, with many towns framed by a skyline of forested ranges visible from within or from the edges of towns.

The Cairns region is an extensive area of scenic beauty comprised of many natural and rural landscape elements enjoyed by residents and visitors, within close proximity to (and accessible from) the urban area and major routes. Population growth pressures present a challenge to maintain the landscape values that underpin the liveability, cultural significance, tourist image and prosperity of the Cairns region.

8.2.10.3 Purpose

- (1) The purpose of the Landscape values overlay code is to ensure that development protects, maintains and enhances the landscape values within the Cairns region.
- (2) The purpose of the code will be achieved through the following overall outcomes:
 - (a) areas of High landscape value are protected, retained and enhanced;
 - (b) areas of Medium landscape value are managed to integrate and limit the visual impact of development;
 - (c) the landscape values of the Coastal scenery zone are managed to integrate and limit the visual impact of development;
 - (d) development maintains and enhances the significant landscape elements and features which contribute to the cultural significance and distinctive character and identify of the Cairns region;
 - (e) ridges and vegetated hillslopes are not developed in a way that adversely impacts on landscape values;
 - (f) inland watercourses, forested mountains and coastal landscape character types remain predominantly natural in appearance in order to maintain the region's diverse character and distinctive tropical image, in particular:
 - (i) areas in the coastal landscape character type which are predominantly natural and undeveloped in appearance retain this natural landscape character;
 - (ii) inland watercourses which are predominantly natural and undeveloped in appearance retain this natural landscape character;
 - (iii) the rural character of canfields, grassy hillsides and lowlands landscape character types which are predominantly rural or natural in appearance are maintained.
 - (g) landscape values are maintained when viewed from:
 - (i) lookouts;
 - (ii) scenic routes;
 - (iii) gateways;
 - (iv) public places.
 - (h) view towards High landscape value areas and the Coral Sea are not diminished;
 - (i) development is consistent with the prevailing landscape character of its setting, and is neither visually dominant nor visually intrusive;
 - (j) advertising devices do not detract from the landscape values, character types or amenity of an area.

8.2.10.4 Criteria for assessment

Part A – Criteria for assessable development

Table 8.2.10.4.a – Landscape values overlay code – assessable development

Performance outcomes	Acceptable outcomes
For assessable development	
Development within the High landscape value area	
<p>PO1 Development within High landscape value areas identified on the Landscape values overlay maps contained in Schedule 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) avoids detrimental impacts on the landscape values of forested skylines, visible hillslopes, ridgelines, the coastal foreshore or the shoreline of other water bodies through the loss of vegetation; (b) is effectively screened from view from a road, lookout or other public place by an existing natural landform or native vegetation, or will be effectively screened by native vegetation within 5 years of construction; (c) retains existing vegetation and incorporates new landscaping to enhance existing vegetation and visually soften built form elements; (d) incorporates development of a scale, design, height, position on site, construction materials and external finishes that are compatible with the landscape values of the locality; (e) avoids detrimental impacts on landscape values and excessive changes to the natural landform as a result of the location, position on site, scale, design, extent and alignment of earthworks, roads, driveways, retaining walls and other on-ground or in-ground infrastructure; (f) avoids detrimental impacts on landscape values and views as a result of the location, position on site, scale, design and alignment of telecommunications facilities, electricity towers, poles and lines and other tall infrastructure; (g) extractive industry operations are avoided or screened from view. <p>Note – A visual impact assessment is undertaken in accordance with Planning scheme policy – Landscape values in satisfaction of a performance outcome</p>	<p>AO1.1 Buildings and structures are not more than 8.5 metres and 2 storeys in height.</p> <p>Note – Height is inclusive of the roof height.</p> <p>AO1.2 Buildings and structures are setback not less than 50 metres from ridgelines or peaks.</p> <p>AO1.3 Development is screened from view from roads or other public places by an existing natural landform or a native vegetation buffer.</p> <p>AO1.4 Where development on land steeper than 1 in 6 (16.6%) cannot be avoided, development follows the natural contours of the site.</p> <p>AO1.5 The external features, walls and roofs of buildings and structures have a subdued and non-reflective palette.</p> <p>Note – Examples of suitable colours include shades of green, olive green, blue green, grey green, green blue, indigo, brown, blue grey, and green yellow.</p> <p>AO1.6 No clearing of native vegetation occurs on land with a slope greater than 1 in 6 (16.6%).</p> <p>AO1.7 Where for accommodation activities or reconfiguration of a lot involving 5 or more dwellings or 5 or more new lots in a High landscape value area development demonstrates that the height, design, scale, position on site, proposed construction materials and external finishes are compatible with the landscape values.</p> <p>Note – A visual impact assessment undertaken in accordance with Planning scheme policy – Landscape values may be required.</p> <p>AO1.8 Advertising devices do not occur.</p>

Performance outcomes	Acceptable outcomes
Development within the Medium landscape value area	
<p>PO2 Development within Medium landscape value areas identified on the Landscape values overlay maps contained in Schedule 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) avoids detrimental impacts on the landscape values of forested skylines, visible hillslopes, ridgelines, the coastal foreshore or the shoreline of other water bodies through the loss of vegetation; (b) Is effectively screened from view from a road, lookout or other public place by an existing natural landform or native vegetation, or will be effectively screened by native vegetation within 5 years of construction; (c) Retains existing vegetation and incorporates new landscaping to enhance existing vegetation and visually soften built form elements; (d) Incorporates development of a scale, design, height, position on site, construction materials and external finishes that are compatible with the landscape values of the locality; (e) Avoids detrimental impacts on landscape values and excessive changes to the natural landform as a result of the location, position on site, scale, design and alignment of earthworks, roads, driveways, retaining walls and other on-ground or in-ground infrastructure; (f) Avoids detrimental impacts on landscape values and views as a result of the location, position on site, scale, design and alignment of telecommunications facilities, electricity towers, poles and lines and other tall infrastructure; (g) Extractive industry operations are avoided or screened from view. <p>Note – A visual impact assessment is undertaken in accordance with Planning scheme policy – Landscape values in satisfaction of performance outcomes.</p>	<p>AO2.1 Buildings and structures are not more than 8.5 metres and 2 storeys in height.</p> <p>Note – Height is inclusive of the roof height.</p> <p>AO2.2 Development is screened from view from roads or other public places by an existing natural landform or an existing native vegetation buffer.</p> <p>AO2.3 Where development on land steeper than 1 in 6 (16.6%) cannot be avoided, development follows the natural contours of the site.</p> <p>AO2.4 The external features, walls and roofs of buildings and structures have a subdued and non-reflective palette.</p> <p>Note – Examples of suitable colours include shades of green, olive green, blue green, grey green, green blue, indigo, brown, blue grey, and green yellow.</p> <p>AO2.5 No clearing of native vegetation occurs on land with a slope greater than 1 in 6 (16.6%).</p> <p>AO2.6 Advertising devices do not occur.</p>
Development within the coastal scenery zone	
<p>PO3 The landscape values of the Coastal scenery zone as identified on the Landscape values overlay maps contained in Schedule 2 are managed to integrate and limit the visual impact of development.</p> <p>Note – A visual impact assessment is undertaken in accordance with Planning scheme policy – Landscape values in satisfaction of a performance outcomes</p>	<p>AO3.1 The dominance of the natural character of the coast is maintained or enhanced when viewed from the foreshore.</p> <p>AO3.2 Where located adjacent to the foreshore buildings and structures are setback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Where no adjoining development, a minimum of 50 metres from the coastal high water mark and the setback area is landscaped with a native vegetation buffer

Performance outcomes	Acceptable outcomes
	<p>that has a minimum width of 10 metres; or</p> <p>(b) Where there is adjoining development, setbacks will be consistent with that of adjoining buildings and structures, but not less than 10m from the coastal high water mark. The setback area is landscaped in accordance with the requirements of the landscaping code but may allow areas for pedestrian and vehicle access.</p> <hr/> <p>AO3.3 Where separated from the foreshore by land contained within public ownership (e.g. unallocated State land, esplanade or other public open space), buildings and structures area setback:</p> <p>(a) where no adjoining development, a minimum of 6 metres from the coastward property boundary. The setback area is landscape in accordance with the requirements of the landscaping code but may allow for areas for pedestrian and vehicle access; or</p> <p>(b) Where there is adjoining development, setbacks will be consistent with that of adjoining . The setback area is landscaped in accordance with the requirements of the landscaping code.</p>
<p>PO4 Development is to maximise opportunities to maintain and/or enhance natural landscape values through the maintenance and restoration of vegetated buffers between development and coastal waters where practicable.</p> <p>Note – A visual impact assessment is undertaken in accordance with Planning scheme policy – Landscape values in satisfaction of a performance outcomes</p>	<p>AO4.1 No clearing of native vegetation is undertaken within a Coastal scenic area, except for vegetation damage undertaken in accordance with the Vegetation management code.</p>