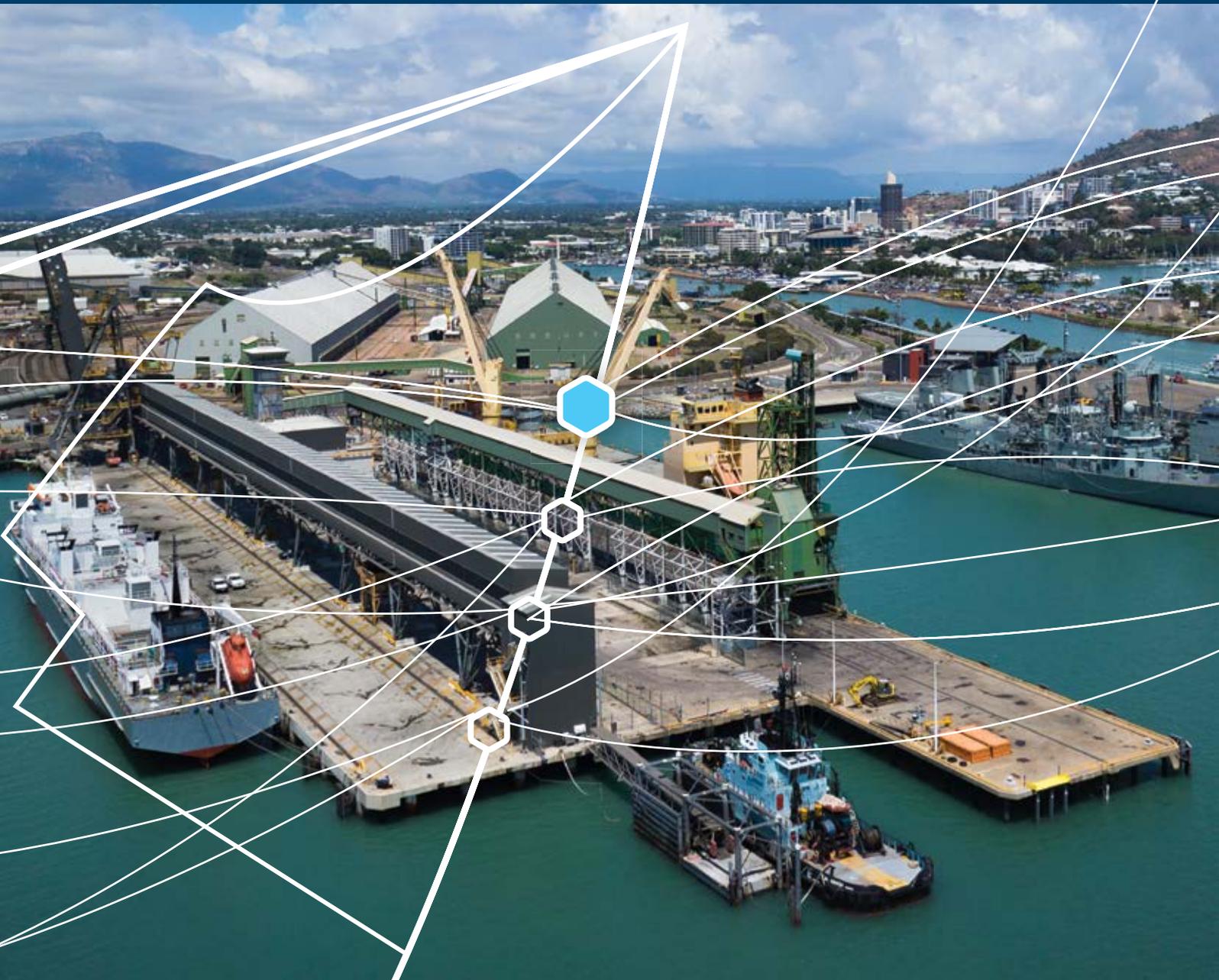


Priority port master planning

Report on public consultation

Draft master plan for the priority Port of Townsville

Queensland | Australia | 2019



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1. Background

1.1 Priority port master planning

The Queensland Government is leading master planning for the four priority ports of Gladstone, Townsville, Hay Point/Mackay, and Abbot Point, as required by the *Sustainable Ports Development Act 2015* (Ports Act) and the *Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan* (Reef 2050 Plan).

Priority port master planning will support the sustainable development of critical economic infrastructure, the state's priority ports, in a way that will balance growth, job creation, environmental values, and community interests.

1.2 Master planning for the priority Port of Townsville

The priority Port of Townsville is a critical northern gateway for the state's trade and investment. It is the largest general cargo and container port in northern Australia and Australia's leading exporter of copper, zinc, lead and sugar. The port supports a wide range of industry sectors, including resources, energy and agriculture while providing an increasingly strategic role in Australia's defence capabilities. It also plays a vital role in tourism for the region.

Through master planning, the Queensland Government has established a long-term vision for the future development of the Port of Townsville, consistent with the principles of ecologically sustainable development. Master planning provides a strategic and coordinated approach, considering issues beyond strategic port land, including potential marine and land-based impacts, port and supply chain infrastructure capacity and connectivity, and economic, community, and environmental interests.

The Queensland Government released the *Draft master plan for the priority Port of Townsville* (draft master plan) for public consultation in accordance with the Ports Act. The Ports Act requires that draft priority port master plans are publicly notified for at least 30 business days prior to their finalisation.

Public consultation for the draft master plan, opened on Monday 5 November 2018 and closed on Monday 17 December 2018, providing stakeholders and the community the opportunity to make submissions on the draft master plan. The draft master plan was accompanied by a set of supporting documents that informed the development of the draft master plan and show how it could be implemented. This included reports identified in section 2.1.1 and a preliminary draft port overlay.

1.3 Purpose

Under section 45 of the Ports Act, the Queensland Government is required to keep a register of matters raised in submissions on the draft master plan during public consultation.

The purpose of this consultation report is to meet the requirements of section 45 of the Ports Act by providing:

- a summary of the matters raised in submissions received during the public consultation period
- an overview of the government's response to the summarised matters, including how the final master plan considered the matters raised.

2. Public consultation program

2.1 Consultation approach

The draft master plan was released for public consultation on Monday 5 November 2018 to Monday 17 December 2018.

A public consultation program was delivered to meet the requirements of the Ports Act and included a range of communication and stakeholder engagement activities to raise community awareness of the scope, process, and opportunity to comment on the draft port master plan.

2.1.1 Notification of the release of the draft master plan

In accordance with the Ports Act and to ensure the community was well-informed about the release of the draft port master plan, the following notification activities were undertaken on Monday 5 November 2018:

- A range of information was published on the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) website (www.tmr.qld.gov.au/SustainablePorts-Townsville), including the draft master plan; preliminary draft port overlay; public notice advertisement; supporting documents (which included the *Evidence base report*, *Infrastructure and supply chain analysis report*, and *Risk assessment report*); two fact sheets; and information about where hard copies of the master plan were available to view.
- Public notice advertisements were printed in The Townsville Bulletin, The Australian and The Courier-Mail, detailing that the Minister had made the draft master plan and details about the public consultation period.
- An extraordinary Gazette Notice was issued.
- Letters from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads were sent to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Port of Townsville Limited (POTL), the CEO of Townsville City Council (TCC), the Mayor of TCC, the Minister for Economic Development Queensland and the Queensland Coordinator-General, informing these key stakeholders the draft master plan had been prepared and released for public consultation.
- Emails were sent to stakeholders from a subscribers' database announcing the release of the draft master plan, providing information on how to make a submission, and the contact details of the project team.

Additionally, public consultation on the draft port master plan was promoted through a range of communication tools, including:

- A ministerial media release from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, issued on Tuesday 6 November 2018, advising the draft master plan had been released for public consultation and informing when public information sessions were being held in Townsville and Magnetic Island.
- Social media posts on TMR's Twitter account published on Tuesday 6 November 2018 and a LinkedIn post published on Wednesday 7 November 2018.
- Reminder emails were sent to targeted stakeholders from a subscribers' database on Monday 10 December 2018, reminding them of the consultation period and its closing date of Monday 17 December 2018.
- Two fact sheets were printed and distributed to the community, and also published on the TMR website to give Queenslanders an overview of the draft master plan and provide information on how to make a submission.

2.1.2 Access to draft port master plan and supporting documents

The draft port master plan and supporting information about it were made available through:

- the TMR website (www.tmr.qld.gov.au/SustainablePorts-Townsville)

- printed copies were made available at the Townsville and Brisbane public libraries and at the TMR offices of 61 Mary Street, Brisbane and 445 Flinders Street, Townsville.

2.1.3 Public information sessions

Three information sessions were held during the public consultation period where departmental officers and officers from POTL and TCC were available to talk to the community about the draft port master plan. The information sessions provided members of the public and industry stakeholders an opportunity to speak directly with officers either one-on-one, or in small groups, and discuss topics of importance relating to port activities.

The details of the public information sessions were included in a Ministerial media release on 6 November 2018, advertised in The Townsville Bulletin on 10 November 2018, promoted through TMR's social media channels (Twitter and LinkedIn), and promoted on POTL's social media channels and local networks.

Industry stakeholders were emailed an invitation to attend one of the information session.

Information sessions included:

- a targeted industry session held on Wednesday 21 November 2018 at the Townsville Maritime Museum between 2pm and 4pm; ten people from local businesses and organisations attended
- a community information session held on Wednesday 21 November 2018 at the Townsville Maritime Museum between 5pm and 7pm; seven residents attended
- a community information session held on Thursday 22 November 2018 at the Magnetic Island Bowls Club between 10am and 12pm; six residents attended.

2.1.4 Other sessions

During the public consultation period, draft master plan presentations were delivered at the:

- Townsville Industry Breakfast on Tuesday 27 November 2018 to 260 attendees
- POTL community liaison group on Wednesday 28 November 2018
- North/North West Planners Forum on Thursday 29 November 2018 to local and state government planning professionals.

Following the formal consultation period, follow-up meetings with submitters were held to clarify issues raised by submitters and to inform the amendments to the master plan.

2.1.5 Port of Townsville Limited communications and media

To increase awareness of the public consultation program, POTL:

- published Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter posts about the release of the draft master plan on Tuesday 6 November 2018
- released a media statement about the release of the draft master plan on Thursday 8 November 2018
- published a Facebook post with details about the information sessions on Tuesday 13 November 2018
- General Manager Infrastructure and Planning, Kim Gebers conducted a radio interview with ABC North Queensland about the draft master plan in a brief segment that aired on Wednesday 21 November 2018
- attended port industry and community information sessions on Wednesday 21 and Thursday 22 November 2018
- hosted a POTL community liaison group meeting to discuss the draft master plan on Wednesday 28 November 2018.

2.1.6 Website statistics

The following documents were made available on TMR's program website during the public consultation period. Access by members of the community, local business, industry and stakeholders showed strong results:

- Website unique views — 897 views
- Draft master plan — 281 downloads
- Supporting master planning documents, including:
 - Preliminary draft port overlay — 69 downloads
 - Evidence base reports — 54 downloads
 - Fact sheets — 87 downloads.

3. Submissions

3.1 Submission summary

Twelve submissions were received during the public consultation period, from a range of stakeholder groups and individuals, including:

- four submissions from individual community members
- three submissions from environmentally focussed groups and peak environmental bodies
- two submissions from industry
- one submission from a local community group
- one submission from a local government
- one submission from a Queensland Government agency.

3.2 Themes of consultation and responses

A range of matters were raised in the submissions. These matters were categorised into four common themes. The four themes identified in the table below have been ordered based on the number of submissions that raised each theme.

Theme	Number of submissions that raised the theme
Refinement of the draft master plan – content and mapping	8
Protection of environmental values, including the Great Barrier Reef	7
Maintenance dredging activities and potential impacts on Magnetic Island	6
Port optimisation initiatives	3

All submissions received were analysed and considered during preparation of the final master plan. Submissions were also considered during the preparation of a draft port overlay for the priority Port of Townsville.

The following tables identify the matters raised within each theme and outline the government's response including how the matters were considered in preparing the final master plan.

It is recognised some matters may be relevant to more than one theme.

3.2.1 Refinement of the draft master plan – content and mapping

Matter raised	Response
<p>Minor grammar, wording, and mapping changes to improve the clarity and readability of the master plan.</p>	<p>The master plan has been amended to improve presentation and clarity of information including, policy initiatives, mapping, and diagrams. The following amendments were made to improve the master plans readability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diagrams have been used to better explain complex information where appropriate • information notes have been included in the final master plan to assist interpretation • minor amendments to mapping including updates to reflect current data sets, upscaling of maps and insets.
<p>Suggestions to include additional mapping of environmental values within and surrounding the master planned area.</p>	<p>New environmental values mapping has been included in the master plan appendices. The mapping includes hightide shorebird roost sites and potential shorebird habitat areas which is a first of its kind for Cleveland Bay (see Appendix B of the master plan).</p> <p>The data for the shorebird mapping was provided by the Queensland Wader Study Group with input from academics from the University of Queensland.</p> <p>The shorebird mapping demonstrates a collaborative ‘citizen science’ approach bringing together community data, academic expertise, and government resources to produce shorebird mapping.</p>
<p>Request to remove a light industrial property under the Townsville City Plan in Cluden from the master planned area.</p>	<p>The master plan identifies industrial land within the Townsville State Development Area for port-related activities, such as a medium and heavy industries, that require proximity to the Port of Townsville.</p> <p>It is considered that the particular parcel of light industrial land identified in the submission is unlikely to be required for long-term port-related development within the timeframe of the master plan. Therefore, it has been removed from the master planned area, resulting in a minor change to the master planned area boundary.</p>
<p>The inclusion of information about current regulatory frameworks, environmental management measures, and statutory conditions that apply to port-related development.</p>	<p>A comprehensive assessment of the existing statutory requirements and operational environmental management measures relevant to the master planned area was undertaken during preparation of the master plan.</p> <p>The <i>Risk assessment report</i> prepared to inform the draft master plan recognised that existing planning and regulatory frameworks across all levels of government provide a comprehensive system for managing potential environmental impacts associated with port-related development.</p>

Matter raised	Response
	<p>The master plan has been amended to provide an overview of existing legislative frameworks for maintenance dredging in Queensland (see the maintenance dredging section in Part A of the master plan). Footnotes and hyperlinks to the <i>Risk assessment report</i> which provides more detailed information about state and Commonwealth statutory requirements, approvals and operational and environmental management measures for managing potential impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value of the Great Barrier Reef have been included.</p> <p>Additional content, including diagrams has been included in the introduction of the master plan to assist the community and industry to better understand how the master plan and port overlay will operate under existing regulatory frameworks. Supporting material including fact sheets and web content will be released alongside the final master plan.</p>

3.2.2 Protection of environmental values, including the Great Barrier Reef

Matter raised	Response
<p>Suggestion to strengthen objectives and outcomes to protect of the Great Barrier Reef and reference ecologically sustainable development.</p>	<p>The environment objectives and desired outcomes identified in <i>Part B: Strategic vision, objectives and desired outcomes</i> of the master plan have been set to apply to activities across the entire master planned area. These are consistent with the principles of ecologically sustainable development.</p> <p>The master plan has been strengthened to identify leading practice in a Great Barrier Reef context as a desired outcome for the master planned area (see Part B of the master plan). The existing regulatory requirements of Queensland and Australian Government development assessment processes are not modified by the master plan and will continue to apply.</p>
<p>Expanding the proposed master planned area to include additional areas with protected environmental values within the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area (GBRWHA).</p>	<p>Stakeholder views about the exclusion or inclusion of already protected areas with high environmental values were mixed.</p> <p>The spatial extent of the master planned area encompasses land and marine areas needed for the efficient development and operation of the port.</p> <p>The inclusion of areas that contain significant environmental values, such as Fish Habitat Areas and intertidal land already protected under existing environmental legislation have been intentionally avoided. This approach provides greater assurance to the community that port-related development is not planned to occur in such areas.</p> <p>The master plan has been amended to include additional wording about environmental values surrounding the master planned area (see Part D of the master plan).</p>
<p>Request to include additional information about locally significant environmental values, including those that contribute to the Outstanding Universal Value of the Great Barrier Reef, such as intertidal wetlands and migratory shorebirds.</p>	<p>The master plan has been amended to include additional wording about environmental values within and surrounding the master planned area. This content provides greater recognition of Magnetic Island, Indigenous cultural heritage values, intertidal wetland areas, and migratory shorebirds (see Part D of the master plan).</p> <p>The master plan has been amended to recognise that the contribution of local fringing reefs and shallow water coral reefs around Magnetic Island provide greater significance to the Outstanding Universal Value of the Great Barrier Reef. Part D of the master plan has been amended to reflect a change of classification for coral reefs from minor to moderate contribution to the OUV of the GBRWHA.</p>

Matter raised	Response
<p>The need for greater protection of the Great Barrier Reef and management of cumulative impacts under the Reef 2050 Plan, in addition to existing regulatory processes.</p>	<p>The Queensland Government's commitment to reduce current cumulative impacts from land and marine-based activities under Queensland jurisdiction is acknowledged in the master plan.</p> <p>Priority port master planning will respond to cumulative impact management research and policy developments as these are developed.</p>
<p>Suggestion that the master plan should address the challenge of climate change and impacts of global warming on coral reefs, such as recent coral bleaching events.</p>	<p>The master plan has been amended to recognise the major threats to the GBR such as rising ocean temperatures, ocean acidification, and land-based run-off (see the Great Barrier Reef section in Part A of the master plan).</p> <p>Part D of the master plan has also been updated to recognise the importance of local reefs which if unaffected by coral bleaching, may assume a greater significance on a reef-wide scale.</p>

3.2.3 Maintenance dredging activities and potential impacts on Magnetic Island

Matter raised	Response
<p>Expanding the master planned area to include potential maintenance dredged material placement areas beyond port limits and within the state and Commonwealth marine parks.</p>	<p>Under section 6(3)(b) of the Ports Act, the master planned area boundary is restricted to marine areas within existing port limits but outside of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (Cwlth) and the Great Barrier Reef Coast Marine Park (Qld).</p>
<p>Investigating and moving the existing maintenance dredged material placement area (DMPA) to deeper waters outside Cleveland Bay or other suitable locations to minimise potential sedimentation impacts on Magnetic Island.</p>	<p>The master plan does not restrict the consideration of alternative locations for DMPA's. The existing approval processes for placement of maintenance dredged material are not affected by the master plan.</p> <p>The master plan identifies the current Commonwealth and state approved DMPA (see Part C of the master plan) and does not prevent the relocation of this site in the future if the requisite approvals are obtained.</p> <p>The master plan supports opportunities for continually seeking improvements to maintenance dredging practices, including potential beneficial reuse and improved outcomes from disposal of maintenance dredged materials on land or sea. The guiding principles of the <i>Maintenance Dredging Strategy for the GBRWHA Ports</i> require ports operating within the GBRWHA to examine and evaluate new technologies and beneficial reuse options for managing maintenance dredged material. This is consistent with the <i>Guidelines for the Long-term Maintenance Dredging Management Plans</i> (2018).</p> <p>The Port of Townsville Limited (POTL) is investigating long-term alternative options for the sea placement of maintenance dredged material.</p>
<p>Include requirements for Port of Townsville Limited to review its maintenance dredging activities as part of its long-term maintenance dredging management plan (LMDMP).</p>	<p>POTL's LMDMP was released in January 2019. The LMDMP is required to be formally reviewed at least every five years and the creation of a new LMDMP every ten years. The master plan has been updated to reflect this requirement (see the maintenance dredging section in Part A of the master plan).</p> <p>The requirement for POTL to prepare and implement a LMDMP is prescribed by the Department of Transport and Main Road's <i>Maintenance Dredging Strategy for the GBRWHA Ports</i>.</p> <p>It is noted that maintenance dredging activities undertaken by POTL are subject to a highly regulated approval system that requires state and Commonwealth approvals and permits based on international agreements and conventions. A new diagram has been developed and included in the master plan to assist reader understanding of the</p>

Matter raised	Response
	current legislative framework for maintenance dredging in Queensland (see the maintenance dredging section in Part A of the master plan).
Concern about overlapping consultation processes for the Port of Townsville long-term maintenance dredging management plan and the draft master plan.	The Port of Townsville released its LMDMP for consultation from 27 November to 12 December 2018 which coincided with the draft master plan notification period. The consultation processes for the draft master plan and the LMDMP are discrete projects conducted independently by the TMR and POTL.

3.2.4 Port optimisation initiatives

Matter raised	Response
<p>Suggestion to include additional wording about impacts on local infrastructure networks from increased port development.</p>	<p>It is recognised that local infrastructure networks are important to facilitate port-related development. The Ports Act does not include requirements for local infrastructure; this is regulated under the <i>Planning Act 2016</i>.</p> <p>It is understood that the Office of the Coordinator-General and Townsville City Council are investigating the efficient delivery of infrastructure to support the Townsville State Development Area.</p>
<p>Request to include additional information about the Townsville Eastern Access Rail Corridor and the Townsville Port Access Road.</p>	<p>Comment has been noted and relevant sections of the master plan reviewed. The master plan appropriately recognises the proposed Townsville Eastern Access Rail Corridor project as being enabling infrastructure critical for the long-term development of the port. The master plan identifies and protects the future alignment through its inclusion in the Infrastructure and supply chain corridor precinct.</p>
<p>Include more specific information about how the port can optimise existing assets to improve operational efficiency and reduce the need for expansion.</p>	<p>Part A of the master plan has been amended to provide examples of port and infrastructure optimisation initiatives and includes information about the sequencing of the port's planned expansion.</p>

