

# **RTI Application**

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**URBIS Report**

**DETE**



# Scoping Study for Special Schools

Department of Education, Training & Employment

23 August 2013

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# Executive Summary

Urbis was commissioned by the Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment in June 2013 to undertake a preliminary scoping study for new special schools with a focus on the following priority areas:

- Cairns;
- Sunshine Coast (Caboolture, Nambour, Maroochydore);
- Gold Coast (Coomera, Southport and Mudgeeraba); and
- Ipswich and Springfield.

The Department of Education, Training and Employment provides a range of programs for students including specialised programs and services for students who have significant educational support needs. There are currently 43 special schools across Queensland and a new special school to cater for additional demand has not been built in the last decade.

## DEMAND AND NEED FOR SPECIAL SCHOOLS

This project comes at a time of significant policy change and community concern regarding opportunities available for people with a disability and their families and carers. Policy reforms such as the National Disability Insurance Scheme, Gonski Education Funding Review and the introduction of a national definition for disabilities; have led to increased community expectations regarding the quality of services individuals and families receive and broad community discussion. This has implications for special schools and special education programs more generally.

Research suggests that families make decisions around their children's schooling options based on a number of factors (e.g. income, type and complexity of disability, location, culture, previous experience with education environments and/or disability services, reputation and 'look' of the school) and indicators such as prevalence of disability, population growth, and socio-economic disadvantage cannot be completely accurate in determining need and demand in the future. It is therefore important to look at a number of factors that will drive demand for new special schools, rather than a pure needs assessment based on statistics.

## ASSESSMENT OF PRIORITY LOCATIONS

Urbis has assessed the four priority locations based on the following need and demand indicators to identify those locations with the greatest need for a special school.

TABLE 1 - METHODOLOGY FOR ASSESSMENT OF PRIORITY LOCATIONS

APPROACH	INDICATORS
Need Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Projected population age profile at an SA2 level (ABS Census data and Office of Economic and Statistical Research (OESR) data);</li><li>▪ Need for Assistance with Core Activities (as declared on the Census and applying these rates to population projections);</li><li>▪ Socio Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA); and</li><li>▪ Australian Early Development Index (AEDI).</li></ul>
Demand Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Location and number of special schools within a 10km radius;</li><li>▪ Planning context and population growth pathways; and</li><li>▪ Significant retail, commercial and social infrastructure developments which may</li></ul>

APPROACH	INDICATORS
	affect families choice of housing location.
Qualitative Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeted engagement with DETE and EQ staff to identify location and service-specific factors likely to influence need and demand</li> </ul>

These investigations confirmed the following:

- There is an immediate need for a new Special School in Cairns and the best location for this service would be in the southern growth corridor towards Edmonton.
- There is an established and growing need for additional services within the Sunshine Coast (Caboolture, Nambour, Maroochydore) region. High demand for additional special school services in Caboolture, although this may be addressed through expansion of the Caboolture Special School to a junior and senior campus in the short-medium term, with future planning for new Special School site in the medium-long term. Detailed consideration should also be made of a new Special School at the northern end of Sunshine Coast to service the Gympie to Noosa corridor.
- There is an established and growing need for additional services within the Gold Coast (Coomera, Southport and Mudgeeraba). High demand for additional special school services in the northern Gold Coast corridor with a need for a new special school north-west of Coomera along the development and transport pathway.
- There is an established and growing need for services in Ipswich and Springfield. There is likely to be high demand for a new Special School associated with the master planned communities of Springfield and Ripley Valley in the medium term. Detailed consideration should be given to current and future capacity of existing Ipswich special schools.

TABLE 2 - PRIORITISATION OF NEW SPECIAL SCHOOLS

	Existing provision	Current estimated demand for services	Timeframe of need	Possible locations / solutions	Priority for attention
<b>Cairns</b>	None	High	Immediate (0 - 2 years)	New special school in Edmonton growth pathway	Very high
<b>Caboolture</b>	1 existing special school	Medium	Immediate (0 - 2 years)	Short term expansion of Caboolture Special School and new special school in the longer term	High
<b>Northern Sunshine Coast</b>	2 existing special schools	Medium	Medium - long term (5-10 years)	New special school to service Gympie / Noosa	Medium
<b>Gold Coast</b>	3 existing special schools	High	Short term (2 - 5 years)	New special school in North / North-west of Coomera	High

Ipswich	4 existing special schools	Medium	Medium – long term (5 - 10 years)	Utilise capacity in Ipswich first and then priority location would be near Springfield Town Centre	Medium
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## LOCATIONAL CRITERIA

Based on an understanding of current planning practice and alignment with current and emerging literature regarding the importance of responsive environments which support learning outcomes for students with a disability, the following locational criteria have been developed for future location assessment.

TABLE 3 – LOCATIONAL CRITERIA OF SPECIAL SCHOOLS – NEW/ EXPANDED/ RENEWAL

UNDERSTAND THE LOCAL CONTEXT	STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS	PLANNED, FLEXIBLE AND ADAPTABLE CAMPUS APPROACH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local demand;</li> <li>▪ Integration of school within local communities;</li> <li>▪ Responsiveness to family and carer responsibilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Supports the development of life skills for students</li> <li>▪ Supportive environments for all ages, gender and abilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strategic Planning</li> <li>▪ Siting of core functional components</li> </ul>

These criteria have been refined through stakeholder discussions, but would benefit from ongoing testing and review as part of future site selection, expansion and renewal processes. Further details are provided in Section 8 of this report.

## THOUGHTS FOR FUTURE INVESTIGATIONS

Given the limited scope of this study there is opportunity for further investigations the Department and in particular, the Infrastructure Services Branch, may wish to undertake. These include:

- Assessment of a junior and senior campus model for new Special Schools and/or expansion of Special Schools where a current site has available land.
- Further stakeholder discussions with school principals of special schools and mainstream schools supporting a Special Education Program to understand challenges and benefits of colocation of campuses.
- Successful models such as the Upper Coomera State College Advancement Centre should be considered as case studies for co-located mainstream and special education services.
- The *MySchool* data utilised in this study indicated a significantly higher proportion of male to female students in each of the special schools. This should be confirmed against internal Departmental data. If confirmed it may have implications for future design of facilities and programs of special schools to better meet the needs of a differentiated gender balance.



## PROJECT LIMITATIONS

The scope for this project did not include a detailed analysis of the policy position of Government around supporting people with a disability, or available funding, or operational policies of education services. A Student with Disabilities (SWD) project is being undertaken in order to develop and establish agreed policy positions and methodology on location, staffing and set ups for schooling provisions for students with a disability.

The Urbis Scoping Study project aligns with the directions of the SWD project and those currently under consideration by the Queensland Planning Schools Commission, including the understanding future school population trends and schooling capacity.

# Introduction

## 1.1 PURPOSE OF THIS PROJECT

Urbis was commissioned by the Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment in June 2013 to undertake a preliminary scoping study for new special schools with a focus on the following priority areas:

- Cairns;
- Sunshine Coast (Caboolture, Nambour, Maroochydore);
- Gold Coast (Coomera, Southport and Mudgeeraba); and
- Ipswich and Springfield.

Urbis has undertaken research and analysis around needs and demand to assist in future special schools infrastructure planning, based on population growth and enrolment trends and projections.

The Department of Education, Training and Employment provides a range of programs for students including specialised programs and services for students who have significant educational support needs.

To assist students with disabilities participate in the life of the school and achieve educational outcomes, school communities make adjustments to programs, teaching and learning strategies and facilitate increased access to the curriculum.

There are currently 43 special schools across Queensland and a new special school to cater for additional demand has not been built in the last decade.

A Student with Disabilities (SWD) project is being undertaken in order to develop and establish agreed policy positions and methodology on location, staffing and set ups for schooling provisions for students with a disability.

A SWD Reference Group (SWDRG) has been established to guide the SWD project and infrastructure is a key component of this project.

The Urbis Scoping Study project aligns with the directions of the SWD project and those currently under consideration by the Queensland Planning Schools Commission, including the understanding future school population trends and schooling capacity.

The scope for this project did not include a detailed analysis of the policy position of Government around supporting people with a disability, or available funding, or operational policies of education services.

## 1.2 REPORT STRUCTURE

Our report is structured in the following way:

Chapter 1 – Strategic Context, examining current and historical policy and planning influences on the development of education services and in particular services for students with a disability.

Chapter 2 – Demand and Needs Analysis, provides a summary of the key findings of the needs and analysis.

Chapter 3 – Location Selection Criteria, discusses proposed location selection criteria which have been developed based on an understanding of current planning practice and alignment with current and emerging literature regarding the importance of responsive education environments for learning outcomes.

Chapter 4 – Town Planning Context provides summary findings from a scan of the communities of interest in terms of strategic planning and identifies potential areas within the locality that may be suitable to investigate as new special school locations.

Chapter 5 – Conclusions, summarises the key findings of this project.

This Scoping Study report is supported by a background technical document, *Location Profiles*, which includes detailed needs and demand data by locality of interest for:

- Cairns;
- Sunshine Coast (Caboolture, Nambour, Maroochydore);
- Gold Coast (Coomera, Southport and Mudgeeraba); and
- Ipswich and Springfield.

### 1.3 KEY INDICATORS OF NEED AND DEMAND

In assessing need and demand for new special schools, the Urbis project team has used a variety of indicators. Understanding that families make decisions around their children's schooling options based on a number of factors (e.g. income, type and complexity of disability, location, culture, previous experience with education environments and/or disability services, reputation and 'look' of the school), no one indicator will be completely accurate in determining need and demand in the future.

#### 1.3.1 NEED

Given this, for the purposes of this project the project team have used the following factors and publicly available statistics to indicate need; and determined those localities that indicate need on a number of indicators will have the greatest need for a special school:

- Projected population age profile at an SA2 level (ABS Census data and Office of Economic and Statistical Research (OESR) data);
- Need for Assistance with Core Activities (as declared on the Census and applying these rates to population projections);
- Socio Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA); and
- Australian Early Development Index (AEDI).

#### 1.3.2 DEMAND

In understanding potential demand for new special schools we have used the following indicators:

- Location and number of special schools within a 10km radius;
- Planning context and population growth pathways; and
- Key social infrastructure developments such as hospitals and health services.

## 2 Strategic Context for Special Education Services

### 2.1 PLANNING FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION SERVICES

Education services and infrastructure have an instrumental role in establishing liveable communities. The provision of education services supports a culture of life-long self-improvement<sup>1</sup>. The availability of such services builds the capacity of local communities and empowers them to sustain and enhance core elements which compromise the liveability of their community, including the economy, environmental sustainability, leadership and health and wellbeing. They also serve as a key method to gather and integrate people of diverse socio-economic backgrounds within the community, often enhancing a community's sense of place.

#### 2.1.1 APPROACH

The Department of Education, Training and Employment (DETE) deliver public education services to around 70% of all Queensland primary and secondary school students<sup>2</sup>. Generally state schools are established for the long term, with many of the current assets having been built more than 50 years ago.

In planning secondary schools, DETE forecasts up to 20 years in advance to develop catchment projections, with review and more detailed consideration of catchments in the five years prior to construction. To establish a new school DETE generally aims to have 300 new attendees from the catchment. This is calculated by assessing residential population projections.<sup>3</sup> It does not account for those students who may attend private/independent schools as there is a requirement for the DETE to provide a universal service to any student wishing to access state school services. DETE will also consider the impact on enrolments and subsequent sustainability of the existing schools within and adjacent to the catchment. The current approach to the development of new secondary schools is to establish services for Years 8 and 9 initially, and add another year of service through each of operation i.e. Years 7 and 8 in first year (preparing for the introduction of Year 7 into secondary schools in 2015), addition of Year 9 in second year addition of Year 10 in third year, addition of Year 11 in fourth year and addition of Year 12 in fifth year.

While historically schools have been located where people live, there is now discussion within advisory and planning services that sustainability may also be positively affected if schools are located on key transport routes between home and work locations. There is also ongoing consideration of whether the previous planning approach for optimal school sizes based on standard sizes for urban and regional areas is still appropriate, or whether more of a place-based approach should be taken to tailor school planning to relevant community needs. These discussions are in preliminary stages within DETE and align to the consideration of suitable locations for special schools and whether there is an optimal size for a special school.

#### 2.1.2 SPECIAL SCHOOLS

There are currently 43 State special schools in Queensland and only one private special school. These schools generally have annual enrolments of between 60 and 200 students. Additionally, a number of mainstream primary and secondary schools provide a Special Education Program for students with a disability. This is specialist program and goes beyond the support services that all state schools in Queensland are required to offer students with a disability. Families of students with a an intellectual disability have the right to choose which type of service their child accesses i.e. special school, special education program or support services.

The following map represents the locations of special schools in Queensland.

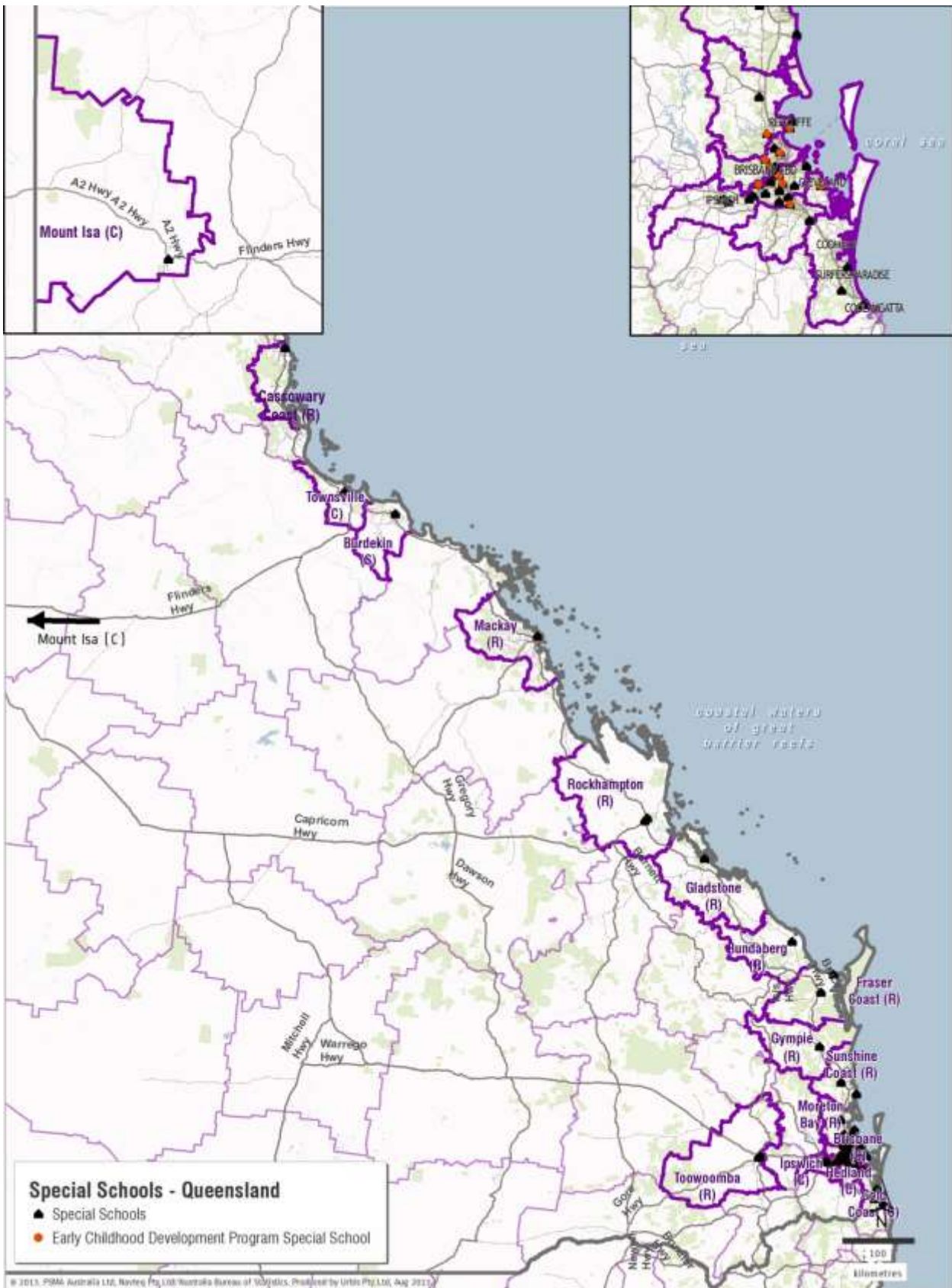
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<sup>1</sup>Partners for Liveable Communities Australia, Liveability April 2013

<sup>2</sup> According to DETE website <http://education.qld.gov.au/>

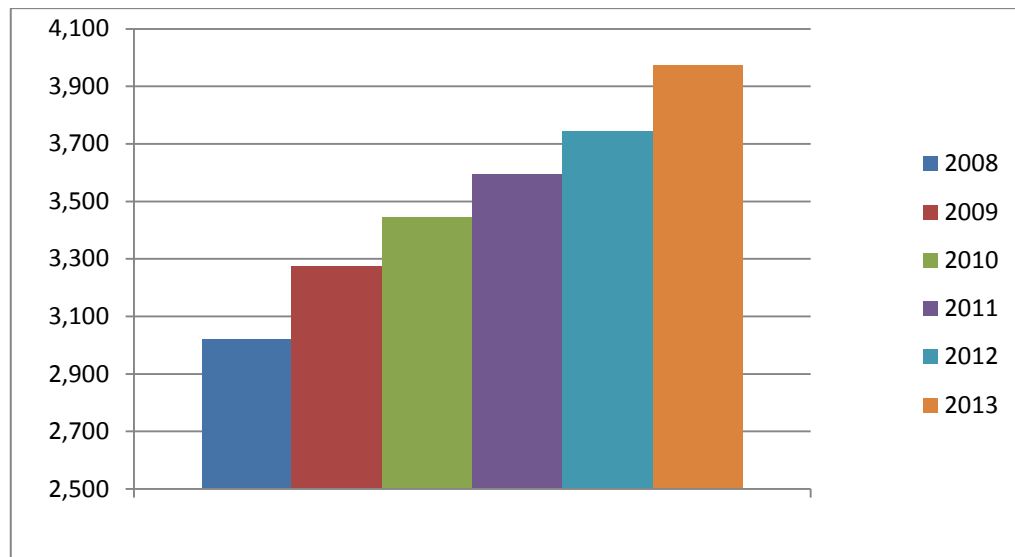
<sup>3</sup> Informal discussion with Principal Planning Officer, Schools Planning Division, Infrastructure Services, DETE March 2013

FIGURE 1 – STATE SCHOOL SPECIAL SCHOOLS IN QUEENSLAND



The following graph demonstrates the increasing demand and associated change in enrolment numbers in the state special schools in Queensland between 2008 and 2013<sup>4</sup>

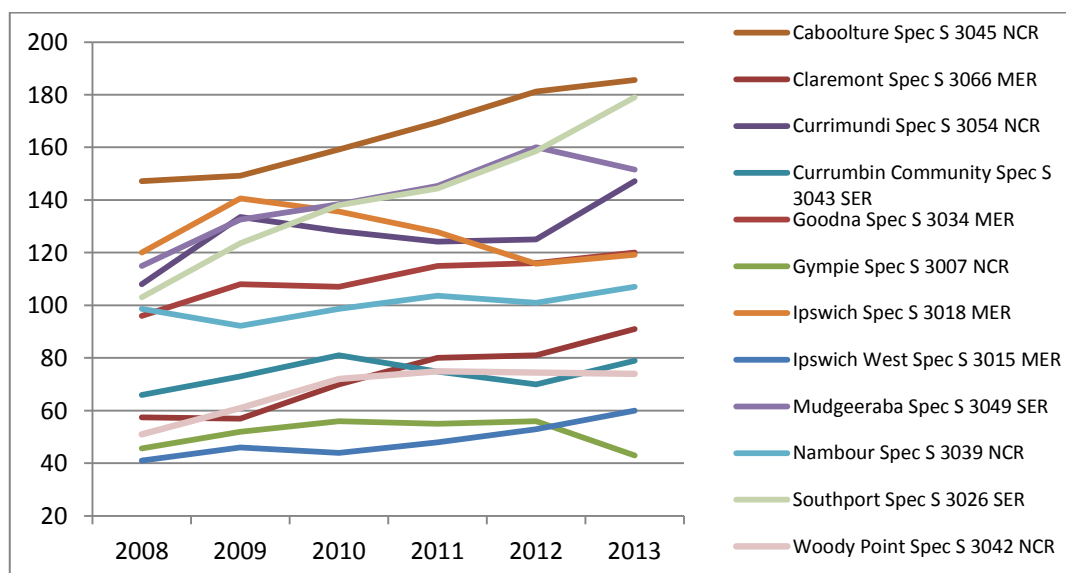
FIGURE 2 - QUEENSLAND STATE SPECIAL SCHOOL ENROLMENTS 2008-2013



Although total number of enrolments at all special schools in Queensland have risen between 2008 and 2013, there is a lot of variation between regions and individual schools as demonstrated in the following graph which charts enrolment numbers of schools within the study areas of:

- Cairns;
- Sunshine Coast (Caboolture, Nambour, Maroochydore);
- Gold Coast (Coomera, Southport and Mudgeeraba); and
- Ipswich and Springfield.

FIGURE 3 - STATE SPECIAL SCHOOL ENROLMENTS FOR STUDY AREAS 2008-2013<sup>5</sup>



<sup>4</sup> Data provided by Infrastructure Services Branch of the Department of Education, Training and Employment in June 2013 for the purposes of the Special Schools Scoping Project.

<sup>5</sup> Data provided by Infrastructure Services Branch of the Department of Education, Training and Employment in June 2013 for the purposes of the Special Schools Scoping Project.

The following information has been provided by the Infrastructure Division of the Department of Education, Training and Employment in June 2013 as part of the research phase of this project.

*Approximately 85 per cent of students verified with a disability attend primary and secondary schools, with approximately 15 per cent attending a special school in Queensland.*

*While there is a trend for more students with a disability attending mainstream primary and secondary schools in recent years, there has also been an increase in the real number of students enrolled in special schools. This indicates a demand remains for some students with an intellectual impairment and/or multiple impairments to enrol in special schools.*

*Research indicates that special schools are being reaffirmed as specialist schools providing education and support for students with the most severe and complex special education needs. For these students, special schools have a vital role to play in the overall spectrum of provision in meeting the educational needs of all children and young people with disabilities.*

### 2.1.3 REVIEW OF HISTORICAL PLANNING CONTEXT

Due to a changing policy landscape at a state and national level over the last decade, and a distinct policy position of the former Bligh Government around inclusion and promoting the availability of mainstream education services for students with a disability, there has been a resulting consequence of a hiatus in planning for new special schools in Queensland. It should be noted that there is not the inclusion policy position did not exclude planning of new special schools, but remained silent on the issue.

However, there continues to be a rise in demand for student places at special schools and pressure on existing special schools to meet the needs of a larger school population that may have historically been planned.<sup>6</sup> In addition to pressure on human resources, this has placed subsequent pressure on facilities and a current consideration of a variety of infrastructure planning models which consider size, location, facility type, school specialisation, etc. Further work will be required to determine whether there are clear guidelines for school design and placement. The scoping project undertaken by Urbis will provide some preliminary research into these issues, which can subsequently be tested with stakeholders.

### 2.1.4 RESOURCING METHODOLOGY FOR SPECIAL SCHOOLS IN QUEENSLAND

The following information has been provided by the Infrastructure Division of the Department of Education, Training and Employment in June 2013. It describes the current resourcing methodology in terms of staffing for Special Schools and Special Education programs in Queensland.

*Resourcing for students with disabilities (SWD) is broken into two major components: Special Schools, Special Education Programs (SEPs) and Services (SERVs). Staffing allocations are finalised according to enrolment and impairment data retrieved from the Adjusted Information Management Systems (AIMS) on the eighth day of the school year (Day 8).*

- *Special schools are resourced according to fixed ratios for teacher and teacher aides and are allocated at the school level.*
- *The allocation of teachers and teacher aide hours for special education programs (SEPs) and services (SERVs) in mainstream schools is based upon each region's proportional share of SWD enrolments. The enrolments included in the SWD totals are Prep, Years 1-12 with a verified disability, and compulsory non-state school programs. Students verified as having an intellectual impairment in the top 10th percentile are resourced at the same student teacher ratio as students in Special schools. These allocations are supplemented with admin time for Head of Special Education Services (HOSES), non-contact time, and time and travel. Resources are allocated at a regional level and distributed via the region according to local decision making processes.*

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<sup>6</sup> See Section 2.1.2 – Special Schools of this document for evidence of growth in demand.

Following Day 8, the Regions report to Central Office the distribution of SWD resources to individual school sites, programs and services via the SWD Data Collection Tool. This reported information is utilised as the basis of calculations for allocations of the Administrative Assistant Enhancement Program (AAEP) and Teacher Relief Scheme (TRS) to SEPs and SERVs.

### 2.1.5 QUEENSLAND SCHOOLS PLANNING COMMISSION

In July 2012, the Minister for Education, Training and Employment, John-Paul Langbroek established the Queensland Schools Planning Commission as a Ministerial Advisory Committee. The Commission is aimed at streamlining and coordinating processes around the planning, establishment and expansion of government and non-government schools across Queensland.

The Commission provides advice and recommendations to the Minister, drawing on evidence, expertise and consultation with key stakeholders. It looks at current infrastructure planning and financial systems of schools; efficiency strategies; capacity; and population trends in order to map demand based on need for infrastructure funding and support.<sup>7</sup>

The Commission does not take submissions for new or improved school infrastructure but directs these to the relevant body with responsibility for that school i.e. either DETE or an independent schools operator. At its discretion, the Commission may engage in specific consultation on areas of particular interest.

Although not specifically tasked with assessing need and demand for special schools at this time, there may be capacity for the Commission to consider information prepared by the Department which addresses resourcing and infrastructure for special schools, particularly in considering a standard approach to infrastructure assessment for these schools.

## 2.2 NEW DIRECTIONS FOR QUEENSLAND EDUCATION

Education Queensland is in a state of reform and change, responding to the changing policy and operational influences at a local, state and national level. The following are key foci of the Minister and DETE in relation to the delivery of primary and secondary education services in Queensland:

- Review of the resourcing for schools servicing students with a disability;
- Development of junior secondary school program;
- Specialist education and skills development (including industry alliances);
- Teacher quality; and
- PPP to accelerate development of schools in growth communities.

### 2.2.1 REVIEW OF THE RESOURCING FOR SCHOOLS SERVICING STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY

In 2013, the Queensland Government through Education Queensland is undertaking a review of resourcing for schools servicing students with a disability. *The changing nature and prevalence of disability; the fixed budget model of the Queensland Government; and the changing landscape of definitional and funding work occurring at a national level has led to a need to review current resources used to support Queensland students with disability.*<sup>8</sup>

A Disability Resourcing Review project is being undertaken to develop and establish agreed policy positions and methodology on the location, staffing and structure of schooling provisions for students with disability. One component of this review is to provide policy advice to inform future infrastructure planning

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<sup>7</sup> DETE Education Queensland website for Queensland Schools Planning Commission - <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/schools-planning-commission/>

<sup>8</sup> Education Queensland Disability resourcing review – infrastructure considerations



in relation to existing and future school facilities. The project being undertaken by Urbis will provide research that will be utilised by DETE Infrastructure Services to provide advice to the Resourcing Review Committee.

## 2.2.2 JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL PROGRAM

Queensland state schools are soon to undergo a transition where Year 7 is removed from the primary school structure, a new junior secondary school is established for Years 7-9 and senior secondary school will subsequently include Years 10-12. It is intended that this new structure will be in place by 2015 and aligns to national strategic directions. The current P-12 model of most special schools

## 2.2.3 SPECIALIST EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The current Queensland Government and in particular the Minister for Education has a strong position around supporting Queenslanders through education, with a focus on education pathways to achieve real jobs. As part of this we may see a renewed focus on specialist schools that offer skills development around the four pillars of the Newman Government's economic strategy – tourism, agriculture, resources and construction. Given that there is a strong federal position around “earn or learn” and a focus around supporting people with a disability into work opportunities, there may be a chance for program and infrastructure planning of these specialist schools to consider their relationship with and location to special schools and special education services for students with a disability. At the most basic level, these schools should be providing accessible infrastructure to support students with a disability.

## 2.2.4 TEACHER QUALITY

John-Paul Langbroek, the Minister of Education, Training and Employment has highlighted the need for the Queensland's Teachers' Union to develop a support plan to improve teacher quality in Queensland<sup>9</sup>. On April 8 2013, Premier Campbell Newman and John-Paul Langbroek announced the *Great Teachers = Great Results* action plan which endeavours to focus on teachers, whilst strengthening the government's existing reform agenda<sup>10</sup>.

Over the last several years there has been a focus from the Queensland and Australian Governments to ensure that special schools and special education services provide a learning program that is curriculum based to support students with a disability. However, anecdotal reports<sup>11</sup> indicate that there are no longer tertiary programs that train teachers specifically to work with students with a disability – although there remain units within tertiary courses that support this. This means that additional support for new teachers, or teachers working with students with a disability for the first time, is required to be provided by the schools and subsequently places additional pressure on school resources. This matter should be further investigated to validate.

## 2.2.5 PPPS TO ACCELERATE DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOLS IN GROWTH COMMUNITIES

The current Queensland Government is increasingly using Public Private Partnerships to accelerate development of schools in growth communities. The SEQ Schools Project uses the skills and resources of both the public and private sector to provide education services and infrastructure efficiently in areas of great demand<sup>12</sup>. The provision and development of schools through PPPs does not alter the core school and education services in any way, as the DETE maintain core responsibilities for delivery of education services, whilst the private sector constructs and maintains the facilities. The current policy around ensuring that school programs and infrastructure are accessible to students with a disability mean that design of these new facilities includes a provision for a special education unit.

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<sup>9</sup> Queensland Government, The Queensland Cabinet and Ministerial Directory, Union Fails to Support Better Teacher Quality April 2013

<sup>10</sup> Queensland Government, The Queensland Cabinet and Ministerial Directory, Great Teachers = Great Results, April 2013

<sup>11</sup> Stakeholder discussions with School Principals June 2013

<sup>12</sup> Queensland Government, DETE, SEQ Schools Project, April 2013

## 2.3 DISABILITY PREVALENCE

The following key take-outs are taken from “AIHW Bulletin 61 Disability in Australia: Trends in prevalence, education, employment and community living.”

- *There has been no significant change in the underlying age-standardised rates of severe or profound core activity limitations over the past two decades.*
- *A rise in the reported prevalence rates of disabling conditions associated with childhood such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and autism-related disorders resulted in a substantial increase in the reported number of children with a disability in the past decade.*
- *In 2003, children and young people with disability (especially those aged 15-20 years) were more likely to be attending school than at any time over the previous two decades.*
- *The increase in the number of students with disability is likely to create future demand for services and assistance to help these young people successfully manage the transition from school to adult life. This includes entry into employment, post-school education, and other social and economic activities.*
- *Between 1981 and 2003 there was a trend towards people with severe or profound core activity limitations living in the community. The trend was strongest in those aged 5-29 years. The trend shows clearly the importance of service programs to support carers, and to support the stability of community living arrangements.*

## 2.4 SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

There is a strong correlation between socioeconomic status and severe disability, according to a report released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare in 2009. Report author, Dr Louise O'Rance, said that the figures clearly showed that disability among people aged under 65 was more common in communities where residents had fewer economic resources. Dr O'Rance said that the relationship between disability and economic disadvantage 'works both ways'.

*“Socioeconomic disadvantage can contribute to disability and vice versa. People with disability often have lower average incomes than people without disability, and their disability can impose extra costs on individuals and their families.”*

*“On the other hand, risk factors for many chronic diseases are higher among socioeconomically disadvantaged people, and people working in lower status jobs can face greater occupational hazards (such as serious workplace injury) that in turn contribute to higher rates of disability”, Dr O'Rance said.<sup>13</sup>*

## 2.5 LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

There are a number of challenges associated with meeting the needs of children and young people with a disability, and the need to support their learning and education opportunities. These challenges face families, teachers, community and health service providers and potential employers. A variety of factors affect learning outcomes for students with a disability, as with students who do not have a disability, many of which are external to the curriculum. These include (but are not limited to) socio-economic and housing circumstances of families, potential transport disadvantage, requirements for flexible, adaptable and appropriate learning spaces, direct and indirect discrimination by students, teachers and communities in relation to expectations of students with a disability participating in education and work environments.

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<sup>13</sup> AIHW Report 2009 - [The geography of disability and economic disadvantage in Australian capital cities.](#)

These factors also distinctly affect family choice of facility type, location and program school services for their child<sup>14</sup>

Proposed major changes to the disability sector, including Disability Care (the National Disability Insurance Scheme) and consumer directed care packages are raising community awareness of some of the challenges facing people with a disability in terms of mainstream opportunities around education, employment and housing and they are also influencing demand for appropriate education choices for families, carers and students.

In addition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme, the Australian Government's education policy platform is committed to ensuring that all students have access to a quality education. Significant reforms have been implemented to support students with disability to achieve their potential. These include:

- support in accessing higher education through the Higher Education Disability Support Program
- early intervention packages
- targeted programs for children with autism; and,
- the More Support for Students with Disabilities initiative in schools.

The 2011 review of Disability Standards for Education 2005 found that these standards provided a '*good framework for promoting the requirements for students with disability to be able to access and participate in education on the same basis as all other students*'<sup>15</sup>, however further work is required to ensure the standards are effectively implemented.

In its response to the review, the Australian Government made a number of commitments which may have direct and in-direct impacts on special schools and special education programs in Queensland. They include:

- A commitment to improving access for all children to high quality, inclusive education and care services in both early childhood settings and school aged settings. The Government is also committed to increased access to quality vocational education and training and higher education.
- Circulation of resources to promote good practice to students, parents, teachers and other school staff. Topics to include learning impacts of specific disabilities, challenging behaviour, student safety and the use of restrictive practices with students with disability.
- Strategies for meeting the needs of students with disability who have complex and multiple needs.
- Extended coverage of the Standards to child care providers and Registered Training Organisations
- Development of nationally consistent individual education plans for students in schools. These plans will be used to assist in transitions between early childhood education, primary, secondary and tertiary sectors and ensure that students with disability are given options on the same basis as all other students.
- Development of agreed support plans for students with a disability in the tertiary sector
- Strategies to support the enhanced use of technology across the sector

These commitments are in addition to the initiatives already underway inclusive education practice in early childhood and schools, develop and apply a nationally consistent definition of students with disability and the provision of additional resources and appropriate training of staff under the *More Support for Students with Disabilities* initiative<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> Supported by key themes from stakeholder consultation undertaken for this project. See Section 3 of this document.

<sup>15</sup> Australian Government 2012, Australian Government Response to Review of Disability Standards for Education 2005, p.1

<sup>16</sup> Australian Government 2012, Australian Government Response to Review of Disability Standards for Education 2005

## 2.5.1 EMPHASIS ON EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION

A recent KPMG report into the effectiveness of early childhood intervention found that:

- early childhood intervention is associated with improved outcomes for children including those with a disability (particularly where these interventions are part of the child and families 'natural environment');
- early childhood interventions can improve school transitions through supporting families, and may also improve education outcomes
- generalist and specialist programs report success in improving social and workforce participation outcomes for children later in life
- enhanced coordination of support for families at the local level is important.<sup>17</sup>

Special schools are often the 'community hub' for families with a child or young person with a disability, particularly in regional and suburban settings. Any shift in policy emphasis to support these findings may create opportunities/challenges in terms of special school infrastructure provision and resourcing.

## 2.5.2 EMERGING APPROACHES TO DISABILITY EDUCATION AND SERVICES

There are indications that there is growing demand for targeted intervention services for children and young people with a disability, and their families and/or carers. A number of examples are identified below.

TABLE 4 - TARGETED INTERVENTION SERVICES

SERVICE	DESCRIPTION
AEIOU	<p>The AEIOU Foundation is a not for profit organisation dedicated to providing a professional, full-time early intervention program of the highest quality for children aged 2 ½ to 6 who have been diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). Each AEIOU centre is staffed with full-time specialist early childhood teachers and skilled learning facilitators, with support from speech pathologists, occupational and music therapists.</p> <p>AEIOU Foundation was established in 2005, and operates nine centres across Queensland, in Bray Park, Bundaberg, Camira, the Gold Coast, Hervey Bay, Nathan, the Sunshine Coast, Toowoomba and Townsville. The Foundation currently enrolls around 200 children, and is committed to expanding its services interstate within the next five years.</p> <p>Source: <a href="http://www.aeiou.org.au">www.aeiou.org.au</a></p>
Stepping Stones Triple P Project	<p>Program targeting families with children with a disability between 2-12years with the skills to cope with everyday behavioural issues for children with an intellectual disability. This new program commences in Queensland in July 2013, with planned expansions into Victoria and New South Wales in 2014.</p>

<sup>17</sup> KPMG 2011, Reviewing the evidence on the effectiveness of early childhood intervention, report to Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 20 September 2011, p.8

SERVICE	DESCRIPTION
Outside School Hours Care for Teenagers with a Disability	<p>This Australian Government initiative, provides students with disability, aged 12 to 18 years with quality outside school hours care. Outside schools hours care includes before school, after school and holiday care. Darling Point Special School is the location for one of Brisbane’s services.</p> <p>A recent evaluation of this program found that there were many benefits of providing this service within a special school, and schools should proactively engage with their communities and the Outside School Hours Care sector to address an overwhelming demand for this service<sup>18</sup>.</p>

### 2.5.3 IMPACT OF NATIONAL CURRICULUM

The Australian Curriculum has been reviewed and enhanced to ensure students with a disability have access to a high-quality curriculum which promotes excellence and equity in education. The curriculum builds in flexibility to cater for the diverse needs of students with disability, and supports teachers to work with students to personalise their learning. The most significant changes include extensions to support literacy and numeracy, and personal and social capability. The introduction of individual learning plans now supports ‘equitable opportunities for access to age equivalent learning area content’<sup>19</sup>. This increased emphasis on ‘education outcomes’ may have infrastructure and resourcing impacts across Queensland special schools.

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<sup>18</sup> [http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/05\\_2012/outside\\_sch\\_hours\\_finaleval.pdf](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/05_2012/outside_sch_hours_finaleval.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> [http://www.acara.edu.au/curriculum/student\\_diversity/students\\_with\\_disability.html](http://www.acara.edu.au/curriculum/student_diversity/students_with_disability.html)

## 3 Stakeholder Engagement

Discussions were held with the following stakeholders through a limited engagement process undertaken in June and July 2013.

### 3.1 NOMINATED STAKEHOLDERS

Each of the stakeholders was nominated and invited by the Infrastructure Services Project Working Group. Deborah Dunstone (Regional Director for Darling Downs South West Region) was contacted by email but was not interviewed due to availability.

#### **Queensland Association of Special Education Leaders**

Ches Hargreaves (Chair, also representative on the Students with a Disability Reference Group)

#### **School Principals**

David Rogers (Principal, Southport Special School)

Karen Lindsay (Executive Principal, Upper Coomera Secondary College)

Kylie Spann (HOSES, Upper Coomera Secondary College)

#### **Regional Facilities Managers**

Peter Kingston (South East Region)

Trevor Schultz (North Coast)

#### **Regional Directors**

Elaine Cassar, (Director of Regional Services)

Brian Streatfeild, (Assistant Regional Director)

Peter Blatch (Assistant Regional Director Metropolitan Region)

#### **Students with a Disability Reference Group**

Marg Pethiyagoda (Assistant Director-General)

Hayley Stevenson (Director, State Schooling Operations and Strategy)

Alison Smith (Principal Advisor, Metropolitan Region)

### 3.2 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH THEMES

The project team agreed a structured interview approach with the Department's Infrastructure Services Team and a copy of the discussion guide is provided in Appendix A of this document. Areas of focus for stakeholder discussions included:

- Demonstrated need in the community and changes or trends over time;
- Current and emerging issues for providing education services, including special education services in that region/community;
- Factors enabling or limiting future services including special education services e.g. local expectations role of NDIS, education policies

- Future challenges for special schools;
- Current and projected level of demand;
- School/Departmental responses to and learnings from the changing environments;
- Key issues and challenges in relation to education and pathways to workforce opportunities and potential changes time;
- Role of partnerships/links in the future delivery of education services for children and young people with a disability;
- Local opportunities in terms of similar services are offered in the community/region and opportunities to complement Departmental Services;
- Key drivers for people seeking special education services e.g. proximity to home, availability of health and other disability support services, delivery model e.g. integrated or separated facilities/services, technology, reputation of school leadership and staffing;
- Locational criteria for new special schools;
- Critical success factors in terms of location and design; and
- Key functionality and operational requirements for a new special school e.g. scale, parking and drop-off, capacity and flexibility to expand, quality of indoor/outdoor learning environments.

### 3.3 KEY THEMES EMERGING FROM THE CONSULTATION

The following themes, issues and concerns emerged through the stakeholder consultation:

#### 3.3.1 POLICY IMPACTS AND CHANGING ENVIRONMENTS

- The changing policy and operational environments had impacted on demand for special schools and special education services, including:
  - National Curriculum – introduced an enhanced academic focus and expectations around the curriculum;
  - National Testing (NAPLAN) – increased (and potentially earlier) identification of learning impairments; and
  - Queensland inclusion policies – reduced planning around new special schools.
- School partnerships with external services and organisations were considered very important in enhancing life experiences and opportunities for students with a disability, particularly in planning for post school options and with the Earn or Learn policy of the Australian Government in terms of securing income assistance.
- There was significant uncertainty regarding the NDIS/Disability Care and what it might mean in terms of service delivery, although there was an expectation there would be rising expectations of families in relation to quality and availability of services.
- Coomera and Southport areas had experienced a significant change in demographic profile between 2008 and 2012, primarily with a rise in overseas immigration. This had capacity to delay diagnosis and secure funding support for students with a disability.

#### 3.3.2 FAMILY DECISION MAKING

- It was agreed by all stakeholders that families made decisions about their children's schooling options based on a number of factors including, but not limited to income, residential location; transport

options, type and complexity of disability, location of school, culture, previous experience with education environments and/or disability services, reputation of the school/ program/ principal and 'look' of the school and consequently estimating demand based purely on statistical indicators of need was inadequate and potentially inaccurate.

- Anecdotally, with a rising community understanding and awareness of disability issues there appeared to be a rising diagnosis and/or demand for special education services for students experiencing speech and language impairment or autism.
- Critical learning points for families making decisions regarding whether their child will attend a special school or not tend to be at Prep and Year 7 (it is expected that this point will move to Year 6 with the introduction of the junior secondary school structure in Queensland in 2015), as curriculums become noticeably more complex the following year.
- Families of students attending special schools viewed the school as a community, for themselves and their children.
- Special schools were considered the primary disability service accessed by special school students and a primary access point to external services (such as speech therapy, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, support groups for families). When children finished their schooling i.e. Year 12, there was often a dramatic reduction available services to young people.

### 3.3.3 PROJECTING DEMAND

- The anecdotal reporting of the optimum size of a special school as 120 seems to have arisen primarily in response to the resourcing model for special schools rather than a design or site constraint. It was reported that in the special school environment the resourcing for principals and administration staff was the same at 120 as it was at 190, and 120 was about the maximum number of enrolments that could be supported through management, given the high volume of teachers and supporting staff.
- It was noted that principals of special schools do not have control of enrolments, these are managed at regional levels.

### 3.3.4 FACILITY PLANNING

- There may be opportunities for specialisations within individual schools e.g. vision impaired, autism focuses; or separation of primary and secondary programs. It was considered that this would be a more viable in a large urban areas where there were multiple special schools in relative proximity, in comparison to regional areas where there may only be one school for the region.
- Planning for new facilities on existing campus was considered somewhat ad-hoc and reactive to annual enrolments.
- There was acknowledgement that primary and secondary aged students had quite different needs and potentially there may be capacity to plan for separate campuses (co-located) in some locations.
- Green space within the a safe and secure areas was very important and it was noted that some schools had lost significant amounts of green space in order to maximise land use on site for new facilities – which was considered a material loss of functionality.
- New facilities needed to be flexible and adaptable in order to manage changing needs but some felt there was a risk of over-providing/ over-engineering for flexibility and accessibility which was inefficient in terms of cost to benefit.
- Flexibility on the site (rather within the facility itself) was considered important to adapt to changing requirements.



### 3.3.5 LOCALITY AND FUNCTIONALITY

- Location supports development of social skills (e.g. walking distance to local retail and or service centre; safe signalised pedestrian crossings; opportunity to use public transport; proximity to local employment opportunities/experiences i.e. light industry, service centres, hospitality, community uses).
- Although it was felt it was important to be within proximity of activity centres (e.g. retail or commercial) and transport routes, location on main transit thoroughfares posed challenges in terms of delivering a safe and secure environment within school hours and before and after school due to traffic risks.
- Although many stakeholders felt it was important for schools to be located near public transport routes in order to support life skills training for students, public transport was not considered the primary transport option to and from school.
- There were varied opinions from stakeholders about whether co-location or proximal location of mainstream and special schools was important for parents with children attending both schools. Some stakeholders noted that given that many special school students were provided with transport, it was possibly more important that parents would have time to return home after doing the school run to mainstream schools, in order to meet the bus from the special school.
- Co-location of mainstream schools and special schools appeared to offer some potential efficiencies in terms of development and maintenance of shared use facilities such as playing fields, libraries, technology centres.
- Co-location of mainstream schools and special schools could potentially support inclusion through shared use of facilities and student and staff interactions between the two program areas e.g. the Advancement Centre within Upper Coomera Secondary College.
- Safe and secure environments were critical in terms of the design and management of facilities. It was noted that this requirement was sometimes difficult to balance against a desire to provide and be seen to provide an open and accessible service and facility e.g. fencing.
- Targeted bus transport represented a significant portion of the transit options for students to and from school (the Department funds transport) and as such suitable design of bus transit routes within the school grounds and suitable waiting areas for students were imperative.
- Green space and a range of internal and external environments were considered as very important with some anecdotal reporting of increase in students with sensory impairments including autism spectrum disorder.
- The following matters and preferences were also raised when considering functional requirements:
  - Preference to access to allied health and development facilities e.g. fixed therapeutic play equipment or hydrotherapy pool within the core facility funding was raised by some stakeholders;
  - Siting the administration centre so it had a strong community interface;
  - Learning environments
    - indoor and outdoor and combined areas with easy supervision; and
    - close proximity to shower and toilet facilities
  - Recreation areas
    - secure passive and active activity areas; and
    - different passive and active sensory experiences
  - Clear paths of travel to and from set-down areas (to support access by students with mobility requirements);
  - Individual buildings are connected by covered walkways to allow movement between buildings during all weather conditions.

## 4 Cairns Demand and Needs Analysis

### 4.1 SUMMARY

There are currently no special schools in the Cairns region, although there historically has been. Considering the indicators of need being utilised in this project (Socio-economic disadvantage, developmental vulnerability, need for assistance with core activities, enrolment in special education programs) and demand drivers of strategic urban development and availability of services there appears to be a strong case for a new special school within the Cairns local government area (LGA).

Edmonton, Redlynch, Bentley Park, Innisfail, Gordonvale-Trinity, Kanimbla-Mooroobool, Manoora, Atherton, Mount Sheridan, Tully are reported as having the highest level of need for assistance with core activities.<sup>20</sup>

If the Department's estimate of 15% if students with a disability attend special schools was applied to the Cairns LGA, it is estimated that approximately 130 students may access a special school in Cairns (i.e. based on 15% of 908 (total number of people needing assistance with core activities under between 5 and 20 years of age in 2011<sup>21</sup>)) if it were available.

The preferred areas to locate a new school in the Cairns LGA, based on highest level of need and projected population growth, appear to be White Rock, Mount Sheridan and Edmonton. Additionally, Manoora, Manunda and Yarrabah also experience high levels of developmental and socio-economic vulnerability both of which indicate there may be higher rates of disability in these areas.

These investigations confirmed there is an immediate need for a new Special School in Cairns and the best location for this service would be in the southern growth corridor towards Edmonton.

TABLE 5 - PRIORITISATION OF NEW SPECIAL SCHOOLS

	Existing provision	Current estimated demand for services	Timeframe of need	Possible locations / solutions	Priority for attention
<b>Cairns</b>	None	High	Immediate (0 - 2 years)	New special school in Edmonton growth pathway	Very high

### 4.2 SPECIAL SCHOOLS

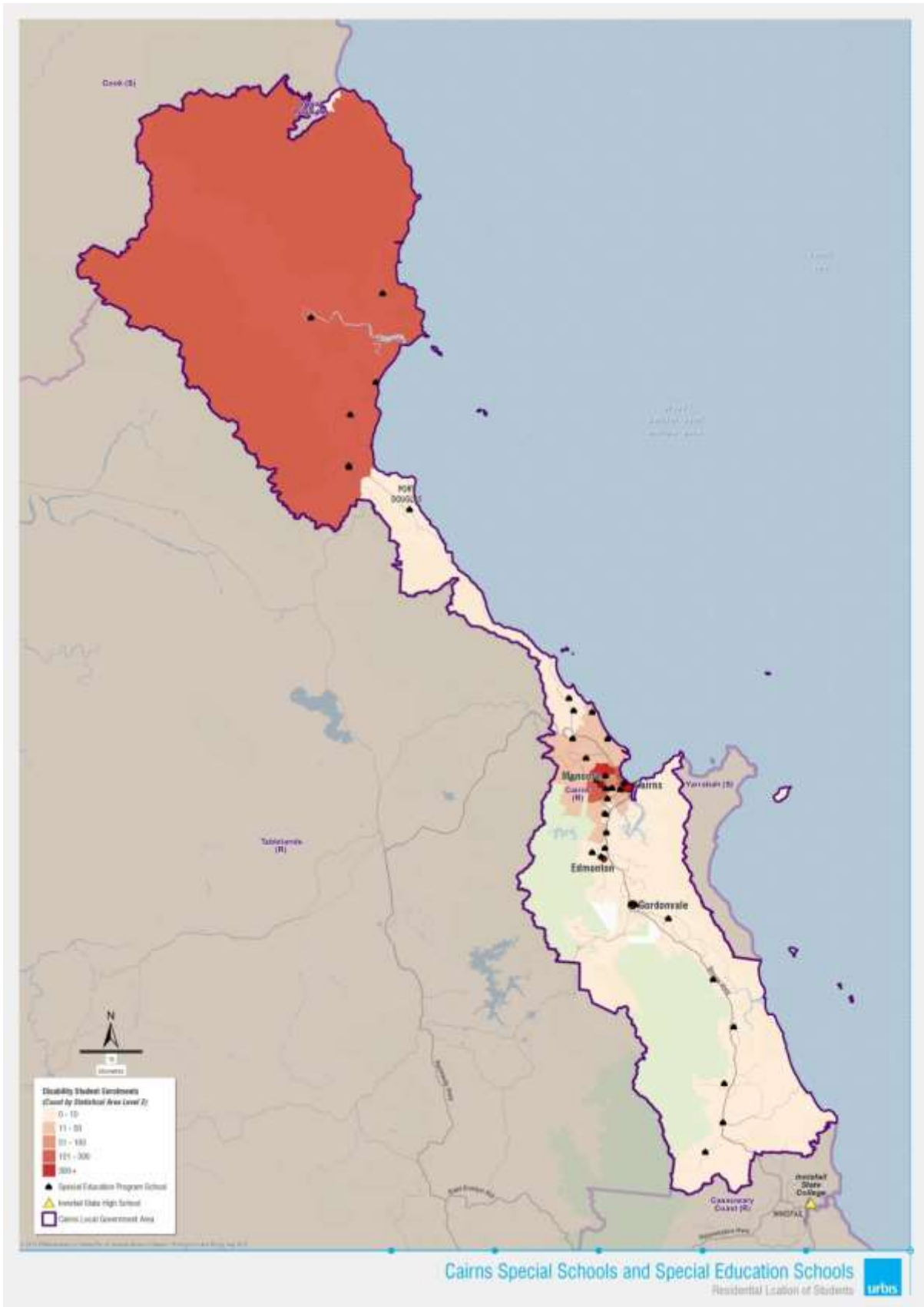
There are currently no special schools in the Cairns region. However each state school provides access to students with a disability. The following map provides a sense of the residential locations of students enrolled in special education programs in the Cairns LGA.

<sup>20</sup> ABS Census 2011 – Need for Assistance with Core Activities

<sup>21</sup> ABS Census 2011 – Need for Assistance with Core Activities

FIGURE 4 - RESIDENTIAL LOCATIONS OF STUDENTS OF SPECIAL SCHOOLS CAIRNS

Sources: Enrolment data provided by DETE Infrastructure Services Branch June 2013



## 4.3 DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS

### 4.3.1 SEIFA

Those Statistical Area Level 2s (SA2s) with the greatest socio-economic disadvantage within the Cairns LGA are Manoora, Manunda, Woree, Westcourt-Bungalow, Innisfail, Yarabah, Herberton – all within the highest decile of disadvantage. Additionally, White Rock, Tully and Mareeba are all in the second highest decile of disadvantage.

### 4.3.2 AEDI

Those areas with the highest proportion of children who are developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains in 2012, and are significantly above the regional and state percentage include Babinda, Bentley Park, Edge Hill, Edmonton and Surrounds, Manoora, Manunda and Mount Sheridan, Parramatta Park Smithfield, Woree, Yarrabah and Yorkey's Knob.

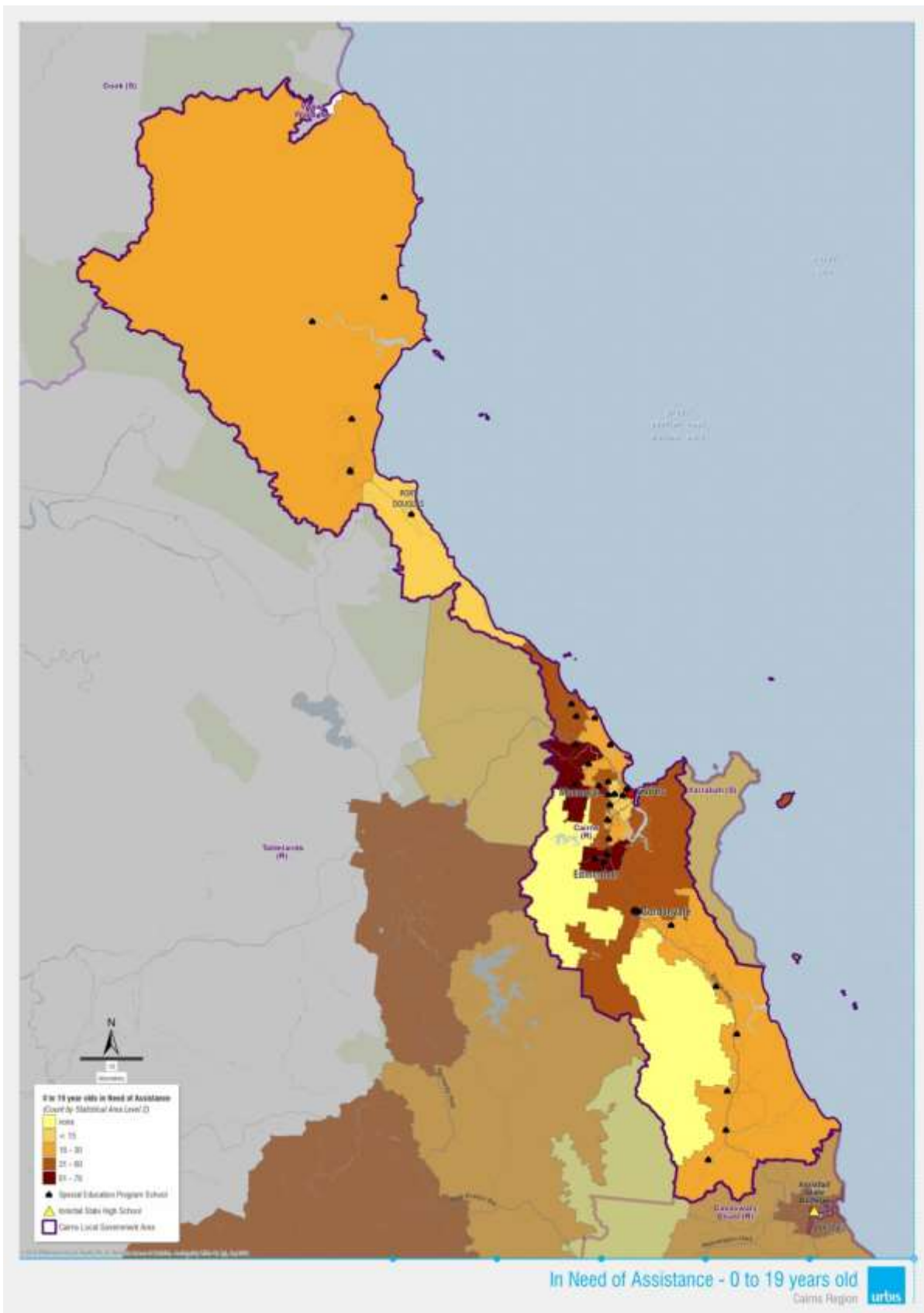
### 4.3.3 NEED FOR ASSISTANCE

The ABS Census data (2011) indicates that approximately 11.3% of people who have need for assistance with core activities in Cairns LGA are under 20 years of age, equating to 1049 people (141 0-4yrs, 314 5-9yrs, 306 10-14yrs, 288 for 15-19yrs). The age group reported as requiring the least need is the 0-4 years. This may be due to a number of factors including conditions being undiagnosed prior to key developmental milestones and therefore being unreported, rather than a lower incidence.

Those SA2s with the highest number of the population reporting as needing assistance with core activities include Edmonton, Redlynch, Bentley Park, Innisfail, Gordonvale-Trinity, Kanimbla-Mooroobool, Manoora, Atherton, Mount Sheridan, Tully.

FIGURE 5 - NEED FOR ASSISTANCE 0-19 YRS CAIRNS LGA

Source: ABS Census 2011



## 4.4 URBAN PLANNING CONTEXT

The urban growth initiatives for Cairns include:

- Consolidation of existing and new urban areas;
- Development of a new urban growth corridor between Edmonton and Gordonvale west of the Bruce Highway; and
- Establishment of major service centres near Smithfield and Edmonton.

The Regional Plan provides that development for social infrastructure is best located within or adjoining existing urban areas where greater land use synergies can be achieved. This includes social infrastructure such as educational facilities (e.g. schools, universities). These facilities can act as community anchors and should generally be located within the urban footprint to facilitate access and infrastructure efficiency.

Mount Peter represents some of the last remaining developable land in the Cairns area that has relatively few natural constraints. There is other land available in this area as well, which may be a consideration for the siting of a new special school. It is further noted that Catholic Education are seeking approval for a school in Mt Peter, which is forecast to open in 2015.

There are existing schools located in the area, including Bentley Park College, which has additional land available and may provide opportunity to accommodate a Special School in the future.

### 4.4.1 OPPORTUNITIES

The Bruce Highway is a prominent feature in Cairns, and provides a transportation spine from Smithfield in the north to Babinda in the south. Council's Strategic Plan shows that both existing and future development is generally aligned with the highway and there is a tendency towards future development occurring in the proposed residential corridor south of the CBD to Gordonvale. There is an opportunity for the Department of Education, Training and Employment to locate a dedicated Special School in the southern suburbs of Cairns in recognition of the following drivers:

- There is a projection for strong population growth for Cairns over the next 20 years.
- The existing Structure Plan indicates that Edmonton will become a new sub-regional centre and an anchor for development south of the CBD. It will also provide strong employment opportunities with the designation of a future major industrial area to the east of the highway in addition to a commercial strip along the highway.
- There are significant greenfield development opportunities in the southern corridor, typified by recent residential developments at White Rock, Mount Sheridan and Edmonton on the western side of the highway. The future residential development of Mt Peter may provide significant demand for schooling facilities, given the family oriented nature of the proposal. It is noted that there is still large parcels of land available to be developed.
- Existing investigations have identified Edmonton as a potential location for a new dedicated Special School. Refer to the site selection criteria used in determining appropriate locations to address the growing demand for a new dedicated Special School in Cairns.

## 5 Sunshine Coast Demand and Needs Analysis

### 5.1 SUMMARY

The focus of this study has been on the Sunshine Coast LGA, in particular Maroochydore and Nambour and additionally on the Caboolture region. There are three schools servicing the Sunshine Coast region although only two schools are within the Sunshine Coast LGA - Currimundi, Nambour. Additionally Caboolture Special School (within the Moreton Bay LGA) services the area. Considering the indicators of need being utilised in this project (Socio-economic disadvantage, developmental vulnerability, need for assistance with core activities, enrolment in special education programs) and demand drivers of strategic urban development and availability of services there appears to be a case for an extension to the Caboolture Special School or a new special school within the Caboolture region.

Both Caboolture and Nambour Special Schools appear to have some additional margin for expansion from a site perspective. However, feedback from stakeholders noted there are current management, administration and resourcing issues for special schools with enrolments above approximately 120 students. Given Caboolture Special School had approximately 180 students in 2012, having experienced almost 20% growth over the previous five years, and that there is a projected growing residential population over the next 20 years, there may be a better case for establishment of a new facility rather than extension of the existing facility.

Additionally, when considering indicators of need there may be an unmet need based on population figures. Applying the Department's estimate of 15% if students with a disability attend special schools to the Caboolture region, it is estimated that:

- approximately 220 students may access a special school in that area (i.e. based on 15% of 1446 (total number of people needing assistance with core activities under between 5 and 20 years of age in 2011<sup>22</sup>). This would include those children already attending special schools in the area (Currimundi and Nambour).
- approximately 175 students may access a special school in that area (i.e. based on 15% of 1154 (total number of people needing assistance with core activities under between 5 and 20 years of age in 2011<sup>23</sup>). This would include those children already attending Caboolture Special School.

Those areas with the highest proportion of children who are developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains in 2012 in the Caboolture region, and are significantly above the regional and state percentage include Bellmere, Bongaree, Caboolture, Caboolture South, Deception Bay, Morayfield, Upper Caboolture, Wamuran and Surrounds.

Given that there are currently approximately 230 students already attending special schools in the LGA (Currimundi and Nambour) and growth has been limited, the current provision appears to be relatively meeting the needs of the existing residential population, although this will grow over the next 10 years.

Therefore a decision about establishing a new school in this LGA could now focus more on the optimal school size in terms of management, administration and resourcing, rather than an immediate requirement to cater to an unmet need. Although it is acknowledged that there are a number of areas with strong levels of need for assistance with core activities, and high levels of socio-economic and developmental vulnerability, which may in the future affect the demand for special school services.

In comparison, approximately 180 students are attending the Caboolture Special School (above the estimated need) and acknowledging that the school has experienced growth of approximately 22% over the previous five years, there seems to be a growing demand for additional services. Additionally, ABS Census data (2011) indicates that approximately 17.9% of people who have need for assistance with core activities in Caboolture region are under 20 years. This is higher than many other areas in Queensland and significantly higher than all other areas covered through this study.

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<sup>22</sup> ABS Census 2011 – Need for Assistance with Core Activities

<sup>23</sup> ABS Census 2011 – Need for Assistance with Core Activities

These investigations confirmed there is an established and growing need for additional services within the Sunshine Coast (Caboolture, Nambour, Maroochydore) region. High demand for additional special school services in Caboolture, although this may be addressed through expansion of the Caboolture Special School to a junior and senior campus in the short-medium term, with future planning for new Special School site in the medium-long term. Detailed consideration should also be made of a new Special School at the northern end of Sunshine Coast to service the Gympie to Noosa corridor.

TABLE 6 - PRIORITISATION OF NEW SPECIAL SCHOOLS

	Existing provision	Current estimated demand for services	Timeframe of need	Possible locations / solutions	Priority for attention
<b>Caboolture</b>	1 existing special school	Medium	Immediate (0 - 2 years)	Short term expansion of Caboolture Special School and new special school in the longer term	High
<b>Northern Sunshine Coast</b>	2 existing special schools	Medium	Medium - long term (5-10 years)	New special school to service Gympie / Noosa	Medium

## 5.2 SPECIAL SCHOOLS

There are three schools servicing the Sunshine Coast region although only two schools are within the Sunshine Coast LGA - Currimundi, Nambour. Additionally Caboolture Special School (within the Moreton Bay LGA) services the area.

Caboolture has experienced significant growth in the last 5 years. Pine Rivers and Woody Point experienced high growth between 2008 and 2011, but saw a significant reduction in enrolments in 2012 according the *MySchools* data.

Currimundi and Redcliffe both reported relatively high proportions of students with English as a second language, 8% and 10% respectively. Caboolture and Nambour had the highest proportion of Indigenous students with 10% each, followed by Pine Rivers and Redcliffe with 7% each.

Every school in the region had significantly high proportion of male than female students, ranging from 60% more males to 350% (more than triple) more males than females.

TABLE 7 – SPECIAL SCHOOL ENROLMENTS SUNSHINE COAST REGION

SECONDARY SCHOOL	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Caboolture Special School	150	154	155	170	183
Currimundi Special School	116	132	125	125	134
Nambour Special	100	96	105	106	100

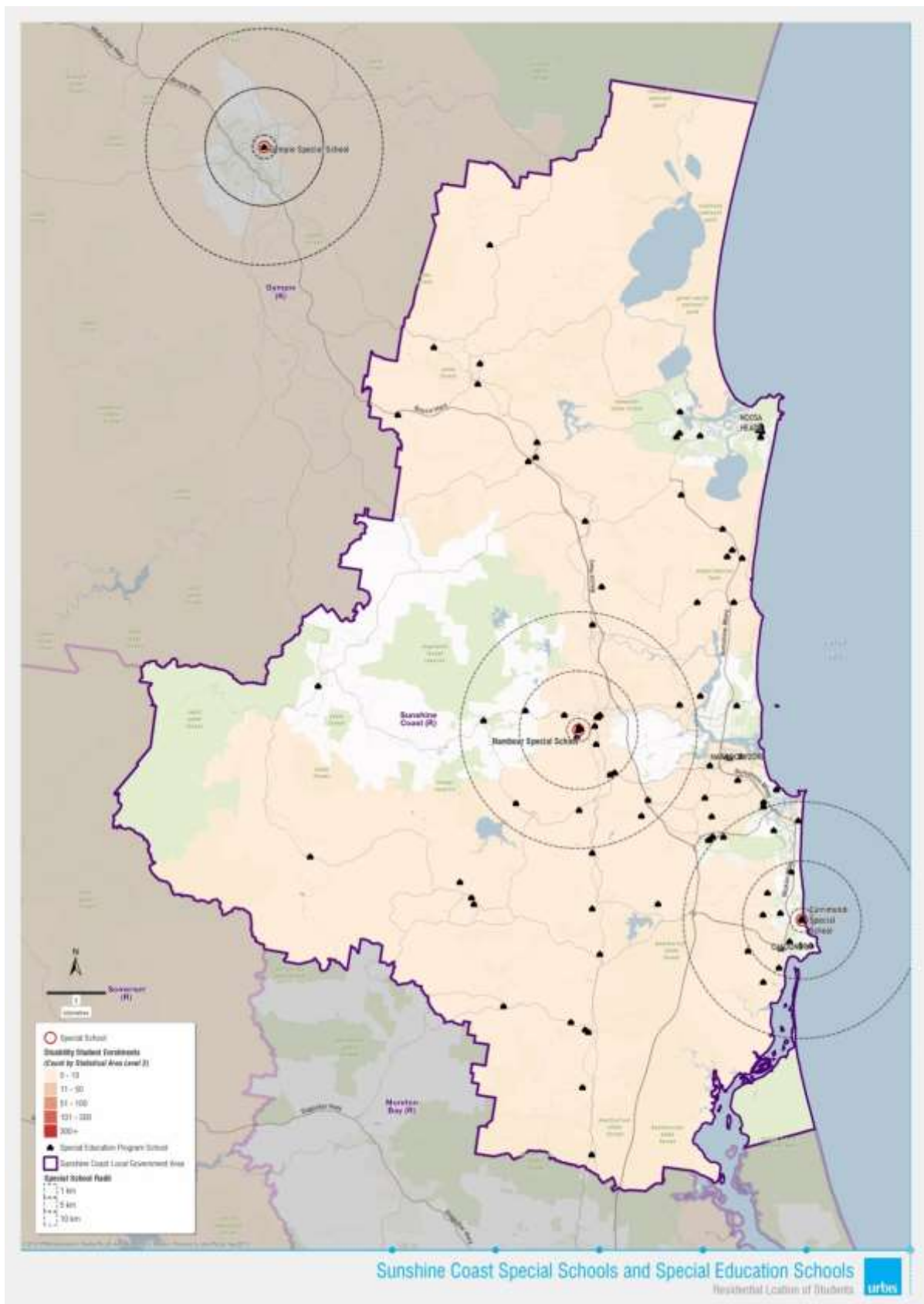


SECONDARY SCHOOL	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
School					

The following map shows the residential locations of students in special education programs within the Sunshine Coast region.

FIGURE 6 - RESIDENTIAL LOCATIONS OF STUDENTS OF SPECIAL SCHOOLS SUNSHINE COAST

Sources: Enrolment data provided by DETE Infrastructure Services Branch June 2013



## 5.3 DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS

### 5.3.1 SEIFA

Those Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2) with the greatest socio-economic disadvantage within the Sunshine Coast area are Caboolture and Deception Bay – both within the highest decile of disadvantage. Additionally, Caboolture South and Kilcoy are in the second highest decile of disadvantage and Beachmere-Sandstone Point, Morayfield-East, Maroochydore-Kaluin and Nambour are in the third highest decile of disadvantage.

### 5.3.2 AEDI

#### 5.3.2.1 CABOOLTURE

Those areas with the highest proportion of children who are developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains in 2012 in the Caboolture region, and are significantly above the regional and state percentage include Bellmere, Bongaree, Caboolture, Caboolture South, Deception Bay, Morayfield, Upper Caboolture, Wamuran and Surrounds.

#### 5.3.2.2 MAROOCHY

Those areas with the highest proportion of children who are developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains in 2012 in the Maroochy region, and are significantly above the regional and state percentage include Burnside and surrounds, Eumundi, Forest Glen and surrounds, Kuluin, Mapleton, Marcoola, Montville and surrounds, Mudjimba, Nambour, North West Maroochy, Woombye and Yandina Creek.

### 5.3.3 NEED FOR ASSISTANCE

#### 5.3.3.1 CABOOLTURE REGION

The following ABS Census data (2011) indicates that approximately 17.9% of people who have need for assistance with core activities in Caboolture region are under 20 years, equating to 1306 people (152 0-4yrs, 397 5-9yrs, 434 10-14yrs, 323 for 15-19yrs). The age group reported as requiring the least need is the 0-4 years. This may be due to a number of factors including conditions being undiagnosed prior to key developmental milestones and therefore being unreported, rather than a lower incidence.

Those SA2s with the highest proportion of the population reporting as needing assistance with core activities include Burpengary-Narangba, Caboolture Central and Morayfield.

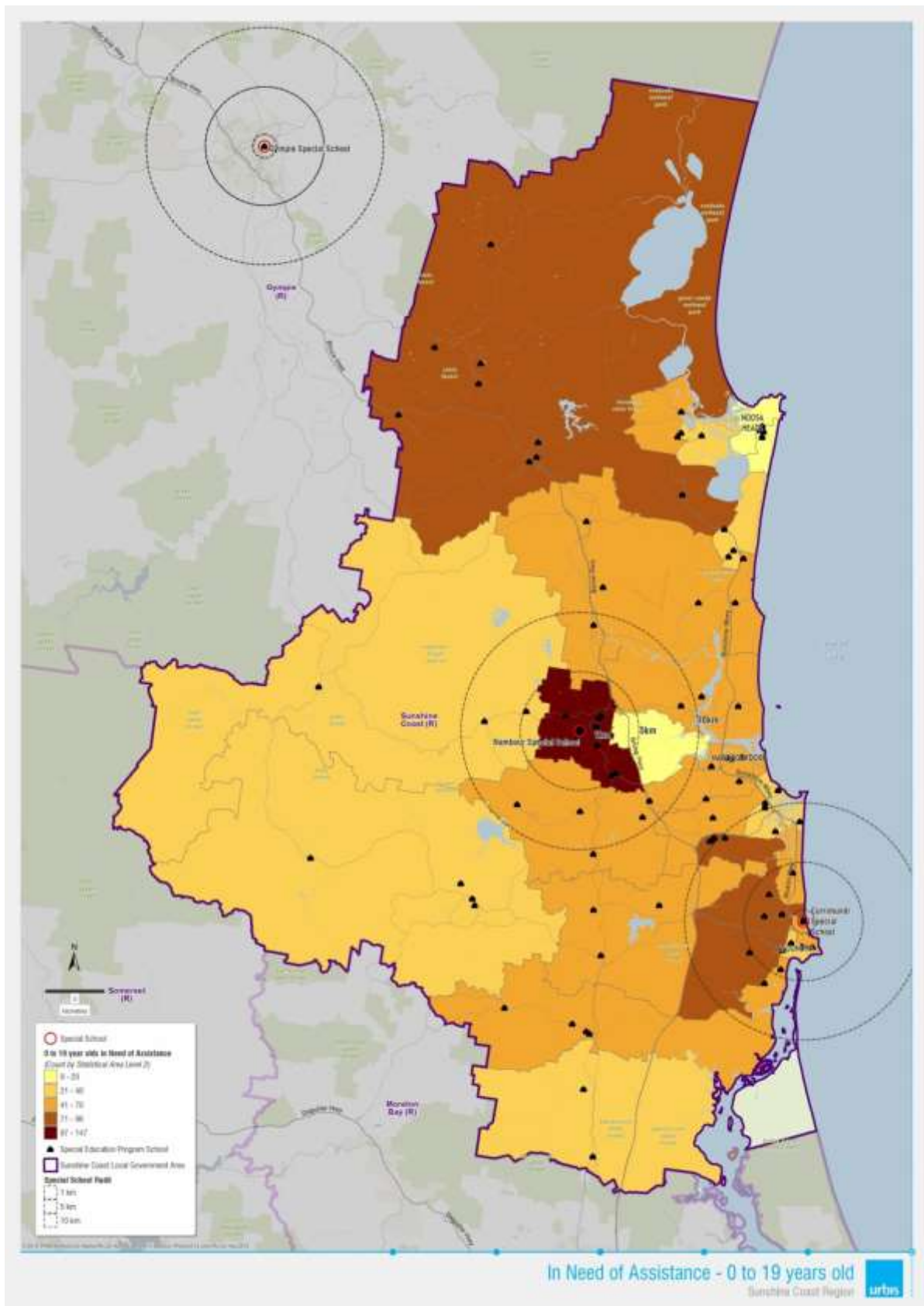
#### 5.3.3.2 SUNSHINE COAST LGA

The following ABS Census data (2011) indicates that approximately 10.7% of people who have need for assistance with core activities in Sunshine Coast LGA are under 20 years, equating to 1628 people (182 0-4yrs, 478 5-9yrs, 519 10-14yrs, 449 for 15-19yrs). The age group reported as requiring the least need is the 0-4 years. This may be due to a number of factors including conditions being undiagnosed prior to key developmental milestones and therefore being unreported, rather than a lower incidence.

Those SA2s with the highest proportion of the population reporting as needing assistance with core activities include Nambour, Caloundra-West, Noosa Hinterland, Aroona-Currimundi, Sippy Downs, Landsborough, Eumundi-Yandina, Coolum Beach, Tewantin, Beerwah.

FIGURE 7 - NEED FOR ASSISTANCE 0-19 YRS SUNSHINE COAST LGA

Source ABS Census 2011



## 5.4 URBAN PLANNING CONTEXT

The Sunshine Coast has a current population exceeding 300,000 residents and this is projected to grow to approximately 500,000 in 2013. A large proportion of this growth will be accommodated in the expansive Greenfield development of Caloundra South which intends to house in excess of 50,000 residents and create thousands of employment opportunities. This area alone is intended to comprise 20 schools and educational facilities. It is also recognised in the *South-east Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2013* (SEQ Regional Plan) as an identified growth area and remains under the control of Economic Development Queensland to facilitate development in the area.

### 5.4.1 CABOOLTURE

Caboolture is the largest centre in the rapidly expanding area between Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast, supported by the nearby suburbs of North Lakes, Mango Hill and Morayfield.

According to the SEQ Regional Plan, the major residential growth in the future for Caboolture is heading west, outside the current urban footprint boundary. It includes lands east of the north branch of the Caboolture River and South of Daguilar Highway. Caboolture West is identified to accommodate long-term employment and enterprise growth.

Moreton Bay Regional Council has prepared a *Draft Strategic Framework* to guide the preparation of the new planning scheme to be actioned in 2014. The framework identifies 'next generation suburban neighbourhoods', which are suburban and rural residential areas close to urban neighbourhoods and activity centres that have the capability and capacity to be developed in the future. These are primarily located north-east of Caboolture along Dances Road, north-west of Morayfield and West of Caboolture.

There is currently a Special School located on Torrens Road in Caboolture South near Morayfield Shopping Centre. There is very limited opportunity to expand this use to accommodate high enrolment, as it is an established urban area. The areas north of the CBD off Dances Road and west of the Caboolture CBD provide the best alternate opportunities for a Special School due to existing and proposed new residential expansion.

### 5.4.2 NAMBOUR AND MAROOCHYDORE

Nambour and Maroochydore are within the jurisdiction of the *Maroochy Plan 2000* (the Planning Scheme), which provides a strategic framework for the location of education facilities. There is a very strong emphasis on locating community facilities in centres and areas that are highly accessible and where other employment is available.

The Maroochydore Principle Activity Structure Plan provides a redevelopment opportunity located centrally in Maroochydore. The Structure Plan sets aside a State Government Community Facilities Precinct to service the needs of the Maroochydore community in the Master Planned Area and the broader community of the sub-region. The State Government Community Facilities Area includes land for already existing public schools and for the proposed regional health facility. It is intended that State Government Community Facilities be reserved and developed for their intended purpose. This may provide an opportunity for the siting of a new Special School in an area which is predominantly established and where land availability is sparse.

Nambour current has a Special School on Windsor Road in the Blaxland Road Educational Establishment (Special Purpose) precinct. From aerial mapping, it would appear that there are opportunities to expand this facility to increase enrolments with demand in the future. This represents the most logical option for such a facility in Nambour.

### 5.4.3 OPPORTUNITIES

This search area includes key centres in both Moreton Bay Regional Council and Sunshine Coast Regional Council. It is noted that both Caboolture and Nambour currently have dedicated Special Schools and both appear to have some additional margin for expansion. Maroochydore is an established centre without a Special School and this might be an opportunity in the future. However, it is considered that there may not be the same level of growth in the relevant demographic in the short term. Therefore, it is considered that a second or alternate facility in Caboolture may be an appropriate option to locate a dedicated Special School. The area provides the following key drivers:

- There is a projection for strong population growth to the north in the shorter term and west over the next 20 years.
- There is an existing population of disadvantaged people and a growing population of young families. This demographic may provide an appropriate catchment for a Special School.
- There are existing and future greenfield development opportunities to the north and west of Caboolture. Most developments that occur in this area provide affordable small house and land packages to suit families.
- Until further investigation occurs, it is not known whether the area can accommodate a second Special School. Refer to the site selection criteria used in determining appropriate locations to address the growing demand for a new dedicated Special School in Caboolture.

## 6 Gold Coast Demand and Needs Analysis

### 6.1 SUMMARY

The focus of this study has been on the Gold Coast LGA, in particular Coomera, Southport and Mudgeeraba. The Gold Coast is relatively advantaged from a socio-economic perspective (although there are pockets of disadvantage in Coolangatta, Labrador, Coombabah and Southport<sup>24</sup>) and there are proportionally fewer areas of development vulnerability<sup>25</sup> than many Queensland local government areas. Approximately 11.2% of people who have need for assistance with core activities in Gold Coast LGA are under 20 years, equating to 2356 people (331 0-4yrs, 725 5-9yrs, 725 10-14yrs, 575 for 15-19yrs).

There are three schools servicing the Gold Coast region - Currumbin, Mudgeeraba and Southport. There is a void in the existing dedicated Special School offering in the North of the Gold Coast. However, it is worth noting that there is also a significant Special Education Program offered through the Advancement Centre at Upper Coomera College, which may currently service some students who may attend a special school if there were one available in the region (noting that there are high numbers of enrolments in the North of the Gold Coast, with the nearest special school (Southport) being located in the Central East region of the city).

There is a projection for strong population growth in the northern segment of the Gold Coast with a myriad of existing and future greenfield development opportunities between Coomera and Beenleigh, providing affordable small house and land packages to suit families. This will likely result in a growth in need and demand for special schools and special education services.

There are high levels of need in the North-west of the city, with Upper Coomera-Willow Vale, Mudgeeraba-Bonogin, Nerang-Mount Nathan, Southport, Pacific Pines – Gaven, Oxenford-Maudsland, Ormeau-Yatala, Helensvale, Robina, Varsity Lakes, Tamborine-Canungra, Burleigh Waters are reported as having the highest level of need for assistance with core activities.<sup>26</sup>

If the Department's estimate of 15% if students with a disability attend special schools was applied to the Cairns LGA, it is estimated that approximately 305 students may access a special school in the Gold Coast LGA (i.e. based on 15% of 2025 (total number of people needing assistance with core activities under between 5 and 20 years of age in 2011<sup>27</sup>)). However, in 2012 approximately 400 students were already attending special schools, with both Southport and Mudgeeraba experience significant growth in the previous 5 years. Noting that there is no special school in the north of the city and two out of the three existing schools have a much higher enrolment level (160-170) than stakeholders have reported as being preferable, there would appear to be a strong case for a new special school in the LGA.

The preferred areas to locate a new school in the Gold Coast LGA, based on highest level of need and projected population growth, and distance to existing special schools would appear to be north/north-west of Coomera along transport and development pathways.

These investigations confirmed the following there is an established and growing need for additional services within the Gold Coast (Coomera, Southport and Mudgeeraba). High demand for additional special school services in the northern Gold Coast corridor with a need for a new special school north-west of Coomera along the development and transport pathway.

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<sup>24</sup> ABS Census 2011 - SEIFA

<sup>25</sup> AEDI 2012 - Vulnerability across 1 or more domains

<sup>26</sup> ABS Census 2011 – Need for Assistance with Core Activities

<sup>27</sup> ABS Census 2011 – Need for Assistance with Core Activities

TABLE 8 - PRIORITISATION OF NEW SPECIAL SCHOOLS

	Existing provision	Current estimated demand for services	Timeframe of need	Possible locations / solutions	Priority for attention
<b>Gold Coast</b>	3 existing special schools	High	Short term (2 - 5 years)	New special school in North / North-west of Coomera	High

## 6.2 SPECIAL SCHOOLS

There are three schools servicing the Gold Coast region - Currumbin, Mudgeeraba and Southport. It is worth noting that there is also a significant Special Education Program offered through the Advancement Centre at Upper Coomera College, which may currently service some students who may attend a special school if there were one available in the region (noting that there are high numbers of enrolments in the North of the Gold Coast, with the nearest special school (Southport) being located in the Central East region of the city.

Mudgeeraba and Southport have experienced significant growth in the last 5 years, while Currumbin enrolments have remained relatively stable.

Mudgeeraba reported relatively high proportions of students with a language background other than English at 10% respectively. Southport had the highest proportion of Indigenous students at 4%.

Every school in the region had a significantly higher proportion of male than female students, ranging from one and half times to three times as many males as females.

TABLE 9 – SPECIAL SCHOOL ENROLMENTS GOLD COAST REGION

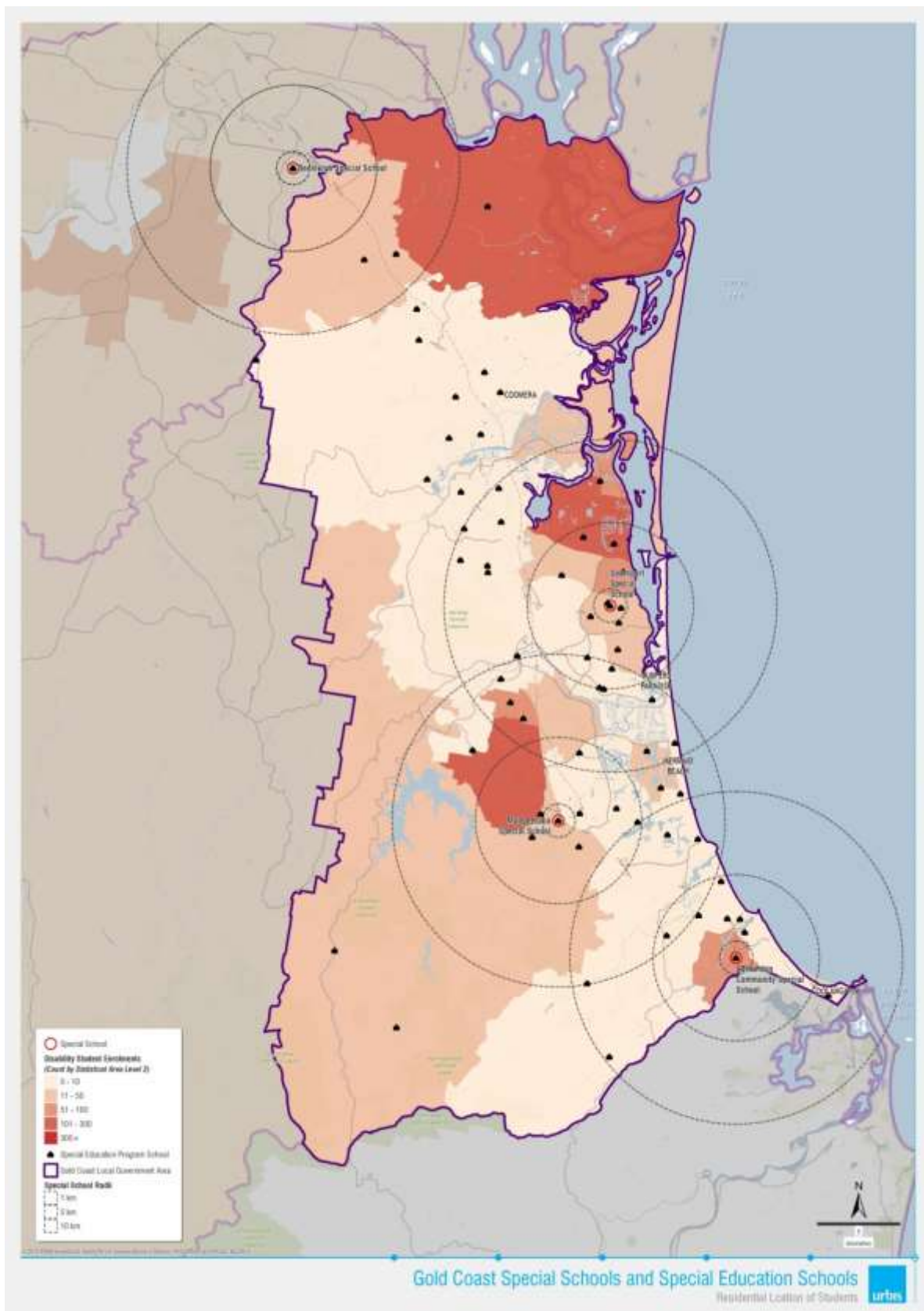
SECONDARY SCHOOL	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Government</b>					
Currumbin Community Special School	75	79	82	75	71
Mudgeeraba Special School	127	142	145	151	161
Southport Special School	115	132	143	146	170



The following map shows the residential locations of students in special education programs within the Gold Coast LGA.

FIGURE 8 - RESIDENTIAL LOCATIONS OF STUDENTS OF SPECIAL SCHOOLS GOLD COAST

Sources: Enrolment data provided by DETE Infrastructure Services Branch June 2013



## 6.3 DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS

### 6.3.1 SEIFA

The Gold Coast LGA is relatively advantaged. Those Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2) with the greatest socio-economic disadvantage within the Gold Coast LGA are Coolangatta and Labrador - both within the second highest decile of disadvantage. Additionally, Coombabah and Southport are in the third highest decile of disadvantage.

### 6.3.2 AEDI

#### 6.3.2.1 GOLD COAST EAST

Those areas with the highest proportion of children who are developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains in 2012, and are significantly above the regional and state percentage include Broadbeach, Burleigh Waters, Labrador, Mermaid Beach and Southport.

#### 6.3.2.2 GOLD COAST WEST

Those areas with the highest proportion of children who are developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains in 2012, and are significantly above the regional and state percentage include Ashmore, Currumbin Valley, Elanora, Gilston, Merrimac, and Nerang

#### 6.3.2.3 GOLD COAST NORTH

Those areas with the highest proportion of children who are developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains in 2012, and are significantly above the regional and state percentage include Beenleigh, Eagleby, Bethania, Edens Landing/Holmview and Waterford.

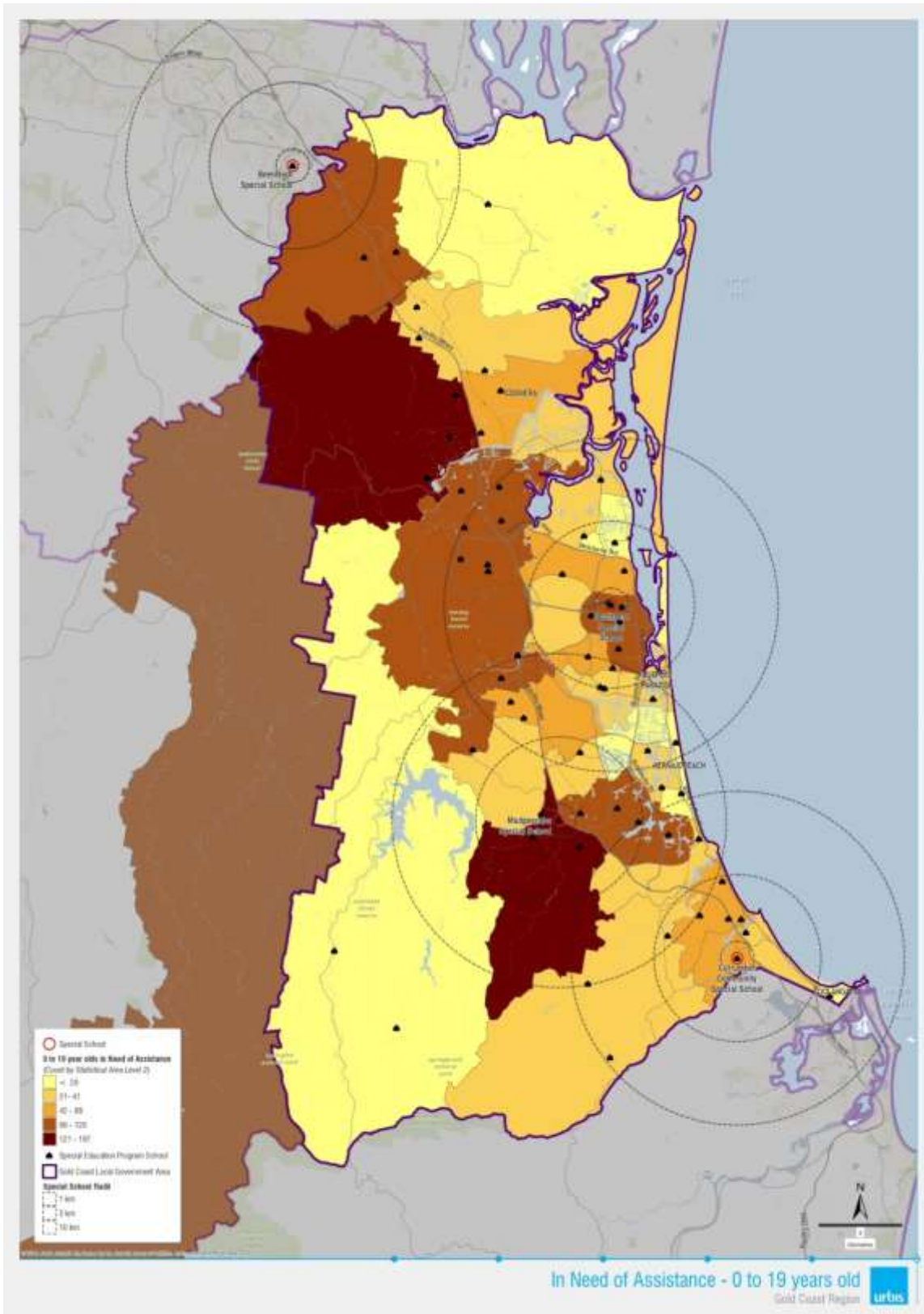
### 6.3.3 NEED FOR ASSISTANCE

The following ABS Census data (2011) indicates that approximately 11.2% of people who have need for assistance with core activities in Gold Coast LGA are under 20 years, equating to 2356 people (331 0-4yrs, 725 5-9yrs, 725 10-14yrs, 575 for 15-19yrs). The age group reported as requiring the least need is the 0-4 years. This may be due to a number of factors including conditions being undiagnosed prior to key developmental milestones and therefore being unreported, rather than a lower incidence.

Those SA2s with the highest proportion of the population reporting as needing assistance with core activities include Upper Coomera-Willow Vale, Mudgeeraba-Bonogin, Nerang-Mount Nathan, Southport, Pacific Pines – Gaven, Oxenford-Maudsland, Ormeau-Yatala, Helensvale, Robina, Varsity Lakes, Tamborine-Canungra, Burleigh Waters.

FIGURE 9 - NEED FOR ASSISTANCE 0-19 YRS GOLD COAST LGA

Source: ABS Census 2011



## 6.4 URBAN PLANNING CONTEXT

Gold Coast is the second largest city in Queensland with a population of over 500,000 residents. The city is anticipated to grow between 13,000 and 16,000 people per year, with the population nearing 730,000 residents by 2026. Given the physical limitations of the city and the prominence of Logan and Brisbane, the natural direction of population growth is towards the north.

The SEQ Regional Plan also identifies key centres where economic and population growth is to be focussed toward 2031. In the Gold Coast, Southport and Robina are identified as the highest order Principle Regional Centres, whilst Coomera is described as a Major Retail Centre. In this regard, the SEQ Regional Plan provides a framework to guide local Planning Schemes to achieve these desired development outcomes.

### 6.4.1 COOMERA

The area generally referred to as east Coomera is indicated on the current Council planning scheme as an area of further significant residential development.

Westfield has acquired significant land on the northern side of Foxwell Road between the Pacific Motorway and the Coomera Railway Station for a regional shopping centre. At present the nearest major shopping centre is "Westfield" at Helensvale approximately 8 kilometres to the south of the new town centre. Local shopping facilities and professional services (medical, dental, town planning, legal etc) are located in the existing Coomera town centre.

The Planning Scheme has set aside Precinct 7 to the south of Foxwell Road as an education precinct in accordance with the Coomera Town Centre Structure Plan. In the Coomera Local Area Plan, on the periphery of the town centre, schools and major recreational spaces typically located away from local or neighbourhood centres (refer to Coomera LAP Figure 9.1). With the exception of secondary and tertiary educational facilities, the Planning Scheme envisages schools amongst areas of lower density development and away from centres.

The Department's strategic planning has concluded that five new primary school sites and one additional site for a high school are required to meet the expected growth in this area. Due to the rate of development in the area the acquisition of these sites has been recommended as a matter of urgency. Land vacancy may be a limiting factor in the siting of a special school in Coomera.

### 6.4.2 SOUTHPORT

Southport is one of the oldest suburbs in the Gold Coast and is seen as the civic and administrative regional centre. The majority of the local area contains low density residential development, with retail and business core anchored by Australia Fair and the Gold Coast Hospital.

The Gold Coast Light Rail project currently under construction is likely to change the shape of Southport over the coming years. It will provide far greater accessibility to the nearby Griffith University Campus and hospital as well as the tourist hotspots in Surfers Paradise.

It is recognised that there is an existing Special School on Kumbari Avenue in Southport, which is understood to be undergoing expansion throughout 2013 to accommodate student enrolment growth.

Existing schools in Southport are recognised as having both a local and regional role given their central location and considerable scale. The Planning Scheme supports the development of new schools in both community use and residential areas, preferably not in immediate proximity of centre activities. Whilst these areas are all established, there may be opportunities to acquire appropriate land in Southport.

### 6.4.3 MUDGEERABA

Mudgeeraba is a small centre across the Pacific Motorway from Robina Town Centre, which contains the largest shopping centre in the city. To this extent, the focus is on secondary retail uses and community facilities to support the expanding local population.

The Planning Scheme is very specific regarding the desire for retention of the existing Special School and expansion of this facility in the area:

*It is intended that the existing community uses be maintained. This precinct includes the Mudgeeraba Special School's site. It is not intended to undermine the role of the current public education facility, but to anticipate the possibility of future redevelopment of the site and to identify some broad planning parameters to guide any future development. Due to the proximity of this site to the village, it is a highly desirable location for concentration of community facilities. In terms of site layout, Council strongly supports the retention of part of the site for community facilities, for a range of active and passive recreational activities. Such a park area could become a strong community focus for the residential areas that surround the site.*

It is considered that there may be opportunity for expansion of the existing premises and acquisition of further land to expand the site in accordance with the intent of the local area in the Planning Scheme.

#### 6.4.4 OPPORTUNITIES

Gold Coast planning at a strategic level indicates that Coomera and the areas north towards Beenleigh will be the focus of significant urban growth over the next 20 years. There is an opportunity for the Department of Education, Training and Employment to locate a dedicated Special School in the area in response to the following drivers:

- There is a projection for strong population growth in the northern segment of the Gold Coast.
- Existing structure plans for Coomera indicate that a new centre will be developed in the future to complement the existing centres network between Southport and Beenleigh. This will provide anchors to support significant residential development in the area.
- There are a myriad of existing and future greenfield development opportunities between Coomera and Beenleigh. Existing residential estates include Highland Reserve and Riverstone Crossing in Coomera, Gainsborough Greens in Pimpama and Jacobs Ridge in Ormeau. This style of development is providing affordable small house and land packages to suit families.
- There is a void in the existing dedicated Special School offering in this part of the Gold Coast. Statistics suggest that there is strong demand in this area for this service, recognising that the catchment for a Special School will far exceed that of a regular school. Refer to the site selection criteria used in determining appropriate locations to address the growing demand for a new dedicated Special School in the Gold Coast.

## 7 Ipswich Demand and Needs Analysis

### 7.1 SUMMARY

The focus of this study has been on the Ipswich area including Springfield. Ipswich is relatively disadvantaged from a socio-economic perspective with a significant proportion of the SA2s within the LGA being within the three highest percentiles of disadvantage. There are also proportionally more areas of development vulnerability<sup>28</sup> than many Queensland local government areas. The ABS Census data (2011) indicates that approximately 16% of people who have need for assistance with core activities in Ipswich LGA are under 20 years, equating to 2259 people (248 0-4yrs, 675 5-9yrs, 727 10-14yrs, 609 for 15-19yrs).

There are four special schools servicing the Ipswich region – Claremont, Goodna, Ipswich and Ipswich West. Claremont, Goodna and Ipswich West have experienced sustained but limited growth in the last 5 years and Ipswich has seen a significant decline in enrolments according to the *MySchools* data.

If the Department's estimate of 15% if students with a disability attend special schools was applied it is estimated that approximately 300 students may access a special school in the Ipswich LGA, (i.e. based on 15% of 2011 (total number of people needing assistance with core activities under between 5 and 20 years of age in 2011<sup>29</sup>)). However, in 2012 almost 400 students were already attending special schools in the region. This indicates that demand is higher than estimated need, although growth in enrolment numbers was not significant between 2008 and 2012 and consequently it may be considered that the areas is relatively well serviced from an availability perspective.

It is worth noting that while there is no special school located the western half of the LGA and visually may be considered underserved, there is a comparatively lower population in this area of the LGA (compared to the east) and need may be lower. In contrast there is an area of high need (i.e. people requiring assistance with core activities) located to the west of Springfield and the south-west of Goodna which is likely serviced by Goodna Special School and Claremont Special School.

With development planned or proposed for the Centenary Motorway corridor (Springfield, Springfield Lakes, Brookwater, Augustine Heights and Redbank Plains) and through Ripley Valley; and expected to continue over the next 20 years, there is likely to be a significant new population to the area and growing demand for local special school services. Goodna Special School is already experiencing growth.

Springfield Lakes has been designated as a centre in Ipswich planning policy. As new non-residential development occurs, it will position itself as the largest regional centre in Ipswich outside of the CBD.. It will be serviced by a new railway station (due for completion in 2014), which will assist with accessibility to employment opportunities in the future. It is noted that on the periphery of the centre there is land available for the potential location of a new dedicated Special School.

Should a new special school be required for the LGA a preferable location would be Springfield and in terms of areas of need, population and economic growth.

These investigations confirmed the following there is an established and growing need for services in Ipswich and Springfield. There is likely to be high demand for a new Special School associated with the master planned communities of Springfield and Ripley Valley in the medium term. Detailed consideration should be given to current and future capacity of existing Ipswich special schools.

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<sup>28</sup> AEDI 2012 - Vulnerability across 1 or more domains

<sup>29</sup> ABS Census 2011 – Need for Assistance with Core Activities

TABLE 10 - PRIORITISATION OF NEW SPECIAL SCHOOLS

	Existing provision	Current estimated demand for services	Timeframe of need	Possible locations / solutions	Priority for attention
<b>Ipswich</b>	4 existing special schools	Medium	Medium – long term (5 - 10 years)	Utilise capacity in Ipswich first and then priority location would be near Springfield Town Centre	Medium

## 7.2 SPECIAL SCHOOLS

There are four schools servicing the Ipswich region. These include Goodna, Ipswich and Ipswich West, and Claremont.

Claremont, Goodna and Ipswich West have experienced sustained growth in the last 5 years and Ipswich has seen a significant decline in enrolments according the *MySchools* data.<sup>30</sup>

Goodna reported relatively high proportions of students with English as a second language at 11%. Ipswich West and Goodna had the highest proportion of Indigenous students with 17 and 14% respectively, followed by Claremont and Ipswich with 6% each.

All special schools in the area had a significantly higher proportion of male than female students, ranging from 230% more males to 350% (more than triple) more males than females.

TABLE 11 – SPECIAL SCHOOL ENROLMENTS SUNSHINE COAST REGION<sup>31</sup>

SCHOOL	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Claremont Special School	62	57	71	82	86
Goodna Special School	100	114	108	117	117
Ipswich Special School	156	150	145	129	116
Ipswich West Special School	43	42	42	48	54

The following map shows the residential locations of students in special education programs within the region.

<sup>30</sup> Source: *MySchool* data accessed at [myschool.edu.au](http://myschool.edu.au) during June 2013

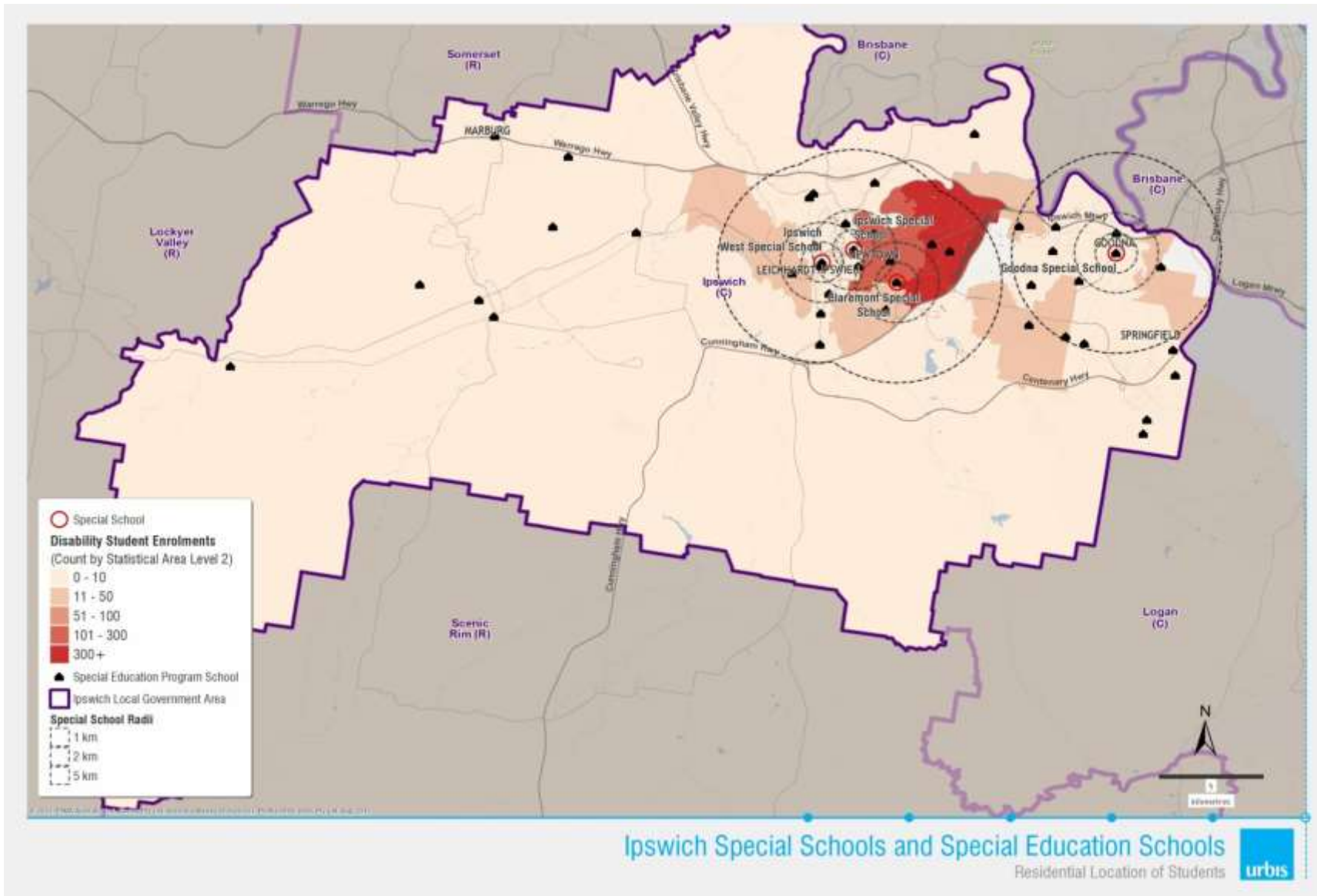
<sup>31</sup> Source: *MySchool* data accessed at [myschool.edu.au](http://myschool.edu.au) during June 2013





FIGURE 10 - RESIDENTIAL LOCATIONS OF STUDENTS OF SPECIAL SCHOOLS IPSWICH

Sources: Enrolment data provided by DETE Infrastructure Services Branch June 2013



## 7.3 DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS

### 7.3.1 SEIFA

Ipswich LGA is comparatively disadvantaged with a high proportion (50%) of SA2s in the three highest deciles of disadvantage. Those Statistical Area Level 2s (SA2s) with the greatest socio-economic disadvantage within the Ipswich LGA are Inala-Richlands, Leichardt-One Mile, Riverview and Goodna - all within the highest decile of disadvantage. Additionally, Durack, Esk, Lockyer Valley-East, Ipswich-East, North Ipswich-Tivoli and Redbank Plains are in the second highest decile of disadvantage. A further three SA2s are in the third highest decile of disadvantage.

### 7.3.2 AEDI

Those areas with the highest proportion of children who are developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains in 2012, and are significantly above the regional and state percentage include Booval, Bundamba, Carole Park, Churchill, Dinmore / Ebbw Vale, East Ipswich / Basin Pocket, Goodna, Ipswich, Leichhardt, Marburg / Tallegalla, North Booval, North Ipswich, Peak Crossing / Harrisville, Raceview, Redbank, Redbank Plains, Riverview, Rosewood, Sadliers Crossing and surrounds, Silkstone / Blackstone, South West Ipswich, Thagoona and Woodend .

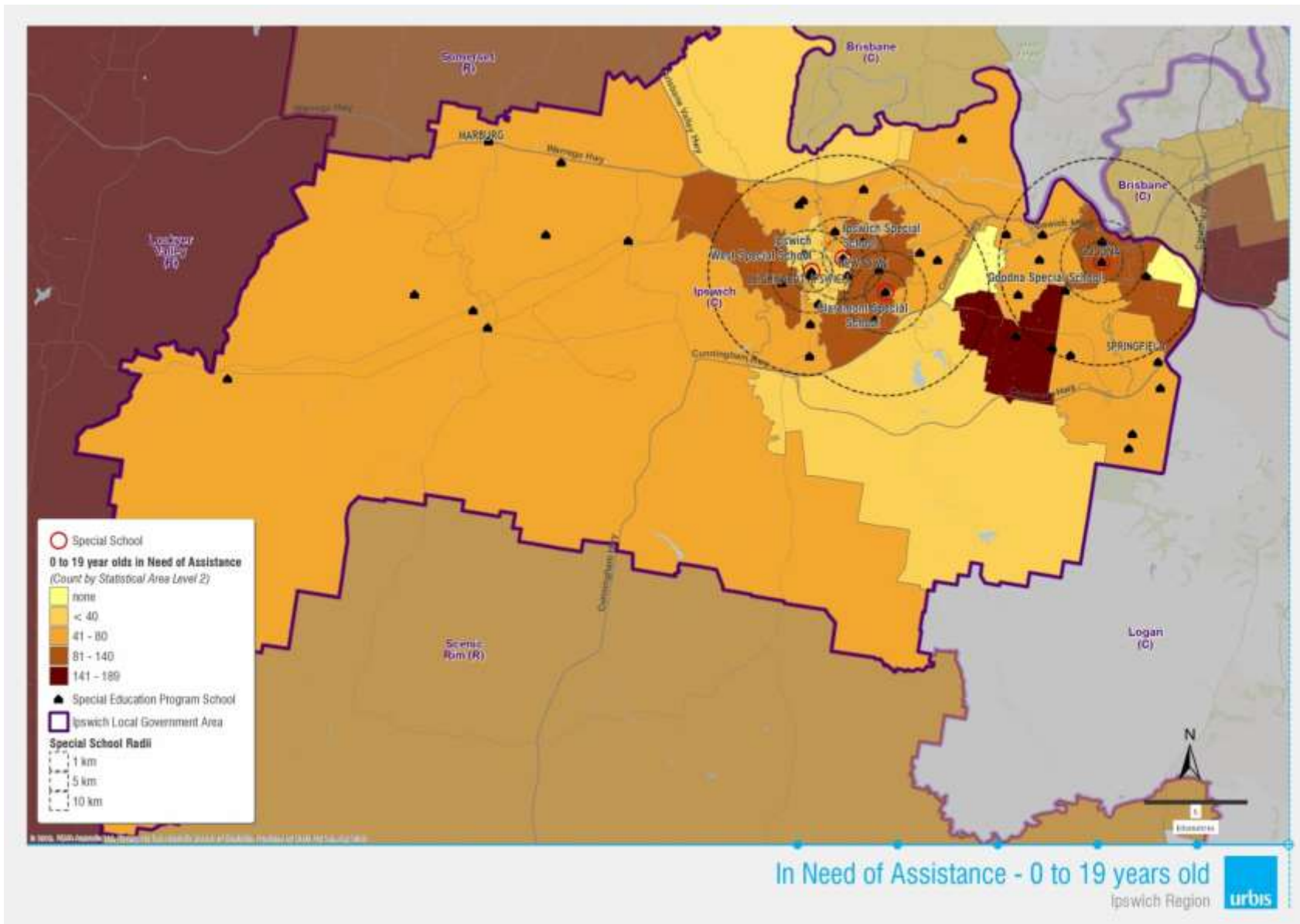
### 7.3.3 NEED FOR ASSISTANCE

The following ABS Census data (2011) indicates that approximately 16% of people who have need for assistance with core activities in Ipswich LGA are under 20 years, equating to 2259 people (248 0-4yrs, 675 5-9yrs, 727 10-14yrs, 609 for 15-19yrs). The age group reported as requiring the least need is the 0-4 years. This may be due to a number of factors including conditions being undiagnosed prior to key developmental milestones and therefore being unreported, rather than a lower incidence.

Those SA2s with the highest proportion of the population reporting as needing assistance with core activities include Forest Lake-Doolandella, Lockyer Valley-East, Redbank Plains, Raceview, Inala-Richlands, Ipswich-East, Leichardt-One Mile, Goodna, Lowood, Camira-Gailes, Brassall, Bundamba, Bellbird Park-Brookwater, Rosewood.

FIGURE 11 - NEED FOR ASSISTANCE 0-19 YRS IPSWICH LGA

(Source: ABS Census 2011)



## 7.4 URBAN PLANNING CONTEXT

The City of Ipswich has a population exceeding 280,000 residents, expected to almost double by 2031. Ipswich forms the majority of Brisbane's western corridor, which provides substantial opportunities to accommodate new residential communities and employment growth, supported by infrastructure provision.

Both Ipswich CBD and Springfield are recognised in the *South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031* (SEQ Regional Plan) as Principle Centres within the city owing to the health, education and technology services available.

Existing urban development is concentrated along the Ipswich–Brisbane rail line and is generally contained between the Warrego and Cunningham highways, with the exception of Springfield Lakes.

### 7.4.1 IPSWICH

Ipswich CBD is described in the Planning Scheme as a centre that fosters community, health, education and well-being, providing community uses for higher education and learning. There is recognition that there are few appropriately zoned areas for educational facilities and these are reserved for secondary and tertiary facilities where in close proximity to centre uses, busy roads and transportation facilities. The Ipswich CBD is to be reserved for higher order uses to reinforce the primacy of the centre.

There is an existing Special School at Milford Street in Ipswich, which has been established since 1937. Given its location in an established urban area, there is limited opportunity for expansion to allow for increased enrolments.

### 7.4.2 SPRINGFIELD

Springfield Lakes is one of the key master planned areas covering the south-eastern portion of Ipswich City. There is a significant retail anchor in Orion Shopping Centre and a number of schools existing in the area. Furthermore, in 2014 Springfield will receive a railway station via the Richlands extension, which will significantly increase accessibility to the Brisbane CBD and other employment opportunities throughout the western suburbs.

The area outside the Town Centre is primarily intended to accommodate a range of dwelling types, totalling between 17,000 and 20,000 upon completion. The Planning Scheme specifies that these dwellings are supported by integrated neighbourhood centres, including school sites and a variety of community facilities located in a number of neighbourhoods within the area. Subsequently, a community residential designation is provided in the Springfield Structure Plan, which allows facilities such as schools in areas of convenience for residents.

It is noted that there is still a significant amount of vacant land in this area currently held by developers. There are definite opportunities for the development of a Special School in Springfield and given the speed of development in this area, there may already be a deficiency.

### 7.4.3 OPPORTUNITIES

The existing Ipswich Special School is well located although there are limited opportunities for expansion should enrolments grow significantly. Springfield and the surrounding area to the west has been identified as an area of substantial population growth and is attributed with the following key drivers:

- There is significant greenfield development either constructed or proposed in Springfield, Springfield Lakes, Brookwater, Augustine Heights and Redbank Plains on both sides of the Centenary Motorway. Development in this corridor is expected to continue over the next 20 years, bringing a significant new population to the area.
- Springfield Lakes has been designated as a centre in Ipswich planning policy. As new non-residential development occurs, this will affirm its position as the largest regional centre in Ipswich outside of the CBD. There is also a new railway station due for completion in 2014, which will assist with accessibility to employment opportunities in the future.

- It is noted that on the periphery of the centre there is land available for the potential location of a new dedicated Special School. Refer to the site selection criteria used in determining appropriate locations to address the growing demand for a second Special School in Ipswich.

## 8 Location Selection Criteria

The following location selection criteria have been developed based on an understanding of current planning practice and alignment with current and emerging literature regarding the importance of responsive education environments for learning outcomes. These criteria will be tested and refined through the report finalisation process.

### 8.1 UNDERSTANDING OF LOCAL CONTEXT

#### 8.1.1 LOCAL DEMAND

- Level of current and future enrolments
  - Establish in areas where there is existing and sustained future demand
- Access to specialist health and medical services
  - Families are likely to locate close to specialist services
- Access to affordable, appropriate housing
  - Cost of housing and other households costs are likely to contribute to families sense of well-being and stress
  - Presence of social and community housing in a local area (likely to be an indicator of demand)

#### 8.1.2 RESPONSIVE TO FAMILY AND CARER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Close proximity to local primary and high schools;
- Within 45min drive time from the family/carer home; and
- Located enroute to local school or place of work (for family/carer).

#### 8.1.3 INTEGRATION OF SCHOOL WITHIN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

- Opportunity to co-locate or locate nearby with adjoining secondary school and/or primary schools (dependent of opportunities for efficiencies and integration);
- Opportunity to co-locate or locate nearby with complementary community services use (e.g. supported accommodation); and
- Opportunity to have onsite supported employment service (e.g. Kingfisher Recycling Centre, Aspley).

### 8.2 STUDENT CENTRED LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

#### 8.2.1 SUPPORTS THE DEVELOPMENT OF LIFE SKILLS FOR STUDENTS

- Location supports development of social skills including:
  - Walking distance to local retail and or service centre;
  - Safe signalised pedestrian crossings;
  - Opportunity to use public transport;
  - Access to local parks and playground via pedestrian paths; and

- Proximity to local employment opportunities/experiences i.e. light industry, service centres, hospitality, community uses.

## 8.2.2 SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS FOR DIFFERENT AGES, ABILITIES AND GENDER

- Proactive consideration of junior and senior campus as part of staging plan
  - Junior campus sizing and design to support successful ‘home to school and community’ transition
  - Senior campus sizing and design to support ‘school to employment and independent living’ transition
  - Creation of indoor and outdoor space for learning, respite and physical activity
- Where located next to primary and/or secondary school, special school design and layout should support inclusion and where possible support positive student and teaching staff interactions

## 8.3 PLANNED, FLEXIBLE AND ADAPTABLE CAMPUS APPROACH

### 8.3.1 STRATEGIC PLANNING

- Schools should be designed as an education campus;
  - Master planned approach to the design of the school campus;
  - Design to support safe, managed connections with the surrounding community; and
  - Staged development to allow for growth in school infrastructure over time (to meet changing community needs).

### 8.3.2 SITING OF CORE FUNCTIONAL COMPONENTS

Core functional requirements include:

- Administration Centre (Strong community interface);
- Learning environments
  - indoor and outdoor and combined areas with easy supervision; and
  - close proximity to shower and toilet facilities
- Possible allied health facilities (i.e. therapeutic pool);
- Passenger set-down areas are in close proximity to individual buildings;
  - Secure and covered waiting areas for transport
  - Clear paths of travel to and from set-down areas (to support access by students with mobility requirements); and
- Individual buildings are connected by covered walkways to allow movement between buildings during all weather conditions.
- Recreation areas
  - secure passive and active activity areas; and
  - different passive and active sensory experiences

## 9 Conclusion

It is clear from the quantitative and qualitative analysis undertaken for this project that there are a number of factors which can influence the need and demand for special schools.

Areas for further consideration which have arisen through this project include:

- Testing the demand and needs assessment approach, as well as the locational criteria, on selected high and under-performing special schools to identify any learnings;
- Undertaking further consultation with school principals, staff, parents and carers to identify local and site-specific issues and challenges which may affect the sustainability of a special school and the learning outcomes of their students;
- What role (if any) the disproportional ratio of male/female students has on the planning, design, management and operations of a special school;
- Opportunities for specialisations within individual schools e.g. vision impaired, autism focuses;
- Opportunities for co-location and/or shared use of special schools campuses and facilities with complimentary allied health and community care services, particularly with the implementation of the NDIS. This strategy may assist schools grow their reputations as 'school of choice' and positively reinforce their role as 'community hubs';
- Further research into the opportunities and barriers associated with the development of junior and senior campuses for special schools. Important to understand the infrastructure, programming, resourcing and community impacts of such an initiative.



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## Appendix A

## Stakeholder Discussion Guide

## DISCUSSION GUIDE: DETE SCOPING STUDY FOR SPECIAL SCHOOLS

Hi, my name is Stephanie/Leila and I am from Urbis, a property and social research company that provides research and planning services. Thank you for agreeing to talk with me today, we appreciate you making time.

Urbis has been commissioned by DETE Strategy Infrastructure Branch to undertake a scoping study into the demand for new special schools in four identified catchments. The study will investigate the local need and demand in the following locations:

- Gold Coast (Coomera, Southport, Mudgeeraba)
- Sunshine Coast (Caboolture, Nambour, Maroochydore)
- Ipswich and Springfield
- Cairns

In conducting this research, we are looking at the role for special schools in supporting the learning outcomes for children and young people with a disability. This analysis will assist the Department's consideration regarding future school planning.

I am going to run through a series of questions and take notes as we talk. Do you have any questions before we start?

### INTRODUCTION

Can I start by asking you to describe your role and your organisation?

Can you describe the community/region where your school operates (for Principals)? What do you see as the current and emerging issues for providing education services in that region/community?

What role do you see for education in the broader service system for children and young people with a disability, and their families in your local community/region?

### DEMONSTRATED NEED IN THE COMMUNITY

#### *FAMILIES CARING FOR CHILD/YOUNG PERSON WITH A DISABILITY*

1. Thinking about the needs of families in your local community/region – what do you see as the key issues for education? Do you think these needs will change over the short, medium or long-term?

#### *CHILDREN WITH A DISABILITY*

2. Thinking about the needs of children with a disability in your region - can you identify the key issues and challenges in relation to education? Do you think these needs will change over the short, medium or long-term?
3. How has your school/the Department responded to this need? What learnings have there been?

#### ▪ *YOUNG PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY*

4. Thinking about the needs of young people with a disability in your region - can you identify the key issues and challenges in relation to education and pathways to workforce opportunities? Do you think these needs will change over the short, medium or long-term?
5. How has your school/the Department responded to this need? What learnings have there been?

## OTHER LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES

6. What other similar services are offered in the community/region? To what extent do you see these services complementing what the Department is/may be able to offer
7. What factors have enabled or may limit future services? (*Prompt: local expectations - role of NDIS, education policies*)

## FUTURE CHALLENGES FOR SPECIAL SCHOOLS

8. What level of demand do you see for special schools in your local area/region? (*Prompt: current enrolments, current contacts from families seeking services, types/degree of disability support*)
9. What are the key drivers for people seeking special education services? (*Prompt: proximity to home, availability of health and other disability support services, delivery model e.g. integrated or separated facilities/services, technology, reputation of school leadership and staffing, )*
10. What role do you think partnerships/links play in the future delivery of education services for children and young people with a disability? Can you identify key partnerships you think would be important?

## LOCATIONAL CRITERIA

11. What do you think are the critical success factors for a new special school? (*Prompt: location – relation to home, work, neighbouring schools; transport, other services, employment and training opportunities*)
12. What do you think the key functions/operational requirements for a new special school? (*Prompt: scale, parking and drop-off, capacity and flexibility to expand, quality of indoor/outdoor learning environments*)

## COMMENTS/OBSERVATIONS

13. Any general comments?

Thank you for your time today. If you have any queries do not hesitate to contact Sharon Leese, Infrastructure Strategy Research and Performance, Infrastructure Services Branch, Department of Education, Training and Employment on (07) 324 75018 or via email [sharon.leese@dete.qld.gov.au](mailto:sharon.leese@dete.qld.gov.au)

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# Scoping Study of New Special Education Infrastructure

Part 2

October 2014



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## Acronyms

AAEP	Administrative Assistance Enhancement Program
AEDI	Australian Early Development Index
AIMS	Adjusted Information Management Systems
CBD	Central Business District
DEOs	Desired Environmental Outcomes
DETE	Department of Education, Training and Employment
EDQ	Economic Development Queensland
EQ	Education Queensland
GONSKI	Gonski Education Funding Review
HOSES	Head of Special Education Services
IRSD	Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (SEIFA)
LGA	Local Government Area
MIWRP	Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday Regional Plan
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
PDA	Priority Development Area
OESR	Office of Economic and Statistical Research
QGSO	Queensland Government Statisticians Office
SA2	Statistical Area 2 (2011 Census)
SA3	Statistical Area 3 (2011 Census)
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indices for Areas
SEPs	Special Education Programs
SERVs	Special Education Services
SWD	Students with Disability
SWDRG	Students with Disability Reference Group
TRS	Teacher Relief Scheme
WHSC	Woodridge Housing Service Centre

# Executive Summary

The Department of Education, Training and Employment provides a range of programs for students including specialised programs and services for students who have significant educational support needs. There are currently 43 special schools across Queensland and a new special school to cater for additional demand has not been built in the last decade.

Urbis was commissioned by the Department in June 2013 to undertake a preliminary scoping study for new special schools with a focus on the following priority areas:

- Cairns;
- Sunshine Coast (Caboolture, Nambour, Maroochydore);
- Gold Coast (Coomera, Southport and Mudgeeraba); and
- Ipswich and Springfield.

Following the completion of this research, Urbis was commissioned to undertake Phase 2 of the project – the current phase – which included additional state-wide investigations of regional need assessment and subsequent review of priority areas for new special education infrastructure, additional to Phase 1. This additional work has built on the existing work completed and the associated methodology, but recognises that a variety of infrastructure solutions may be implemented to meet demand, not limited to special schools. Through an assessment of the population growth areas for Queensland at an SA3 level (excluding previous study areas) and consideration of current supply, Urbis has identified the following priority areas:

- Logan and Scenic Rim;
- Townsville;
- Toowoomba and Lockyer Valley; and
- Mackay.

These areas are discussed in detail in this document (*Scoping Study for Special Education Infrastructure Phase 2 – October 2014*) and the accompanying background document, *Location Profiles for Special Education Infrastructure Scoping Study Phase 2 – September 2014*.

## DEMAND DRIVERS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION INFRASTRUCTURE

As with the first phase of the project, Phase 2 was undertaken during a time of significant policy change and community concern regarding opportunities available for people with a disability and their families and carers. Recent policy reforms and debate such as the National Disability Insurance Scheme, Gonski Education Funding Review and the introduction of a national definition for disabilities; have led to increased community awareness and expectations regarding the quality of services individuals and families receive and broad community discussion. This has implications for special schools and special education programs more generally.

Research suggests that families make decisions around their children's schooling options based on a number of factors (e.g. income, type and complexity of disability, location, culture, previous experience with education environments and/or disability services, reputation and 'look' of the school); and indicators such as prevalence of disability, population growth, and socio-economic disadvantage cannot be completely accurate in determining need and demand in the future. It is therefore important to look at a number of factors that will drive demand for new special education infrastructure, rather than a pure needs assessment based on statistics.

Changes in family choices regarding special education support will affect demand for an individual school or region, with capacity to escalate or slow the need for future investment in additional infrastructure.

## METHODOLOGY

To identify priority areas and then examine these areas in further detail Urbis has undertaken a two-stage assessment focussing on

- Stage 1 - Regional Assessment (comprising need assessment and demand analysis). Completed at SA3 level Stage 1 identified those districts/regions with projected high levels of special school enrolments.
- Stage 2 - Priority Location Assessments (comprising need assessment, demand analysis and targeted stakeholder engagement. Completed at SA2 level Stage 2- provided detailed assessment by location.

The assessments were based on the following methodology

TABLE 1 – UPDATED (PHASE 2) METHODOLOGY FOR ASSESSMENT OF PRIORITY LOCATIONS

APPROACH	INDICATORS
Need Assessment	<p>Stage 1 – Regional Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Projected population age profile at an SA3 level (ABS Census data and Office of Economic and Statistical Research (OESR) data) to 2031 (at intervals of 2016, 2021 and 2031);</li> <li>▪ Potential Special School attendees (as per prevalence data provided by DETE) to population projections for 0-19 years.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">NB: eligibility to attend special schools was used as an indicator of students requiring a higher level of support – acknowledging that future infrastructure solutions may include special schools or alternative infrastructure and servicing.;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Socio Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA); and</li> <li>▪ Australian Early Development Index (AEDI).</li> </ul>
Demand Analysis	<p>Stage 1 – Regional Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ DETE Enrolment data;</li> <li>▪ Map the location and number of special schools within the SA3, or accessible within the adjacent SA3 (within 1.25 hour drive time);</li> <li>▪ Identification of significant retail, commercial and social infrastructure developments (at SA3) level which may affect families' choice of housing location; and</li> <li>▪ Identification of significant greenfield residential developments that will impact on population densification and growth over the short, medium and long-term.</li> </ul> <p>Stage 2 – Priority Location Assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Planning context and population growth pathways.</li> </ul>

APPROACH	INDICATORS
Qualitative Assessment	Stage 2 – Priority Location Assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeted engagement with DETE and EQ senior staff to discuss the findings.</li> </ul>

## NEED AND DEMAND ASSESSMENT – PRIORITY LOCATIONS

The methodology to frame the need and demand assessment and allow for prioritisation of regions has been based on a process to assess gap in service provision. The process has included the following elements:

- Assessing Need and Core Demand – socio demographic indicators such as SEIFA, Australian Early Development Index, Census Need for Assistance identification
- Reviewing Supply - reviewing current service levels through special school locations, capacity and enrolments
- Developing an Adjusted Demand – testing the reality of current demand vs theoretical demand, based on supply factors and eligibility to attend special schools (whether currently attending or not) and taking into account family choice factors that influence demand.
- Determining the Gap which is the Adjusted Demand less the Capacity/Supply

These investigations indicated the following priorities:

TABLE 2 - PRIORITISATION OF NEW SPECIAL EDUCATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Location	Existing provision	Current estimated demand for services	Timeframe of need	Priority for attention
<b>Logan and Scenic Rim</b>	2 existing special schools	High	Immediate (0 - 2 years)	High
<b>Townsville</b>	1 existing special school	Medium	Short term (2 - 5 years)	Medium
<b>Toowoomba and Lockyer Valley</b>	2 existing special schools	Medium	Medium - long term (5-10 years)	Medium
<b>Mackay</b>	1 existing special school	Medium	Long term (10 - 20 years)	Low- Medium

## LOCATIONAL CRITERIA

In Phase 1, Urbis recommended that the following location criteria (Table 3) be considered in future detailed infrastructure assessments. These were based on an understanding of current planning practice and alignment with current and emerging literature regarding the importance of responsive environments which support learning outcomes for students with a disability. Following Phase 1, the Department of Education and Training drafted a set of Infrastructure Guidelines for Special Schools, which subsequently

informed Phase 2 of the project. These draft Infrastructure Guidelines are provided in Appendix A of this document.

TABLE 3 – LOCATIONAL CRITERIA OF SPECIAL SCHOOLS – NEW/ EXPANDED/ RENEWAL

UNDERSTAND THE LOCAL CONTEXT	STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS	PLANNED, FLEXIBLE AND ADAPTABLE CAMPUS APPROACH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local demand;</li> <li>▪ Integration of school within local communities;</li> <li>▪ Responsiveness to family and carer responsibilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Supports the development of life skills for students</li> <li>▪ Supportive environments for all ages, gender and abilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strategic Planning</li> <li>▪ Siting of core functional components</li> </ul>

### PROJECT LIMITATIONS

The scope for this project did not include a detailed analysis of the policy position of Government around supporting people with a disability, or available funding, or operational policies of education services.

At the time Phase 1 of Special Education Infrastructure Scoping Study was commissioned, a Students with Disabilities (SWD) project was being undertaken in order to develop and establish agreed policy positions and methodology on location, staffing and set ups for schooling provisions for students with a disability. A Departmental SWD Reference Group (SWDRG) was established to guide the SWD project and information on the infrastructure study was provided to the SWDRG during the project, although at the time of finalisation of this report, the SWDRG was no longer operating.

It is acknowledged that there are ongoing discussions within the Department of Education, Training and Employment regarding the most suitable infrastructure and program solutions to support children and young people with a disability in the education system, including consideration of special schools and special education programs.

The Urbis Scoping Study (Phase 2) project aligns with the directions of the Department in understanding future school population trends and schooling capacity. This project did not seek to determine the most suitable or preferred model of infrastructure i.e. special schools or other, but rather identified areas of need for additional infrastructure to service students with high end needs (top 10<sup>th</sup> percentile of verified students) for special education services. This identification process was based on current supply of special schools and capacity to meet additional student need and demand for a similar level of service to a special school, regardless of the infrastructure solution.





# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The Department of Education, Training and Employment provides a range of programs for students including specialised programs and services for students who have significant educational support needs. School communities make adjustments to programs, teaching and learning strategies and facilitate increased access to the curriculum to assist students with disabilities participate in the life of the school and achieve educational outcomes. Additionally in some locations, the Department has invested in infrastructure for special schools, which is specifically targeted to students with a significant intellectual disability, for which the Department has a formal assessment.

There are currently 43 special schools across Queensland and a new special school to cater for additional demand has not been built in the last decade.

At the time Phase 1 of Special Education Infrastructure Scoping Study was commissioned, a Students with Disabilities (SWD) project was being undertaken in order to develop and establish agreed policy positions and methodology on location, staffing and set ups for schooling provisions for students with a disability. A Departmental SWD Reference Group (SWDRG) was established to guide the SWD project and information on the infrastructure study was provided to the SWDRG during the project, although at the time of finalisation of this report, the SWDRG was no longer operating.

It is acknowledged that there are ongoing discussions within the Department of Education, Training and Employment regarding the most suitable infrastructure and program solutions to support children and young people with a disability in the education system, including consideration of special schools and special education programs.

The Urbis Scoping Study (Phase 2) project aligns with the directions of the Department in understanding future school population trends and schooling capacity. This project did not seek to determine the most suitable or preferred model of infrastructure i.e. special schools or other, but rather identified areas of need for additional infrastructure to service students with high end needs (top 10<sup>th</sup> percentile of verified students) for special education services. This identification process was based on current supply of special schools and capacity to meet additional student need and demand for a similar level of service to a special school, regardless of the infrastructure solution.

## 1.2 THIS PROJECT

This project is the second phase of a piece of work commissioned by the Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment to investigate potential need and demand for special education infrastructure. The first phase commenced in June 2013 and included a preliminary scoping study for new special schools with a focus on the following priority areas:

- Cairns;
- Sunshine Coast (Caboolture, Nambour, Maroochydore);
- Gold Coast (Coomera, Southport and Mudgeeraba); and
- Ipswich and Springfield.

Following the completion of this research, Urbis was commissioned to undertake additional state-wide investigations and need assessments in Queensland – this project. This additional work has built on the existing work completed and the associated methodology but has broadened to note that future infrastructure solutions for special education services may include special schools or alternative service models. Through an assessment of the population growth areas for Queensland at an SA3 level (excluding previous study areas), Urbis has identified the following priority areas for further investigation, based on growing need and potential demand:

- Townsville;

- Mackay;
- Toowoomba and Lockyer Valley; and
- Logan and Scenic Rim.

Urbis has undertaken research and analysis around needs and demand to assist in future special schools infrastructure planning, based on population growth and enrolment trends and projections.

### 1.3 REPORT STRUCTURE

Our report is structured in the following way:

Chapter 1 is the Introduction to the Report.

Chapter 2 – provides a high level overview of the current context of Special Education services and infrastructure in Queensland.

Chapter 3 – Needs and Demand Project Methodology – a description of the refined methodology used in Phase 2 of this project.

Chapter 4 – Identification of Priority Areas - provides a summary of the key findings of the needs and demand analysis at a Regional level.

Chapters 5-8– Priority Location Assessments - discuss priority locations in detail in terms of need and demand including a planning context for each location/ region.

This Scoping Study report is supported by a background technical document, *Location Profiles*, which includes detailed needs and demand data by locality of interest for:

- Logan and Scenic Rim;
- Townsville;
- Toowoomba and Lockyer Valley; and
- Mackay.

NB: The Phase 1 Report issued in August 2013 provided considerable discussion of the strategic context for special education services and discussion of trends around supportive environments for achieving good learning outcomes for children and young people with a disability. This information is relevant to the current project (Phase 2) but has been excluded from this report to reduce duplication.

### 1.4 METHODOLOGY

To identify priority areas and then examine these areas in further detail Urbis has undertaken a two-stage assessment focussing on

- Stage 1 - Regional Assessment (comprising need assessment and demand analysis). Completed at SA3 level Stage 1 identified those districts/regions with projected high levels of special school enrolments.
- Stage 2 - Priority Location Assessments (comprising need assessment, demand analysis and targeted stakeholder engagement. Completed at SA2 level Stage 2- provided detailed assessment by location.

The assessments were based on the following methodology

TABLE 4 – UPDATED (PHASE 2) METHODOLOGY FOR ASSESSMENT OF PRIORITY LOCATIONS

APPROACH	INDICATORS
Need Assessment	<p>Stage 1 – Regional Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Projected population age profile at an SA3 level (ABS Census data and Office of Economic and Statistical Research (OESR) data) to 2031 (at intervals of 2016, 2021 and 2031);</li> <li>▪ Potential Special School attendees (as per prevalence data provided by DETE) to population projections for 0-19 years.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">NB: eligibility to attend special schools was used as an indicator of students requiring a higher level of support – acknowledging that future infrastructure solutions may include special schools or alternative infrastructure and servicing.;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Socio Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA); and</li> <li>▪ Australian Early Development Index (AEDI).</li> </ul>
Demand Analysis	<p>Stage 1 – Regional Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ DETE Enrolment data;</li> <li>▪ Map the location and number of special schools within the SA3, or accessible within the adjacent SA3 (within 1.25 hour drive time);</li> <li>▪ Identification of significant retail, commercial and social infrastructure developments (at SA3) level which may affect families' choice of housing location; and</li> <li>▪ Identification of significant greenfield residential developments that will impact on population densification and growth over the short, medium and long-term.</li> </ul> <p>Stage 2 – Priority Location Assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Planning context and population growth pathways.</li> </ul>
Qualitative Assessment	<p>Stage 2 – Priority Location Assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Targeted engagement with DETE and EQ senior staff to discuss the findings.</li> </ul>

## 1.5 PROJECT LIMITATIONS

The scope for this project did not include a detailed analysis of the policy position of Government around supporting people with a disability, or available funding, or operational policies of education services. A Students with Disabilities (SWD) project is being undertaken in order to develop and establish agreed policy positions and methodology on location, staffing and set ups for schooling provisions for students with a disability.

The Urbis Scoping Study project aligns with the directions of the SWD project and those currently under consideration by the Queensland Planning Schools Commission, including understanding future school population trends and schooling capacity.

It is acknowledged that there are ongoing discussions within the Department of Education, Training and Employment regarding the most suitable infrastructure and program solutions to support children and young people with a disability in the education system, including consideration of special schools and special education programs. There is not a fixed policy position at the time of writing this document.

This project did not seek to determine the most suitable or preferred model of infrastructure i.e. special schools or other, but rather identified areas of need for additional infrastructure to service students with high end needs (top 10<sup>th</sup> percentile of verified students) for special education services. This identification process was based on current supply of special schools and capacity to meet additional student need and demand for a similar level of service to a special school, regardless of the infrastructure solution.

DRAFT

## 2 Special Education in Queensland

Education services and infrastructure have an instrumental role in establishing liveable communities. The provision of education services supports a culture of life-long self-improvement<sup>1</sup>. The availability of such services builds the capacity of local communities and empowers them to sustain and enhance core elements which compromise the liveability of their community, including the economy, environmental sustainability, leadership and health and wellbeing. They also serve as a key method to gather and integrate people of diverse socio-economic backgrounds within the community, often enhancing a community's sense of place.

In Queensland specialist education services for students with a disability are provided through a number of programs including special schools; and special education programs and special education services in mainstream schools.

There are currently 43 State special schools in Queensland (shown in the table below) and only one private special school. These schools generally have annual enrolments of between 60 and 200 students. Additionally, a number of mainstream primary and secondary schools provide a Special Education Program for students with a disability. This is specialist program and goes beyond the support services that all state schools in Queensland are required to offer students with a disability. Families of students with a an intellectual disability have the right to choose which type of service their child accesses i.e. special school, special education program or support services.

TABLE 5 - SPECIAL SCHOOL LOCATIONS

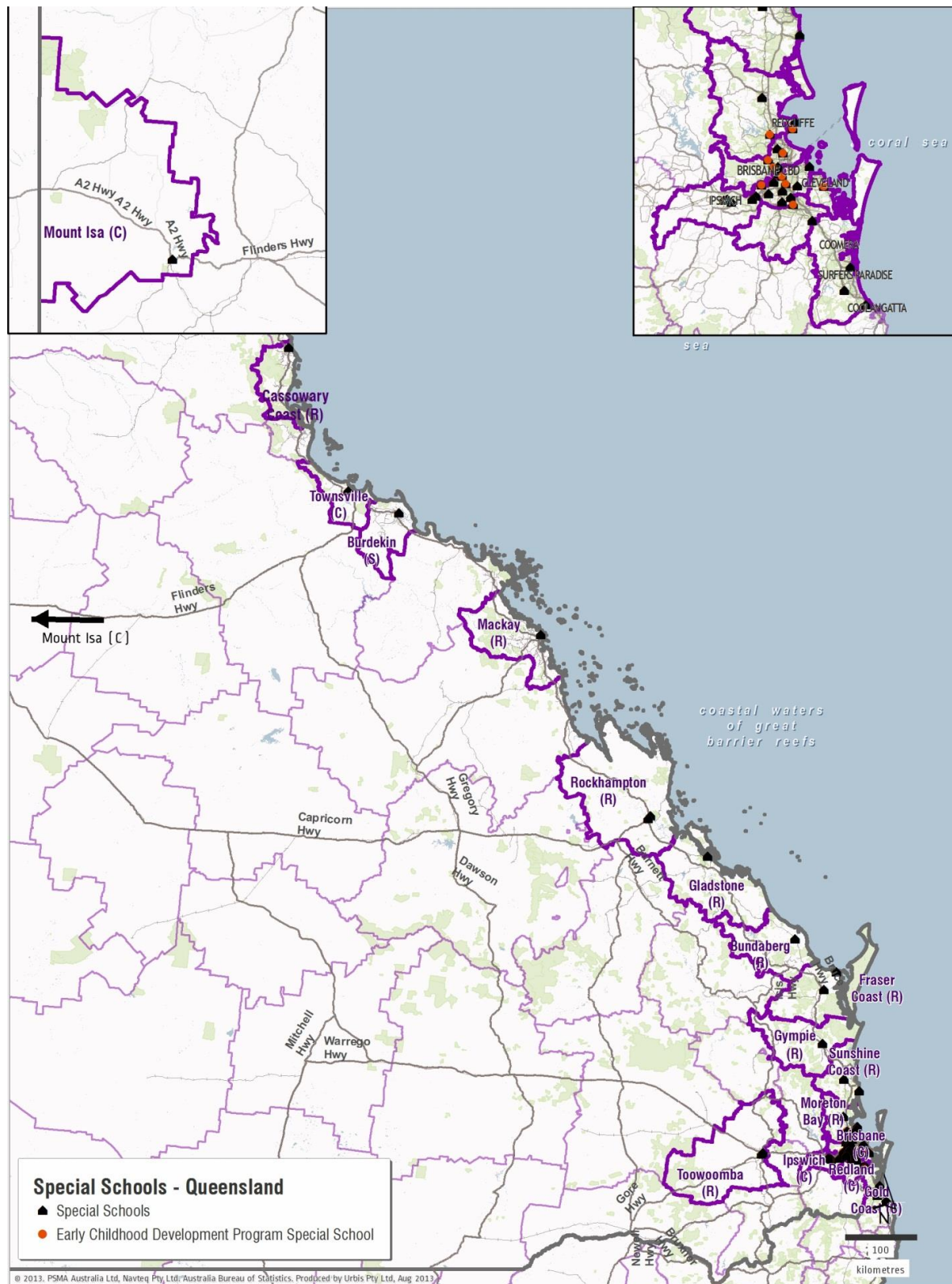
Centre Full Name	Region	EQ Zone Group
Aspley Special School	MER	Metropolitan
Beenleigh Special School	SER	Metropolitan
Bundaberg Special School	NCR	Provincial City
Burdekin School	NQR	Rural
Caboolture Special School	NCR	Metropolitan
Calamvale Special School	MER	Metropolitan
Claremont Special School	MER	Metropolitan
Clifford Park Special School	DSR	Provincial City
Currimundi Special School	NCR	Metropolitan
Currumbin Community Special School	SER	Metropolitan
Darling Point Special School	MER	Metropolitan
Geebung Special School	MER	Metropolitan
Goodna Special School	MER	Metropolitan
Gympie Special School	NCR	Rural
Hervey Bay Special School	NCR	Provincial City
Innisfail State College	FNR	Rural
Ipswich Special School	MER	Metropolitan

<sup>1</sup>Partners for Liveable Communities Australia, Liveability April 2013

Centre Full Name	Region	EQ Zone Group
Ipswich West Special School	MER	Metropolitan
Kuraby Special School	MER	Metropolitan
Logan City Special School	SER	Metropolitan
Mackay District Special School	CQR	Provincial City
Mackenzie State Primary and Special School (Special)	MER	Metropolitan
Maryborough Special School	NCR	Rural
Mitchelton Special School	MER	Metropolitan
Mount Isa Special School	NQR	Remote
Mount Ommaney Special School	MER	Metropolitan
Mudgeeraba Special School	SER	Metropolitan
Nambour Special School	NCR	Metropolitan
Narbethong State Special School	MER	Metropolitan
Nursery Road State Special School	MER	Metropolitan
Pine Rivers Special School	NCR	Metropolitan
Red Hill Special School	MER	Metropolitan
Redcliffe Special School	NCR	Metropolitan
Redland District Special School	SER	Metropolitan
Rockhampton North Special School	CQR	Provincial City
Rockhampton Special School	CQR	Provincial City
Rosella Park School	CQR	Provincial City
Southport Special School	SER	Metropolitan
Sunnybank Special School	MER	Metropolitan
Toowoomba West Special School	DSR	Provincial City
Townsville Community Learning Centre -	NQR	Metropolitan
Western Suburbs State Special School	MER	Metropolitan
Woody Point Special School	NCR	Metropolitan

The following map represents the locations of special schools in Queensland.

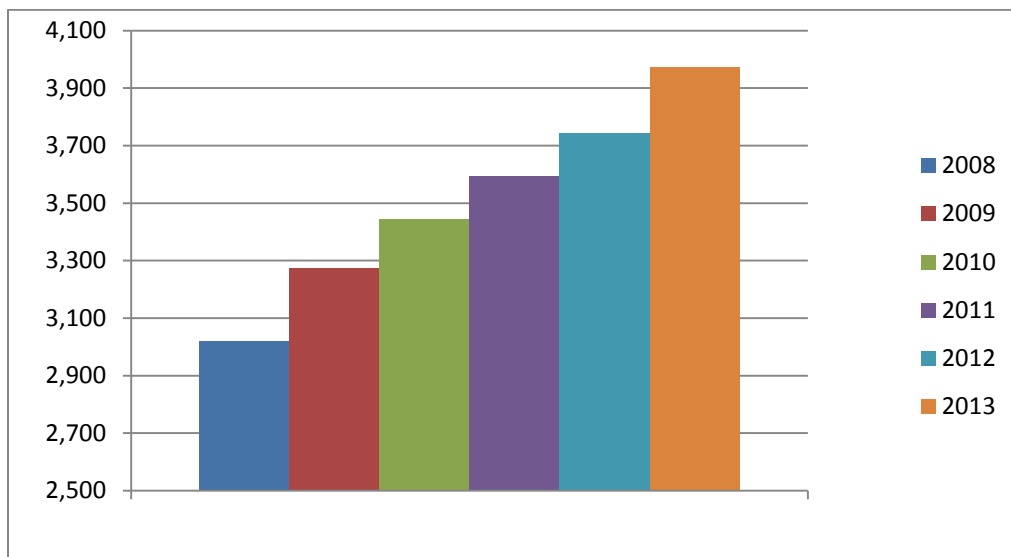
FIGURE 1 – STATE SCHOOL SPECIAL SCHOOLS IN QUEENSLAND





The following graph demonstrates the increasing demand and associated change in enrolment numbers in the state special schools in Queensland between 2008 and 2013<sup>2</sup> - increasing from approximately 3,000 to almost 4,000.

FIGURE 2 - QUEENSLAND STATE SPECIAL SCHOOL ENROLMENTS 2008-2013



The following information was provided by the Infrastructure Division of the Department of Education, Training and Employment in June 2013 as part of the research phase of this project.

*Approximately 85 per cent of students verified with a disability attend primary and secondary schools, with approximately 15 per cent attending a special school in Queensland.*

*While there is a trend for more students with a disability attending mainstream primary and secondary schools in recent years, there has also been an increase in the real number of students enrolled in special schools. This indicates a demand remains for some students with an intellectual impairment and/or multiple impairments to enrol in special schools.*

*Research indicates that special schools are being reaffirmed as specialist schools providing education and support for students with the most severe and complex special education needs. For these students, special schools have a vital role to play in the overall spectrum of provision in meeting the educational needs of all children and young people with disabilities.*

Special schools are one element of the infrastructure delivery model to support special education services.

### 2.1.1 RESOURCING APPROACH FOR SPECIAL SCHOOLS IN QUEENSLAND

The following information was provided by the Infrastructure Division of the Department of Education, Training and Employment in June 2013. It describes the current resourcing approach in terms of staffing for Special Schools and Special Education programs in Queensland.

*Resourcing for students with disabilities (SWD) is broken into two major components: Special School; and Special Education Programs (SEPs) and Services (SERVs) in main stream schools. Staffing allocations are finalised according to enrolment and impairment data retrieved from the Adjusted Information Management Systems (AIMS) on the eighth day of the school year (Day 8).*

<sup>2</sup> Data provided by Infrastructure Services Branch of the Department of Education, Training and Employment in June 2013 for the purposes of the Special Schools Scoping Project.

- *Special schools are resourced according to fixed ratios for teacher and teacher aides and are allocated at the school level.*
- *The allocation of teachers and teacher aide hours for special education programs (SEPs) and services (SERVs) in mainstream schools is based upon each region's proportional share of SWD enrolments. The enrolments included in the SWD totals are Prep, Years 1-12 with a verified disability, and compulsory non-state school programs. Students verified as having an intellectual impairment in the top 10th percentile are resourced at the same student teacher ratio as students in Special schools. These allocations are supplemented with admin time for Head of Special Education Services (HOSES), non-contact time, and time and travel. Resources are allocated at a regional level and distributed via the region according to local decision making processes.*

*Following Day 8, the Regions report to Central Office the distribution of SWD resources to individual school sites, programs and services via the SWD Data Collection Tool. This reported information is utilised as the basis of calculations for allocations of the Administrative Assistant Enhancement Program (AAEP) and Teacher Relief Scheme (TRS) to SEPs and SERVs.*

## 2.1.2 REVIEW OF THE RESOURCING FOR SCHOOLS SERVICING STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY

In 2013, the Queensland Government through Education Queensland announced a review of resourcing for schools servicing students with a disability. *The changing nature and prevalence of disability; the fixed budget model of the Queensland Government; and the changing landscape of definitional and funding work occurring at a national level has led to a need to review current resources used to support Queensland students with disability.*<sup>3</sup>

A Disability Resourcing Review project is being undertaken to develop and establish agreed policy positions and methodology on the location, staffing and structure of schooling provisions for students with disability. One component of this review is to provide policy advice to inform future infrastructure planning in relation to existing and future school facilities. The project undertaken by Urbis will provide research that will be utilised by DETE Infrastructure Services to provide advice to the Resourcing Review Committee. Following Phase 1, the Department developed a set of draft infrastructure guidelines for special schools for the Resourcing Review. A copy of the draft guidelines (2013) is provided in Appendix A of this document.

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<sup>3</sup> Education Queensland Disability resourcing review – infrastructure considerations

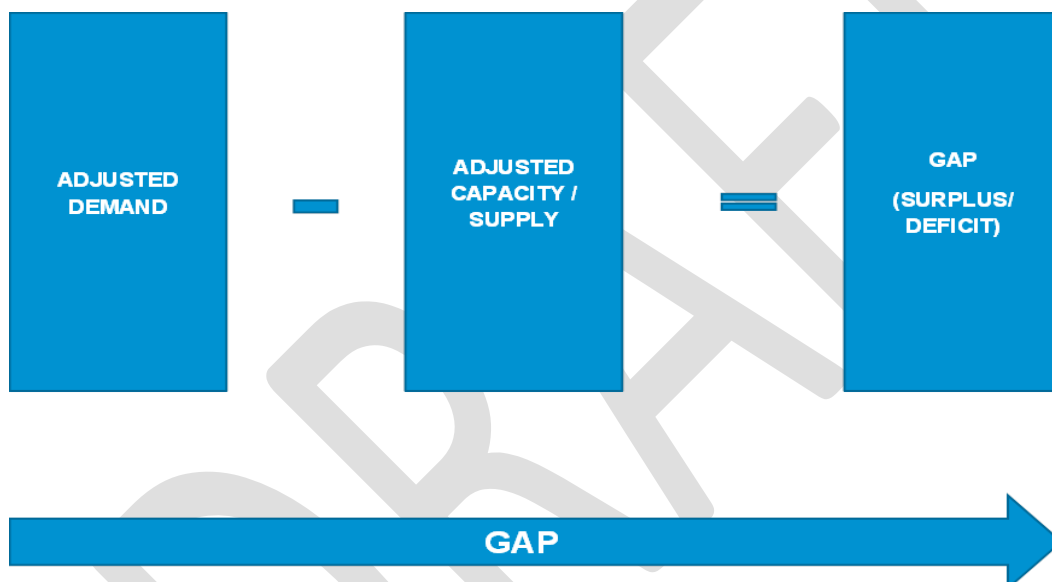
### 3 Need and Demand Assessment

Research suggests that families make decisions around their children’s schooling options based on a number of factors (e.g. income, type and complexity of disability, location, culture, previous experience with education environments and/or disability services, reputation and ‘look’ of the school) and indicators such as prevalence of disability, population growth, and socio-economic disadvantage cannot be completely accurate in determining need and demand in the future. It is therefore important to look at a number of factors that will drive demand for new special schools, rather than a pure needs assessment based on statistics, as no one indicator will be completely accurate in determining need and demand in the future.

#### 3.1 PROCESS

The methodology to frame the need and demand assessment and allow for prioritisation of regions has been based on a process to assess gap in service provision.

FIGURE 3 - GAP ASSESSMENT



The process has included the following elements:

- Assessing Need and Core Demand – population growth, socio demographic indicators such as SEIFA Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage, Australian Early Development Index (vulnerability assessment), identification of Need for Assistance with Core Activities through the Census
- Reviewing Supply - reviewing current service levels through special school locations, capacity and enrolments
- Developing an Adjusted Demand – testing the reality of current demand vs theoretical demand, based on supply factors and verification i.e. eligibility to attend special schools (whether currently attending or not) and taking into account family choice factors that influence demand.
- Determining the Gap which is the Adjusted Demand less the Capacity/Supply (represented in Figure 3 above).

## 3.2 ASSESSING NEED, DEMAND AND SUPPLY

In assessing need and demand for new special schools, the Urbis project team has used a variety of indicators. Understanding that families make decisions around their children's schooling options based on a number of factors (e.g. income, type and complexity of disability, location, culture, previous experience with education environments and/or disability services, reputation and 'look' of the school), no one indicator will be completely accurate in determining need and demand in the future.

### 3.2.1 NEED

There are several challenges in quantifying need given a range of varying socio-demographic factors, differing data sets and varying definitions of disability. Given this, for the purposes of this project the project team have used the following factors and publicly available statistics to indicate need; noting that those localities that show need on a number of indicators will have the greatest cumulative need for additional special education services:

#### Primary Indicators

- Projected population age profile at an SLA level (ABS Census data and Office of Economic and Statistical Research (OESR) data) to 2031 (at intervals of 2016, 2021 and 2031); and
- Potential Special School attendees using special school enrolment data and verification data (data provided by DETE) applied as a proportion of the population (using OESR population projections for 0-19 years).

#### Secondary Indicators

- Need for Assistance with Core Activities (identified through the Census);
- Socio Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage; and
- Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) to assess vulnerability.

Given limited availability of data at the time during Phase 1 Urbis, in consultation with the Department, primarily utilised Need for Assistance (Census) as the primary indicator of need (applying a 15% ratio to account for only a proportion of those requiring assistance as also being eligible to attend a special school). Secondary indicators such as SEIFA and AEDI were used to qualitatively confirm the assessment. It was however difficult to assess demand due to the fact that in some areas supply was good and in some areas non-existent.

During Phase 2 more Departmental data became available and Urbis refined the need and demand assessment using the Department's assessment of eligibility (Verification) as an indicator of need.

Urbis examined the need levels (indicated by Verifications) in a range of locations and selected an average need level (1.9%) which was then applied to population projections.

### 3.2.2 DEMAND

In understanding potential demand for new special schools we have referred to a number of factors from the demand and supply perspectives.

Supply included the location and number of special schools within a 1.25 hour drive time radius (determined by DETE based on current guidelines for funding support for transport to school).

To account for the other factors affecting demand including availability and accessibility of schools; reputation of schools and staff; perceived and actual stigma; family culture Urbis then examined a range of service levels across Queensland locations to understand high, medium and low service levels (excluding statistical outliers (high and low) as extremes which would affect average servicing rates). Those areas representing average low, medium and high servicing levels were

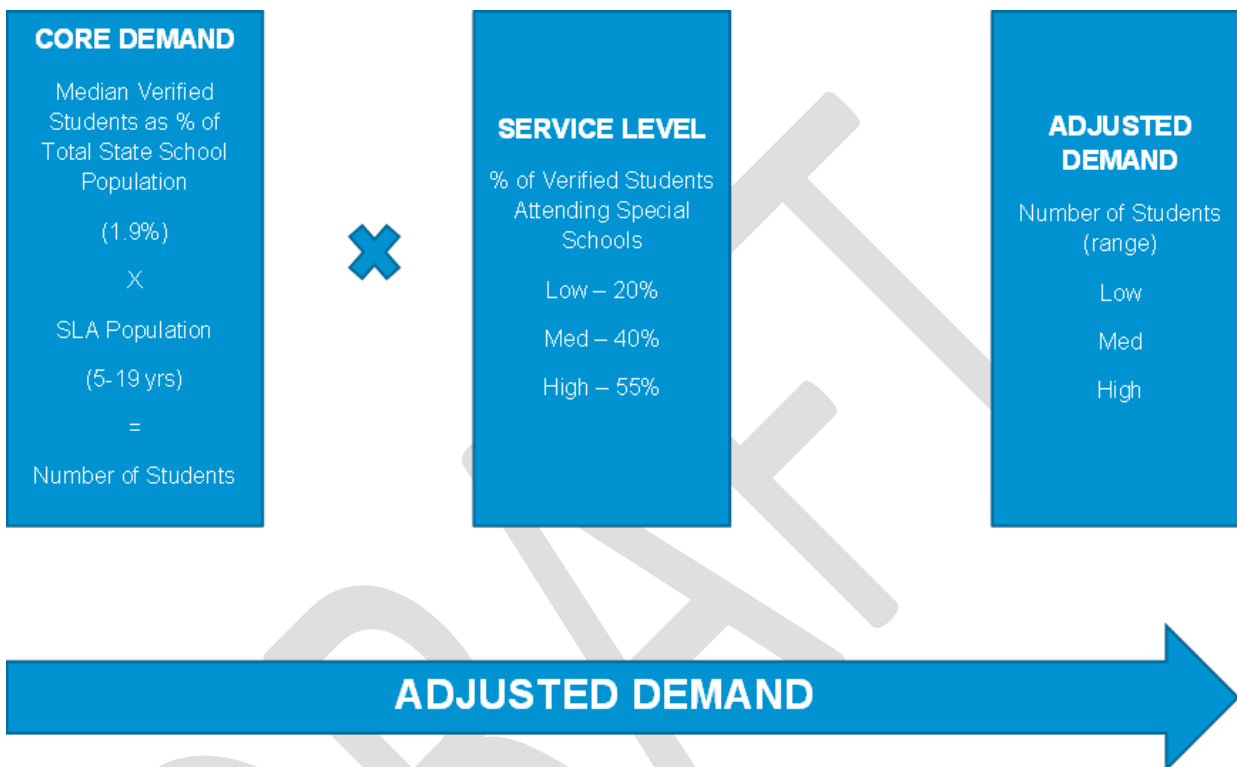
- Low – Townsville;

- Medium – Redlands;
- High – Aspley.

Additionally, Urbis reviewed local and regional planning contexts and population growth pathways for priority locations and key social infrastructure developments such as hospitals and health services to understand external drivers which may affect demand.

The following figure provides a summary of the process to assess an adjusted demand.

FIGURE 4 – ASSESSING DEMAND



### 3.3 FAMILY CHOICE DRIVES DEMAND

Research suggests that families make decisions around their children’s schooling options based on a number of factors (e.g. income, type and complexity of disability, location, culture, previous experience with education environments and/or disability services, reputation and ‘look’ of the school); and indicators such as prevalence of disability, population growth, and socio-economic disadvantage cannot be completely accurate in determining need and demand in the future. It is therefore important to look at a number of factors that will drive demand for new special education infrastructure, rather than a pure needs assessment based on statistics.

Changes in family choices regarding special education support will affect demand for an individual school or region, with capacity to escalate or slow the need for future investment in additional infrastructure.

### 3.4 KEY FACTORS IN RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS

There are a number of key factors to be considered in developing a response to the need. Firstly, the infrastructure response could include a new special school but may alternatively consider an extension to an existing facility or a decision to deliver the additional required services through Special Education Programs in mainstream schools instead.

Regardless of the solution there needs to be a coordinated infrastructure and resourcing/program response – one without the other will result in infrastructure and services not addressing the actual need.

What is clear from the study of sites across Queensland, is that the existing requirements and responses vary widely and it is recommended that a place based assessment occur for identified priority areas to ensure the response is appropriate, effective and long lasting.

A place based assessment might include:

- Socio-demographic indicators (young population, SEIFA Index of Relative Socio-economic disadvantage, AEDI, Census Need for Assistance data);
- Population growth areas;
- Distance to nearest special school (1.25hr drive time but majority 85% within 10km and 94% within 20km);
- Existing service capacity – potentially 0;
- Quality of existing assets;
- Alignment with other EQ investment (mainstream schools);
- Opportunistic alignment to local and regional development/investment e.g. resources, health, universities, etc; and
- Community vocalisation of need

### 3.5 THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDICATORS IN PREDICTING NEED

Why is Socio-Economic Data important in understanding need, demand and suitable responses?

#### 3.5.1 DISABILITY PREVALENCE

The following key take-outs are taken from “AIHW Bulletin 61 Disability in Australia: Trends in prevalence, education, employment and community living.”

- *There has been no significant change in the underlying age-standardised rates of severe or profound core activity limitations over the past two decades.*
- *A rise in the reported prevalence rates of disabling conditions associated with childhood such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and autism-related disorders resulted in a substantial increase in the reported number of children with a disability in the past decade.*
- *In 2003, children and young people with disability (especially those aged 15-20 years) were more likely to be attending school than at any time over the previous two decades.*
- *The increase in the number of students with disability is likely to create future demand for services and assistance to help these young people successfully manage the transition from school to adult life. This includes entry into employment, post-school education, and other social and economic activities.*
- *Between 1981 and 2003 there was a trend towards people with severe or profound core activity limitations living in the community. The trend was strongest in those aged 5-29 years. The trend shows clearly the importance of service programs to support carers, and to support the stability of community living arrangements.*

#### 3.5.2 SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

There is a strong correlation between socioeconomic status and severe disability, according to a report released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare in 2009. Report author, Dr Louise O'Rance, said that the figures clearly showed that disability among people aged under 65 was more common in

communities where residents had fewer economic resources. Dr O'Rance said that the relationship between disability and economic disadvantage 'works both ways'.

- (a) *"Socioeconomic disadvantage can contribute to disability and vice versa. People with disability often have lower average incomes than people without disability, and their disability can impose extra costs on individuals and their families."*
- (b) *"On the other hand, risk factors for many chronic diseases are higher among socioeconomically disadvantaged people, and people working in lower status jobs can face greater occupational hazards (such as serious workplace injury) that in turn contribute to higher rates of disability", Dr O'Rance said.*<sup>4</sup>

### 3.5.3 LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

There are a number of challenges associated with meeting the needs of children and young people with a disability, and the need to support their learning and education opportunities. These challenges face families, teachers, community and health service providers and potential employers. A variety of factors affect learning outcomes for students with a disability, as with students who do not have a disability, many of which are external to the curriculum. These include (but are not limited to) socio-economic and housing circumstances of families, potential transport disadvantage, requirements for flexible, adaptable and appropriate learning spaces, direct and indirect discrimination by students, teachers and communities in relation to expectations of students with a disability participating in education and work environments. These factors also distinctly affect family choice of facility type, location and program school services for their child<sup>5</sup>

### 3.5.4 EMPHASIS ON EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION

A recent KPMG report into the effectiveness of early childhood intervention found that:

- early childhood intervention is associated with improved outcomes for children including those with a disability (particularly where these interventions are part of the child and families 'natural environment');
- early childhood interventions can improve school transitions through supporting families, and may also improve education outcomes
- generalist and specialist programs report success in improving social and workforce participation outcomes for children later in life
- enhanced coordination of support for families at the local level is important.<sup>6</sup>
- Special schools are often the 'community hub' for families with a child or young person with a disability, particularly in regional and suburban settings. Any shift in policy emphasis to support these findings may create opportunities/challenges in terms of special school infrastructure provision and resourcing.

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<sup>4</sup> AIHW Report 2009 - *The geography of disability and economic disadvantage in Australian capital cities.*

<sup>5</sup> Supported by key themes from stakeholder consultation undertaken for this project. See Section 3 of this document.

<sup>6</sup> KPMG 2011, *Reviewing the evidence on the effectiveness of early childhood intervention*, report to Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 20 September 2011, p.8

## 4 Identification of Priority Regions

One of the primary indicators of needs is the projected population age profile of a region or area that indicates (a) growth; and (b) a younger population.

Urbis used these factors applied across Local Government Areas in Queensland as the primary filter to determine potential regions of priority. This included examination of ABS Census data and Office of Economic and Statistical Research (OESR) data to 2031 (at intervals of 2016, 2021 and 2031).

Those areas identified as priorities were then examined in terms of more detailed calculations of need and demand. A detailed demand analysis was undertaken on each of these areas including current enrolments for special schools, potential eligible enrolments, acceptable vs preferred service levels, in accordance with the methodology described previously in Section 3.2.

### 4.1 EXISTING AND PROJECTED POPULATION

In order to identify key growth areas, Urbis has analysed the projected population growth between 2011 and 2031 as provided by OESR for all Local Government Areas (LGA's) within the State of Queensland, represented in Table 6 below. This analysis identified a considerable number of LGA's that exhibited a significant rate of growth, including Gladstone (63%), Fraser Coast (48%), Ipswich (154%), Isaac (52%), Lockyer Valley (48%), Logan (43%), Mackay (43%), Scenic Rim (116%), Toowoomba (37%), Townsville (42%) and Whitsunday (44%).

In order to establish priority areas of focus, areas that had shown a significant rate of growth but were well serviced i.e where current supply was greater than or similar to projected demand (Gladstone and Fraser Coast,) or had previously been studied (Ipswich), were excluded from selection along with areas where growth in population in real terms was quite small i.e. actual residential numbers as opposed to percentage growth (Isaac and Whitsunday).

This was determined by applying the standard need and demand methodology as described in Section 3 of this document to all of the high growth areas highlighted in Table 6 below, including looking at projected population growth, current supply, desired level of servicing and current take-up of special school services.

Following the exclusion of Gladstone, Fraser Coast, Ipswich (previously studied), Isaac and Whitsunday, and discussion with the Department of Education, Training and Employment (Infrastructure Services and Education Queensland); of the following areas were prioritised for investigation:

- Townsville;
- Mackay;
- Toowoomba and Lockyer Valley; and
- Logan and Scenic Rim.

These four areas are discussed in detail in the following Sections 5 – 8 of this document.

TABLE 6 - POPULATION GROWTH IN QUEENSLAND LGAS 2011-2031 (HIGH GROWTH AREAS HIGHLIGHTED)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA	2011	2021	2026	2031
Aurukun (S)	1,398	1,511	1,611	1,701
Balonne (S)	4,862	4,796	4,780	4,778
Banana (S)	14,812	15,068	15,101	15,021
Barcaldine (R)	3,292	3,251	3,171	3,085
Barcoo (S)	363	356	349	342



LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA	2011	2021	2026	2031
Blackall Tambo (R)	2,257	2,355	2,426	2,492
Boulia (S)	493	503	513	523
Brisbane (C)	1,089,879	1,176,418	1,246,841	1,310,033
Bulloo (S)	418	409	399	388
Bundaberg (R)	92,063	100,238	107,042	112,395
Burdekin (S)	17,775	18,001	18,365	18,713
Burke (S)	557	584	609	633
Cairns (R) (c)	150,992	167,794	186,575	205,735
Carpentaria (S)	2,197	2,286	2,357	2,421
Cassowary Coast (R)	28,636	28,715	29,214	29,639
Central Highlands (R)	29,541	33,025	35,850	38,393
Charters Towers (R)	12,434	12,480	12,531	12,533
Cherbourg (S)	1,264	1,306	1,352	1,398
Cloncurry (S)	3,342	3,445	3,476	3,509
Cook (S)	4,409	4,765	5,037	5,320
Croydon (S)	327	345	368	391
Diamantina (S)	292	289	286	283
Doomadgee (S)	1,374	1,465	1,546	1,626
Douglas (S) (c)	11,186	11,970	12,873	13,797
Etheridge (S)	929	941	963	985
Flinders (S)	1,840	1,822	1,801	1,785
Fraser Coast (R)	97,661	104,563	114,389	124,852
Gladstone (R)	59,461	70,098	83,424	96,107
Gold Coast (C)	515,202	579,067	659,162	738,261
Goondiwindi (R)	10,900	11,309	11,845	12,378
Gympie (R)	46,837	49,992	53,560	57,051
Hinchinbrook (S)	11,817	11,733	11,664	11,565
Hope Vale (S)	1,052	1,150	1,239	1,310
Ipswich (C)	172,200	222,337	293,361	364,584
Isaac (R)	23,188	25,803	28,655	31,359
Kowanyama (S)	1,112	1,161	1,201	1,236
Livingstone (S) (c)	33,394	39,377	44,072	49,824
Lockhart River (S)	520	505	491	477
Lockyer Valley (R)	35,880	39,577	43,377	47,120
Logan (C)	287,474	316,013	364,197	419,087
Longreach (R)	4,296	4,235	4,159	4,089
Mackay (R)	115,960	130,896	146,304	162,455

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA	2011	2021	2026	2031
Mapoon (S)	281	310	337	358
Maranoa (R)	13,437	14,126	14,804	15,506
Mareeba (S) (c)	20,745	22,015	23,660	25,304
McKinlay (S)	1,085	1,114	1,141	1,171
Moreton Bay (R)	390,051	442,565	494,394	541,969
Mornington (S)	1,220	1,315	1,406	1,491
Mount Isa (C)	22,079	23,233	24,292	25,324
Murweh (S)	4,731	4,687	4,627	4,572
Napranum (S)	908	927	983	1,021
Noosa (S) (c)	51,038	55,419	58,539	59,605
North Burnett (R)	10,374	10,331	10,314	10,320
Northern Peninsula Area (R)	2,463	2,621	2,758	2,884
Palm Island (S)	2,538	2,722	2,913	3,096
Paroo (S)	1,937	1,887	1,833	1,783
Porpuraaw (S)	715	762	805	847
Quilpie (S)	1,007	963	915	869
Redland (C)	143,711	157,224	169,498	180,599
Richmond (S)	847	822	794	767
Rockhampton (R) (c)	78,939	86,688	94,045	100,986
Scenic Rim (R)	37,437	41,412	47,407	57,720
Somerset (R)	22,200	24,398	26,675	28,745
South Burnett (R)	31,803	33,840	35,731	37,594
Southern Downs (R)	34,649	36,496	38,493	40,446
Sunshine Coast (R) (c)	267,241	297,641	337,951	380,741
Tablelands (R) (c)	24,372	25,500	27,019	28,039
Toowoomba (R)	155,473	163,960	174,824	188,412
Torres (S)	3,477	3,563	3,637	3,714
Torres Strait Island (R)	4,578	4,743	4,879	5,006
Townsville (C)	180,114	203,672	229,982	257,292
Weipa (T)	3,423	3,853	4,258	4,631
Western Downs (R)	32,365	34,241	36,109	38,010
Whitsunday (R)	32,416	35,830	39,795	43,106
Winton (S)	1,380	1,346	1,313	1,286
Woorabinda (S)	976	1,053	1,098	1,137
Wujal Wujal (S)	287	278	270	261

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA	2011	2021	2026	2031
Yarrabah (S)	2,595	2,809	3,049	3,290
<b>Queensland</b>	<b>4,476,778</b>	<b>4,946,319</b>	<b>5,477,082</b>	<b>6,007,578</b>

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## 5 Townsville

### 5.1 SPECIAL EDUCATION IN TOWNSVILLE

The Townsville Region currently has one special school in operation. Townsville Community Learning Centre is located on 78 Thompson St, Mundingburra. As of day eight 2014, Townsville Community Learning Centre has 118 enrolled students. Enrolments at Townsville Community Learning Centre have grown steadily since 2008 (85.0) to 2013 (103.0). The school currently has capacity (according to Infrastructure Services Branch records) to cater for up to 114 students and can therefore be considered as at capacity in 2014. It is located near Aitkenvale Centre and opportunities for future expansion are constrained by Ross River to the south.

### 5.2 DEMOGRAPHICS

#### 5.2.1 EXISTING AND PROJECTED POPULATION

Within the Townsville Region, Bohle Plains (1827 persons), Deeragun (8865 persons), Mount Louisa (2101 persons), Townsville South (2876) and Townsville City – North Ward (1379 persons) will experience the highest growth in population numbers by 2031. All areas will experience consistent increases in population over the next 20 years, with growth in Townsville South increasing considerably from 2016. The areas of Annandale, Cranbrook, Gulliver - Currajong – Vincent, Heatley, Kirwan – East, Kirwan – West and Magnetic Island are projected to experience population decline in relatively small numbers between 2011 and 2031.

#### 5.2.2 SEIFA

Those Statistical Area Level 2s (SA2s) with the greatest socio-economic disadvantage within the Townsville LGA are Gulliver - Currajong – Vincent, Garbutt – West End and Heatley – all within the second highest decile of disadvantage. Condon-Rusmussen, Kirwan East and Wulguru-Roseneath are also relatively disadvantaged (within the 3<sup>rd</sup> decile).

#### 5.2.3 AUSTRALIAN EARLY DEVELOPMENT INDEX

Those areas with the highest proportion of children who are developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains in 2012, and are significantly above the regional and state percentage include Cranbrook, Currajong, Gulliver, Heatley, Hermit Park, Mundingburra, Oonoonba, Railway Estate, South Townsville, Vincent and Wulguru.

### 5.3 PROJECTED DEMAND SCENARIOS

	CORE DEMAND	ADJUSTED DEMAND	CORE DEMAND	ADJUSTED DEMAND	CORE DEMAND	ADJUSTED DEMAND
	2011	2011	2021	2021	2031	2031
Location	Townsville		Townsville		Townsville	
Current Attendees	94					
Total Population (5-19)	40610		48620		57522	
Change in Pop 2011-31 (5-19)	0		8010		16912	
Actual Verified as % of total state students	0.019					
Projected Total Students	771.59					
Projected Extra Students	0.00					
Projected verified at 1.9% of total state students	0.019		0.019		0.019	
Projected Total Students (1.9%)	771.59		923.78		1092.92	
Projected Total Students (Service Level 20%)		154.32		184.76		218.58
Projected Total Students (Service Level 40%)		308.64		369.51		437.17
Projected Total Students (Service Level 55%)		424.37		508.08		601.10
Projected Extra Students (1.9%)	0.00		152.19		321.33	
Projected Extra Students (Service Level 20%)		0.00		30.44		64.27
Projected Extra Students (Service Level 40%)		0.00		60.88		128.53
Projected Extra Students (Service Level 55%)		0.00		83.70		176.73

### 5.4 TOWNSVILLE PLANNING ASSESSMENT

#### 5.4.1 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Townsville Region includes the City of Townsville and the City of Thuringowa, known as the “twin cities”. This region is the largest urban area in Queensland outside of South East Queensland. Townsville

is a major economic and service centre for North Queensland and has a large transient workforce and population due to ongoing defence presence; university students attending James Cook University and high numbers of fly-in/fly-out (FIFO) workers associated with the mining and resources industries further west. In 2011, the region's resident population was 190,000 persons. This is set to increase to between 270,000 and 300,000 by 2031.

The strategic issues relevant to the planning of education infrastructure in Townsville include:

- To accommodate the growing population, an additional 45,000 dwellings will be required and will be implemented through infill and greenfield development. The Townsville region has capacity to accommodate for up to 65,000 dwellings within the current urban-zoned areas<sup>7</sup>.
- The local population has a younger profile, and is characterised by a high proportion of children and young adults and a lower proportion of those aged 65 years and over. In particular school aged children 5 – 19 make up 21.6% of the population with those 65 years and over making up 9.8%<sup>8</sup>.
- Townsville's resident profile is culturally diverse population profile. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are recorded as comprising around 5% of the total population in Townsville LGA. However, their actual number is considered to be potentially significantly higher, due to under-counting in the Census.
- Townsville due to its location is susceptible to a number of natural hazards, including cyclone damage landslide, flood, bushfire, storm tide inundation and coastal erosion.
- A need to provide a range of human services and associated social and community infrastructure to meet the needs of a rapidly growing population<sup>9</sup>.

It is identified within the planning framework that population growth should be accommodated in infill and intensified development around identified activity centres (Aitkenvale, Thuringowa Central and Hyde Park); in particular this is identified as important to support investment in community facilities. In the long term, greenfield areas will be investigated and planned to support residential growth.

Townsville is the major service centre for North Queensland, and is the location for higher order education and health infrastructure including:

- James Cook University is located on the south side of Ross River and on the edge of the city with available land surrounding the site. It also has access over the Ring Road Bridge to Thuringowa Central and the Bruce Highway Bridge to Aitkenvale.
- Townsville has three hospitals which include James Cook University-Townsville Hospital, located near the James Cook University, the Mater Health Services North Queensland, located between Aitkenvale and Hyde Park, and the Mater Women's and Children's Hospital, located at Hyde Park.

Based on this information it is likely that there will be demand for residential development, and in particular affordable accommodation, in close proximity or with good access to these identified existing service areas.

#### 5.4.2 PLANNING CONTEXT

Townsville City Council is the governing authority for the Townsville Region. Currently, two planning schemes are administered by Townsville City Council, including the *Townsville City Plan 2005*, and the

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<sup>7</sup> Townsville City Council, 2013, City Plan Townsville – Strategic Overview, Townsville City Council < [http://www.townsville.qld.gov.au/business/planning/planningscheme/cityplan2014/Documents/Information\\_Sheets/Strategic%20Information%20Document%20LR.pdf](http://www.townsville.qld.gov.au/business/planning/planningscheme/cityplan2014/Documents/Information_Sheets/Strategic%20Information%20Document%20LR.pdf)>

<sup>8</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013, 2011 Census Quick Stats – Townsville, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Viewed 8 April 2013 < [http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census\\_services/getproduct/census/2011/quickstat/LGA37010](http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2011/quickstat/LGA37010)>

<sup>9</sup> Townsville City Council, 2011, Leading, Creating, Connecting: Shaping a Place to be Proud of, Community Plan Townsville 2011 – 2021, Townsville City Council < [http://www.townsville.qld.gov.au/council/publications/communityreports/Documents/Community\\_Plan.pdf](http://www.townsville.qld.gov.au/council/publications/communityreports/Documents/Community_Plan.pdf)>

*City of Thuringowa Planning Scheme 2003*. Currently the Townsville City Council is in the processes of developing the Draft Townsville City Plan which will consolidate the two existing planning schemes. The Draft Townsville City Plan was open for public comment between September and November 2013 and the new City Plan is expected to be in place in mid-late 2014..

The Planning Framework is made up of three key elements that influence and direct planning for the Townsville Region:

- The relevant Planning Scheme/s;
- Strategic Plans; and,
- Priority Development Areas.

Where an area has been declared Priority Development Areas (PDAs), the relevant UDA Development Scheme that has been prepared supersedes the controls and direction set out in the planning scheme. Within Townsville, Oonoonba has been declared a PDA and will accommodate for a medium density residential neighbourhood with small scale mixed uses. This development initiative is being led by Economic Development Queensland.

### 5.4.3 PLANNING AND EDUCATION DIRECTIONS

Under the current Townsville City Plan 2005, the Desired Environmental Outcomes (DEO's) provide the strategic direction for development. There are nine DEO's and there is a particular emphasis on the future settlement pattern of Townsville being developed around a hierarchy of centres that provide access to higher levels of commercial and community services.

Consistent with the DEO's, it is evident in the Townsville City Plan that educational establishments are preferred (subject to self-assessable or code assessable applications) within the Centre Frame, Neighbourhood Centres, District Centres, CBD Tourist Core and Tourist Core (if located within the Magnetic Harbour local area Sector 2), Education, Heritage and Business Park and Community and Government Precincts<sup>10</sup>.

The City of Thuringowa Planning Scheme has six DEO's, with DEO 4 of particular relevance in regards to the character, city image, amenity and lifestyle which seeks to "meet the needs of the community including special needs groups such as youth, aged, ethnic, disabled, unemployed and indigenous people" by providing affordable housing and equitable access to community and cultural services and facilities<sup>11</sup>.

Under the Draft Planning Scheme, preferred locations for educational establishments are within all Centres Planning Areas (Neighbourhood Centre, District Centre and Sub-Regional Centre).

### 5.4.4 STRATEGIC LOCATIONS

#### **Centres**

Townsville's CBD is classified as a principle centre in an attempt to be a more compact city. Major centres have been identified at Aitkenvale, Thuringowa Central and Hyde Park. Council's plans indicate new centres are planned for Burdell and Rocky Springs which will be economic and community hubs. The Burdell centre (located on the north side of Ross River) and Rocky Springs centre (located on the south side of Ross River) will be required to accommodate a broad range of uses which include commercial and community facilities with recreational facilities.

#### **Greenfield Areas**

Major greenfield areas included have been located on the edge of the urban footprint of Townsville. A new district centre, Shaw, has been included with one of the Greenfield areas which is one of the closest Greenfield sites to other major centres and the CBD.

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<sup>10</sup> Townsville City Council, 2005, Townsville City Plan 2005, Townsville City Council

<sup>11</sup> The City of Thuringowa, 2003, City of Thuringowa Planning Scheme

Greenfield areas have been appropriately identified as “emerging community” areas to facilitate master planning and maintain orderly development. It is intended that greenfield areas will support infill development around centres in accommodating residential growth over the next 20 years.

### 5.5 SUMMARY DEMAND ASSESSMENT

The following table shows a summary of the findings of the demand study and suggested timeframes for future provision of additional infrastructure.

TABLE 7 - PRIORITISATION OF NEW SPECIAL EDUCATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Location	Existing provision	Current estimated demand for services	Timeframe of need	Priority for attention
<b>Townsville</b>	1 existing special school	Medium	Short term (2 - 5 years)	Medium



## 6 Mackay

### 6.1 SPECIAL EDUCATION IN MACKAY

The Mackay region currently has one special school in operation. The Mackay District Special School is located on 63 Mansfield Drive, Beaconsfield. The school is approximately 8km north of the Mackay CBD. As of day eight 2014, Mackay District Special School has 86.2 enrolled students. Enrolments at Mackay District Special School have grown steadily since 2008 (49.0) to 2013 (84.8). The school currently has capacity to cater for up to 84 students and as such is currently operating at capacity. Based on aerial mapping, there is additional land available and may provide an opportunity to expand in the future. Furthermore the Special School is located near the Richmond investigation area which considers urban expansion in the area and future multimodal transport corridor to the south.

### 6.2 DEMOGRAPHICS

#### 6.2.1 EXISTING AND PROJECTED POPULATION

Within the Mackay Region population growth is projected to occur at a relatively consistent rate until 2031 with the largest increase in population projected to occur between 2021 – 2026. Eimeo – Rural View (4945 persons), Mount Pleasant – Glenella (1093 persons), Pioneer Valley (1684 persons) and Shoal Point – Bucasia (1144 persons) experiencing the highest increase in population numbers by 2031. No areas within the Mackay Region are projected to experience an overall decline in population, although some reduction in population numbers is projected for North Mackay, Seaforth – Calen, Slade Point, South Mackay and West Mackay between 2026 and 2031.

#### 6.2.2 SEIFA

Those Statistical Area Level 2s (SA2s) with the greatest socio-economic disadvantage within the Mackay LGA is Mackay which is within the second highest decile of disadvantage.

#### 6.2.3 AUSTRALIAN EARLY DEVELOPMENT INDEX

Those areas with the highest proportion of children who are developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains in 2012, and are significantly above the regional and state percentage include Bucasia, Mount Pleasant – Mackay and St Helens Beach and surrounds

### 6.3 PROJECTED DEMAND SCENARIOS

	Core Demand	Adjusted Demand	Core Demand	Adjusted Demand	Core Demand	Adjusted Demand
	2011	2011	2021	2021	2031	2031
Location	Mackay		Mackay		Mackay	
Current Attendees	73					
Total Population (5-19)	24505		29401		35121	
Change in Pop 2011-31 (5-19)	0		4896		10616	
Actual Verified as % of total state students	0.015					
Projected Total Students	367.575					
Projected Extra Students	0					
Projected verified at 1.9% of total state students	0.019		0.019		0.019	
Projected Total Students (1.9%)	465.595		558.619		667.299	
Projected Total Students (Service Level 20%)		93.119		111.7238		133.4598
Projected Total Students (Service Level 40%)		186.238		223.4476		266.9196
Projected Total Students (Service Level 55%)		256.07725		307.24045		367.01445
Projected Extra Students (1.9%)	0		93.024		201.704	
Projected Extra Students (Service Level 20%)		0		18.6048		40.3408
Projected Extra Students (Service Level 40%)		0		37.2096		80.6816
Projected Extra Students (Service Level 55%)		0		51.1632		110.9372

## 6.4 MACKAY PLANNING ASSESSMENT

### 6.4.1 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Mackay Region's population is predicted to grow significantly in the coming years. Mackay is the dominant city in the region with smaller towns including Walkerston, Sarina, Mirani and Marian which provide local services. As such, strategic issues relevant to Mackay over the next 15 to 20 years include:

- The region's population is expected increase from 121 400 in 2011 to 187 400 by 2031. An additional 22750 dwellings are required to meet this growth with the Mackay urban area selected to receive 85% of these dwellings.
- The distribution of growth in the region is predominantly located in the Mackay local government area and is characterised by relatively low-density development. The Mackay urban area will absorb almost two thirds of the region's growth by 2031.<sup>12</sup>
- The Mackay Region's growth is fuelled by the boom in the mining industry in the Bowen Basin, to which Mackay acts as the gateway for exporting nearly a third of Queensland's export goods. This has ongoing impacts on the provision of affordable accommodation within the Mackay Region.
- The Mackay Region and Rural Areas in particular face a significant challenge in the retention of young people (aged 15 to 24) as young people choose to leave the area for education, life experiences and employment diversity. This could indicate a higher proportion of those aged 15 – 24 living in Mackay City.
- A highly diverse population, including a slightly higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People (3.6%) than the Queensland average (3.3%).

In order to identify and address these key issues, a Mackay Council has put in place key strategic document is *Tomorrow's Mackay, a vision for the community. Our Community Plan 2011 – 2031*.

#### **Tomorrow's Mackay: a vision for the community**

*Tomorrow's Mackay, a vision for the community. Our Community Plan 2011 – 2031* ('Tomorrow's Mackay') is the long term community vision for the Mackay region as developed through extensive consultation with the Mackay community. The vision of the Mackay Region is for "a vibrant prosperous lifestyle today – held in trust for tomorrow's generations. A key factor of importance within Tomorrow's Mackay is that the Mackay Region provides opportunities for people to be educated, trained and employed and to attract and develop a skilled workforce by promoting our region as a lifestyle destination with quality education facilities.

As such, *Tomorrow's Mackay* shows strong support for the provision of a wide range of social services and educational facilities<sup>13</sup>.

### 6.4.2 PLANNING CONTEXT

The *Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday Regional Plan* (MIWRP) is the statutory document which manages regional growth by accommodating all of the region's urban development needs within an urban footprint. The MIWRP takes precedence over all local planning instruments and articulates the strategic directions in the form of principles and policies.

Mackay Regional Council is the governing authority for planning and development, within Mackay. Planning and development are specifically governed by local planning schemes which coordinate and integrate local area growth and change, and express relevant dimensions of regional and state planning

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<sup>12</sup> Queensland Government, 2012, Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday Regional Plan, Queensland Government < <http://www.dsdp.qld.gov.au/resources/plan/miw/miw-regional-plan.pdf>>

<sup>13</sup> Mackay Regional Council, 2011, Tomorrow's Mackay, a vision for the community. Our Community Plan 2011 – 2031, Mackay Regional Council < [http://www.mackay.qld.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/111096/Community\\_Plan\\_2011-2031\\_web.pdf](http://www.mackay.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/111096/Community_Plan_2011-2031_web.pdf)>

instruments. Currently, three planning schemes are administered by Mackay Regional Council, including the *Mackay City Planning Scheme 2006*, the *Mirani Shire Plan 2007* and the *Sarina Shire Planning Scheme 2005*. Currently Mackay Regional Council is in the processes of developing the Draft Mackay Region Planning Scheme which will replace the existing three schemes, with a single cohesive planning scheme. The Draft planning scheme was provided to the public for consultation between May and August 2013, and Council is currently reviewing the information received in this period.

The Planning Framework is made up of four key elements that influence and direct planning for the Logan Region:

- The Regional Plan ;
- The relevant Planning Scheme/s;
- Priority Development Areas; and,
- Strategic Plans.

Where an area has been declared Priority Development Areas (PDAs), the relevant UDA Development Scheme that has been prepared supersedes the controls and direction set out in the planning scheme. Within Mackay, Andergrove has been declared a priority development area but is intended to become a “model residential neighbourhood”<sup>14</sup>.

### 6.4.3 PLANNING AND EDUCATION DIRECTIONS

The Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday Regional Plan identifies that with the significant growth anticipated for the Mackay Region, the capacity of education, health and other community facilities will need to be increased. The regional plan also identifies the importance of ensuring community and educational services are well located and all residential growth should be underpinned with a strong focus on delivering education, commercial or industrial activity for the region. The Mackay urban area has the capacity to accommodate a significant proportion of projected growth and it is intended that growth will be focused around centres to support “higher levels of self-containment, walkable community, shorter and fewer vehicle trips and more efficient transport services”. Urban expansion to the east is limited by physical constraints on the coastal side of the city, including the potential for coastal erosion, storm tides, and consequent flooding and inundation.

Current and future educational and other strategic locations for Mackay City are set out in the Mackay City Planning Scheme. Under the Desired Environmental Outcomes (DEO’s) directing development In Mackay, the outcomes sought for economic development identify that the growth of centres occurs in step with demonstrated community need, recognising the role and function of other centres within the network of centres.

The area controlled by the Mackay City Planning Scheme is broken up into 4 Localities – The Mackay City Centre, Mackay Frame, Mackay Hinterland and the Off-shore Islands localities. Within the Mackay City Centre, preferred locations for an educational establishment include the commercial centre zone, commercial main street zone, commercial (major facility) zone, city residential zone, mixed use zone, open space zone and the public purposes zone. Within the Frame and Hinterland localities, educational establishments are preferred within the commercial zone, rural zone (frame only), village zone and public purposes zone.

The *Draft Mackay Regional Planning Scheme* provides an updated strategic framework and planning for the entire Mackay Region. The Strategic Framework encourages a settlement pattern that supports growth and aligns with existing and planned community infrastructure as well as creates an integrated and compact urban form through infill development in the identified key urban areas and increased residential densities around centres, major transport corridors, and areas of high amenity. The Strategic Framework also states that “The provision of community health, education and social facilities respect the hierarchy of centres, and achieve high levels of public access and economic efficiency”<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> Urban Land Development Authority, 2010, Andergrove Urban Development Area Development Scheme, Queensland Government < <http://www.dsdp.qld.gov.au/resources/plan/pda/andergrove-development-scheme.pdf>>

<sup>15</sup> Mackay Regional Council, 2013, Draft Mackay Regional Planning Scheme Part 3 Strategic Framework, Mackay Regional Council < [http://www.mackay.qld.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0014/141413/06\\_Version\\_0.8\\_-\\_Part\\_3.pdf](http://www.mackay.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0014/141413/06_Version_0.8_-_Part_3.pdf)>

#### 6.4.4 STRATEGIC LOCATIONS

There are a number of strategic locations for an educational establishment within Mackay, as it is broadly supported as a use in a number of zones under the planning scheme. Neighbourhood centres, including Andergrove, Bucasia, Rural View and Walkerston are all identified as key areas for providing community and shopping needs. Other areas identified are divided between the Ooralea Development Area and Investigation Areas.

##### Development Area

The identified development area of Ooralea has been identified in the Draft Mackay Regional Planning Scheme as an area to:

*“provide a mix of housing types, a major centre, a specialised centre, community facilities and employment opportunities in industrial and commercial areas. The Ooralea development area is developed in accordance with a local plan, sequenced infrastructure plan and consideration of environmental and developmental constraints. The Ooralea development area provides access to existing major employment areas, the university precinct, urban infrastructure, major transport corridors and established residential development”.*

##### Investigation Areas

Investigation areas have been identified under the draft planning scheme as areas with potential for urban expansion, following detailed land use and infrastructure planning is undertaken. Richmond is a key area being investigated as a key area for future development which might have potential as a strategic location. However, it is noted that Richmond is in close proximity to Beaconsfield where the existing special school is located.

#### 6.5 SUMMARY DEMAND ASSESSMENT

The following table shows a summary of the findings of the demand study and suggested timeframes for future provision of additional infrastructure.

TABLE 8 - PRIORITISATION OF NEW SPECIAL EDUCATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Location	Existing provision	Current estimated demand for services	Timeframe of need	Priority for attention
Mackay	1 existing special school	Medium	Long term (10 - 20 years)	Low- Medium

## 7 Toowoomba and Lockyer Valley

### 7.1 SPECIAL EDUCATION IN TOOWOOMBA & THE LOCKYER VALLEY

The Toowoomba Region currently has two special schools in operation. Clifford Park Special School currently has two campuses, the main campus is located on Rob Street, Clifford Gardens and the second campus is located at 58 Ramsay Street, South Toowoomba – approximately six kilometres from the Clifford Park campus. Both campuses offer services from pre-prep to year 12. As of day eight 2014, there were 102.9 enrolments across the two campuses. Clifford Park Special school has shown stable growth in enrolment numbers since 2008 (81.2) with a slight decrease this year so far from peak enrolments in 2013 (105.0). Across the two campuses, Clifford Park Special School currently has capacity for up to 144 enrolments.

Toowoomba West Special School also has two campuses. The main campus is located on 26 Gladstone Street, Toowoomba with a secondary campus based at Toowoomba Base Hospital. Both campuses offer services from pre-prep to year 12. The Gladstone Road Campus has been expanded with the addition of 3 classrooms during 2011 – 2012<sup>16</sup>. As of day eight 2014, Toowoomba West Special School had 67.8 enrolments. Toowoomba West Special School has also shown stable growth in enrolment numbers since 2008 (48.0) to 2013 (72.8) and also showing a slight decrease in enrolments so far this year. Toowoomba West currently has capacity for up to 102 enrolments.

There are currently no special schools located within the Lockyer Valley Region. It is assumed that those within the Lockyer Valley are located a reasonable travel distance (less than 1 hour drive time) from Special Schools within either the Toowoomba or Ipswich Region.

### 7.2 POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

#### 7.2.1 EXISTING AND PROJECTED POPULATION

The population of the Toowoomba and Lockyer Valley Region is expected to grow at an increasing rate between 2011 – 2026, with some slowing of population growth between 2026 and 2031. Darling Heights (2030 persons) and Toowoomba West (2897 persons) are anticipated to experience the highest increase in population numbers by 2031. Notably Middle Ridge (-139), Newtown (-91), Toowoomba-Central (-251), Toowoomba – East (-148) and Wilsonton (-215) are all projected to experience an overall reduction in population numbers by 2031.

#### 7.2.2 SEIFA

Those Statistical Area Level 2s (SA2s) with the greatest socio-economic disadvantage within the Toowoomba and Lockyer Valley LGA are Drayton – Harristown, Gatton, Newtown and North Toowoomba – Harlaxton – all within the highest or second highest decile of disadvantage, and Toowoomba Central ranked within the 3<sup>rd</sup> decile.

#### 7.2.3 AUSTRALIAN EARLY DEVELOPMENT INDEX

Those areas with the highest proportion of children who are developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains in 2012, and are significantly above the regional and state percentage include Darling Heights, Drayton, Harristown, Kearneys Spring, Newtown – Toowoomba, Rockville/Cranley, South Toowoomba, Wilsonton, Murphy Creek and surrounds, North Gatton, South Gatton, Brightview, Forest Hill and surrounds, Glenore Grove/Plainland Hatton Vale, Kensington Grove, Laidley, Lockrose/Lockyer Waters/Churchable and Regency Downs.

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<sup>16</sup> Toowoomba West Special School, 2014, History, The State of Queensland (Department of Education, Training and Employment), Viewed 7 April 2014 < <https://toowwestspecs.eq.edu.au/Ourschool/History/Pages/History.aspx> >

### 7.3 PROJECTED DEMAND SCENARIOS

	Core Demand	Adjusted Demand	Core Demand	Adjusted Demand	Core Demand	Adjusted Demand
	2011	2011	2021	2021	2031	2031
Location	Toowoomba		Toowoomba		Toowoomba	
Current Attendees	170					
Total Population (5-19)	34779		39521		47717	
Change in Pop 2011-31 (5-19)	0		4742		12938	
Actual Verified as % of total state students	0.025					
Projected Total Students	869.475					
Projected Extra Students	0					
Projected verified at 1.9% of total state students	0.019		0.019		0.019	
Projected Total Students (1.9%)	660.801		750.899		906.623	
Projected Total Students (Service Level 20%)		132.1602		150.1798		181.3246
Projected Total Students (Service Level 40%)		264.3204		300.3596		362.6492
Projected Total Students (Service Level 55%)		363.44055		412.99445		498.64265
Projected Extra Students (1.9%)	0		90.098		245.822	
Projected Extra Students (Service Level 20%)		0		18.0196		49.1644
Projected Extra Students (Service Level 40%)		0		36.0392		98.3288
Projected Extra Students (Service Level 55%)		0		49.5539		135.2021

	Core Demand	Adjusted Demand	Core Demand	Adjusted Demand	Core Demand	Adjusted Demand
	2011	2011	2021	2021	2031	2031
Location	Toowoomba + Lockyer Valley		Toowoomba + Lockyer Valley		Toowoomba + Lockyer Valley	
Current Attendees	170					
Total Population (5-19)	42811		48788		59586	
Change in Pop 2011-31 (5-19)	0		5977		16775	
Actual Verified as % of total state students	0.025					
Projected Total Students	1070.275					
Projected Extra Students	0					
Projected verified at 1.9% of total state students	0.019		0.019		0.019	
Projected Total Students (1.9%)	813.409		926.972		1132.134	
Projected Total Students (Service Level 20%)		162.6818		185.3944		226.4268
Projected Total Students (Service Level 40%)		325.3636		370.7888		452.8536
Projected Total Students (Service Level 55%)		447.37495		509.8346		622.6737
Projected Extra Students (1.9%)	0		113.563		318.725	
Projected Extra Students (Service Level 20%)		0		22.7126		63.745
Projected Extra Students (Service Level 40%)		0		45.4252		127.49
Projected Extra Students (Service Level 55%)		0		62.45965		175.29875



## 7.4 TOOWOOMBA PLANNING ASSESSMENT

### 7.4.1 TOOWOOMBA STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Toowoomba is located approximately an hour and a half's drive west of Brisbane and has a population of approximately 140,220 persons as of the 2011 Census. Toowoomba is the economic and service hub for the agriculture, mining and resource sectors in the Darling Downs and Surat Basin. As such, there are a diverse range of strategic issues relevant to the area, including:

- Forecasted growth by 32,830 households by 2031.
- Desire to develop a more compact city achieved through infill and redevelopment of existing urban areas.
- An ageing demographic profile that is forecasted to experience a decline in the proportion of young families, growth in seniors, and a stable proportion of mature families.
- Impacts of growth in the resource sector in the Surat Basin carefully to determine the specific impacts on affordability in Toowoomba.
- Need to balance development of mining, agriculture and housing, with Toowoomba the primary service centre for surrounding towns.

It is considered that future growth will be accommodated within four major growth areas, which are forecast to be Toowoomba West, Toowoomba South-East, Highfields, and Westbrook. These generally align with the current high growth areas for the Region. The remainder of projected growth will be accommodated within infill development.

Toowoomba has a diverse range of existing educational institutions ranging from primary to tertiary level education. There is a high concentration of schools within Central Toowoomba and in the Western Suburbs (e.g. Harristown State High School, Concordia High School, Darling Downs Christina School and Glenvale Primary School). The University of Southern Queensland is located in South Toowoomba and Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE is located in North Toowoomba.

Toowoomba has four hospitals which include Toowoomba Base Hospital in South Toowoomba, St Andrew's Hospital in Rockville, St Vincent's Private Hospital in East Toowoomba and Ballie Henderson Hospital in Cranley. With the exception of Ballie Henderson Hospital all other hospitals are located in close proximity to Toowoomba's Centre with limited surrounding land available. Based on a desktop analysis, it does not appear that any complementary health and community services are provided in close proximity to any hospital locations.

Based on this information it is likely that there will be demand for affordable residential accommodation, in close proximity or with good access to existing service areas.

#### **Toowoomba Regional Housing Strategy**

The Toowoomba Regional Housing Strategy released in 2013, has developed a preferred housing strategy for the Toowoomba Region (including Toowoomba and the surrounding townships throughout the region) to address housing diversity, choice and affordability. The background profiling and analysis has shown that Toowoomba faces the following key issues.

- Affordability an issue in some localities, in particular Clifton-Greenmount, Crows Nest-Rosalie, Drayton-Harristown, Millmerran, Newtown, North Toowoomba-Harlaxton, Toowoomba Central and Wilsonton. The impacts of the growing resource sector on housing affordability need to be carefully monitored.
- There are a number of factors, including an established history of producing detached dwellings, an ageing demographic as well as a higher proportion of young persons that contribute to the lack of diversity in housing products provided within the Toowoomba region.

- There is potential that current rates of development may not meet the anticipated housing demand associated with Toowoomba's high forecasted growth rates.

#### 7.4.2 PLANNING CONTEXT

The *South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031* (SEQRP) is a statutory document which manages the regional growth of 11 local government areas in the region, one of which is Toowoomba. The SEQRP takes precedence over all local planning instruments and articulates the strategic directions in the form of principles and policies.

Toowoomba Regional Council is the governing authority and the authority under which the *Toowoomba Regional Planning Scheme* ('Planning Scheme') is regulated. The Planning Framework is made up of three key elements that influence and direct planning for the Toowoomba Region:

- The Regional Plan;
- The relevant Planning scheme/s; and
- Strategic plans (e.g. Toowoomba Regional Housing Strategy).

It is worthy of note that there are no declared Priority Development Areas within the Toowoomba region.

#### 7.4.3 EDUCATIONAL AND PLANNING DIRECTIONS

Under the *Southeast Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031* Toowoomba is identified as a Principal Regional Activity Centre. Principal regional activity centres main objectives are to serve catchments of regional significance and accommodate key employment concentration. They also provide a focal point for regional employment and in-centre regional development.

Current and future educational and other strategic locations for Logan are set out on in the current *Toowoomba Regional Planning Scheme 2012*. Toowoomba has a number of centres which include, local, district, major, specialised activity, and specialised urban activity centres. The district and local centres provide a range of weekly and convenience retail, commerce, medial, entertainment and community activities to support the local population.

Within the Planning Scheme preferred locations (subject to a self-assessable or code assessable development application) for educational establishments are within all Centre Zones (Principal, major, district, local and specialised), the Community Purposes zone (where in the Education Precinct or Higher Education Precinct ), the Township Zone and the Mixed Use Zone<sup>17</sup>.

There are three local plan areas under the Planning Scheme – Highfields District, Glenvale and the Charlton Wellcamp Enterprise Area.. None of the identified local plan areas identify the delivery of an educational establishment as an intended outcome.

#### 7.4.4 STRATEGIC LOCATIONS

By 2031, approximately 31,000 additional dwellings will be needed to house the expected growth in the region. Within Toowoomba City, infill development will be undertaken to provide opportunities for mixed-use and higher density developments. Highfields, due to its close proximity to Toowoomba City, services and facilities, it has become a primary urban growth front. In addition, Glenvale, Drayton and Westbrook, and smaller communities such as Kingsthorpe, Gowrie Junction and Cambooya are broad hectare opportunities and will accommodate residential growth. Westbrook is also identified as an Identified Growth Area and will require further infrastructure extensions if found to be appropriate for residential development.

Furthermore, outside of the Toowoomba urban area, Highfields and Charlton Wellcamp are two major employment centres. Highfields is noted to become a centre of sub-regional importance. Urban development is focused around Toowoomba City and several satellite urban centres such as Highfields, Glenvale, Cambooya and Kingsthorpe. The Warrego Highway is important infrastructure that goes through Toowoomba which comes from Brisbane in the east and exists towards Oakey in the west. The

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<sup>17</sup> Toowoomba Regional Council, 2012, Toowoomba Regional Planning Scheme 2012, Toowoomba Regional Council

Charlton Wellcamp Enterprise Area which is located 13km west of Toowoomba. Toowoomba Regional Council believes the area has the opportunity to be developed as business growth area providing employment for 12,000-15,000 people.

## 7.5 LOCKYER VALLEY PLANNING ASSESSMENT

### 7.5.1 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Lockyer Valley is located between two significant growth areas, Ipswich to the east and Toowoomba to the west and has a population of 34,954 people as of 2011 Census. It comprises a number of townships, including Withcott, Gatton, Laidley and Plainland. Strategic issues relevant to the area, include:

- The Lockyer Valley predicts that an additional 11,500 additional dwellings will be required between 2009 and 2031 to accommodate for a population of approximately 63,000<sup>18</sup>. These dwellings are likely to take place in existing town townships and planned extensions on their edges.
- Lockyer Valley is positioned as the leading agricultural production zone in Australia and is the predominant “food bowl” of Australia.
- Gateway between major cities of Brisbane and Ipswich, and rural activities and booming mining production to the west<sup>19</sup>.
- Following the destruction and loss of life caused by the January 2011 floods, there has been a \$280 million recovery effort, as directed by the Lockyer Valley Community Recovery Plan (Local Plan) and ‘Operation Queensland’ (State Plan). This recovery program ended December 2013.

As residential development should not encroach on land used for agricultural purposes, it is intended that growth is based around the existing rural centres. In particular, it is considered that a large amount of the projected population growth will be accommodated in Gatton as the largest township and “capital” of the Lockyer Valley. Secondary townships intended to accommodate for growth include Laidley and Plainland.

#### **Lockyer Valley: A Growing Lifestyle 2012 – 2022 Community Plan**

Following the community devastation experienced by the January 2011 floods, Lockyer Valley Regional Council engaged with over 2000 residents in order to develop a community vision and long term plan for the Lockyer Valley Region. The Vision for Lockyer Valley is ‘A Growing Lifestyle’ which is supported by the seven themes of:

- *Community* – working together for an inclusive, safe and healthy community
- *Leadership* – working together to unify our community
- *Farming* – working together to secure our farming future
- *Livelihood* – working together to strengthen education, training and career pathways
- *Business* – working together to enhance, attract and diversify business and tourism opportunities
- *Nature* – working together to enhance and protect our environment and landscape

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<sup>18</sup> Lockyer Valley Regional Council, 2012, Lockyer Valley: A Growing Lifestyle 2012 – 2022 Community Plan, Lockyer Valley Regional Council < [http://www.lockyervalley.qld.gov.au/images/PDF/visit\\_lockyer/lockyer%20valley%20-%20a%20growing%20lifestyle.pdf](http://www.lockyervalley.qld.gov.au/images/PDF/visit_lockyer/lockyer%20valley%20-%20a%20growing%20lifestyle.pdf)>

<sup>19</sup> Lockyer Valley Regional Council, 2011, Draft Lockyer Valley Planning Scheme (Strategic Framework only), Lockyer Valley Regional Council < [http://www.lockyervalley.qld.gov.au/images/PDF/plan\\_and\\_build/planning\\_schemes/LVRC\\_Planning\\_Scheme/lvrc-strategic%20framework%20for%20informal%20community%20review.pdf](http://www.lockyervalley.qld.gov.au/images/PDF/plan_and_build/planning_schemes/LVRC_Planning_Scheme/lvrc-strategic%20framework%20for%20informal%20community%20review.pdf)>

- *Planned* – working together for well-planned and connected communities<sup>20</sup>

Under the theme of Livelihood, an identified action is to “work with the community to investigate the need for alternative school options/support for young people at risk or home schooling”<sup>21</sup>

## 7.5.2 PLANNING CONTEXT

As with the Toowoomba Region, *South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031* (SEQRP) is a statutory document which manages the regional growth of 11 local government areas in the region, including Lockyer Valley. The SEQ Plan takes precedence over all local planning instruments and articulates the strategic directions in the form of principles and policies.

Lockyer Valley Regional Council is the governing authority and the authority under which the *Gatton Planning Scheme* and *Laidley Shire Council Planning Scheme* is regulated. The Planning Framework is made up of three key elements that influence and direct planning for the Logan Region:

- The Regional Plan ;
- The Relevant Planning scheme/s; and
- Strategic plans (e.g. Lockyer Valley: A Growing Lifestyle 2012 – 2022 Community Plan).

## 7.5.3 EDUCATIONAL AND PLANNING DIRECTIONS

Current and future educational and other strategic locations for Lockyer Valley are set out on in the current *Gatton Planning Scheme* and the *Laidley Shire Council Planning Scheme*. Following the January 2011 floods which had significant impact on the Valley, the Lockyer Valley Regional Council has initiated the process of developing a draft Lockyer Valley Planning Scheme that will consolidate the two existing schemes into a cohesive direction. Currently the draft planning scheme is yet to be released for public comment, but a draft Strategic Framework has been released for a non-statutory consultation period.

The Gatton Planning Scheme affects the eastern area of Lockyer Valley, including the towns of Gatton, Grantham, Helidon and the smaller communities such as Withcott. Largely development for the purposes of an educational establishment is not a preferred use, with the exception of an educational establishment (<300m<sup>2</sup> GFA) within The Village Zone, which is subject to code assessment. are currently three primary schools (Our Lady of Good Counsel, Peace Lutheran Primary School and Gatton State School) and the Lockyer District High School located in Gatton. There are also primary schools in Grantham, Helidon, Withcott and Tent Hill.

Laidley is classified as a Major Rural Activity Centre and is expected to have a population of 11,500 by 2031. The town focuses on providing local services which include non-residential urban activities such as retail, offices, government services, new higher education facilities, healthcare, community infrastructure and entertainment. New residential areas are concentrated to the north and east of the town where it is not affected by flooding or agricultural land. Plainland has been identified as a residential and employment local development area which will develop as a service centre to accommodate surrounding rural living area additional activities in Gatton and Laidley.

Based on this information, it is considered that Gatton is the key strategic location for community facilities such as a Special School or special education services. However, it is relevant to note that the Lockyer Valley is well located between the larger service centres of Ipswich and Toowoomba.

<sup>20</sup> Lockyer Valley Regional Council, 2012, Lockyer Valley: A Growing Lifestyle 2012 – 2022 Community Plan, Lockyer Valley Regional Council < [http://www.lockyervalley.qld.gov.au/images/PDF/visit\\_lockyer/lockyer%20valley%20-%20a%20growing%20lifestyle.pdf](http://www.lockyervalley.qld.gov.au/images/PDF/visit_lockyer/lockyer%20valley%20-%20a%20growing%20lifestyle.pdf)>

<sup>21</sup> Lockyer Valley Regional Council, 2012, Lockyer Valley: A Growing Lifestyle 2012 – 2022 Community Plan, Lockyer Valley Regional Council, Pg. 32 < [http://www.lockyervalley.qld.gov.au/images/PDF/visit\\_lockyer/lockyer%20valley%20-%20a%20growing%20lifestyle.pdf](http://www.lockyervalley.qld.gov.au/images/PDF/visit_lockyer/lockyer%20valley%20-%20a%20growing%20lifestyle.pdf)>

## 7.5.4 STRATEGIC LOCATIONS

### Gatton

As the Lockyer Valley's symbolic capital and Principal Rural Activity Centre, focus on delivering sub-regional services which include rural services, commercial, retail, government and community activities are concentrated within Gatton. In 2009, Gatton had a population of 9,000, but this is expected to more than double by 2031 to a population of 18,500 people. It is relevant to note that a significant proportion of

The Gatton town centre focuses on non-residential urban activities such as retail, offices, government services, new higher education facilities, healthcare, community infrastructure and entertainment. There are a number of educational establishments in Gatton, including Lockyer District High School and the University of Queensland campus (7km to the east of the town). As such, Gatton can be regarded as the educational and knowledge hub of Lockyer Valley.

## 7.6 SUMMARY DEMAND ASSESSMENT

The following table shows a summary of the findings of the demand study and suggested timeframes for future provision of additional infrastructure.

TABLE 9 - PRIORITISATION OF NEW SPECIAL EDUCATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Location	Existing provision	Current estimated demand for services	Timeframe of need	Priority for attention
<b>Toowoomba and Lockyer Valley</b>	2 existing special schools	Medium	Medium - long term (5-10 years)	Medium

## 8 Logan and Scenic Rim

### 8.1.1 SPECIAL EDUCATION IN LOGAN

The Logan region currently has one special school in operation. Logan City Special School is located on Wembley Road, Logan Central. As of day eight 2014, Logan City Special School has 103 enrolled students. Since peak enrolment numbers in 2008 (112.0), Logan City Special School enrolments maintained a range between 94 – 104 annual enrolments during 2009 – 2013. The school currently has capacity to cater for up to 108 students. From aerial mapping, it would appear that the site is slightly constrained by residential uses limiting the potential for further expansion of the existing facility to accommodate high enrolment.

## 8.2 DEMOGRAPHICS

### 8.2.1 EXISTING AND PROJECTED POPULATION

The Logan and Scenic Rim Region is projected to experience the most significant increase in population numbers by 2031 of all identified priority areas. This growth is all largely projected to occur between 2016 and 2031. The Areas with the highest growth in population numbers include Beaudesert (4989 persons), Boronia Heights – Park Ridge (4153 persons), Greenbank (12041 persons) and Jimboomba (7468 persons). Mount Warren Park (-19), Munruben - Park Ridge South (-230), Cornubia – Carbrook (-95) and Shailer Park (-63) are all projected to experience small numbers of population decrease by 2031.

### 8.2.2 SEIFA

The SEIFA data indicates high levels of socio economic disadvantage within the Logan and Scenic Rim LGAs. Those Statistical Area Level 2s (SA2s) with the greatest socio-economic disadvantage within the Logan and Scenic Rim LGAs are Beenleigh, Eagleby, Marsden, Kingston, Logan Central, Slacks Creek and Woodridge – all within the highest decile of disadvantage. Additionally, Crestmead, Loganlea and Waterford West are all in the second highest decile of disadvantage. Ranked within the 3<sup>rd</sup> decile are Beaudesert, Boronia Heights - Park Ridge, Browns Plains, Bethania and Waterford.

### 8.2.3 AUSTRALIAN EARLY DEVELOPMENT INDEX

Those areas with the highest proportion of children who are developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains in 2012, and are significantly above the regional and state percentage include Boronia Heights, Brown Plains, Crestmead, Heritage Park, Hillcrest, Kingston, Logan Central, Loganholme, Loganlea, Marsden, Meadowbrook, Slacks Creek, Waterford West, Woodridge, Beaudesert, Buccan, Canungra, Cedar Vale, Chambers Flat/Park Ridge South, Greenbank, Jimboomba, Logan Village/Stockleigh, Veresdale/Veresdale Scrub.

## 8.3 PROJECTED DEMAND SCENARIOS

	<b>Core Demand</b>	<b>Adjusted Demand</b>	<b>Core Demand</b>	<b>Adjusted Demand</b>	<b>Core Demand</b>	<b>Adjusted Demand</b>
	<b>2011</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2031</b>	<b>2031</b>
<b>Location</b>	<b>Logan</b>		<b>Logan</b>		<b>Logan</b>	
<b>Current Attendees (2 schools)</b>	222					
<b>Total Population (5-19)</b>	64868		78315		92761	
<b>Change in Pop 2011-31 (5-19)</b>	0		13447		27893	

Actual Verified as % of total state students	0.036					
Projected Total Students	2335.248					
Projected Extra Students	0					
Projected verified at 1.9% of total state students	0.019		0.019		0.019	
Projected Total Students (1.9%)	1232.492		1487.985		1762.459	
Projected Total Students (Service Level 20%)		246.4984		297.597		352.4918
Projected Total Students (Service Level 40%)		492.9968		595.194		704.9836
Projected Total Students (Service Level 55%)		677.8706		818.39175		969.35245
Projected Extra Students (1.9%)	0		255.493		529.967	
Projected Extra Students (Service Level 20%)		0		51.0986		105.9934
Projected Extra Students (Service Level 40%)		0		102.1972		211.9868
Projected Extra Students (Service Level 55%)		0		140.52115		291.48185

	Core Demand	Adjusted Demand	Core Demand	Adjusted Demand	Core Demand	Adjusted Demand
	2011	2011	2021	2021	2031	2031
Location	Scenic Rim		Scenic Rim		Scenic Rim	
Current Attendees	0					
Total Population (5-19)	8067		11158		17431	
Change in Pop 2011-31 (5-19)	0		3091		9364	
Actual Verified as % of total state students	0					
Projected Total Students	0					

<b>Projected Extra Students</b>	0					
<b>Projected verified at 1.9% of total state students</b>	0.019		0.019		0.019	
<b>Projected Total Students (1.9%)</b>	153.273		212.002		331.189	
<b>Projected Total Students (Service Level 20%)</b>		30.6546		42.4004		66.2378
<b>Projected Total Students (Service Level 40%)</b>		61.3092		84.8008		132.4756
<b>Projected Total Students (Service Level 55%)</b>		84.30015		116.6011		182.15395
<b>Projected Extra Students (1.9%)</b>	0		58.729		177.916	
<b>Projected Extra Students (Service Level 20%)</b>		0		11.7458		35.5832
<b>Projected Extra Students (Service Level 40%)</b>		0		23.4916		71.1664
<b>Projected Extra Students (Service Level 55%)</b>		0		32.30095		97.8538



## 8.4 LOGAN PLANNING ASSESSMENT

### 8.4.1 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Logan and surrounds present a complex community with diverse social, economic and cultural circumstances and needs, with the areas identified to accommodate for significant growth over the next 15 years. As such, there are a diverse range of strategic issues relevant to the area, including:

- Accommodating significant growth due to expected increase in population of 170,000 people by 2031 (63%). This additional population will need to be accommodated in approximately 70,000 new dwellings.
- Ongoing need to provide a range of quality community facilities to meet the needs of new and existing residents with a diverse social and cultural demographic profile particularly focused on those located in strategic new growth areas<sup>22</sup>.
- Established communities experiencing entrenched socio-economic disadvantage (particularly Woodridge, Kingston, Marsden and Loganlea, Beenleigh and Eagleby), and incidences of intergenerational poverty.
- A relatively young population including a high proportion of children and young people at risk of poor health, safety and education outcomes including low literacy and numeracy levels.
- Low levels of school attendance and high proportions of residents without qualifications.

In order to address these key issues, as well as the issues referenced in the *Logan: City of Choice, State of the City 2013 Report*<sup>23</sup>, a range of different strategic documents have been prepared and released. Recently, some key initiatives to address strategic issues the Logan area include the City of Choice Two-Year Action Plan 2013 – 2015 and the Logan Renewal Strategy (Social Housing).

#### **City of Choice Two-Year Action Plan 2013 – 2015**

The City of Choice Two-Year Action Plan 2013 – 2015 was developed following the Logan, City of Choice Summit and sets out directed actions for Logan across the five key themes of education, employment, housing, safety and social infrastructure. The purpose of the plan is to guide community, business and government in decision making and acts as a strategic document with Logan's Planning Framework.

In terms of Education, there are number of identified actions for Logan over the next two years. Actions are based on the recognition that access to appropriate education enables people to “gain employment, have stable families, build a sense of self efficacy and independence and be active and productive members of society<sup>24</sup>”. Of particular relevance to this project are:

1. Explore opportunities to encourage school attendance
2. Develop a whole of community plan to support children and their families from birth, through school and to adulthood.
3. Work with key stakeholders in planning for the Meadowbrook knowledge precinct
4. Ensure Logan schools are appropriately resourced and supported

#### **Logan Renewal Initiative (social housing)**

In late 2012, the Queensland State Government expressed interest in identifying a suitable entity or consortium to work closely with the State and Logan City Council over the next decade to deliver and

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<sup>22</sup> Logan City Council 2009 Corporate Plan 2009-2014, p.13

<sup>23</sup> Logan City Council, 2013, *Logan: City of Choice, State of the City 2013 Report*, Logan City Council, Viewed 3 April 2014 <[http://www.logan.qld.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/284712/State-of-the-City-2013-Updated-Web-version-23.12.13.pdf](http://www.logan.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/284712/State-of-the-City-2013-Updated-Web-version-23.12.13.pdf)>

<sup>24</sup> Logan City Council, 2013, *Logan: City of Choice Two-Year Action Plan 2013 – 2015*, Logan City Council, Viewed 3 April 2014 <[http://www.logan.qld.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/284184/LCC\\_DOCS-8652819-v1-City\\_of\\_Choice\\_Two-Year\\_Action\\_Plan\\_2013-2015.pdf](http://www.logan.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/284184/LCC_DOCS-8652819-v1-City_of_Choice_Two-Year_Action_Plan_2013-2015.pdf)>

renew Logan's social housing as part of the Logan Renewal Initiative ('Initiative'). The State Government has been undertaking a public procurement process which is expected to be complete by August 2014, with a new community housing manager in place in early-mid 2015.

The Initiative was developed in response to the growing pressures on the supply of affordable housing in Logan and an understanding of the benefits that can be achieved through new partnerships with the private and not-for-profit sectors. The initiative involves:

- Transfer of management of approximately 4, 731 public housing tenancies and properties in the Logan LGA;
- Transfer of all functions currently undertaken by Woodridge Housing Service Centre (WHSC), including assisting client applications for the full suite of departmental products (e.g. assessing eligibility for social housing, delivery of Rent Connect services and referrals);
- Working with the State and Logan City Council to commence renewal and redevelopment with Logan City to meet the Initiative objectives including the supply of up to 200 one and two-bedroom dwellings within the first three years of the initiative.

As a result of this initiative there is likely to be an increase of affordable housing. In the short term key areas for the provision of new social and affordable housing will include Logan Central, Woodridge, Loganlea, Beenleigh, Browns Plains and Kingston.

#### 8.4.2 PLANNING CONTEXT

The *South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031* (SEQRP) is a statutory document which manages the regional growth of 11 local government areas in the region, one of which is Logan. The SEQRP takes precedence over all local planning instruments and articulates the strategic directions in the form of principles and policies.

Logan City Council is the governing authority of planning and development, community facilities, environmental, water and waste management and local laws within Logan. Currently, three planning schemes are administered by Logan City Council, including the *Logan Planning Scheme 2006*, the *Gold Coast Planning Scheme Version 1.2* and the *Beaudesert Planning Scheme 2007*. Currently the Logan City Council is in the processes of developing the Draft Logan Planning Scheme 2014 which will replace the existing three schemes, with a single cohesive planning scheme for the Logan City Council area. The consolidated Draft Logan Planning Scheme was released for public comment on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April 2014.

The Planning Framework is made up of four key elements that influence and direct planning for the Logan Region:

- The Regional Plan;
- The relevant Planning Scheme/s;
- Priority Development Areas; and
- Strategic Plans.

Where an area has been declared Priority Development Areas (PDAs), the relevant UDA Development Scheme that has been prepared supersedes the controls and direction set out in the planning scheme. Within Logan, Greater Flagstone and Yarrabilba have been declared PDAs and will be discussed in section 1.4.1.

#### 8.4.3 PLANNING AND EDUCATION DIRECTIONS

Current and future educational and other strategic locations for Logan are set out on in the current *Logan Planning Scheme 2006*, the *Gold Coast Planning Scheme Version 1.2* and the *Beaudesert Planning Scheme 2007* and the Draft Logan Planning Scheme

As Logan's principal regional activity centre, Springwood will be the most significant location for key concentrations of economic and employment growth. Other major activity centres such as Logan Central, Shailer Park and Browns Plains will supplement this growth.

The Strategic Approach highlights the key Residential Growth Areas along with the Proposed Specialist Activity Centre (economic). The key activity centres such as those outlined above will support Residential Growth Areas along with the Park Ridge Greenfield Development Site.

The Logan Region has a current population exceeding 290,000 residents<sup>25</sup> and is predicted to grow at an annual rate of 2.4% (7000 people) over the next 15 years<sup>26</sup>. Based on Logan's current proportion of the population at school age (22.9%) it is anticipated that there will be approximately 12,664 new residents between the ages of 5–19 by 2031<sup>27</sup>.

Under the provisions of the Draft Planning Scheme there are a number of existing and anticipated educational locations in the Logan Region. It is directed in the planning scheme that research, health, education and technology uses are provided and agglomerated to create active and vital hubs of knowledge based employment<sup>28</sup>.

Meadowbrook is identified to provide a health, education and knowledge based employment hub, although it is noted that this is largely based on tertiary education. Use for an educational establishment preferred in the following areas as identified by the Draft Planning Scheme:

- Centre Zone (District, local, major and neighbourhood centres); or
- Community Facilities Zone.

Educational Establishments may also be located within the Beenleigh (not within the Civic and community precinct or Showgrounds precinct), Logan Village, Park Ridge and Shailer Park (not within the Bryants Road Precinct) Local Plan areas.

#### 8.4.4 STRATEGIC LOCATIONS

Logan's growth is largely based around two key corridors to both the south-east and the south-west. In order to accommodate for Logan's anticipated growth a number of strategic locations have been identified and these can be separated into two broad types: new master planned communities (PDAs) and infill/greenfield development. New communities include the identified PDAs of Greater Flagstone and Yarrabilba; infill development will be located in Springwood, Logan Central, Shailer Park, Browns Plains and Bahrs Scrubs and Greenfield development in Park Ridge.

##### **New Cities of Yarrabilba and Flagstone**

The Yarrabilba PDA is a 2,200 hectare area of land, located in Logan's south-west growth corridor that is anticipated to provide housing for up to 50,000 residents. Yarrabilba is located approximately three kilometres south of Logan Village and seven kilometres east of Jimboomba in an area predominantly characterised by rural residential uses. The vision for Yarrabilba is to be a self-contained town, "with a strong, healthy and prosperous community, rich in social capital which provides employment, learning and diverse housing opportunities through the adoption of sustainable development principles"<sup>29</sup>. Educational Establishments may be provided in the major centre zone of Yarrabilba and it is anticipated

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<sup>25</sup> Logan City Council, 2014, *Statistics and Facts*, Logan City Council, Viewed 10 April 2014 <<http://www.logan.qld.gov.au/about-logan/living-in-logan/statistics-and-facts>>

<sup>26</sup> Queensland Treasury and Trade, 2011, *Queensland Government Population Projections: Local Government Areas (archived)*, Queensland Government, Viewed 10 April 2014 <<http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/subjects/demography/population-projections/publications/qld-govt-pop-proj-lga/index.php>>

<sup>27</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011, 2011 Census Quick Stats – Logan, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Viewed 4 April 2014 <[http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census\\_services/getproduct/census/2011/quickstat/LGA34590?opendocument&navpos=220](http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2011/quickstat/LGA34590?opendocument&navpos=220)>

<sup>28</sup> Logan City Council, 2014, Draft Logan Planning Scheme – Part 3 Strategic Framework, Logan City Council, P3-12

<sup>29</sup> Urban Land Development Authority, 2011, Yarrabilba Urban Development Area Development Scheme, Queensland Government, Pg 3, Viewed 4 April 2014 <<http://www.dsdip.qld.gov.au/resources/plan/pda/yarrabilba-development-scheme.pdf>>

that a “range of service delivery options delivered in a timely manner to meet the education needs of the community”<sup>30</sup>.

The Greater Flagstone PDA is also located within the south-west growth corridor and includes 3 discrete areas: Flagstone, Greenbank Central and North Maclean. The area known as Flagstone is identified to accommodate for a population of approximately 110,000 with Greenbank Central accommodating approximately 5, 900 additional residents, with North Mclean identified as an enterprise precinct with office, commercial, warehouse, retail services and low impact industrial uses. Flagstone is envisioned as an integrated community located in “attractive, compact neighbourhoods and provided with a wide range of facilities and services”, Greenbank Central will be a smaller community focused around a district centre, neighbourhood centre and primary school. It is also intended that Greenbank Central provides services for the surrounding rural residential catchment<sup>31</sup>.

### Infill and Greenfield Development

Springwood has been identified in the Local Growth Management Strategy Plan as a principal activity centre. Principal activity centres are identified for key concentrations of employment, retail and services, with regional government offices and regionally significant health, education, cultural and entertainment facilities. They are also hubs for residential development and transport, being part of the regional transport system.

Logan Central, Shailer Park (in particular the Logan Hyperdome) and Browns Plains have been identified as major activity centres. Major activity centres are defined as areas with concentrations of employment. They provide business, services, and retail functions, and are a secondary sub-regional focus for government. Major centres also provide cultural and entertainment facilities, and are part of the regional public transport network.

Logan Central currently has a Special School located on Wembley Rd. From aerial mapping, it would appear that the site is slightly constrained by residential uses limiting the potential for further expansion of the existing facility to accommodate high enrolment.

Park Ridge has been identified as a major development area to accommodate for Logan’s anticipated growth, but will be subject to further investigation and planning before any major development can take place. Although largely undeveloped, Park Ridge is an identified Greenfield Development area with a vision to develop approximately 12,000 dwellings. Park Ridge will comprise residential communities and employment precinct and offer diverse housing, community facilities and knowledge based employment opportunities but will require significant upgrades to the existing urban infrastructure network.

## 8.5 SUMMARY DEMAND ASSESSMENT

The following table shows a summary of the findings of the demand study and suggested timeframes for future provision of additional infrastructure.

TABLE 10 - PRIORITISATION OF NEW SPECIAL EDUCATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Location	Existing provision	Current estimated demand for services	Timeframe of need	Priority for attention
<b>Logan and Scenic Rim</b>	2 existing special schools	High	Immediate (0 - 2 years)	High

<sup>30</sup> Urban Land Development Authority, 2011, Yarrabilba Urban Development Area Development Scheme, Queensland Government, Pg 40, Viewed 4 April 2014 < <http://www.dsdp.qld.gov.au/resources/plan/pda/yarrabilba-development-scheme.pdf>>

<sup>31</sup> Urban Land Development Authority, 2011, Greater Flagstone Urban Development Area Development Scheme, Queensland Government, Viewed 4 April 2014 < <http://www.dsdp.qld.gov.au/resources/plan/pda/greater-flagstone-development-scheme.pdf>>

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## Appendix A

## Draft DETE Infrastructure Guidelines for Special Schools

## ***Infrastructure guidelines for planning special schools***

**December 2013**

All Queensland State schools are required to adhere to the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *Disability Standards for Education 2005*.

The Department of Education, Training and Employment provides a variety of supports and services to all students, including those with disability, so they can participate in school life, access the curriculum and achieve learning outcomes.

Students with disability may access their education through a local school, special education programs and services or special schools.

Special schools play an important role in providing highly specialised and individualised educational programs to support students with intellectual disability and/or multiple disability.

The following policy principles have been identified from research and practical experience in Queensland schools, as the standards to consider when planning, building and maintaining special schools as places for learning now and into the future.

1. Special schools will continue to be provided as an education option for eligible Queensland students.
2. Special schools are able to implement Enrolment Management Plans with negotiated catchments to address enrolment capacity issues and offer specialised education programs of support for students. (Note: subject to EMP Review).
3. There is no set maximum size for a special school. However, the size of a special school may be influenced by the following factors:
  - a. The array of services in the geographical area.
  - b. Site constraints (such as size and gradient of land) and the ability of existing and future facilities to meet student needs.
4. The establishment of new special schools should be based on the following factors:
  - a. Local area would need to comprise a sufficient number of eligible students.



Ref:



- b. Preference where appropriate to co-locate junior special schools with the primary school and senior special schools with the high school as this promotes and enables:
  - acceptance of the diversity that exists within the wider community;
  - increased potential for chronological age peer and older/younger peer mentoring across "schools" on the same site;
  - potential for Certificate 1-4 offerings, especially in relation to "child care"; and
  - an increased array of educational program options for students with a disability.
- c. Sufficient access to a local community to provide students with opportunities to become active and informed citizens.
  - a. Transport travel time<sup>1</sup> of the student cohort should be no more than 1 hour and 15 minutes one way journey as a condition of transport assistance approval.
  - b. Access to public transport and/or light commercial vehicle (depending on characteristics of student cohort).
  - c. Flexibility of facility design that enables responsiveness to a changing student cohort of the school.
5. Where a number of special schools are closely located, efforts should be made to establish each school specialising in a particular phase of learning to maximise student socialisation with similar age peers.
6. Every new state school should be master planned to have an SEP, preferably located within the main body of the school.

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<sup>1</sup> *School Transport Assistance Programs for Students with Disabilities*

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