

Planning Scheme Amendment for Short-term Accommodation



Project Overview

- We are proposing updates to the Planning Scheme relating to Short-term accommodation, and we want to hear from you!
- Our Region is a popular destination for visitors, many of whom choose holiday home-style accommodations, which can conflict with permanent residents, from an amenity and housing supply perspective.
- To refine the balance of managing diverse visitor accommodation options and maintaining low density residential amenity, Council is amending the *Whitsunday Regional Council Planning Scheme 2017* to include additional provisions for Short-term accommodation in the Low density residential zone, identifying locations where Short-term accommodation is permitted.



IMPORTANT INFO

Keep up to date with our Planning Scheme amendment consultation occurring from Wednesday 11 June - Sunday 20 July 2025 via our Online Engagement Portal - Yoursay. whitsundayrc.qld.gov.au. Have your say by completing a survey in customer service centres or online via the QR code (right), or attend an information stall:

- Whitsunday Shopping Centre (Cannonvale) Thursday 12 June 2pm - 5:30pm
- Airlie Beach Markets - Saturday 21 June 7am - 12pm
- Bowen Centrepont Shopping Centre - Thursday 26 June - 12pm - 4pm
- Dingo Beach Sunday Markets - Sunday 6 July 7am - 12pm



Planning Scheme Amendment for Short-term Accommodation

What changes are proposed?

- The amendment applies to Short-term accommodation that may occur within a dwelling, dual occupancy or multiple dwelling:

Definition - 'The use of one or two, existing or proposed Dwellings for short-term accommodation for tourists for a temporary period of time not exceeding three consecutive months.'
- The amendment identifies precincts where Short-term accommodation (STA) may be supported in the Low density residential zone, removing support in all other locations zoned Low density residential.
- It is important to [view mapping in detail](#) to understand extents - Proposed precincts include:
 - Queens Beach (parts of)
 - Horseshoe Bay (parts of)
 - Brisk Bay
 - Shute Harbour
 - Conway Beach & Wilson Beach
 - Dingo Beach & Hydeaway Bay
 - Airlie Beach (parts of)
 - North Mandalay (parts of)

Within a <i>Low density residential zone</i> and <u>inside a STA Precinct</u>	Within the <i>Low density residential zone</i> and <u>outside a STA Precinct</u>
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development applications for STA will be supported <i>subject to compliance with requirements</i>. These applications do not require formal public notification. 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> STA is not supported by the Planning Scheme. An application may be lodged, but it would be subject to <i>impact assessment</i> requiring public notification and officers will recommend refusal.

This amendment does not change:

- Home based businesses* - e.g. letting a room alongside permanent residents living in the home.
- STA within the Low-medium density residential zone or other non-residential zones where it is currently permitted, *subject to requirements*
- STA that already have planning approval in any zone.

SHORT-TERM ACCOMMODATION

E.g. Entire dwelling let out for short-term & permanent resident doesn't reside.



HOME BASED BUSINESS

E.g. Part of dwelling let out for short-term & permanent resident still resides



IMPORTANT RESOURCES

Our online planning services can help you find out information regarding your premises, such as its planning zone and hazard mapping overlays. Use the QR code right to view:

- Online mapping - view zoning and overlays across the region
- Online property report - to find your zone and hazard overlays
- Flood and Stormtide Report - to understand potential inundation
- Track my Development application - to find a development application



Planning Scheme Amendment for Short-term Accommodation

Why are we making the change?

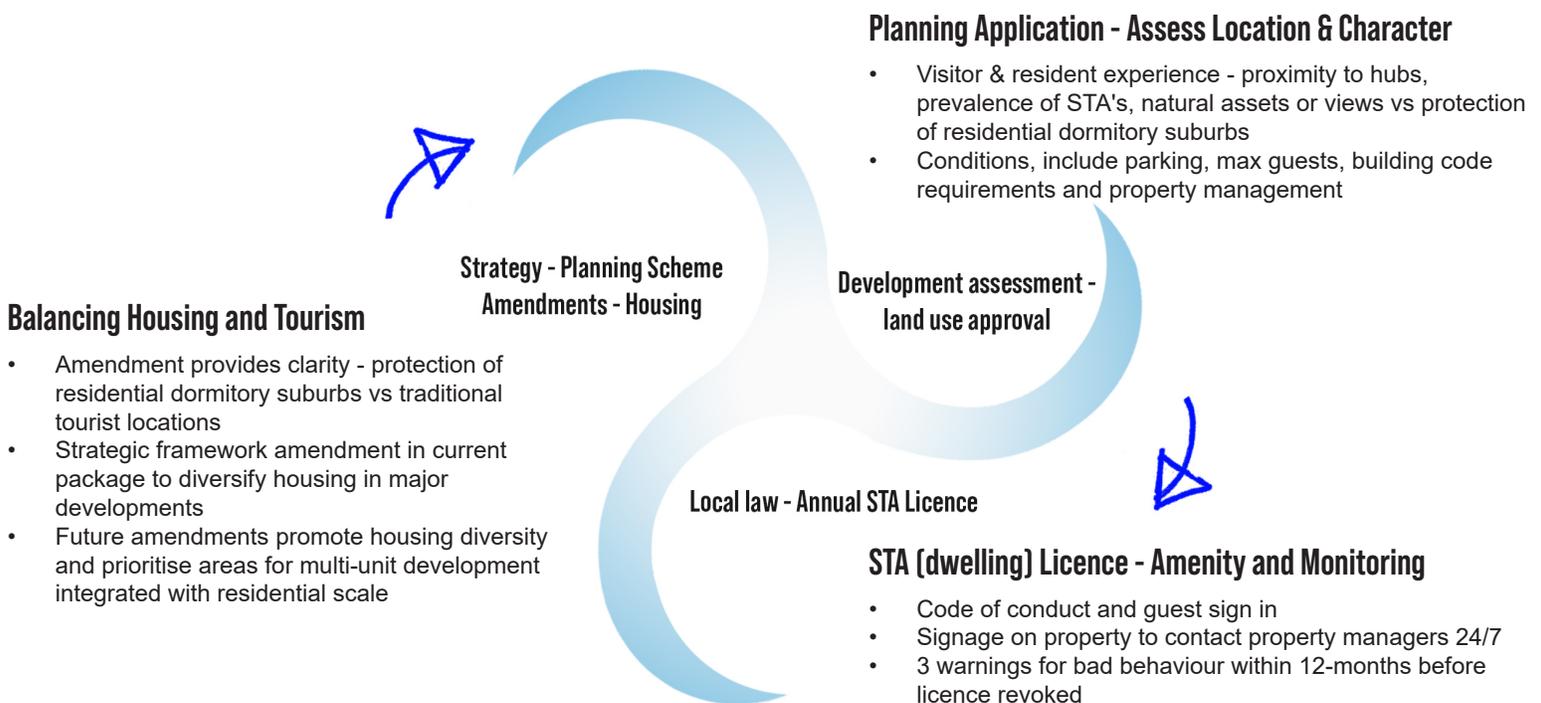
- This amendment addresses concerns raised by the community, such as impacts on availability of housing for long-term residents and residential amenity.
- Public consultation undertaken in mid-2022 attracted 348 submissions containing themes relating to STA.

Historic submitter issues	
Security / Safety	Highest concern  Moderate concern
Behaviour / Parties	
Noise	
Parking	
Increase demand on services	
Decrease in property value	
Impact on housing supply	
Waste management	

What is the role of STA (dwelling) in our tourism market?

- STA plays an important role in the visitor accommodation make-up, especially given that existing hotels and tourist parks are often operating at full capacity - ultimately limiting the capacity of events and peak season.
- In 2023, guests using short-term accommodation platforms such as Airbnb in the Region contributed significantly to the local economy, with \$174 million spent on accommodation and even more spent in the local community on food and grocery, tourism experiences and shopping

How do we find an appropriate balance?





Planning Scheme Amendment for Short-term Accommodation Relationship to Local Law

Local Law - Short-term accommodation licence

- To lawfully let out a room, or entire dwelling, whether in a house or unit complex, a local law licence or planning approval may be required.
- If a planning approval is needed, this must be completed first, as a local law licence will not be provided for visitor accommodation without evidence of planning approval (historic or recent).
- If required, a planning approval permits a 'change of use' of the premises from residential to short-term accommodation, considering if it is a suitable fit for the amenity of the area or within a proposed STA precinct.
- The local law licence enforces the operational aspects of the use and can be rescinded if the premises does not appropriately manage operational impacts. Visitor accommodation must cease if the local law licence is rescinded - including after three code of conduct breaches in a 12 month period.

Non-Hosted Accommodation

A **Short-term accommodation (dwelling)** use involves letting out all or part of the dwelling or unit for short-term rental, typically not exceeding three consecutive months, where the owner/long term resident of the dwelling or unit does not reside in the property.

Party houses, involving letting to bucks or hens parties, **are prohibited development.**



An annual **Local law licence is required** for all Short-term accommodation.

Our proposed Local law amendment means the following uses do not need a local law licence:

- Caretaker's accommodation.
- Home-based business
- Hotel
- Nature-based tourism
- Non-resident workforce accommodation
- Resort complex
- Rooming accommodation
- Rural workers' accommodation
- Tourist Park

A Development application is required for all.

Hosted Accommodation

A **Home Based Business** involves letting part of the dwelling for short-term rental whilst a long-term resident resides within the dwelling.



An annual **Local law licence is not required** for Home based business, whether or not a development application is required.

If not complying with the criteria of the Home based business code, a **development application is required.**

IMPORTANT INFO

Keep up to date with Short-term accommodation Planning Scheme Major amendment consultation from Wednesday 11 June - Sunday 20 July 2025 via our Online Engagement Portal yoursay.whitsundayrc.qld.gov.au. Have your say by completing a survey in customer service centres, online via the QR code (right) or email a 'properly made submission', including the name and address / email of each person who is making the submission.

Council officers will host information stalls to discuss with interested residents:

- Whitsunday Shopping Centre (Cannonvale) Thursday 12 June 2pm - 5:30pm
- Airlie Beach Markets - Saturday 21 June 7am - 12pm
- Bowen Centrepoint Shopping Centre - Thursday 26 June - 12pm - 4pm
- Dingo Beach Sunday Markets - Sunday 6 July 7am - 12pm



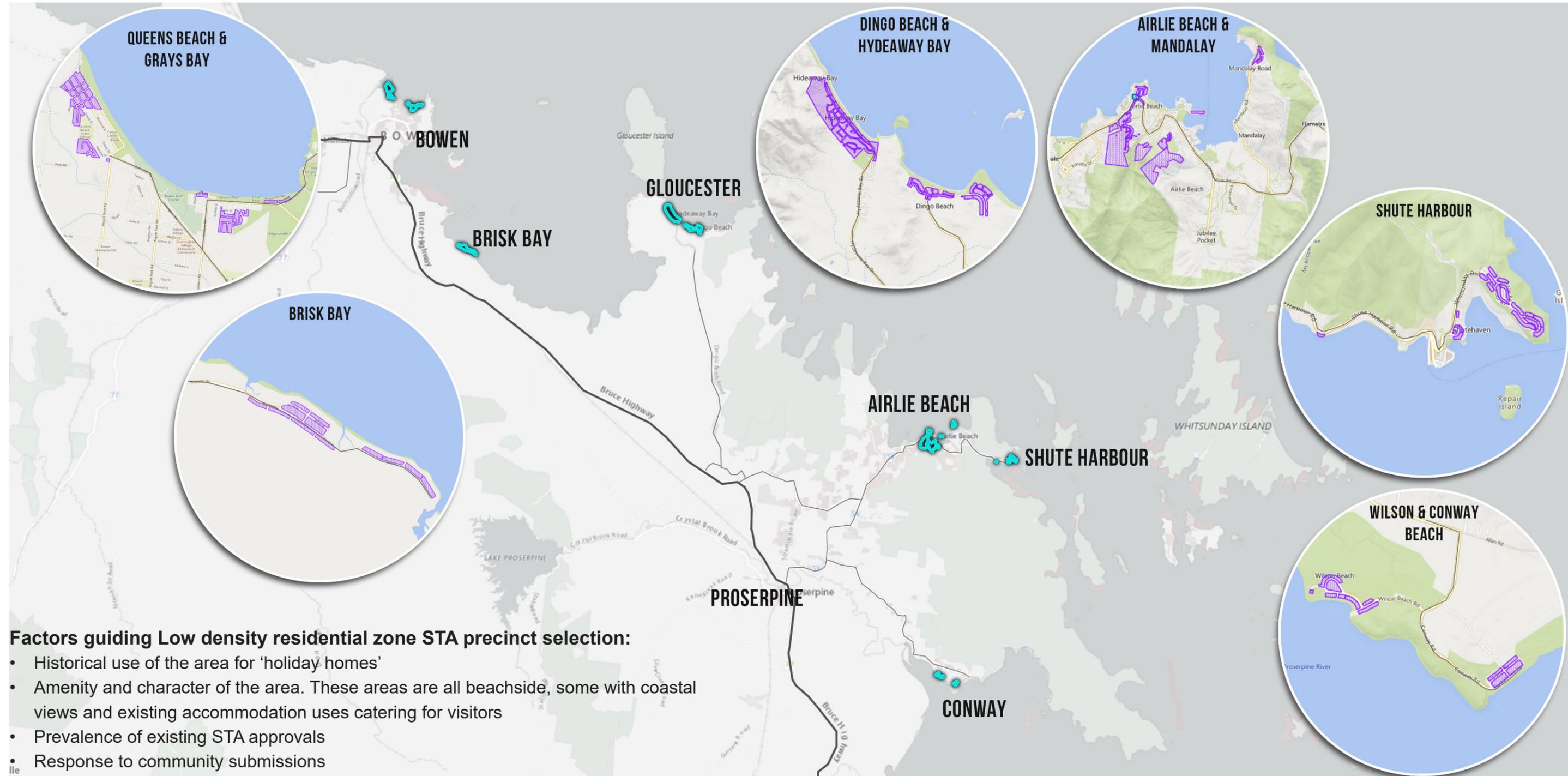
Whitsunday Planning Scheme Amendment - Proposed Short-term Accommodation Precinct Maps



Proposed Low density residential zone Short-term accommodation Precincts

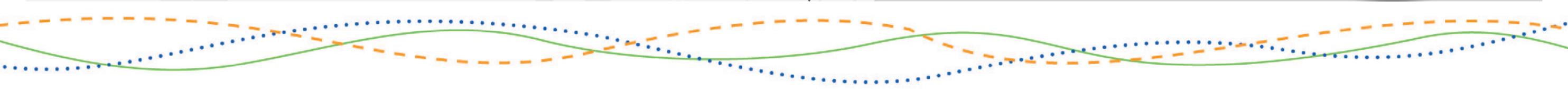
View proposed precinct boundaries in detail on Council's mapping via the QR code right or in person at Council offices.

Note - Short-term Accommodation (STA) may be permitted within Low-medium density residential, Centres, Mixed use, Tourist accommodation and Rural zones, subject to meeting requirements.



Factors guiding Low density residential zone STA precinct selection:

- Historical use of the area for 'holiday homes'
- Amenity and character of the area. These areas are all beachside, some with coastal views and existing accommodation uses catering for visitors
- Prevalence of existing STA approvals
- Response to community submissions





Whitsunday Planning Scheme Amendment - Amendments Summary



What is the proposed amendment changing in the Planning Scheme?

The amendment seeks to strengthen assessment benchmarks within the Planning Scheme to clearly identify that Short-term Accommodation (STA) is not supported within the Low density residential zone, with the exception of 10 STA precincts, which historically have had traditional use for holiday home purposes.

Key components of the proposed amendment include:

Planning Scheme Section	Amendment Overview
Part 3 - Strategic Framework (mark-up right)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amendments to the Strategic Framework describe the overarching policy direction for STA (dwelling) in the Low-density residential zone - <i>Mark-up 3.2 (2) and 3.2.1.2 (2)(3)</i> Strengthening of Strategic Framework to include additional support for affordable housing supply and diversity to encourage incorporation of affordable housing products in major developments - <i>Mark-up 3.2.1.2 (11)</i>
Part 5 - Tables of Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amendments to the Table of Assessment for the <i>Low density residential zone</i> to reduce the level of assessment for STA (Dwelling) within STA precincts from impact assessable to code assessable. If outside STA precincts in the <i>Low density residential zone</i>, STA (Dwelling) will be impact assessment, requiring public notification, and generally not supported by the Planning Scheme.
Part 6.2.8 Low Density Residential Zone	<p>Amendments to the Low density residential zone code <i>Purpose statement and overall outcomes</i>, including:</p> <p>6.2.8.2 (1) Purpose of the Low density residential zone code is to provide for:</p> <p>(a) a variety of low density dwelling types; and</p> <p>(b) community uses, and small-scale services, facilities and infrastructure, to support local residents.</p> <p>6.2.8.2 (3) (c) <i>Amendment identifies that Short-term accommodation (dwelling) uses are confined to STA precincts.</i></p>
Part 9 - Development codes (mark-up right)	<p>Additional acceptable and performance outcome within the Short-term accommodation and multi-unit uses code, including:</p> <p>9.3.17.2 (2) (a) Short-term accommodation is located in appropriate areas, providing suitable options for visitors.</p> <p>9.3.17.3.1 Benchmarks for assessable development (<i>Benchmarks mark-up right</i>)</p>
Schedule 1 - Definitions	<p>Addition of two (2) administrative definitions for '<i>residential amenity</i>' and '<i>local resident</i>' to support amendment interpretation:</p> <p><i>Local resident</i> - An individual who resides or lives in a particular suburb on a regular, semi-permanent or permanent basis. Often this is considered their primary place of residence.</p> <p><i>Residential amenity</i> - Residential amenity is the combined public and private qualities and characteristics of an area that contribute to a resident's living condition, health and wellbeing and overall enjoyment of their dwelling and neighbourhood. Elements which impact residential amenity include:</p> <p>(a) noise and vibration from different sources including machinery and equipment (but not temporary construction noise), traffic and transport, business activities, resident and guest use of neighbouring dwellings and outdoor areas;</p> <p>(b) presence of non-local residents and their ability to negatively impact on the neighbourhood's character, sense of place and community that comes from having consistent neighbours.</p> <p>(c) loss of privacy and overlooking into indoor and outdoor private spaces; or light spill from public light sources and surrounding properties affecting sleep.</p>
<p>The proposed amendment does not seek to alter the way STA is dealt with in other zones. STA (dwelling) may also be permitted within Low-medium density residential zone, Centres zones, Mixed use zone, Tourist accommodation zone and Rural zone, <u>subject to meeting requirements.</u></p>	

3.2 Strategic intent

(2) The Region's major townships and communities have a strong and proud social identity, ~~being sustainable and well supported through the provision of diverse, accessible and well-serviced housing options catering for all groups in the current and future demographic and socio-economic profile of the Region, including seniors and those on low to moderate incomes. Valuable residential land in key locations is safeguarded for the development of diverse housing typologies, supporting housing supply and affordability for local residents. Appropriate community and utility infrastructure will ensure sustainability and support a vibrant, equitable and interconnected community, a variety of social and affordable housing lifestyle options and appropriate community and utility infrastructure. Risks to the community (including life and property) from hazardous activities and natural hazards are appropriately mitigated or avoided, ensuring disaster management response capabilities and capacities are supported.~~

3.2.1.2 Land use strategies

(2) ~~The low density residential areas of Cannonvale, Cannon Valley, Jubilee Pocket, the southern end of Mandalay, Proserpine and Bowen primarily serve as dormitory suburbs accommodating the majority of the Region's resident population. These areas will continue to provide low density residential housing, supplemented by a limited range of local convenience services and facilities.~~

(3) ~~Historic development approvals and past planning schemes have resulted in a presence of short-term accommodation alongside permanent residences in the Low density residential zone. Whilst this mix is recognised, the Low density residential zone is intended for local residents with new Short-term accommodation uses to only occur in localities traditionally used for holiday homes and designated as STA precincts within the planning scheme mapping.~~

(8)(11) ~~All new major developments will be encouraged to incorporate a greater range of housing types and affordable housing products. This includes provision of housing for entry-level buyers, low-income households, and a variety of demographic groups, ensuring broader housing affordability, diversity and inclusivity.~~

Assessment benchmarks

Table 9.3.17.3.1 Benchmarks for assessable development

Performance Outcomes		Acceptable Outcomes	
Short-term accommodation (Dwelling) - Location			
PO1	Short-term accommodation (Dwelling) within a Low-density residential zone is located in areas traditionally used for holiday homes and compatible with the character of the area as to maintain a high level of residential amenity.	AO1.1	If within the Low density residential zone, Short-term accommodation (Dwelling) is limited to operate within the following STA precincts:
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hydeaway Bay; or Dingo Beach; or Conway Beach; or Wilson's Beach; or Brisk Bay; or Queens Beach; or Horseshoe Bay; or Shute Harbour; or Airlie Beach; or North Mandalay.
<p><small>Editors note - STA precinct boundary mapping is designated within Schedule 2 - Mapping and is based on a variety of 2021 Census geography boundaries and refined to only include properties zoned Low density residential.</small></p>			