



Midge Point



2018

Local Coastal Plan Summary and Highlights

Activities across multiple zones

- Undertake cultural heritage surveys
- Investigate ecotourism opportunities
- Implement Coastcare education and activities program
- Monitor beach profiles, flora and fauna

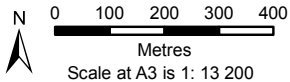


Midge Point Local Coastal Plan

Management Zones

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| A | Local park |
| B | Swing |
| C | Toilet |
| Vehicle Access | Seat |
| Official access | Bubbler |
| Access to be formalised | Bin |
| Fence | Picnic table |
| Road | BBQ shelter |
| National park | Playground |
| Reserve | Tap |
| | Sign |

Data:
 Mackay Regional Council Imagery 10 cm Mosaic 2015,
 Mackay Regional Council 2016, State of Queensland
 (Department of Natural Resources and Mines) 2015



Zone A

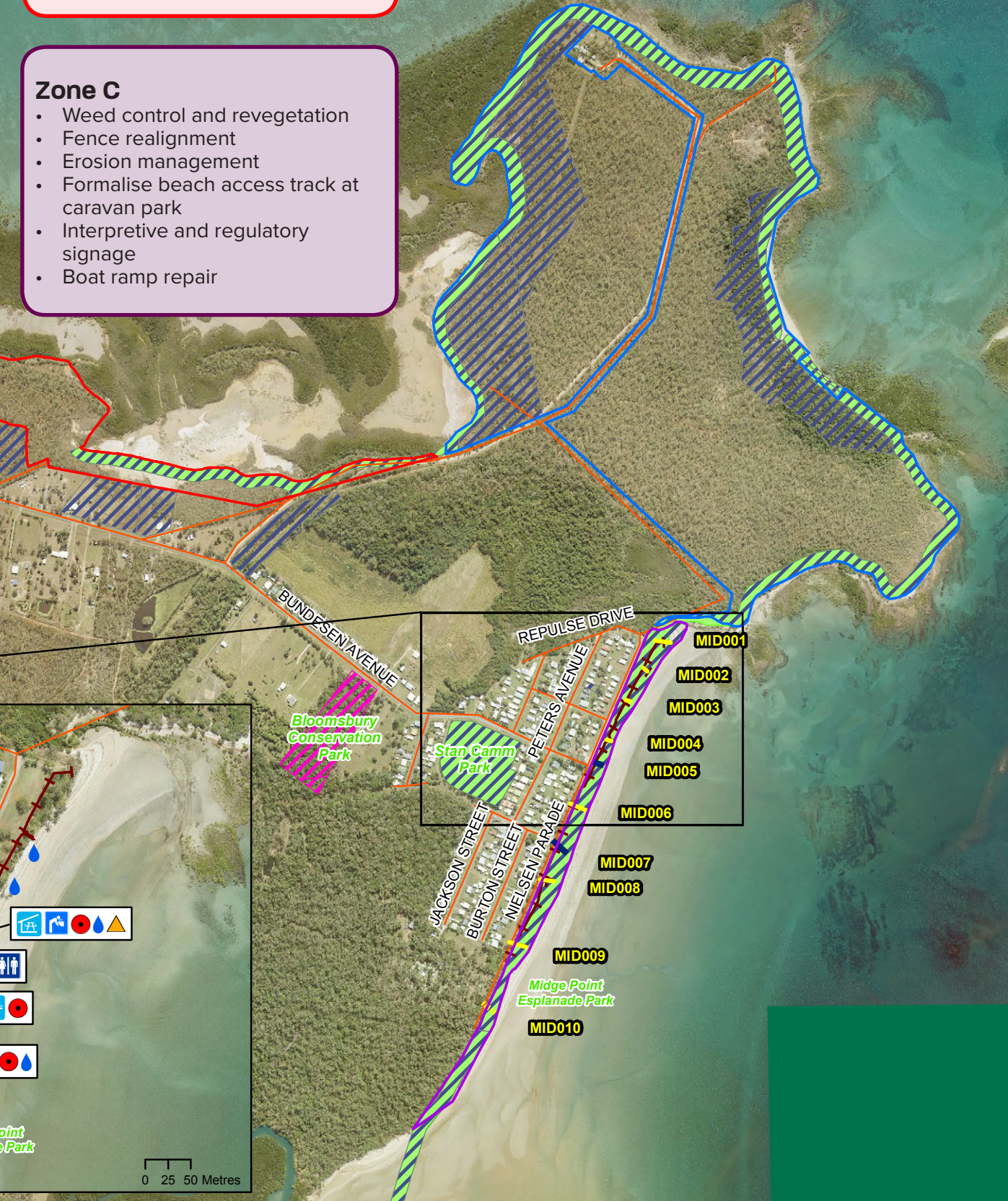
- Weed control and revegetation
- Fencing
- Interpretive and regulatory signage
- Consideration of boardwalk, barbecue area and playground

Zone B

- Weed control and revegetation
- Fencing
- Interpretive and regulatory signage
- Consideration of walking trails
- Addressing illegal dumping
- Consideration of boat ramp and car parking

Zone C

- Weed control and revegetation
- Fence realignment
- Erosion management
- Formalise beach access track at caravan park
- Interpretive and regulatory signage
- Boat ramp repair



About Midge Point

The Midge Point coastal unit supports rare and threatened species including migratory shorebirds and critically endangered beach scrub vegetation. It is also a popular recreational area for locals and visitors to our region.

Council manages its coastal land at Midge Point through an integrated program of planning, on-ground works, monitoring and community engagement known as the Coasts and Communities Program. As part of this program, *Coastal Management Guidelines* have been developed to provide a framework for management decisions and activities for coastal land under Council's jurisdiction. Individual Local Coastal Plans, such as this plan for Midge Point, provide site-specific recommendations for individual coastal units.

The *Midge Point Local Coastal Plan* describes the environmental and social values of the coastal unit, as well as the key threats and management issues. Key pressures include erosion, inappropriate access, removal of native vegetation and the presence of non-native vegetation, waste dumping and climate change. Recommendations to manage these threats include revegetation, fencing, access management and weed control.

Social values are also described and opportunities to improve recreational facilities and values have been identified, including rationalised and improved beach accesses, interpretive signage, bushwalking tracks, and infrastructure such as developing a boardwalk and improving existing boat ramps located along Midge Point Esplanade Park. The recommended activities will be implemented on a prioritised basis as resources become available. Community engagement is recognised as a critical part of the success of on-ground works and opportunities for the community to learn about coastal ecosystems and get involved in management activities at Midge Point will be provided through the Coastcare program.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR LOCAL COASTAL PLAN (LCP)

The activities recommended in this Local Coastal Plan will help protect and improve the condition of assets in the coastal unit, ensure best-practice management principles are implemented and on-ground activities are prioritised and undertaken in a coordinated and strategic way. This plan will help attract additional funding to the region (including from State and Federal sources) to protect coastal resources and improve recreational opportunities for our community.



Environmental Values and Management Issues

Vegetation and Wildlife Values

Midge Point is located 70 km north of Mackay CBD and is the northernmost township within Council's boundary. The Midge Point coastal unit extends 9.5km along the Esplanade 800m northwest of Herb Winton Park, south around the headland and ends at Yard Creek. It includes three wide low-gradient sandy beaches separated by a low rocky headland and is surrounded by estuarine wetland, intertidal flat communities and the open ocean.

Remnant vegetation communities within the coastal unit include *Eucalyptus* woodland, *Corymbia* open forest and patches of critically endangered beach scrub (R.E. 8.2.2). The Esplanade foredune is dominated by endangered *Melaleuca viridiflora* woodland (RE 8.3.2) and is protected by estuarine wetlands comprised of samphire forblands and critically endangered beach scrub. Habitat fragmentation occurs along the foredune of Herb Winton Park and Whitsunday Waters subdivision and limited vegetation remains. Midge Point headland provides the largest portion of intact vegetation and maintains high resilience due to low levels of disturbance. The foredune environment of Midge Point Esplanade Park presents a narrow corridor of native and non-native vegetation separated by a post and rail fence and is maintained as a linear park with mown lawn. Maintenance of a grassed lawn area, along with frequent storm activity continues to perpetuate vegetation loss and impede plant recruitment and zonation.

The vegetation communities within Midge Point provide habitat for an array of native wildlife including frogs, birds, reptiles and mammal species. Extensive estuarine wetlands, salt pans and open beach areas provide locally important intertidal roosting sites for shorebirds. Additionally, estuarine wetlands provide important breeding grounds for many marine fish species. The wetlands and the adjacent grasslands contain essential habitat for the highly specialised and regionally vulnerable mangrove mouse and the complex coastal vegetation types provide essential habitat and foraging opportunities for the near threatened coastal sheath-tail bat. Adjacent seagrass meadows characteristic of the region's sheltered coastal waters provide an important food source for marine animals including dugongs and turtles.

Key threats to remnant vegetation communities at Midge Point include erosion, weed invasion, inappropriate access and waste dumping. These threats interrupt natural vegetation zonation and reduce the resilience of coastal ecosystems. Key threats to wildlife include habitat loss and degradation, predation by domestic and feral animals and disturbance to nesting or roosting sites. Climate change is likely to place additional stresses on coastal vegetation and wildlife.

Protecting existing native vegetation, re-establishing vegetation zonation and improving vegetation quality through weed control are key ways this plan seeks to protect and enhance the vegetation and wildlife values in this area.

Providing opportunities for the local community to learn about coastal ecosystems and wildlife through Coastcare events and interpretive signage will raise awareness about coastal values at Midge Point.

Coastal Processes and Erosion

Coastal environments are dynamic, experiencing periods of erosion and accretion. Well-vegetated coastal dunes help protect coastal infrastructure during intense wind, storm and cyclone events. Human induced changes such as coastal development and vegetation loss can reduce the protective capacity of dune systems and coastal recession can occur.

The tidal and intertidal flats along the north-facing Esplanade are protected by extensive tracts of estuarine mangroves and salt pan forblands, backed by coastal dunes of *Melaleuca viridiflora* woodland interspersed with beach scrub. Fragmentation at Herb Winton Park and at Whitsunday Waters subdivision provides little protection from extreme coastal processes. Limited development and vegetation clearing across the northeast-east facing beaches facilitates dune recovery, allowing dune zonation and vegetation succession to occur.

A series of coastal parallel sand ridges and swales occur along the southern embayment of Midge Point between Midge Point Headland and Yard Creek. This pattern of sand ridge building is characteristic of barrier spits with seaward influence. In natural settings, barrier spits with seaward influence periodically cycle between short-term storm induced beach erosion events and long-term sand transport and deposition. The establishment of a residential community along the erosion prone area of the Midge Point Esplanade Park foreshore has altered the dynamic nature of this barrier spit. Midge Point beach will continue to be impacted by short term (event-based) erosion and the beach and its foreshore requires active management to address long term regression and protect critical infrastructure. Measures proposed to mitigate further recession and protect existing infrastructure (roads and houses) include; the establishment of a buried geobag revetment wall, sand nourishment and revegetation to restore natural zonation and replenish the foreshore with sand after major sand-loss events. Ongoing rehabilitation works will be required to encourage dune building and vegetation establishment. Maintaining and improving vegetation along the dune system will be key to minimising future erosion and providing a buffer during major storm events.

Climate change and sea level rise is likely to worsen the extent and impact of erosion in coastal areas. Monitoring of beach profiles will provide early indication of changes.

Social Values and Management Issues

Cultural and Recreational Values

Midge Point offers a village atmosphere and is highly valued by locals and visitors for its diverse and rich fishing and boating opportunities. Tourist accommodation (i.e. a caravan park), the local tavern, and a general store add recreational value to the small community. There are three parks in Midge Point that provide a range of recreation opportunities including playgrounds, picnic tables, seating areas and a barbecue shelter. Recreational facilities provide a range of social benefits including opportunities for active and passive recreation, tourism, education and social interaction, as well as supporting community well being and providing opportunities for improving general health through outdoor interaction.

The Local Coastal Plan considers the extent and state of built assets, including access points, play equipment, signage, toilet facilities, paths and fencing. Opportunities for improving built assets to meet community needs and improve recreational opportunities in the area are identified. Installation of a wetland boardwalk trail with interpretive signage would enhance environmental education and active recreation opportunities in Herb Winton Park. Nearby Open Space could be used for a basketball, netball or tennis court, and the installation of additional seating options and barbecue facilities would provide an opportunity for locals and visitors to enjoy the park setting with a view of the mangrove ecosystems and island. Post and rail fencing and formalisation of a car parking area

is also recommended. Nature-based activities throughout the headland area should be explored including the establishment of bushwalking trails with distance markers and interpretive signage. Furthermore, formalisation of a boat ramp and car parking area on the headland would reduce inappropriate vehicle access to adjacent beaches. Rehabilitation of the dune system including increasing the vegetated buffer strip is a priority along the Midge Point Esplanade Park. Recreational facilities will need to be moved landward and the Reserve fenced and vegetated in accordance with recommendations provided in the Midge Point Sediment Erosion Management Plan review (Alluvium 2017). Works proposed at the Midge Point Esplanade Park should consider access upgrades including realigning the post and rail fence, upgrading beach accesses and incorporating interpretative signage. Where appropriate, plans for this linear park should include upgrading existing as well as introducing new park facilities such as play equipment and linking Midge Point Esplanade Park to Stan Camm Park via a pathway network.

Key management issues at Midge Point include erosion, inappropriate access, removal of coastal vegetation and weed invasion. Community education and enforcement activities will be undertaken as required.





KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- ▶ Implementation of dune rehabilitation strategies to improve the retention of sand along Midge Point Esplanade Park beach in line with the recommendations of the 2017 SEMP review, including building a geobag revetment wall.
- ▶ Upgrade of beach accesses at Midge Point Esplanade Park Beach, including boat ramp upgrades.
- ▶ Continue to work with the State Government to address common management issues on Midge Point headland, including investigating opportunities for bush walking trails in this area and formalisation of the boat ramp and associated car parking.
- ▶ Weed control across all zones, targeting major weeds including Guinea grass, lantana and revegetation to assist dune stabilisation and supplement native vegetation.
- ▶ Installation of regulatory and interpretive signage where appropriate.
- ▶ Removal of waste and prevention of future waste dumping at key sites including Jimmys Rock Road.
- ▶ Fencing the margins of Herb Winton Park to direct pedestrian access, restrict vehicle access and allow rehabilitation of the coastal vegetation.
- ▶ Investigate additional recreational opportunities, such as sporting or play equipment and additional park assets at Herb Winton Park, including a coastal wetland trail.
- ▶ Rationalise vehicle access tracks along Conder Parade.
- ▶ Revegetation of the foredune at Midge Point Esplanade Park to rehabilitate and stabilise the dune system, including realigning fencing landward where practicable to facilitate rehabilitation.

The full suite of recommended activities can be found at the end of this document.



STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS

There are a range of statutes at the Regional, State and Federal level that are relevant to, and may guide the management of natural resources and recreation within the Mackay area. These are shown below



FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

- *Biosecurity Act 2015* provides management principles for diseases and pests that may cause harm to human, animal or plant health or the environment, and for other related purposes.
- *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* provides a high level of protection for Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES). In particular it provides protection for important populations of migratory species.
- *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984* provides for the preservation and protection of areas and objects in Australia and in Australian waters that are of particular significance to Aboriginals in accordance with Aboriginal tradition.



INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS

- *China and Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (CAMBA)*, the *Japan and Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (JAMBA)*, and the *Republic of Korea-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (ROKAMBA)* provide for conservation of shorebirds (waders) across the migratory flyway for these species.



STATE GOVERNMENT

- *Land Act 1994* provides for the designation of the reserves and assignment of Trustees for the protection of environmentally and culturally valuable and sensitive areas and features.
- *Recreation Areas Management Act 2006* provides for the establishment, maintenance and use of recreation areas; and aims to coordinate, integrate and improve recreational planning, recreational facilities and recreational management for recreation areas.
- *Vegetation Management Act 1999* provides management principles for vegetation within Queensland.
- *Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995 (Coastal Act)* provides a comprehensive framework for the coordinated management of the Queensland Coast, and establishes the Queensland Coastal Plan 2012 as the primary statutory instrument under the Coastal Act.
- *Nature Conservation Act 1992* provides management principles for wildlife within Queensland.
- *Native Title (Queensland) Act 1993* identifies the presence of Native Title over land.
- *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002* provides the regulatory basis for control of pest species. In particular the Act classifies pest species and provides obligations for landholders.
- *Fisheries Act 1994* provides protection for marine plants including mangroves and saltmarshes, and provides the regulatory environment for control of recreational fishing activities.
- *Sustainable Planning Act 2009* provides the regulatory background for the development of planning schemes.
- *Environmental Protection Act 1994* regulates environmentally relevant activities, including release of emissions on land, air or water and noise.
- *Marine Parks Act 2004* regulates use of Marine Park to protect marine environment.
- *Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011* provides regulatory regime for management of litter and illegal dumping.
- *Queensland Coastal Plan 2012* provides policy guidance to coastal land managers including best practice coastal management principles which support the development of local management plans.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- *Mackay Regional Council Local Law No. 4 (Local Government Controlled Areas, Facilities and Roads) 2011* provides for the management of Council controlled lands by enabling the prohibition of vehicle access and protection of vegetation and infrastructure.
- *Mackay Regional Council Local Law No. 2 (Animal Management) 2011* provides for the management of animals in the natural environment, including ensuring that they are under effective control and requiring removal of faeces in a public place.
- *Coastal Management Guidelines 2012* provides a framework for management decisions and activities for land under Mackay Regional Council jurisdiction in the coastal zone.
- *Mackay Regional Council Planning Scheme Open Space Strategy No. 12* outlines Mackay Regional Council's commitment to provide a balanced mix of public open space that in turn will provide for a range of active and passive recreational opportunities for the community.
- *Reef Guardian Council program* recognises Council's commitment to protect, conserve and enhance the values of the Great Barrier Reef for future generations through effective and responsible land-based management practices. The *Coasts and Communities Program* is a key initiative under this program.

Table 2: Recommended activities for the Midge Point Local Coastal Plan

RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES	
Zone A Midge Point Esplanade (60 ha)	
1	Vegetation management
1.1	Control major target weed species including castor oil plant, Guinea grass, lantana, mile a minute, prickly pear and thatch grass.
1.2	Supplement removed weed species with native vegetation, particularly along the frontal dune.
1.3	Rehabilitate cleared areas and bare patches such as illegal access tracks or mown areas.
1.4	Control weeds on and around beach access tracks including highly dispersive weeds such as cobbler's peg and Seaforth burr.
1.5	Monitor and where suitable, manage other problematic weed species including, but not limited to: annual stylo, black nightshade, Brazilian nightshade, centro, Chinese burr, cobbler's peg, common guava, corky passionflower, couch, devil's fig, leucaena, pink periwinkle, snakeweed, stinking passionfruit, tridax daisy and siratro.
2	Recreational opportunities
2.1	Consider additional recreational opportunities at Herb Winton Park such as a playground or sports court, more tables and a barbecue area.
2.2	Consider installing a boardwalk wetland trail from Herb Winton Park through the mangroves and salt flats.
2.3	Install interpretive signage where appropriate to highlight biodiversity values.
3	Access management
3.1	Install post and rail fencing to clearly define areas for conservation and recreational purposes at Herb Winton Park and at the subdivision.
3.2	Fencing to delineate a car parking area at Herb Winton Park.
4	Waste management
3.1	Remove waste and regulate hot spot locations with signage.
Zone B Midge Point headland (105 ha)	
5	Vegetation management
5.1	Control major target weed species including coconut, Guinea grass, lantana, leucaena, prickly pear and thatch grass
5.2	Supplement removed weed species with native vegetation, particularly along the frontal dune.
5.3	Rehabilitate cleared areas and bare patches such as illegal access tracks.
5.4	Control weeds on and around beach access tracks including highly dispersive weeds such as cobbler's peg and Seaforth burr.
5.5	Monitor and where suitable, manage other problematic weed species including, but not limited to: annual stylo, black nightshade, Brazilian nightshade, centro, Chinese burr, cobbler's peg, common guava, corky passionflower, couch, devil's fig, leucaena, pink periwinkle, snakeweed, stinking passionfruit, tridax daisy and siratro.
6	Recreational opportunities
6.1	Investigate opportunities to create a bush walking trail network in this area.
6.2	Investigate the upgrade and formalisation of the boat ramp with associated car parking.
7	Access management
7.1	Fencing (either star picket and wire or post and rail) on both sides of Jimmys Rock Road to define the Road Reserve, and to prevent unauthorised access into the nearby estuarine wetland, State land and Reserve land.
8	Waste management
8.1	Remove waste and regulate hot spot locations with signage.

Table 2: Recommended activities for the Midge Point Local Coastal Plan

Zone C Midge Point Esplanade Park (6 ha)	
9	Vegetation management
9.1	Control major target weed species including century plant, coconut palms, Easter cassia, Guinea grass, prickly pear, leuceana, lantana, prickly pear and Singapore daisy.
9.2	Supplement removed weed species with coastal vegetation, particularly along the frontal dune.
9.3	Rehabilitate cleared areas and bare patches such as illegal access tracks or mown areas.
9.4	Control weeds on and around beach access tracks including highly dispersive weeds such as cobbler’s peg and Seaforth burr.
9.5	Monitor and where suitable, manage other problematic weed species including, but not limited to: annual stylo, black nightshade, Brazilian nightshade, centro, Chinese burr, cobbler’s peg, common guava, corky passionflower, couch, devil’s fig, leucaena, pink periwinkle, snakeweed, stinking passionfruit, tridax daisy and siratro.
10	Recreational opportunities
10.1	Consider a pathway linkage between Midge Point Esplanade Park and Stan Camm Park to improve connectivity of recreational areas in Midge Point.
11	Access management
11.1	Offset fencing landward, where practicable, to allow dune growth and to increase the vegetated buffer in the area. Liaise with residents regarding an appropriate alignment before moving the fence. Incorporate a designated parking area for visitors and the mobile library.
11.2	Install post and rail fencing to clearly define areas for conservation and recreational purposes in front of the caravan park in the south to prevent encroachment of the mown areas further into the Reserve.
11.3	Formalise the beach access track MID010 in front of the caravan park.
11.4	Investigate formalisation of vehicle access track MID005 and MID007 in line with the 2017 SEMP design requirements.
11.5	Remove private Infrastructure such as seating and boats parked on the beach.
12	Dune rehabilitation
12.1	Implement dune rehabilitation strategies to improve the retention of sand along Midge Point Esplanade Park beach in line with the recommendations of the 2017 SEMP review, including building a geobag revetment wall.
12.2	Consider using sediment trapping fencing in restoration area to reduce wind-blown sand and assist with sand retention.
Other activities across multiple zones	
13	Cultural Heritage
13.1	Engage Traditional Owners to undertake cultural heritage surveys of the area to outline clear management objectives for the preservation cultural heritage within the coastal unit.
14	Signage
14.1	Audit all beach access signs across the unit and update or install: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signage at the landward end of each beach access point that clearly identifies the beach access number, restricted activities, hazards present and provides information on the appropriate first aid treatment for marine stingers. • Beach access numbering signage at the seaward end of each beach access point.
14.2	Install pathway linkage signage that describes pathway routes and beach access tracks and include measured walking distances where appropriate.
14.3	Accompany rehabilitation areas with signage (both regulatory and informative).

Table 2: Recommended activities for the Midge Point Local Coastal Plan

15	Waste management
15.1	Inform residents of appropriate waste disposal methods. Follow up with education, regulation and enforcement activities.
15.2	Educate the community on the impacts of waste on native vegetation, dune health, and wildlife.
16	Tourism
16.1	Investigate opportunities for increased tourism visitation to the beach and area.
17	Education
17.1	Partner with Coastcare and others to deliver education programs about: <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Local weed species and the use of local native species in residential gardens.• Garden waste and general waste disposal.• Responsible pet ownership and how to protect native wildlife i.e. impacts of illegal fires, domestic animals etc.
18	Monitoring
18.1	Undertake beach profile monitoring and monitor sea level rise to guide future coastal planning and works.
18.2	Consider a regional study on the long-term sediment (sand) supply for the Mackay coastline.
18.3	Monitor, or in partnership with others, assist with the monitoring of shorebirds and turtles.
19	Climate change
19.1	Consider how to manage future predicted reduction in coastal land to retain buffer above the high tide mark (e.g. rolling boundaries).
19.2	Review existing revegetation list to ensure that species reflect diversity of all Regional Ecosystems present in coastal unit and in preparation for future predicted climates.
20	Legislation and local laws
20.1	Use available legislation to protect existing native vegetation on Esplanade and Reserve tenure as required.
20.2	Using existing laws, undertake enforcements and compliance activities across the area, particularly relating to unrestrained dogs and motor vehicles in park and beach areas.
20.3	Review and update this document in line with changing legislation.
21	Community involvement
21.1	Provide opportunities for community members to be involved in coastal management activities at formal Coastcare events.
22	Enhancement of surrounding areas
22.1	Implement a tree succession plan across the length of the coastal unit.
22.2	Implement a roadside vegetation program to increase the amount of street trees along roads.
23	Access management
23.1	Install regulatory signage to protect shorebird and potential marine turtle populations.
23.2	Consider pathway linkages in neighbouring areas to improve connectivity between parks and reserves including Stan Camm Park and Midge Point Esplanade Park.
24	Vegetation maintenance
24.1	Continue to protect and enhance vegetated dune systems.



How to view the Local Coastal Plan

Visit www.mackay.qld.gov.au

Acknowledgements: The project is supported by Reef Catchments and Mackay Regional Council through funding from the Australian Government *National Landcare Programme*, and Mackay Regional Council's *Natural Environment Levy*. Local Coastal Plans are based on Mackay Regional Council's *Coastal Management Guidelines* (MRC 2012). Technical geomorphic assessment of the *Midge Point Beach Local Coastal Plan* area was provided by Alluvium. Images supplied by Reef Catchments, Mackay Tourism, Mackay Regional Council.

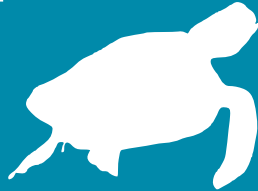
MIDGE POINT SUPPORTS PATCHES OF **CRITICALLY ENDANGERED** BEACH SCRUB



THE EXTENSIVE ESTUARINE WETLAND, SALTPAN AND MANGROVE COMMUNITIES OF MIDGE POINT PROVIDES IMPORTANT ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES INCLUDING HABITAT FOR **JUVENILE FISH, SEDIMENT TRAPPING AND CARBON SEQUESTRATION**

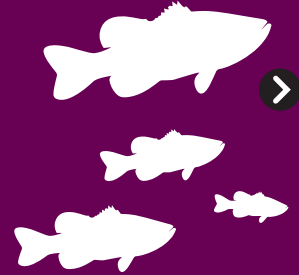


POTENTIAL **TURTLE NESTING BEACH**



MIDGE POINT IS A

POPULAR FISHING LOCATION



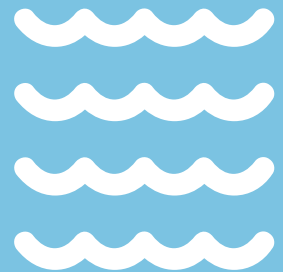
MIDGE POINT SUPPORTS

TWO

SHOREBIRD ROOST SITES



9.5km OF COASTLINE IN THE COASTAL UNIT



THE VULNERABLE

BEACH STONE-CURLEW

HAS BEEN RECORDED AT THE SOUTHERN ROOST



SUPPORTS ALMOST

150 ha

OF REMNANT VEGETATION ON GOVERNMENT COASTAL LAND



THE COASTAL UNIT CONTAINS **ESSENTIAL HABITAT FOR MANGROVE MOUSE**



MIDGE POINT ENCOMPASSES LANDSCAPES & PLACES OF GREAT **IMPORTANCE TO ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES** IN THE MACKAY REGION AND MAY CONTAIN, MIDDENS, FISH TRAPS & OTHER CULTURALLY SIGNIFICANT AREAS



MIDGE POINT IS HIGHLY VALUED BY LOCALS AND VISITORS, WHO LIKE TO ENJOY THE **ENVIRONMENT & ITS NATURAL ASSETS**



THE COASTAL UNIT CONTAINS **ESSENTIAL HABITAT FOR COASTAL SHEATHTAIL BAT**

